



THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
GENERAL COUNCIL

MINUTE OF THE 310th STATUTORY MEETING

The 310th meeting of the General Council was held in King's College Conference Centre on 26 January 2019. The Convener of the Business Committee, Mr Nigel Lindsay, was in the Chair.

1 DRAFT MINUTES

The draft Minutes of the 309th Statutory Meeting were approved.

2 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

3 REPORT FROM THE CONVENER OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The Convener of the Business Committee, Mr Nigel Lindsay, reported on the activities of the Business Committee.

The Convenor noted that previously the Statutory meetings had been held six months apart, in June and December. In recent years the summer meeting has been brought forward to May, to coincide with the May Festival. The winter meeting is now taking place five or six weeks later than in previous years, due to the new combined Annual University Meeting format. The gaps between meetings now stands at 4 months and 8 months, which could present problems in future. The Business Committee will monitor and review the impact of these changes. The report here therefore covers an eight-month period and three Business Committee meetings.

The Convenor noted that Mr Graham Hunter has now completed his time on the committee and that Mr Mike Cooper has taken the decision not to stand for re-election after many years' service. The Convenor thanked them both for their contributions. The committee also welcomed new member Bishop Mark Strange. The Convenor noted that the decision was taken to add the Rector of the University and the President of AUSA as ex-officio members of the Business Committee. One vacancy remains, and the hope is this will be filled by co-option at the next Business Committee meeting.

The Convenor updated that there have been a number of workstreams developed, following the Business Committee strategy day in February 2018. These works have included developing new terms of reference and contributing the University's overall Strategic Planning process. The Convenor emphasised that all members of the Business Committee have contributed to and been involved with these various works and thanked them all for their dedication.

The Convenor thanked Professor George Boyne for attending the committee's September 2018 meeting, and noted how pleased they were to see that their priorities were very much aligned.

The Business Committee were also invited to send representation to the University Court away day, the first step towards the Court's new strategy. They were appreciative of this invitation and opportunity to contribute, and the Convenor noted the committee's intention to remain active partners in University success going forward.

The Convenor explained that the Business Committee will continue use their position within the University to represent the General Council in matters of importance or concern to them. The committee can use their wide variety of skills and expertise to create small work groups to tackle issues, before making formal representations to University Court where appropriate.

The Business Committee were also invited to provide their input to the search consultants for appointing the new Principal, Professor George Boyne. Their feedback was received and considered carefully, and the committee was delighted with the results.

The Convenor noted that the Business Committee had received a presentation on the potential of developing an affinity bond for the University. This idea is in the very early stages of research and updates will be provided when they become available.

The Business Committee has continued their involvement with the 'Reclaim our University' movement. The Convenor noted that the representatives of the movement have communicated they are encouraged by the positive changes within the University's culture over the past few months. They remain in touch and the Business Committee shares their optimism in this regard.

Finally, the Convenor noted that the General Council and the Business Committee continue to play an important role in the ceremonial life of the University.

There were no questions following the report.

4 BUSINESS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Ms Inglis, Clerk and Registrar to the Business Committee of the General Council, advised the General Council that there are six terms of office coming to an end on 30 September 2019. Nominations are therefore open and will close at noon on Friday 29 March 2019. If there are more nominations than there are available places, then an election will be held.

The terms of office currently coming to an end relate to Steve Duggan, Nigel Lindsay, Tom Lynch, Jenny Mordue, Victoria Aston and Graeme Nicol. Steve Duggan and Nigel Lindsay are ineligible for a further period of office.

5 HISTORY OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The Convenor welcomed Dr Alexander Charles Calder to provide an update on his work regarding the history of the General Council. Dr Calder spoke the General Council at the May 2018 Statutory Meeting regarding the work of Louise Donald, who published the last book on the history of the General Council.

Dr Calder is researching the General Council from 1960 – 2020, having now completed the first decade of that time period.

Dr Calder noted the following persons of interest from his research:

- Colonel Henry Jackson Butchart, one of the greatest figures in the history of the University. He held the position of University Secretary from 1919 – 1952, continuing as Lloyd until 1967
- John Nelson Milne, a Business Committee member from 1930 and Convenor from 1949 to 1970
- William Douglas Simpson, Clerk & Registrar to the General Council and University Librarian from 1926 to 1966
- Sir Thomas Taylor, Principal from 1948 to 1962 and his successor, Sir Edward Wright.

Dr Calder noted the range of interests and creative sparks apparent in the writings, speeches and minutes of these individuals.

Dr Calder went on to provide a full account of numerous notable individuals who made great contributions to the General Council throughout the 1960s. Dr Calder's full presentation was recorded and can be viewed on the University website. Please contact the Alumni Relations team on alumni@abdn.ac.uk if you would like guidance on where to view this.

6 ABERDEEN KILTWALK 2019 (IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT TRUST)

The Convenor noted the intention to gather a team of General Council members to undertake the Aberdeen Kiltwalk in June 2019, in order to raise funds for the University of Aberdeen Development Trust. He called for anyone interested in joining this team and raising money to contact him directly on the matter.

7 NOTICE OF THE 311th STATUTORY MEETING

The 311th Statutory meeting will be held on Saturday 25 May 2019, this being the weekend of the 2019 May Festival.