

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

Minutes of meeting held on 30 March 2010

*Present:* Sir Moir Lockhead (in the Chair), Mr A Amoore, Mr A Arthur, Lady Catto, Sir Don Cruickshank, Professor C Fynsk, Mrs S Grant, Professor D Houlihan, Provost Howatson, Mr G Hunter, Mr B Lockhart, Professor S Logan, Dr A Mair, Mr B Pack, Mr R Parker, Mr S Robertson, Dr N Vargesson, Professor N Webster, with Professor I Diamond, Professor C Gane, Professor N Haites, Professor B MacGregor, Professor P Morgan, Professor A Rodger, Professor W Long, Mr S Cannon, Mrs C Banks, Ms I Bews, Mr A Donaldson, Mr L Forsyth, Mr P Haley, Mrs C Inglis, Mrs L Manders, Ms J Sewel and Mr B Purdon (Clerk).

Apologies for absence were received from the Principal, Dr A Baxter, Ms J Craw, Professor P Edwards, Professor G Robinson, Mr R Ruddiman, Cllr J Stewart, and Dr G Mackintosh.

NEW PRINCIPAL

- 122 Sir Moir Lockhead welcomed Professor Ian Diamond to the meeting ahead of his commencement as Principal on 1 April 2010.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEXT STRATEGIC PLAN

- 123 The Court received a number of background papers, including an analysis of the Scottish Funding Council's Main Grant Letter for 2010/11, and presentations from the Principal (elect), Senior Vice-Principal, Vice-Principals and Heads of Colleges to inform discussion of the development of the next Strategic Plan. The key points of the discussion are summarised as follows:

*Review of 2007-2010*

- 124 Professor Logan provided Court with an overview of how the University had performed against the targets of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, the main points of the recently announced funding settlement from the Scottish Funding Council and the proposed key dates for the development of the next Plan. The Court noted that it would receive at its extended meeting in September 2010 a draft version of the plan with a view to approving a final version at its meeting in December 2010. It was agreed that there would be a further discussion in June which would include an outline structure with the key themes of the Plan.

*Presentation from the new Principal*

- 125 Professor Diamond presented to Court his view of the key issues the University would need to consider in developing the new Strategic Plan. These included:

STRATEGIC ISSUES

- The development of the Plan needed to include an extensive conversation and consultation with the University community and external stakeholders.
- An emphasis on continuing to raise the University's profile and reputation - locally, nationally and internationally.
- The University needed to recognise the importance of the impact its teaching and research had on society and consider how it could increase that impact.
- Securing a sustainable financial base against a backdrop of uncertain public funding would be a key challenge. The need to diversify income and to maintain the University's success in fundraising would be essential.

#### RESEARCH

- The University should identify a number of meta-themes where it could earn a worldwide reputation as a leader. There should, therefore, be a discussion about the key areas on which the University might choose to focus.
- The Plan had to be underpinned by College and School level Plans and cross-discipline Plans.
- The pressure on public finances made it imperative that the University continue to diversify its research income through partnerships with industry, government and the 'third sector'. The United States and European Union were seen as two major sources of potential research income in the future.
- The University needed to improve its postgraduate research student numbers and create the culture and environment that was attractive to postgraduates, including masters students who might progress to research degree study.
- Developing academic staff to create the research 'stars' of tomorrow should also be a priority for the University.

#### TEACHING

- Improving the University's retention of students and addressing widening participation would remain key challenges
- The University needed to ask how could it better serve its students, particularly in the context of a student population which had changed significantly in recent years to include many more International and postgraduate students. The quality of the student experience would be crucial if the University was to continue to recruit students at all levels.
- The importance that the University put on teaching and the quality of that teaching had to be clear to staff and students. Undergraduate students would be attracted by the reputation of the University's teaching.

#### PARTNERSHIPS

- The University needed to forge new and different approaches to partnerships in teaching and research. Aberdeen should strive to be the Partner of choice.

- 126 In the general discussion that followed the presentations, the following key points emerged:
- 127 The Court discussed how the University should market/brand itself and it was felt this would be an important theme to develop, both as an institution and as a partner with others in promoting the region. The Court also discussed whether greater focus on particular areas could be achieved whilst also being a 'full spectrum university'. There was a need to develop that discussion and what it meant further. It was also suggested that in addition to developing meta-themes the University needed to consider the mechanisms by which cross-discipline research could be encouraged and platforms for research created to bring researchers together and project that research to external audiences. There was agreement that at its next meeting the Court should discuss further the issue of financial scenario planning, and the potential impact of various potential mitigating actions suggested by the Director of Finance be quantified together with an analysis of staff costs. Some members felt that in broad terms the high level vision of the existing plan to be a top one hundred university, remained relevant and that the important aim in developing the next Plan would be how to create the financial conditions for this to be achieved. Other members argued that there remained a need to discuss the overarching vision and strategic direction of the University. There was agreement that retention was a key issue to be addressed in the next Plan. It was suggested that the University consider giving a greater priority in the ordering of the Plan to the theme of teaching.
- 128 It was agreed that the Court should have a further discussion at its next meeting where it should also receive an outline structure for the Plan.

## MINUTES

- 129 The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2009 were approved.

### REPORT FROM SENIOR GOVERNOR

- 130 Sir Moir reported that the Governance Committee had met the day before Court and had agreed to recommend two candidates for independent membership of the Court. The Court would be invited to approve these recommendations at its next meeting.

### REPORT FROM OPERATING BOARD

Mr Cannon introduced a report from the Operating Board meetings held on 20 January 2010 and 3 March 2010.

### **FINANCE AND FUTURE SCENARIO PLANNING**

#### *Ten-Year Cash Flow Plan*

- 131 The Court received and approved on the recommendation of the Operating Board, an update to the 10-Year Cash Flow Plan. The Court noted the flexibility that had been built into the Plan in order that the University could respond to future funding changes. It had also noted that while such flexibility was necessary in the present financial environment, it was also important for the University to maintain its aspirations for the estate.
- 132 The Court noted that the Board had also approved recommendations relating to the Library research reserve. The demolition of the Queen Mother Library would continue as planned, but the lease and fit out of a research reserve would be delayed, delivering annual revenue savings of approximately £0.5M per annum and delaying capital spend of £2.4M.

#### *Scenario Planning*

- 133 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered papers on scenario planning.
- 134 The Court noted that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had published its funding allocations to institutions on 25 March 2010. As usual, in advance of this announcement, SFC had issued the intake targets for the workforce planning subjects (Medicine, Dentistry, and Education). As expected, Education places had been significantly cut across all Teacher Education providers. The reduction had equated to around a £1.5M drop in funding to the University of Aberdeen in 2010/11 and 208 places.
- 135 The Court noted that the Board had discussed the current actions being taken to ensure that the University was well placed to meet reductions in funding. These had included:
- A review of the ten-year cash flow plan to ensure future flexibility (see above);
  - Diversifying income-streams;
  - Carrying out reviews of key processes to ensure maximum efficiency.

#### *Monthly Management Accounts*

- 136 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered the latest Monthly Management Accounts at its meetings on 20 January and on 3 March. The Report for the period ended 31 January 2010 had shown a cumulative surplus before exceptional items of £0.9M against a budgeted surplus for the year to date of £1.9M, a negative year to date variance of £1.0M. Income from Research Grants and Contracts and Overseas Tuition Fees had been lower than anticipated, and therefore savings targets remained challenging.

- 137 The Court noted that the Board had endorsed the approaches being taken in response to the latest forecasts, which had included:
- Continuing to take management actions which were required if forecasts were to be brought back on budget and target surplus achieved;
  - Diversifying international student markets;
  - Continuing to take proactive actions in relation to debtors.

#### *Budget Planning*

- 138 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered an update on the budget planning process; and the proposed planning assumptions for preparing financial budgets for the years 2010/11 to 2012/13. Following meetings with Colleges held in December and March, and the SFC funding announcement on 25 March, draft budgets would be presented to the May meeting of the Board.
- 139 The Court noted that the Board had approved the budget planning assumptions and noted that, in line with these assumptions, the University Executive had now approved:
- Tuition Fees for 2010/11
  - Accommodation Fees for 2010/11

#### *Applications for early retirement*

- 140 The Court noted that the Board had noted that in response to inquiries from staff, a communication had reminded staff of the process by which applications for early retirement could be made. Based on the level of inquiries about the process, it was possible that additional funds would be required to fund the costs of early retirements in 2009/10, and at its meeting in January, the Board had agreed to delegate authority to approve the total costs of early retirements to the Senior Governor, the Chair of the Operating Board, and the Senior Vice-Principal.
- 141 The Board had noted that 13 applications had been approved at a cost of £301K funded by the University's Strategic Investment Fund. This had led to a saving of £103K for this financial year and a full year saving of £723K in future years.

#### *Investment Strategy*

- 142 The Court had noted that the Board had considered and approved progress with the University's investment strategy, including the allocation of portfolios to investment managers.

#### *Universities Accounts Comparison*

- 143 The Court had noted that the Board had received and considered a paper comparing the University's Accounts against those of comparators across the UK.

#### **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

- 144 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered updates on Capital Projects noting that the Capital Expenditure Report for the period ending 31 January 2010 had shown that major projects and the annual recurrent programme were both generally on budget.

The Board had also received update reports for individual projects as follows:

145 *Rowett Estate*

The Court noted that the Board had noted that, following on from the publication of the Council's Main Issues report in October 2009, which had identified areas of the Rowett Estate as preferred options for development, further work was now required to retain these indicative allocations in the Local Development Plan when it was published in September 2010 for consultation. The Court noted that the Board had agreed that a budget of up to £100K, funded from sale proceeds, would be identified to fund the sale process of the Estate. This budget would also cover spend already made in support of the estate sale.

146 *Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health*

The Court noted that the Board had noted that the design of the building was on hold pending confirmation of projected costs and options for the source and capacity of steam and electrical supplies to the facility. In addition, a number of space issues had also been raised, and options to reconsider the configuration of the building were under consideration by the Project Board. The anticipated completion date of the project was currently mid-2013 and the Court noted that the Board had stressed the need for the Project Board to resolve outstanding issues in order to move the project forward.

147 *Library*

The Court noted that the Board had noted actions taken to address issues with progress, as the contractor, Pihl, was now reporting that work was approximately six weeks behind schedule. A number of issues relating to quality management; Pihl's management structures; and conditions on site were also being addressed through high-level meetings, and Pihl had been required to draw up an Action Plan with agreed dates to resolve these issues. The Board had noted that the project budget was not giving cause for concern and that the £2M super-contingency which was approved in June 2009 remained untouched.

148 *Hillhead Halls*

The Court noted that the Board had approved a final budget of £4.7M for refurbishment of Wavell, Fyfe and Adam Smith Houses noting that this would be funded from Campus Services Reserves. This budget was inclusive of the costs of additional temporary facilities which had had to be installed on site to allow the refurbishment to continue while the three blocks were occupied, due to an overall shortage of beds. The President of the Students' Association was liaising with the Director of Student Affairs to address any concerns raised by students about the refurbishment process.

149 *Swimming Pool Development Project*

The Court had noted that the Board had received and considered an update on the 50 metre Pool Project. The University had agreed, in principle, a capital contribution of £5m towards the construction of the 50m pool at Linksfield. Capital contributions had also been made by Aberdeen City Council (£10m) and Sportscotland (£5m).

150 The project had been designed to Stage C and the current estimated cost for an 8 lane pool facility varied between £23.5m and £25.5m. A further report commissioned by the University had identified the cost of a 10 lane pool to be between £24.7M and £26.7M. The Board had discussed what these different facilities would offer to the University and to the local community, and the benefits and costs of each.

- 151 The Court noted that the Board had agreed that there was a need to establish firm costs associated with the two sizes of facility. To achieve this, the Board had approved a budget of £267K to fund the cost of a twin-track tender approach, taking forward designs for both an 8 lane and 10 lane pool, with the intention of making a final decision on the size of the facility once the post-tender costs had been established.

#### **PAY AND PENSIONS**

##### *Pay Negotiations*

- 152 The Court noted that the Board had noted that national pay negotiations for 2009 had resulted in a 0.5% increase to salary points on the national pay spine from 1 August 2009. In addition to the salary increase, the pay agreement had established three joint Universities and Colleges Employers Association/Trade Union Working Groups to address a range of topics. University staff had been informed of the outcome of pay negotiations on 13 January 2010.
- 153 The Court noted that pay discussions for 2010 had been set to commence at the end of March, and it was hoped that a reasonable settlement would be achieved to ensure affordability.

#### **REVIEW OF PENSION SCHEMES**

- 154 The Court noted that the Board had noted that the Employers Pension Forum had issued documentation to universities regarding potential changes to the USS pension scheme. Negotiations regarding benefit changes had been scheduled to complete on 15 April. The likely start date for the implementation of any changes was October 2010.
- 155 The Court noted that it had been proposed that the timeline for the University to make any change to its own scheme, UASLAS, should be consistent with the USS review timeline. Various proposals in relation to UASLAS were being worked up, and would be discussed at the next UASLAS Trustees meeting in March prior to consultation with staff.

#### **STUDENT POPULATION ISSUES**

- 156 The Court noted that the Board had noted that Scottish Funding Council had announced that from 2010/11 it would be changing its policy for monitoring full-time, UK/EU undergraduate student numbers:
- A cap would be re-introduced for the student numbers in engineering and science-related subjects.
  - The threshold by which institutions would be permitted to breach the cap for the number of students in social sciences and humanities would be reduced by 3% from 10% to 7%.
- 157 This would have significant implications for the way in which the University managed its 2010 intake, particularly as Admissions for 2010 entry showed a 32% increase on the same time last year. The Board had noted the actions being taken to minimise over-recruitment, and approved the revised approach to student intake requirements in light of the restrictions of SFC's new policy.
- 158 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a paper on Student Retention which highlighted the University's performance in relation to the non-continuation of full-time undergraduate students. The University had seen some improvement in relation to the number of students who did not complete their studies. However, it remained an area where the University wished to improve performance, and activities to strengthen retention rates continued.

## **RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK**

- 159 The Court noted that the Board had received an update on the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the successor to the Research Assessment Exercise.
- 160 The University had established a Steering Group to oversee preparations for submission to the REF. As part of preparations it had been proposed to conduct mid-term research activity reviews in the first half of 2010. The reviews would be inclusive and would take a retrospective look at progress since the last RAE submission, based on 'old' RAE2008 Units of Assessment to allow for comparisons to be made. The reviews would cover staff, research outputs, brief impact case studies, quantitative data (for example, research income, postgraduate research student numbers and research degrees awarded), and a short commentary from Colleges on research activity and environment and trends since RAE2008.

## **OPERATING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEES**

### *Risk Management Committee*

- 161 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered reports from the Risk Management Committee.

### *Health and Safety Committee*

- 162 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered reports from the Health and Safety Committee. The Board had approved the appointment of Vice-Principal Professor Peter Morgan as Convener of the Committee, noting that Professor Morgan would take forward a review of the Committee's membership and composition.

### *Strategic Business Ventures Group*

- 163 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a report from the Strategic Business Ventures Group, summarising the University spin-out activity where the University or Aberdeen University Research & Industrial Services Ltd held shares in the company.

## **SINGLE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME**

- 164 The Court noted that the Board had, for its part, approved the proposed Single Equality and Diversity Scheme (*See Minutes 189-191*).

## **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: STAFFING POLICIES**

### *Partnership Working and Recognition Agreement*

- 165 The Court received a paper which proposed new procedures for collective bargaining which the University had developed in partnership with its recognised Campus Trade Unions, UNITE, UNISON, Prospect and UCU. Agreement had been reached on a Partnership Working Arrangement which created a single consultative committee (Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee, PNCC) for the purposes of local collective bargaining on matters that are of relevance to all members of staff. This proposed that PNCC be established as a direct committee of Court. The existing consultative machinery, JNCC, SSLC and CNC would be retained as sub-committees of PNCC for items of direct relevance to specific categories of staff. The sub-committees would be entitled to communicate directly to Court on issues where there had been a failure to reach agreement on matters of individual or joint concern.

*Consultation on Avoidance of Redundancy*

- 166 The Court received a paper which outlined the University's commitment to seek to avoid staff redundancies wherever possible. The proposed policy detailed statutory obligations for collective and individual consultation whenever situations arose which placed individuals at risk of redundancy. The paper proposed that collective consultation obligations are fulfilled through a new Joint Consultative Committee on Redundancy Avoidance (JCCRA).

*Collective Agreement on the Management of Staff Contracts of Employment*

- 167 The Court received a paper which set out a Collective Agreement on the Management of Staff Contracts of Employment. The University had been engaged for over a year with campus trade unions on the introduction of a framework for managing staff contracts of employment. In keeping with the judgement of the Employment Tribunal (*Ball v University of Aberdeen*) the University recognised open ended contracts as the standard form of employment contract and was committed to appointing new and existing staff to open ended contracts unless necessary and objective reasons justify the use of an alternative type of employment contract. In doing so this would almost eliminate the reliance on fixed term contracts and improve the stability of employment for many staff particularly those engaged wholly in research. This approach would help to underpin commitment to the implementation of the principles of the Research Concordat. This approach was also in keeping with the best practice in place at University College London as highlighted at the Ball Tribunal.
- 168 The Court approved in principle the Partnership Working and Recognition Agreement; the Consultation on Avoidance of Redundancy; and Collective Agreement on the Management of Staff Contracts of Employment
- 169 The Court noted that following the last meeting of Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee further representation had been received from the University and College Union (UCU) regarding drafting changes to the first two documents. The UCU had also indicated that it was unwilling to provide its agreement to the proposed policy position regarding the management of staff contracts of employment.
- 170 The Court agreed to delegate authority to the Senior Vice-Principal and Senior Governor of Court to approve any further necessary amendments to these documents subject to those not altering the general principles of the policies and being reported to the next meeting of Court.

PETITION FROM ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION/  
ABERDEEN DEFEND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

- 171 The Court received a petition from the Aberdeen Defend Education Campaign which the organisers of the petition estimated to have been signed by 1500 individuals. The Court also noted that following submission of the petition to the University by a group of students, a number of those students had held a 'sit-in' within the University Office.
- 172 Mr Parker, the President of the Students' Association, had requested that as well as making the Court aware of the petition, that the Court discuss a related document which reflected the substance of the petition by asking that the University provide three specific assurances/commitments, namely:
- 1) We will add our voices to those of the Russell Group of 20 via Universities Scotland in opposing cuts on the University budgets.
  - 2) We will openly oppose removing or increasing the cap on tuition fees in England and Wales, the introduction of tuition fees in Scotland and the increasing of tuition fees for postgraduate, international and English students.
  - 3) We will guarantee that neither student support services, Aberdeen University Students' Association nor campus services will either suffer or be outsourced as a result of cuts.

- 173 The Court also noted that the Principal and Senior Vice-Principal had met with the Student President and two representatives of those students involved in the 'sit-in'. The Court also received a communication from the Principal which had resulted from that meeting and a communication that the University had issued to its staff following the protest.
- 174 In presenting the request, Mr Parker indicated that it had the support of the Students' Association AGM. He also noted that with respect to the issue of tuition fees, the current Browne review in England could add to pressure for the introduction of 'top-up' or 'variable fees' in Scotland. In response, Professor Logan noted that the University opposed cuts to its funding but that it also recognised the competing demands on reduced public funds and acknowledged that its recent funding settlement was considered to have been fair given these pressures. Professor Logan also noted that the Browne review applied only to England and that at present no political party in Scotland was advocating the introduction of 'top-up' fees. It was therefore difficult in that context to take a view on tuition fees when there was no proposal to change the Scottish position. The University was committed to continuing to deliver high quality student support services and while it was reviewing how changes in processes might reduce costs, it had at present no plans to privatise campus services as had been suggested by the petition.
- 175 The Court discussed its concern that it was being asked to reach a view on the question of fees without appropriate information. Concern was also expressed that should the Court decide to respond to the issue of fees by calling for a debate on how higher education in Scotland should be funded, this might be interpreted externally as support for the introduction of tuition fees in Scotland. Mr Parker considered that it would be possible to suggest a wide ranging debate that took into account University finances as well as student finances and that could rule out up-front variable tuition fees. It was also suggested that the Court might return to the issue with the student community as part of the development of the strategic plan as part of the wider discussion of how the University would plan for financial sustainability. It was also noted that the Scottish Committee of University Chairmen was considering calling for a review on higher education funding in Scotland.
- 176 Following discussion, the Court agreed that:
- It welcomed the support that the University had received from the Scottish Funding Council in recent years despite pressures from competing Government priorities. This reflected the important role that Scottish higher education institutions would play in the future success of Scotland. This would continue to be the basis upon which the University would argue for an appropriate level of funding to be maintained.
  - It agreed with calls from other higher education stakeholders that there should be a full debate about the future of higher education funding in Scotland and the University looked forward to participating in any such future discussion.
  - The University had made a significant investment over recent years in student support services and in enhancing the student experience and reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining such support in the years to come.

COMPOSITE REPORT FROM COURT COMMITTEES AND  
JOINT COMMITTEES OF COURT AND SENATE

**Governance Committee**

- 177 The Court approved a recommendation from the Governance Committee to re-appoint Mr R Bickerton and Mr B Lockhart as co-opted members of the Audit Committee for a further term of three years (with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010).

### **Audit Committee**

- 178 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meeting on 28 January 2010, which included: Internal Audit Reports on: Staff Work Permit and Visa Management Scheme; Student Population Planning; reports on the status of outstanding internal audit recommendations and the 2008/09 Annual Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) Return.

### **Student Affairs Committee**

- 179 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meeting on 22 February 2010, which included: the Single Equality and Diversity Scheme, the Evaluation of the Class Representative System, Library Opening Hours and Appeals, Complaints and Discipline.

### **Committee for Research, Income Generation and Commercialisation**

- 180 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meetings on 11 December 2009 and 19 February 2010, which included: Research Excellence Framework, Interdisciplinary Research Themes, Reports from Colleges, SFC Funding Competition: Strategic Priority Investments in Research and Innovation Translation (SPIRIT), Research Council policy and funding initiatives, Research Grant Applications and Awards Trends, the development of a University E-Research Strategy, and Strategic Research Development Grant Annual Reports.

### **University Committee on Teaching and Learning**

- 181 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meeting on 27 January 2010, which included: Report from the UCTL Working Group on the Postgraduate Grade Spectrum, Immigration and student monitoring update, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2010, Enhancement-led Institutional Review, Amendment to Standard Terms Governing Offers & Admissions, and Changes in A-Level entry requirements for Medicine for entry in 2012 and beyond.

### **Staffing and Development Committee**

- 182 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meetings on 30 November 2009 and 2 March 2010, which included: the Committee's Terms of Reference and Modus Operandi, Leadership and Management Development, Partnership Working, Recruitment and Retention, and Staffing Policies.

### **Support Staff Liaison Committee**

- 183 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meetings on 12 January 2010 and 23 February 2010, which included: Car Parking, Policy on the Employment of Overseas Nationals, Long Service Awards, Single Equality & Diversity Scheme, Policy on the Management of Work Related Stress and Smoking in the Workplace.

### **Chapel Committee**

- 184 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business that the Committee had considered at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010, which included: Estates Matters, Chaplain Matters and Podcast from the Chapel.

## APPOINTMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL

- 185 The Court at its meeting on 30 September 2009 had approved the recommendation from the Committee for the Appointment of the Principal to appoint Professor Ian Diamond to the position of Principal from an effective date of 1 October 2010. Professor Sir Duncan Rice had originally anticipated serving as Principal until 30 September 2010 however he had decided to demit office as Principal & Vice Chancellor from the earlier date of 31 March 2010. Sir Duncan had agreed to make himself available to the University to work on future projects.
- 186 The Court noted that Professor Diamond had agreed, in principle, to commence his role as Principal from the earlier date of 1 April 2010 at the rate of 80% of full-time until 30 June 2010. The remainder of Professor Diamond's time would be spent in his current role as Chief Executive of the ESRC.
- 187 The Court noted that the Chancellor had confirmed that Professor Ian Diamond would serve as Vice Chancellor from 1 April 2010.
- 188 The Court approved the appointment of Professor Ian Diamond as Principal from 1 April 2010.

## SINGLE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME

- 189 The Court received and noted a paper on the Single Equality and Diversity Scheme.
- 190 The Court noted that the Scheme had been considered by the University Management Group, the Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee, the Student Affairs Committee, the Support Staff Liaison Committee, the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity and the Operating Board.
- 191 The Court approved the Single Equality and Diversity Scheme.

## SENATE REPORT

### *Draft Resolution [Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees]*

- 192 The Court received the draft Resolution [Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees] from the Senate and agreed to forward it to the General Council and make it generally available in terms of Section 6 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

### *Draft Resolution No 164 of 2010 [Amendments to the Code of Practice on Student Discipline]*

- 193 The Court received the draft Resolution No 164 of 2010 [Amendments to the Code of Practice on Student Discipline and agreed in accordance with the provisions of Section 6(2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, that the draft Resolution be passed forthwith, so that the amended provisions may be applied with effect from the date on which they are passed by the University Court.

### *Validation of the UHI Subject Area of History*

- 194 The Court noted that the Senate had approved the recommendation that the UHI subject area of History, based at the Centre for History at North Highland College, be validated to deliver the research degree programmes of MLitt, MPhil and PhD. The validation would remain in force for five years.

*Enhancement-led Institutional Review*

- 195 The Court noted that the Senate, for its part, had approved the University's Reflective Analysis document which would be submitted to the Quality Assurance Agency in advance of the University's forthcoming Enhancement-led Institutional Review in March and May 2010. (See *Minute 198*)

*Proposed Revisions to Statutory Instrument 1992 No 2704 Education (Model Employment Statute)*

- 196 The Court noted that the Senate, for its part, had approved the Draft Ordinance (Revised Employment Statute).

ITEMS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- 197 The Court homologated business approved since the last meeting under delegated powers:

*Enhancement-Led Institutional Review*

- 198 The Court noted that a final version of the document had been approved by Senate and the Senior Vice-Principal on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010 for submission to the QAA as part of the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review process. (See *Minute 195*)

*Amendments to University Policy on Academic Appeals*

- 199 The Court noted that, on the recommendation of the Senate, the Senior Governor took Convener's action to approve changes to the University's Policy on Academic Appeals.
- 200 The substance of the changes was to expand the scope of those who can investigate the initial formal stage of an Academic Appeal from a Vice-Principal to an Investigating Officer who may either be a Vice-Principal or an academic member of the Senate Business Committee. The change was proposed to expand the pool of staff who are able to review academic appeals at the initial formal stage and thereby ensure that the University is better able to respond to these in a timely manner.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 201 The Court noted that the date of its next meeting was Tuesday 29 June 2010.