

[Press release: Coal Authority wins Welsh contract](#)

The Coal Authority has been awarded a contract by Natural Resources Wales as part of its programme to clean up metal-polluted rivers across Wales.

[Press release: Dereham drug-dealer sent to prison](#)

Kay Strugnall has sentence increased by Court of Appeal

[News story: Trawler owner and master ordered to pay £35,240 for fisheries offences](#)



The court heard how on 26 January 2018, the *Illustris*, a trawler targeting nephrops, was towing two nets in an area of the North Sea known as the Farne Deeps. The vessel was boarded by MMO Marine Officers for a routine inspection and several conservation measure infringements were discovered. Seven charges were brought before the court, including excess meshes for the declared mesh size on both nets and logbook discrepancies in the recorded weight of cod, anglerfish and dab.

Sagittarius Fishing Company and skipper James Thompson both pleaded guilty to all charges.

Sagittarius Fishing Company was fined £25,931.72, ordered to pay £2,003.10 in costs and a victim surcharge of £170. James Thompson was fined £6,966 and a £170 victim surcharge.

A spokesperson for the MMO said:

The fines imposed in this case should send a strong message on the importance of protecting fish stocks. The offending took place in the Farne Deeps, an area subject to recovery measures due to the precarious nature of stocks.

In cases like this the MMO will always take proportionate and appropriate action, including prosecution, to ensure offenders do not benefit from illegal activity and to protect fish stocks for the wider fishing industry and future generations.

Published 20 November 2018

[News story: Higher education expert to review TEF](#)

A higher education expert has been appointed to lead the review and ensure that the world's first government-led university rating system is delivering clarity for students, it was announced yesterday (19 November).

Dame Shirley Pearce has been named as the independent reviewer of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), which shines a light on universities offering high quality teaching and genuine graduate outcomes, and which ones are lagging behind, by rating them as gold, silver or bronze.

The government is fulfilling a promise to students and the sector that TEF be reviewed, so that the ratings allocated to institutions best serve students making the choice about where to study.

The former Vice Chancellor of Loughborough University was officially appointed by the Education Secretary based on her impressive experience within the sector that will give her a unique insight into the needs of students, and enable her to review the process by which TEF ratings are given to universities.

This review will ensure the potential of the rating system is maximised, so that prospective students up and down the country can be sure of the value of the university they choose.

Universities Minister Sam Gyimah said:

Students deserve access to accurate, relevant and comprehensive information when they make the life-changing decision to go to university. I am committed to delivering this – the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework is an invaluable vehicle for translating the vast array of complicated data into useful and clear-cut ratings.

I am delighted to welcome Dame Shirley Pearce to join this cause, conducting this review to guarantee the maximum efficiency and precision of the TEF ratings process.

Dame Shirley Pearce said:

This independent review is an important opportunity to look at how TEF is being delivered and to make recommendations for its future development. I am pleased to be taking on this role and look forward to hearing the views of the different providers of higher education as well as the students, employers and general public who are such important audiences for the TEF.

Dame Shirley Pearce will establish an advisory group to assist with her review, which will conclude in Summer 2019.

Dame Shirley Pearce DBE has held senior executive and non-executive roles in higher education, health and policing. She is currently Chair of Court and Council at the London School of Economics and Political Science, a member of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Panel for the Ministry of Education in Singapore, a Trustee for the Royal Anniversary Trust, a member of the advisory board of HCA UK and a member of the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

[News story: Top college leaders to help strengthen further education sector](#)

Six experienced college governors and clerks have been appointed to help improve colleges across the country, as the Skills Minister announced the new National Leaders of Governance for further education today (Tuesday 20 November).

These top governors will provide peer-to-peer support at further education and sixth form colleges where governance needs to improve. This exciting programme will build on the work of the National Leaders of Further Education, as part of a collective package of support for colleges led by the Office of the FE Commissioner.

It goes hand in hand with the [Strategic College Improvement Fund](#), an innovative £15m fund which will help struggling colleges to improve, and [new strengthened governance guidance](#) – also published today and announced by the Skills Minister at the Association of Colleges conference.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton said:

Further education can change lives, giving people the skills they need, boosting their confidence and opening the door to a range of job opportunities and careers. We want the further education sector to be well-run, resilient, and able to meet people's needs.

With the introduction of new gold-standard T Levels and high-quality apprenticeships, further education has never been more critical. The National Leaders of Governance appointed today are exceptional leaders who will help their peers to develop at this pivotal time, strengthening the sector in the process.

FE Commissioner Richard Atkins said:

High quality governance is critical to the success of colleges. I'm delighted to have this new small team of talented and experienced governors and clerks who will be sharing their expertise and supporting colleges to raise the standard of governance.

The National Leaders of Governance will help diagnose any areas in need of improvement, building expertise and identifying ongoing sources of support.

Governance is an important part of the FE Commissioner's increased focus on early intervention, diagnosis and prevention. The FE Commissioner's [annual report](#) is also being published today, and finds that the expanded role of the FE Commissioner has allowed issues in colleges to be proactively tackled, reducing the need for formal intervention across the sector.