

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

Minutes of meeting held on 24 June 2008

Present: Rector (in the Chair), Principal, Mr A Amoore, Mr A Arthur, Lady Catto, Sir Don Cruickshank, Ms A Fraser, Professor C Fynsk, Mrs S Grant, Miss A Harper, Professor D Houlihan, Cllr P Johnston, Sir Moir Lockhead, Professor S Logan, Ms C Macaslan, Dr M Mackie, Dr A Mair, Mr M Moir, Professor G Robinson, Mr R Ruddiman, with Professor C Gane, Professor B MacGregor, Professor A Rodger, Mr S Cannon, Ms C Banks, Ms I Bews, Mr A Donaldson, Mrs C Inglis, Dr G Mackintosh, Mrs L Manders, Mr D McKay and Mr B Purdon (Clerk).

Apologies for absence were received from Professor I Booth, Professor N Haites, Ms J Craw, Dr P Edwards, Mr J Leiper, Professor C Secombes, Cllr J Stewart and Mr J Wilson.

MINUTES

347 The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2008 were approved.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

348 Mr Ruddiman declared an interest as a Partner in the firm McGrigors, who had advised the University in relation to two items on the agenda: Employment Tribunal and the Rowett Research Institute Merger. Mr Ruddiman had taken no part in the provision of legal advice to the University regarding either item.

STATEMENT BY THE RECTOR

349 The Rector noted that it was his last meeting as a member of Court and expressed thanks for the support he had received from Ms Fraser and Mr Wilson, and from the University Management team.

STATEMENT BY PRINCIPAL

350 The Principal noted that it was the Rector and Ms Fraser's final meeting as members of Court. On behalf of the Court, he thanked them both for their respective service to the work of the Court and the University.

351 The Principal congratulated Sir Moir Lockhead on his award of a Knighthood in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

352 The Principal noted that Subsea UK had announced that their National Subsea Research Institute would be based in the University. This was a significant endorsement of the quality of the University's energy research.

353 The Principal reported on the outcome of the *Times Good University Guide* rankings. The University had moved up six places to be ranked as 26th in the UK. A number of individual academic departments had been listed in the top ten for their respective subject areas. Overall the outcome for the University was encouraging.

354 The Principal noted that good progress continued to be made in increasing philanthropic support for the University and he highlighted the significant contribution that members of Court had made to the fundraising campaign.

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL

- 355 Mrs Inglis introduced a paper on the outcome of a recent Employment Tribunal involving the University and a member of staff, regarding the issue of that employee's entitlement to be regarded as a 'permanent employee' under the terms of the Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002.
- 356 The Court noted that the Employment Tribunal had found in favour of the employee and the detailed reasons for that judgement. After taking legal advice, the University had decided not to appeal the judgement.
- 357 The Court also noted the wider implications of the decision that were currently being considered by the University. These included:
- Revisions to the University's policy on the employment of fixed-term staff.
 - Implementation of the Ordinance Procedure on Redundancy and the use of compulsory redundancies.
 - Quarterly reporting to the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform on the numbers of staff who would be dismissed as a result of compulsory redundancy.
 - Communication and management of the subsequent implications of the introduction of compulsory redundancy within the academic community and with campus trade unions.

ROWETT RESEARCH INSTITUTE

- 358 Professor Logan introduced a paper on the progress of merger discussions with the Rowett Research Institute (RRI).
- 359 The Court noted that the following assurances had been received from Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment:
- that, based on assurances provided by the University with regard to the use of the Rural and Environmental Research and Analysis Directorate (RERAD) grant income, RERAD funding would continue under the current research programme to a new merged Institute; and the University, post merger, would be entitled to bid for RERAD future funding in the same way as the RRI and the other Main Research Providers;
 - that a capital grant of £12m would be made available to fund a new building for the University of Aberdeen Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health;
 - that a grant of £3m to support the pension deficit would be forthcoming and also that the Scottish Government had increased this amount by up to £2m, making £5m in total;
 - that a grant of £0.4m to support restructuring would be forthcoming. This had been reduced by £0.5m in return for the increased pension deficit support indicated;
- 360 The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs had also given his approval to the merger.
- 361 The Court noted that information regarding the pensions deficit was still awaited from the Government Actuarial Department (GAD). The Merger Business Plan continued to contain a presumption that any shortfall after funding from GAD would be met in full from RERAD or from RRI Ltd current funds.
- 362 The Court had previously agreed that the University and the RRI should move to market the estate in an open and transparent manner by restricted tender marketing. In discussion, it was agreed that should other potential interested parties come forward outside the restricted tender process, these should also be considered, subject to them meeting the required criteria.
- 363 The Court noted that a Draft Ordinance (No. 139 Incorporation into the University of Aberdeen of the Rowett Research Institute), to provide the University with the specific constitutional power required for it to merge with the RRI, had been approved by Her Majesty in Council on 11 June 2008.

- 364 The Court noted that the previously approved Draft Merger Agreement would be updated upon the conclusion of the due diligence exercise. The Merger Agreement would be signed at, or close to, the date of merger, under powers delegated by Court (*See Minute 418*). The Court noted that the Memorandum and Articles of Association for the new University subsidiary company which would result from the merger, were close to being finalised.
- 365 On this basis, the Court approved the proposal that the merger of the RRI into the University should proceed as planned at midnight on 30 June 2008.

FINANCE AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Report from Joint Planning, Finance & Estates Committee: Updated Ten Year Cash Flow Plan

- 366 Ms Bews introduced a report from the Joint Planning, Finance & Estates Committee (JPFEC) on a proposed update to the University's 10-year Capital Plan.
- 367 The Court noted that the Plan had been revised to incorporate £23.7M capital funding over the next three years (2008/09, 2009/10, and 2010/11), which had been allocated to the University by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The award was significantly higher than had been anticipated. The 10-year Plan was based on the previously agreed strategy of moving towards a surplus of 3% of turnover, and providing access to working capital of £12m.
- 368 The assumptions in the Plan in respect of affordability had been subject to independent review by PriceWaterhouseCoopers. It was confirmed that this had not considered the operational costs of the buildings over and above those included in the Plan. The Convenor of the Audit Committee had also reviewed the proposals. The operation of the borrowing facility would be regularly reviewed by the Director of Finance in conjunction with the provider, Barclay's Bank.
- 369 In discussion, the following principal points of record were made:
- 370 It was noted that the JPFEC had agreed that a paper should be prepared on the project management needs for each capital project, including the Library, and the way these needs would be addressed. It was confirmed that these issues were being considered by the University and the Convenor of the Capital Expenditure Sub-Committee.
- 371 It was agreed that the University should write to the Scottish Funding Council to express the Court's concern at the lack of notice to institutions of the additional capital funding. It was confirmed that the stipulation in the existing 10-year Plan previously approved by Court in June 2007, that commencement of construction of the Library be conditional on fundraising of £10 million of cash and £5 million of pledges, had been superseded. The proposed revised Plan continued to include a target for fundraising of £30 million in respect of the Library Project.
- 372 The inclusion of an investment fund for equipment was welcomed by the Court. It was noted that many of the future equipment needs were difficult to predict as they greatly depended on which particular senior academics the University recruited. It was also desirable that the University attempt, wherever possible, to fund new equipment externally.
- 373 Subject to the above, and in light of the independent advice received, the JPFEC, invited Court to approve the following recommendations:
1. That £18.4M of the SFC Capital Investment Fund (CIF) and Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills UK wide Research Capital Investment Fund (DIUS RCIF) be allocated towards the Library to allow construction to commence at the earliest opportunity, recognising the continuing role of the Project Board in delivering the project on budget.

2. That the University make a commitment to invest £5M towards the construction of a 50 metre swimming pool within the Regional Sports Facility, in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Sports Scotland.
3. That £2.2M of the CIF and DIUS RCIF be allocated towards Oceanlab, reducing the institutional contribution required.
4. That £1.2M of the CIF be allocated towards phase 1 of the Fraser Noble Project reducing the contribution required from the College and institution.
5. That an allocation of £1.8M over the three years be made to establish a fund for investment in equipment.
6. That Colleges and the central administration be invited to develop a more detailed specification of the requirements of the highest priority projects prior to requesting commitment in principle to these projects by the Court.
7. That the budget of £3M per annum for Estates commencing 2008/09 be spent, based on an indicative allocation of £1M per annum for Health and Safety/ statutory compliance, taking into account the views of the University Safety Advisor; £1M per annum for functionality/ modernisation improvements as requested by the colleges and central administration to pick up small projects identified within the school academic planning process; and £1M for condition improvements and sustainability initiatives, based on the estate condition survey and the views of the Environmental Forum.
8. That the budget for recurrent capital be increased from £0.65M to £1M per annum for DIT commencing 2008/09; with the increased spend being allocated in line with the IT strategy presented to the Information Management Committee for tactical investment in small to medium sized projects, as requested by the colleges and central administration.
9. That the sale of Dunbar be now brought forward to minimise the level of borrowing.

374 The Court approved the recommendations.

Strategic Forecasts to SFC

375 Ms Bews introduced a paper which reported to the Scottish Funding Council, the Strategic Plan Forecast 2008 (SPF 2008), covering the forecast out-turn for the current financial year 2007-08 and budgets for the years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11.

376 The Court approved the Strategic Plan Forecast for submission to the Scottish Funding Council.

Quarterly Financial Report

377 Ms Bews introduced a paper on the management accounts for the period ended 30 April 2008.

378 The Court noted the paper.

GOVERNANCE REFORM

379 Sir Don Cruickshank introduced a paper (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) on reform of the governance structure and the establishment of an Operating Board.

380 As agreed by Court, consultation on the proposals had been undertaken with the Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and the Campus Trade Unions. Following that consultation, the Governance Committee had again considered the proposals and revised them to include:

- the addition of a section on the functions and powers that would be delegated by Court to the Operating Board.
- recommendations on appointments to the positions on the Board reserved for independent members of Court.

- a stipulation that the Convenor of the Operating Board should be an independent member, following comments received during the consultation from the Senate.
- a recommendation that the Court in 2009/10 reduce the number of meetings it had each year.

- 381 In discussion, it was agreed that the issue of how members of Court who were not on the Operating Board or the Governance Committee would continue to fulfil their duties effectively was one which should be kept under careful review and it was noted that in addition to the Governance Committee's role in this respect, it was intended to ask the University's Internal Auditors also to review matters in due course.
- 382 The Court also noted that the paper had proposed that Court consider holding fewer but more extended meetings with effect from 2009/10 and that this could assist in the recruitment of new members with international experience.
- 383 The Court approved the establishment of an Operating Board (with effect from 1st September 2008) on the basis proposed in the paper, and invited the Operating Board to produce proposals by no later than Spring 2009, regarding which Court and Joint Court and Senate Committees are required for the future, subject to the approval of Court and consultation with the Senate, the Campus Trade Unions and Business Committee of the General Council.

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

- 384 Professor Rodger introduced the Health and Safety Committee's annual report for 2007/08.
- 385 It was reported that the annual rate (per 1000 members of staff) for those accidents to staff which must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (ie. accidents that result in more than 3 days absence from work), had increased from 2.3 in 2006 to 4.7 in 2007 compared to a benchmark of 2.7. There were 14 HSE reportable accidents involving staff in 2007, compared to 7 in 2006, and in total the number of accidents involving staff had increased from 69 to 102.
- 386 In discussion concern was expressed at this. It was noted that the benchmark figure was lower as it included many universities that did not have a medical school or significant laboratory facilities. It was also noted that a small increase in the number of HSE reportable accidents could result in a significant change in the rate due to the small numbers involved. The majority of accidents were considered to be minor. The Court was assured, however, that the University would continue to work to reduce incidences of accidents and to improve the Health and Safety Culture across the institution. It was also agreed that the Director of Estates would investigate the prevalence of lead based paint within University buildings.
- 387 The Court noted the report.

RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 388 Professor Rodger introduced an updated version of the University's Risk Register.
- 389 In discussion, it was noted that the changing nature of the housing market and the rapidly changing economic environment were of relevance to a number of risks on the Register and it was agreed that these factors should be kept under review by the Risk Management Committee.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Vice-Chair of Court

- 390 The Court approved the re-appointment of Dr Mair as the Vice-Chair of Court for a period of one year with effect from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

- 391 In discussion, it was noted that Dr Mair had given considerable service to the Court. The Court noted that it would be asked, in the course of 2008/09, to consider in good time the appointment of Dr Mair's successor as Vice-Chair.

Re-Appointment of Co-opted Members

- 392 The Court approved the reappointment of Dr M Mackie, for a further period of one year, with effect from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.
- 393 The Court approved the reappointment of Sir Moir Lockhead, for a further period of three years, with effect from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2011.
- 394 The Court approved the reappointment of Mr A Amooore, for a further period of three years, with effect from 1 October 2008 to 30 September 2011.
- 395 The Court approved the reappointment of Mr M Moir, for a further period of three years, with effect from 13 September 2008 to 12 September 2011.

Revised Remit and Composition

- 396 The Court approved the amendment of the composition of the Governance Committee to state that:
- "The Vice-Chair of Court to be invited to be in attendance for items of business, as appropriate".

Membership of Court and Court-Senate Committees

- 397 The Court approved its membership and representation on Court/Court-Senate Committees.
- 398 The Court also agreed that, given possible changes to the committee structure in 2008-09, further appointments to the small number of vacancies for representatives or members of Court on committees be deferred.

Representatives on Educational and Other Bodies

- 399 The Court approved a recommendation that the responsibility for appointments to external organisations on which the Court was represented be delegated to the Principal.

STAFFING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Staffing Policy on Volunteering

- 400 The Court received a paper from the Staffing & Development Committee, recommending approval of a Policy on Staff Volunteering.
- 401 In discussion, it was suggested that the University should consider how it might record the contribution that staff regularly made within their respective fields of expertise on a voluntary basis as this might in the future prove to be important in demonstrating to Government and others the contribution that Universities make to society in general and to the economy.
- 402 The Court approved the Staffing Policy on Volunteering.

Disclosure Scotland Checks

- 403 The Court received a paper from the Staffing & Development Committee, recommending approval of an amendment to the Disclosure Policy to clarify it in respect of situations where contractors or service providers were required to provide evidence of Disclosure Scotland checks or of appropriate supervision arrangements.

404 The Court approved the amendments to the Disclosure Policy.

Staff: Staff Relationships Policy

405 The Court received a paper from the Staffing & Development Committee recommending approval of minor amendments to the Staff: Staff Relationships Policy.

406 The Court approved the amendments to the Staff: Staff Relationships Policy.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Re-appointment and Tendering: Internal Auditors

407 The Court approved a recommendation of the Audit Committee to re-appoint Deloitte and Touche as the University's Internal Auditors for a further year from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

SENATE REPORT

Draft Resolution No. of 2008
[Code of Practice on Student Discipline]

408 The Court, on the recommendation of the Senate, was invited to approve the draft Resolution [Code of Practice on Student Discipline], setting out a number of revisions to the Code of Practice, which related to the way allegations of plagiarism against students, registered in postgraduate programme year five, were handled.

409 The Court, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, agreed to pass the Resolution forthwith in order that the amended provisions might be applied with immediate effect.

Draft Resolution No. of 2008
[Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery]

410 The Court, on the recommendation of the Senate, was invited to approve the draft Resolution [Regulations for the Degree of Dental Surgery].

411 The Court, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, agreed to pass the Resolution forthwith in order that the Regulations could be effective on the day on which the Scottish Parliament approved the Order in Council empowering the University to confer joint degrees.

Draft Resolution No. of 2008
[Changes to the Regulations for the Degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery]

412 The Court, on the recommendation of the Senate, was invited to approve the draft Resolution [Changes to the Regulations for the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery].

413 The Court, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, agreed to pass the Resolution forthwith in order that the Regulations could be effective from 15 September 2008.

Draft Resolution No. of 2008
[Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus]

414 The Court, on the recommendation of the Senate, was invited to approve the draft Resolution [Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus]. The revisions proposed were to reflect the necessary amendments to the distribution of seats on the Senate, which would result from the merger with the Rowett Research Institute.

- 415 The Court, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 agreed to pass the Resolution forthwith in order that the amended Resolution could be effective from the merger Vesting Day of 30 June 2008.

RE-APPOINTMENT OF VICE-PRINCIPAL

- 416 The Court, on the recommendation of the Principal, approved the reappointment of Ms C Macaslan as Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching) for a period of one year from 1 August 2008.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

- 417 The Court approved the revised University Health and Safety Policy, as recommended by the Health and Safety Committee.

VACATION POWERS

- 418 The Court approved a proposal that for the period between its meetings of 24 June and 9 September 2008 it delegate authority to act on its behalf:
- (i) on any estates-related matter of particular urgency to a small committee composed of the Principal, Senior Vice-Principal, Senior Lay Member, Convener of the Joint Planning, Finance and Estates Committee (or Convener of the Operating Board from the date of its establishment) and the Convener of the Capital Expenditure Sub-Committee, or three of the five, if members were to be unavailable, and;
 - (ii) on any outstanding issues related to the merger with the Rowett Research Institute to a small committee, composed of the Principal, Convener of the Joint Planning, Finance and Estates Committee (or Convener of the Operating Board from the date of its establishment), Senior Lay Member and the Convener of the Audit Committee, and;
 - (iii) on any other matter of particular urgency to a small committee composed of the Principal, the Senior Lay Member and/or the Senior Vice-Principal.

RE-APPOINTMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR'S ASSESSOR

- 419 The Court noted that the Chancellor had re-appointed Dr Mair as his Assessor on Court for a period of one year with effect from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

SENATE REPORT

- 420 The Court noted that the Senate, at its meeting on 11 June 2008, had endorsed a motion in regard to University Nursery provision, which included a request for the Court to incorporate a level of financial provision for adequate nursery provision within the University's Capital Expenditure Plan.
- 421 In discussion, the Court was assured that proposals for future nursery provision were under consideration and were expected to be included in the next iteration of the capital plan in the course of 2008/09.

Election of Senate Assessor to Court

- 422 The Court noted that, following recent elections, Professor N R Webster from the School of Medicine had been appointed to serve as a Senate Assessor to Court from 1 October 2008 until 30 September 2012.

JOINT PLANNING FINANCE AND ESTATES COMMITTEE

Rowett Research Institute Merger

- 423 The Court noted that the Joint Planning, Finance & Estates Committee had received and considered a paper on merger negotiations with the Rowett Research Institute, together with a letter dated 3 June 2008 from the Director of the Rural and Environment Research and Analysis Directorate (RERAD), sent on behalf of Mr Richard Lochhead, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment. It had noted that all matters of principle had been agreed between the parties, and that the final Merger Agreement was close to completion. (See *Minutes* 358-365)

Finance Strategic Plan Forecast

- 424 The Court noted that the Joint Planning, Finance & Estates Committee had, for its part, approved the Strategic Plan Forecast to the Scottish Funding Council, which covered the forecast outturn for the current year (2007/08) and the budgets for the years 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11. (See *Minutes* 375-376)

Monthly Management Accounts 2007/08

- 425 The Court noted that the Joint Planning, Finance and Estates Committee had received copies of the Monthly Management Accounts for the period ending 30 April 2008. (See *Minutes* 377-378)

Capital Expenditure Sub-Committee Report

- 426 The Court noted that the Joint Planning, Finance and Estates Committee had received and considered a report of the meeting of the Capital Expenditure Sub-Committee, held on 22 May 2008, at which the Sub-Committee had considered progress reports for various projects, including the Fraser Noble Building, Zoology, Student Accommodation and the Regional Sports Facilities. The Committee had been informed that the projected overspend for the Central Heating Station Project was not yet finalised, as the ongoing review of disputed contractor claims had not yet been resolved.

Matthew Hay

- 427 The Court noted that since the meeting of the Sub-Committee progress had been made in reducing the 8-week projected delay for the Matthew Hay project.

Life Sciences Innovation

- 428 The Court noted that the Committee had been informed that the lease with Wyeth had been finalised in respect of the Life Sciences Innovation (LSI) building, and that initial discussions were being held with Scottish Enterprise Grampian about the possibility of LSI phase 2.

New Library

- 429 The Court noted that the Committee had been informed that the new Library Design Team had submitted Stage E reports, setting out final proposals, together with project costs, and that work was underway to ensure that these projected costs were aligned with the £57.3M budget, agreed by Court.

Preferred Partnership Agreement: Braveheart Plc

- 430 The Court noted that the Joint Planning, Finance and Estates Committee had approved a recommendation that the University enter into a preferred partner relationship with Braveheart Investment Group plc, together with proposed Heads of Terms. This recommendation had been reached by a group comprising the AURIS Board, the Convener of Audit Committee, and the lay member of the Commercialisation and Income-Generation Sub-Committee.

- 431 In discussion, clarification was given as to the terms and benefits of the partnership for the University.

Risk Management Committee

- 432 The Court noted that the Joint Planning, Finance and Estates Committee had received and noted a report from the Risk Management Committee, which gave details of changes to the University's Risk Register, agreed by the Committee. (See *Minutes* 388-389)

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Membership of Court 2008-2009

- 433 The Court noted its membership for 2008-09.
- 434 With respect to the vacancy for a co-opted member, the Court was reminded that this position had been reserved for the Chairman of the Rowett Research Institute Board of Governors under the terms of the Rowett Research Institute Merger.
- 435 The Court noted that while there were no immediate vacancies, the Governance Committee would in the course of 2008/09 initiate a series of steps to identify potential new members of Court.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT

- 436 The Court noted the annual report for 2007/08 from the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Internal Audit Reports

- 437 The Court noted that the Audit Committee had approved the following internal audit reports from Deloitte & Touche: Student Recruitment and Admissions (Report No. 4 of 2007/08); School of Divinity, History and Philosophy (Report No. 7 of 2007/08)
- 438 The Court noted that the Committee had also approved Follow-Up Report 2 of 2006/07 Recommendations (Report No. 12 of 2007/08), in respect of the following areas: Procurement, Top 5 Research Grants, Marketing, School of Geosciences, School of Biological Sciences, Governance (Colleges) and IT Controls.

Ongoing Recommendations

- 439 The Court noted that the Committee received regular reports on recommendations outstanding from previous audit cycles to ensure that they were being appropriately progressed.

External Audit Plan 2008-09

- 440 The Court noted that the Audit Committee had approved the External Audit Plan 2008-09 from PricewaterhouseCoopers.

CURRICULUM REFORM UPDATE

- 441 The Court received and noted an update on Curriculum Reform. In discussion, it was noted that the use of market research was important, as was the impact in the future of the increasing economic strength of Asian countries and that of the future of Energy.

COMMISSION ON SCOTTISH DEVOLUTION

- 442 The Court received and noted a letter from the Commission on Scottish Devolution inviting the University to contribute to its consultation on the operation and future shape of devolution. In discussion, it was noted that Universities Scotland would prepare a response to the Commission. It was noted that the wide variety of views held within the University made it difficult for the Court to adopt a single position on the matter, it would, however, wish to encourage staff, students and members of Court to contribute to the work of the Commission as individuals.

2008 PAY AWARD AND TRANSITION TO THE NATIONAL PAY SPINE

- 443 The Court received a paper on the 2008 Pay Award and Transition to the National Pay Spine. The Court noted the paper and the provision within the national Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) agreement on the terms of deferring implementation of pay increases and the impact on salaries within higher education of the level of Retail Price Index at September 2008.

STAFF PROMOTIONS

- 444 The Court received and noted from the Staffing and Development Committee a series of decisions pertaining to staff promotions, resulting from the annual promotions exercise.

JOINT DEGREE AWARDING POWERS

- 445 The Court noted that The Academic Awards and Distinctions (Additional Powers of the University of Aberdeen Order of Council 2008) had been passed and would come into force with effect from 1 September 2008.

ORDINANCE NO 139
[INCORPORATION INTO THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN OF
THE ROWETT RESEARCH INSTITUTE]

- 446 The Court noted that Ordinance No 139 [Incorporation into the University of Aberdeen of the Rowett Research Institute] had been passed by the Privy Council on 11 June 2008.

PAPERS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

- 447 The Court was informed that the following papers were available on request from Policy, Planning & Governance:
- (i) CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: Email from Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning.
 - (ii) SCOTTISH AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE CONSULTATION ANALYSIS AND FINAL REPORT: Summary paper on the analysis and final report of the Scottish Government consultation on the Scottish Agricultural College being designated as a higher education institution.
 - (iii) ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL UPDATED COMMUNITY PLAN.
 - (iv) SUPPORT FOR GAELIC EDUCATION IN FE AND HE IN SCOTLAND: SFC Circular Letter SFC/25/2008, 16 May 2008, announcing the Council's decision to provide additional support for Gaelic education in FE and HE in Scotland.
 - (v) TRANSPARENT APPROACH TO COSTING (TRAC) STRATEGY GROUP: SFC Circular Letter SFC/26/2008, 16 May 2008, reporting on the work of the TRAC Strategy Group and the establishment of the TRAC Development and Implementation Group.

- (vi) STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL LIFELONG LEARNING: INVITATION TO BID: Universities Scotland Circular 43/08, 9 May 2008, inviting bids to the International LLL Strategy – Co-ordinating Group by 1 September 2008.
- (vii) SCOTTISH INITIATIVE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCIENCE: Universities Scotland Circular 48/08, 13 May 2008, inviting attendance at a meeting on the proposal for a Scottish Initiative for International Development Science on 3 June 2008.
- (viii) ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT SCOTLAND (ePS): Update on eProcurement Scotl@nd Project.

FUTURE BUSINESS

- 448 Members were invited to forward any matters which they felt should be included in Court papers as future business.
- 449 Members were also invited to suggest items which they felt should be discussed at the Court Strategy Day on 9th September.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND MEETINGS FOR NEXT YEAR

The Court noted the dates of its meetings for session 2008/09 as follows:

8 September 2008	Court Dinner, 7.00pm for 7.30pm, venue and timings to be confirmed.
9 September 2008	Court Meeting/Strategy Day, 9.00am to 5.00pm; venue and timings to be confirmed.
4 November 2008	
9 December 2008	
10 February 2009	
24 March 2009	
19 May 2009	
30 June 2009	