

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

**Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2013**

Present: Sir Moir Lockhead (in the Chair), Principal, Rector (Dr M Mackie), Mr A Arthur, Dr A Baxter (part of meeting), Dr C Brittain, Ms J Craw, Ms A Deseilligny, Mr C Duncan, Mr J Hall, Professor S Heys, Mr G Hunter, Professor N Hutchison, Professor S Logan, Professor P McGeorge, Mrs K McPhail (by teleconference), Mr K Murray, Mr B Pack, Mrs J Shirreffs, Mr D Steyn and Dr N Vargesson.

In attendance: Miss M Dunn, Mrs C Inglis, Ms I Bews, Ms J Sewel, Very Rev Professor I Torrance and Mr B Purdon (Clerk).

Apologies were received from Cllr B Crockett, Professor P Edwards, Professor P Hannaford, Mr D MacFarlane, Cllr R McKail, Mr B Paterson and Dr J Skakle.

MINUTES

268 The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2013 were approved.

PRESENTATION ON RESEARCH THEME: PATHWAYS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

269 The Court received a presentation on the research theme, Pathways to a Healthy Life, from Dr Baukje de Roos, Leader of the Research Theme. The presentation highlighted the objectives and key activities of the Theme in bringing together the University's research strengths in medicine, applied health, nutrition and other disciplines to address issues of healthy ageing and sustainable lifestyle choices.

270 The Court discussed a number of aspects of the Theme's work including how best to engage with and influence key stakeholders, in particular, the food industry and major supermarkets. The Court also discussed the involvement of social science researchers in issues related to the Theme and the broadening of the proposed Atlas of Expertise.

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

271 The Court noted a Health and Safety Update which reported no accidents or incidents which needed to be brought to the attention of Court since its last meeting. The Court noted that to date there had been no accidents during 2013 involving members of staff which were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive. There had been 3 accidents involving students which were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive because they required hospital treatment but the accidents were not causes of significant concern.

272 The Court noted that the Health and Safety Committee's Annual Report was included in the Operating Board report to Court (*See minutes 334-335*)

273 In discussion, it was noted that the University had reported to the Operating Board that it had sought advice and evidence from its insurance brokers and liability insurers regarding reverse parking as a safety risk reduction measure in car parks, and had agreed not to pursue a policy on reverse parking, although the matter would be kept under review in light of any new information becoming available. It was suggested that further information may be available on the rationale for such policies in other organisations and it was agreed that the University should report further on this to the Operating Board.

274 The Court also discussed whether student fatalities should be routinely reported to Court so it could be aware of whether there was a pattern or increase that required further review. It was noted that there were sometimes legal restrictions around the sharing of personal information regarding such events, particularly where the wishes of the family of a student were concerned. It was agreed that if a fatality gave rise to issues that the University needed to consider further that the Court should be advised of this.

## REPORT FROM SENIOR GOVERNOR

- 275 The Senior Governor welcomed Miss M Dunn who was attending the meeting as the President (Elect) of the Students' Association. The Senior Governor also thanked Miss A Deseilliigny for her contribution to the work of the Court and to the University over the past year.
- 276 The Senior Governor noted that the current terms of office of Dr N Vargesson and Dr C Brittain would conclude in September and thanked them for their contribution to the work of the Court.
- 277 The Senior Governor noted that Mr Steve Cannon, the University Secretary, was leaving the University to take up a position at the University of Hong Kong. The Court agreed to record its thanks and appreciation for the highly significant contribution that Mr Cannon had made both in terms of service to the Court and to the success of the University.
- 278 The Senior Governor noted the success of the ceremony for the Installation of HRH The Duchess of Rothesay as Chancellor of the University.
- 279 The Senior Governor gave a brief update to Court on recent meetings between senior management and non-executive members of the Court with their equivalents from RGU.

## REPORT FROM PRINCIPAL

- 280 The Principal introduced a written report on recent developments related to the University. (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).
- 281 The Principal recorded his thanks for the service that the University Secretary had given. The Principal advised Court that the University was taking forward the recruitment process for a new Secretary and that in the interim Mrs C Inglis had agreed to serve as Acting Secretary. In discussion, it was noted that senior members of Court would be involved in the recruitment process. The Principal also noted that the University had undertaken a short period of reflection on the structure of the University Administration and it had been agreed that the existing unitary structure remained appropriate although a number of changes planned by the outgoing Secretary within this overall structure would be implemented.
- 282 The Principal reported on the successful ceremony been held for the Installation of HRH The Duchess of Rothesay as the University's new Chancellor. The Principal recorded his considerable appreciation for the professionalism of staff involved in the organisation of such a major event which would have left a very positive impression of the University with the many visitors present.
- 283 The Principal reported on the *May Festival* which had been held during the weekend of 10-12 May. Around 7,000 people attended over 100 events at venues across the City and Aberdeenshire and the feedback from visitors had been generally positive with the Festival also succeeding in attracting a significant amount of its funding from corporate sponsorship.
- 284 The Principal reported on the University's performance in two league tables that had been published since the last meeting. The University had been ranked 91st in the Lieden rankings <http://www.leidenranking.com/> of the top 100 universities in the world for science, including 46<sup>th</sup> for Biomedical and health sciences. The Principal noted that having moved from 161<sup>st</sup> in 2012 this was an encouraging direction of travel.
- 285 The Principal also reported that in *The Guardian University Guide (UK institutions)*, the University had dropped from 38<sup>th</sup> (2012) to 43<sup>rd</sup>. The reason for this was that while the University's overall score in the rankings had improved slightly on last year, its relative position had not. The Principal outlined a number of steps the University was taking to improve upon some of the indicators in this and other league tables. The expectation was that these and other initiatives that had been put in place would result in an improvement by 2016.
- 286 The Principal reported that over the summer he had been involved in discussions with regard to both the Universities UK submission to the UK Government's forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review and Universities Scotland's corresponding submission to the Scottish Government Spending Review.

- 287 The Principal reported that with the University of Dundee and the James Hutton Institute, good progress had been made in taking forward *Food Security Alliances Scotland – Crops* which had been launched at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh on 20-23 June.
- 288 The Principal highlighted to Court that the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health had celebrated its centenary in April, with a series of events taking place across 2013 to profile not only the historic achievements of the Rowett, but also the current activities which made it a global leader in nutrition research.
- 289 The Principal reported on developments in the area of Energy including new education partnerships with BP and Senergy, opportunities for new partnerships with Colombia, the launch of the Offshore Renewables Institute in partnership with Dundee University and RGU, and the University's Oil and Gas Skills Academy.
- 290 The Court noted that the Principal's report listed a number of significant grants that the University had been awarded in recent weeks.
- 291 The Principal highlighted a number of successes that had been achieved by the University's sports teams and athletes.

#### REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

- 292 The Court received and noted a report from the Rector which highlighted the important contribution that the new team of Student Association sabbatical officers would make to the student community and the continuing importance of a close working relationship between them and University management. (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*)

#### SIX MONTH STRATEGIC PLANNING & RISK REPORT

- 293 Ms Sewel introduced a report on actions being taken in support of the Strategic Plan and to mitigate against identified risks within the Corporate Risk Register. The report also included an assessment of current performance as measured by the University's Key Performance Indicators (*copies filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).
- 294 The Court discussed the Corporate Risk Register and Key Performance Indicators, the approach to risk scoring and the actions being taken to mitigate against the risks. The Court discussed in particular, the risk of failing to establish an appropriate market share of the international student population. It was noted that a significant amount of actions had been put in place to mitigate against the risk, but that the long-term nature of some of the actions would mean that it was likely a high net score would persist. A number of members noted the importance of the early recruitment of a Vice-Principal for Internationalisation and of a Head of Student Recruitment, particularly in the context of the current risk owner, the University Secretary, having been appointed to another University. The Court discussed the level of resource that had been put in place to support the area of Internationalisation. It also discussed the development, delivery and staffing of postgraduate taught courses and noted that there would be an opportunity to discuss this further with Heads of Colleges as part of the next meeting.
- 295 The Court approved the University's Corporate Risk Register and agreed that the market share of international student population should be discussed further at its next meeting.

#### DRAFT SCOTTISH CODE OF THE GOOD GOVERNANCE AND UPDATE ON POST-16 EDUCATION BILL

- 296 The Court received and discussed the Draft Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, together with a paper identifying key points arising from the Draft Code that the Court would need to consider and recommendations on how to take these forward. The Court also noted a summary of the developments and issues for higher education in the development of the Post-16 Education Bill (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).

297 In an extended discussion a number of points were discussed, the key points being:

- That the University would have to report on its adherence to the Code as a condition of SFC funding on a 'comply or explain' basis.
- That the size of Court at 28 members was above the suggested benchmark maximum of 25. The absence of a guaranteed majority of independent members was also noted as an issue requiring further consideration, including how the Court defined "independent".
- The interest of the Court in including a further student representative, potentially to enable representation of International students. It was further noted that the variety of possible mechanisms to achieve this objective required input from the Students' Association and that the actual individual appointed should be chosen by students rather than Court.
- The conflict between adding a further student member while the Court was already above the benchmark size of 25. The potential for the position of Rector's Assessor to be used as the additional student place, was discussed and the issues around that approach acknowledged, in particular, if a Rector did not regularly attend meetings of Court, and the securing of an appointment agreeable with the Students' Association.
- The need to address the lack of diversity in Court membership and the limitations upon how Court could achieve this given the significant number of members who were either elected or not appointed directly by the Court. It was suggested that if a target for the number of female members on Court was adopted, there would need to be a process setting out how this would be achieved.
- The question of whether Remuneration Committee policies should be approved by Court before they were implemented and whether more detailed outcomes of Remuneration Committee decisions should be reported back to Court.
- The formal documentation of the appraisal process for the Principal.

298 Following discussion, the Court broadly endorsed the suggested approach to addressing the issues identified in the Draft Code. Specifically the Court agreed, subject to any changes being made to the final version of the Code, that:

- The Governance and Nominations Committee should consider options to reduce the size of Court to accord with the best practice benchmark of 25 or lower.
- The Governance and Nominations Committee should, following discussion with the Students' Association, develop a recommendation on how to give effect to an additional student member of Court.
- The Governance and Nominations Committee should consider the issue raised in discussion regarding the Court having a guaranteed majority of independent members and that Court should agree the definition of "independent" in this context.
- The Governance and Nominations Committee should consider the issue of Equality and Diversity within Court, and that this should include the setting of goals and the means by which the Court could ensure that the election and appointment processes of all constituencies on Court facilitate greater diversity.
- The Governance and Nominations Committee should consider whether the University's current practices in relation to the interaction of Court and the Remuneration Committee were appropriate in terms of the Draft Code's requirements.

- The Governance and Nominations Committee should consider whether there should be a staff member of Court and a student member of Court on any appointment panel of the Senior Governor, noting that this might be achieved through extension of membership of the Governance and Nominations Committee.
- In any future process for the appointment of the Principal the Court should, in addition to continuing to enable staff and student input into the appointment process, give consideration to including a staff member of Court and a student member of Court on the appointment panel.
- In the appraisal of the Principal, the current process whereby the Senior Governor takes soundings and view of lay members of Court would be extended to include the views of staff and student members of Court.
- The Governance & Nominations Committee should consider changes to the composition of the Committee to include a student member and an additional independent member. It was noted that the Committee was not chaired by the Senior Governor but by an independent member, a separation of roles which was considered to enhance good governance.
- The University would review its procedures for the public notification of agendas in advance of meetings of Court and other points arising from the Code in relation to the openness and transparency of its business.
- The Governance and Nominations Committee should review the Code's guidance on the duration of terms of office and consider how the Court could effect uniformity across its membership.
- The Governance and Nominations Committee should review whether to introduce a protocol to distinguish the role of the Rector from that of the Chair regarding the conduct of Court meetings, representing the University and in relations with the Principal, with a view to this being available to future Rectorial elections.

#### PRESENTATION FROM UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

- 299 The Court received a presentation from Ms C Banks, the University Librarian and Director of Library, Special Collections and Museums. The presentation highlighted a number of developments including how Library provision at Aberdeen was meeting the evolving needs of its students and staff, and information on usage and feedback of the Sir Duncan Rice Library. The presentation also reported on the activities of Special Collections and Museums. In discussion, the potential for a facility to enable greater use of the University's Museums collections was noted as an issue for future discussion of capital priorities.
- 300 The Court, noting that Ms Banks was due to leave the University to take up an appointment at Imperial College London, recorded its appreciation of her significant contribution to the University, in particular, the success of the new Sir Duncan Rice Library.

#### FINANCE & ESTATES

##### **REVENUE BUDGETS 2013/14**

- 301 The Court received Revenue budgets for 2013/14 and indicative budgets to 2015/16.
- 302 The Court noted that the budgets had been considered and approved by the Operating Board
- 303 The Court approved the budgets for 2013/14 subject to measures being adopted throughout the institution to exercise budgetary control.

##### **SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL (SFC) FINANCIAL FORECASTS**

- 304 The Court received a Strategic Plan Forecast 2013 return required by the SFC, covering the forecast outturn for the current financial year (2011/12) and budgets for the three subsequent financial years.

305 The Court approved the Strategic Plan Forecast for onward submission to the Funding Council.

#### **TEN YEAR CAPITAL PLAN**

306 Ms Bews introduced to Court a revised 10 year capital plan which reflected up-dated cash flows. (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*). The plan retained the previously approved capital commitments of £180M and included a recommendation to allocate £0.5M per annum from capital grants to support investment in research equipment and facilitate the institutional contribution required towards Research Council UK (RCUK) research grant awards for equipment, conditional on the receipt of annual capital grants of this level being maintained.

307 The Court noted that the cash flow plan showed the investment potential available assuming full utilisation of the £35M facility, retaining £12M in bank cash as working capital. As at the year-end 2014/15, forecasts currently suggested that spend profiles might need to be managed to retain sufficient cash and remain within the borrowing facility. This was a short term issue which was predicted to fully resolve by the end of 2015/16 on the basis of current assumptions. Additional work would be undertaken to refine the assumed timing of expected cash flows to address this temporary issue as the phasing of approved capital projects became clearer.

308 The Court approved the updated 10 year plan and a recommendation to allocate £0.5M per annum from capital grants to support investment in research equipment and facilitate the institutional contribution required towards RCUK research grant awards for equipment, conditional on the receipt of annual capital grants of this level being maintained.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

##### **REPORT FROM REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

309 Mrs Inglis introduced a report to Court from the Remuneration Committee in relation to business it had considered in the course of 2012/13 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).

310 The Court noted that the Remuneration Committee had focussed on three key areas: Professorial gender 'pay gap', Senior Staff Pay Policy, and the assessment of recommendations for salary awards. The Court noted detailed reports on the Committee's consideration and decisions regarding each of these areas.

311 In discussion, the Court noted a related point raised by a Court member regarding the analysis of staff salary information which had been included in the analysis of Scottish universities financial statements at the previous meeting of Court. The question concerned how the University's average staff salaries and number of staff earning more than £100Kpa compared to other institutions. It was agreed that officers would meet the member to discuss the analysis further and that if requested the matter could be raised for discussion at a later meeting.

##### **REPORT ON EQUAL PAY AUDIT**

312 Mrs Inglis introduced a report to Court on the University's recent Equal Pay Review (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*). The report included information on the Gender Pay Gap, Ethnicity Pay Gap, Disability Pay Gap and the Age Pay Gap.

313 The Court noted and discussed the main conclusion of the Equal Pay Audit, that while the University does not have any significant need for concern over equal pay issues when comparing equal pay for equal work, the main areas for further consideration were in relation to the underrepresentation of females in higher grades. The Audit noted that females accounted for 57% of the University's staff but only 22% of the University's top two salary bands.

- 314 The Court noted that an action plan was being prepared in partnership with representative groups to address the issues arising from the Equal Pay Audit. In discussion, it was further agreed that information on the outcomes of the staff promotions exercise analysed by gender would be provided to Court.

#### **UPDATE ON STAFF RECRUITMENT**

- 315 Mrs Inglis introduced a report to Court on recent academic staff recruitment activity (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).
- 316 The Court noted the report.

#### **GOVERNANCE AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

- 317 Mrs Inglis introduced a paper which provided an overview of the University's internal governance arrangements and a detailed commentary on the management structures and roles and responsibilities of senior staff (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*). The paper also outlined the arrangements for the annual appraisal of the Senior Management Team.
- 318 The Court noted the paper.

#### **BUSINESS FOR EXTENDED MEETING IN OCTOBER**

- 319 The Court received and discussed a paper outlining potential items for the Court's extended meeting in October 2013. In discussion it was noted that there would not be time to discuss all of the suggested items but key items were considered to be: the Principal's vision for the next three years, online delivery of education and the use of technology in teaching and learning, the Estates strategy, and delivery of the Strategic Plan within the Colleges. It was also suggested that the Court should receive information on the implications of new financial reporting regulations.

#### **REPORT FROM THE OPERATING BOARD**

- 320 The Court received a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) from the Operating Board of business from its meetings of 7 May 2013 and 11 June 2013, the principal items of which were:

##### **TUITION FEES**

- 321 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered proposals relating to tuition fees for future years, a copy of which had been appended to the Board's report to Court. In developing the paper, the possibility of forward-fixing international tuition fees, as raised by the Student Association at an earlier meeting of the Board, had been discussed with the main University committees and students' representatives.
- 322 The Court, on the recommendation of the Board, agreed that:
- (i) the University should maintain the banded approach for international fees for 2014-15 and for continuing students seek to increase fees in each band by 5%, recognising that guidance sent to some of our continuing students required greater clarity.
  - (ii) home fees should be introduced for each band and programmes re-distributed to ensure all programmes within a band have consistent home and international rates.
  - (iii) as an interim step all modular fees should be increased by a fixed percentage of 5%, and that over the next 12 months a review of the setting of fees for modular programmes be carried out, to inform fee setting for future years.
  - (iv) the 14/15 fees for continuing students be published on web pages before the start of the 13/14 academic year and that this timetable be followed in future years
  - (v) the University should continue to work with the student body to improve the information available to students on future fee increases, building on best practice in the sector
  - (vi) the University should work with the student body to develop a system of fixed fees for new students. A proposal on this would be presented to the January 2014 meeting of the Board.

#### **CATERING OUTLET: STARBUCKS**

- 323 The Court noted a report of the Board's consideration of proposals to replace Café Zeste in Crombie Hall with a Starbucks outlet and that the Board had received written and oral representations from the Campus Trades' Unions and Students' Association regarding the proposal.
- 324 The Court noted that the Board had agreed in principle, that University management should take forward the proposal subject to follow-up discussions on the detail of the proposal taking place immediately with the Trades Unions and Students' Association. These discussions should lead to a longer-term wider review of potential opportunities for providing a range of social space and facilities on campus, in terms of type of provision and price. The possibility of delivering these opportunities through existing planned capital projects should be explored.
- 325 In discussion, a member of Court suggested that there was evidence that potentially challenged the Fairtrade status of Starbucks which had been a key criterion for its selection. The Court agreed that this evidence should be received and considered by University Management and the Operating Board, and that if the Fairtrade status of Starbucks was not secure, the proposal would be reviewed further, but that otherwise it was noted that the proposals would be taken forward.

#### **ESTATES AND CAPITAL**

- 326 The Court noted that the Board received regular updates on ongoing capital projects including the Disposal of the Rowett Estate, the new build for the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health, OneSource, Student Accommodation, Aquatic Centre, and the Nursery.

#### **SFC FINAL GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR 2013/14**

- 327 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a paper on the Scottish Funding Council Final Grant Announcement for 2013/14, which had summarised the changes made since the indicative announcement in December 2012.

#### **STUDENT ADMISSIONS**

- 328 The Court noted that the Board had received an update on student admissions for 2013/14.
- 329 The Court noted that the Board had noted the University was likely to be close to the lower end of the range approved by Operating Board for the number of Scottish/EU entrants. The Board had noted that the impact of the reduced intake was likely to be uneven across disciplines, and this would be monitored and managed. The detailed position in relation to individual disciplines could not be fully understood until new students had registered.
- 330 The Court noted that the Board had noted that there were more firm acceptances from RUK students than at the same time last year, but the forecast intake continued to be similar to the prior year, due to the removal of the cap on entrants with ABB grades at A level in England having increased the uncertainty of the situation.
- 331 The Court noted that the Board had noted there had been an increase in applications and acceptances for postgraduate taught and research students both international and UK/EU. However, it was also recognised that the University was starting from a relatively low base, and conversion rates were uncertain.
- 332 The Court noted that the University had received additional funded student places from the Scottish Funding Council for specific purposes, namely:
- 50 undergraduate skills places targeted at science and engineering programmes; and
  - 75 undergraduate widening access places targeted at entrants from the most deprived 40% of postcodes according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- 333 The Court noted that there might therefore be limited places offered in clearing to Scottish/EU students to ensure that these places were filled, the requirement for which would become clearer by early summer. The University would also be in clearing for RUK applicants, as this population was not capped by the Scottish Government.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

### **Annual Report**

- 334 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered the Annual Report from the Health and Safety Committee, a copy of which was appended to the Board's report to Court. In its discussion of the Annual Report, the Board had re-iterated the actions it had requested in response to the Review of Arms Length Organisations at its meeting on 7 May 2013, and received an oral update on progress with these from the Convener of the Health and Safety Committee.
- 335 The Court noted that the Board had noted that in May 2013 the University's internal auditors, had carried out an audit of the key health and safety risk controls which operated at a University-wide level. The report on the internal audit (which had been approved by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 6 June 2013) had stated that the University had a robust control framework in place for the risk areas which were reviewed, with controls operating as intended, and only one recommendation was made. This was for the University to obtain annual confirmation from contractors of their overall health and safety performance (covering matters such as reportable incidents and statutory enforcement notices served against them).

### **Arms Length Organisations**

- 336 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a paper from the Convener of the Health and Safety Committee which reviewed the relationships between the University and four Arm's-Length Organisations associated with the University in terms of their health and safety arrangements:
- Aberdeen University Students' Association
  - Aberdeen Sports Village
  - Cruickshank Botanic Garden Trusts
  - Rocking Horse Nursery
- 337 The Court noted that there were a number of other Arm's Length Organisation associated with the University, but that these four were considered to have the greatest health and safety risks arising from their activities. The paper had proposed putting in place a partnership agreement with each organisation which would set out details of how the University would be assured of standards of health and safety management. The aim of the new partnership processes was to provide a better health and safety environment.
- 338 The Court noted that there had been discussion about the position of the Students' Association as an Arm's Length Organisation, and noted that the Aberdeen University Students' Association was a separate legal entity.
- 339 The Court noted that the Board had agreed that:
- Legal advice should be sought on the proposals in the paper and how these fitted with the University's statutory duties
  - Advice would also be required on the impact of the proposed processes on insurance cover. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Arm's Length Organisations in existing University insurance cover.
- 340 The Court noted that the Board had also discussed the role of the University Health and Safety Adviser in giving independent advice to Arm's Length Organisations. It had considered whether independent advice from outwith the University should be sought, and agreed that the Board should consider this issue further once legal advice on the proposals in the paper were obtained. It had also noted that the University and Arm's Length Organisations were individually subject to the Health & Safety Executive as the regulatory body.
- 341 The Court noted that, subject to the above comments, the Board had approved the new process recommended in the paper, and the establishment of partnership agreements.

### **Reverse Parking**

- 342 The Court noted the Board's consideration of a policy on reverse parking.

## **STAFFING PROCESSES**

### **National Pay Negotiations 2013**

- 343 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a brief update on developments with regard to the sector's National Pay Negotiations 2013.

### **Review of Appraisal**

- 344 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered an evaluation of the Pilot Exercise of the Review of Appraisal. The Board had made a number of specific comments on the review process. The Court noted that subject to these comments the Board had:
- Approved a recommendation that forms be developed to provide documentation which was suitable for all categories of staff;
  - Agreed that use of the "performance for all" software should be continued for the online annual reviews;
  - Agreed that adequate training and guidance for reviewers and reviewees should be provided;
  - Agreed that further trials of the process should be conducted using the "performance for all" software at a cost of £2K;
  - Noted that a further paper would be provided to the Board following the second pilot exercise, which would include an implementation plan.

### **Review of Promotions Procedures (Support Staff)**

- 345 The Court noted that the Board had received and approved revised criteria and guidance for promotion and contribution awards for Support Staff developed as a result of the review.

### **Protection of Vulnerable Groups – Retrospective Checks**

- 346 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a report on the Scottish Government's Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (which had replaced the Disclosure Scotland checking system for individuals who work with children and/or vulnerable adults).

## **STRATEGIC BUSINESS VENTURES GROUP**

- 347 The Court noted that the Board had received and considered a paper from the University's Strategic Business Ventures Group on University spin-out activity.

## **OTHER ITEMS ON COURT AGENDA**

- 348 The Court noted that the Board had received updates on the following items :
- Planning and Risk Report (*See Minutes 293-295*)
  - Revenue Budgets and SFC Financial Forecasts (*See Minutes 301-03 and 304-305*)
  - Monthly Management Report (*See Minute 371*)
  - 10 Year Cash Flow Plan (*See Minutes 306-308*)
  - Equal Pay Audit (*See Minutes 312-314*)

## **REPORTS FROM COURT COMMITTEES**

### **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

- 349 The Court noted a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) of the principal items of business considered by the Committee at its meetings on 23 April and 6 June 2013 which included reports on:
- Internal Audit Fees;
  - Internal Audit Reports on Data Management, Legal Services, Insurance, Health and Safety, Tuition Fees, Transparent Approach to Costing, Estates Directorate and Follow Up Reports;
  - External Auditor's Interim Management Report.

## **GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

350 The Court noted a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) of the principal items of business considered by the Committee at its meeting on 14 May 2013 which included reports on:

- The Committee's consideration of the Draft Scottish Code of Good HE Governance; (*See Minutes 296-298*)
- The development of a Draft Ethical Statement;
- Governor Appraisal and follow up actions including the introduction of additional events for Court members;
- Guidance on Expenses for Court Members.

### *Chancellor's Appointments*

351 The Court also noted that the Committee had noted that the Chancellor had confirmed the the following appointments:

- The continuing appointment of Sir Moir Lockhead as Chancellor's Assessor to 31 July 2014 and that this term of office was consistent with his appointment as Senior Governor.
- The appointment of Professor Iain Torrance as Vice-Chancellor under the style and title of Pro-Chancellor to undertake duties on behalf of the Chancellor in her absence including the conferral of degrees.
- The appointment of the Principal, Professor Sir Ian Diamond, as Vice-Chancellor Depute under the continuing style and title of Vice-Chancellor.

## **STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

352 The Court noted a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) of the principal items of business considered by the Committee at its meeting on 13 May 2013.

## **COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH, INCOME-GENERATION AND COMMERCIALISATION**

353 The Court noted a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) of the principal items of business considered by the Committee at its meeting on 3 June 2013.

## **UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING & LEARNING**

354 The Court noted a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) of the principal items of business considered by the Committee at its meeting on 15 May 2013.

## **ROUTINE BUSINESS**

### **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-PRINCIPALS**

355 The Court, on the recommendation of the Principal, approved:

- (i) An extension to the period of appointment of Professor Peter McGeorge as Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching) for a further period of 3 years to conclude 1 July 2016.
- (ii) An extension to the period of appointment of Professor Albert Rodger as Vice Principal (External Relations) for a further period of 3 years to conclude 31 July 2016.
- (iii) An extension to the period of appointment of Professor Bryan MacGregor as Vice Principal and Head of College of Physical Sciences to 31 July 2015.

356 In discussion, it was suggested that there be clarification as to whether Court was required to approve such re-appointments, and if so, that the Court should in future receive appropriate information upon which to approve recommendations.

## SENATE REPORT

357 The Court received and noted a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) from the Senate meetings of 1 May and 12 June 2013. This included the following:

### *Institutional Strategy for Research and Knowledge Exchange*

358 The Court noted the new Institutional Strategy for Research and Knowledge Exchange which was approved by Senate at its meeting on 6 February 2013.

### *Model Complaints Handling Procedure*

359 The Court received and considered revisions to the current *Policy on Appeals and Complaints* to establish a separate *Policy and Procedures on Student Appeals* and to introduce a *Complaints Handling Procedure*. In addition, in line with SPSO guidance a new *Unacceptable Actions Policy* had also been drafted. This set out the University's position with regard to expected behaviour from those engaging in University processes such as appeals, complaints and student discipline.

360 The Court noted that the Senate at its meeting on 12 June 2013, for its part, had approved the draft policies.

361 The Court, on the recommendation of Senate, approved the policies.

### *Changes to General and Supplementary Regulations*

362 The Court, on the recommendation of Senate approved, the following draft Resolutions:

- (i) Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees, which enacted the changes in Degree Regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee since January 2013, and
- (ii) Changes to the Supplementary Regulations for the Degrees in Education which enacted to change the Degree of BEd to the Degree of MA in Education.

363 In accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, the Court agreed to pass these Resolutions forthwith, so that the amended provisions would be applied with effect from the date on which they are approved by Court.

### *Amendment to Ordinance No 138 [Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus]*

364 The Court noted that Senate at its meeting on 12 June 2013 had approved revisions to the remit and composition of the sub-committees of the University Committee on Teaching & Learning and the Students' Progress Committee and redistribution of the roles and responsibilities of College Postgraduate Officers and Directors of Undergraduate Programmes.

365 In the light of these changes, the Senate had noted that an amendment to the composition of the Senate was required to replace the seven Directors of Undergraduate Programmes as *ex officio* members of Senate with the seven members of the Quality Assurance Committee as *ex officio* members of Senate. The Senate at its meeting on 12 June 2013 had, for its part, approved the recommendation to amend Ordinance [*Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus*] to reflect these changes.

366 The Court, on the recommendation of Senate, approved for its part, the draft amendment to Ordinance No 138 and agreed to forward it to the General Council and make it available within the University in terms of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

## ENHANCEMENT LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (ELIR)

367 The Court noted a report on the Enhancement Led Institutional Review, (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) which the University was scheduled to undergo in October and November 2013.

- 368 The Court agreed to delegate authority to the Senior Vice-Principal to approve the final version of both the Reflective Analysis (RA) and Case Study, on behalf of the Court, prior to their submission to the QAA which was required by 9 August 2013.

#### **DRAFT RESOLUTION No 274 [CHANGES TO REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS DEGREES**

- 369 The Court, noting that the draft Resolution No 274 of 2013 [Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees] had been approved by the Senate and had been considered by the Business Committee of the General Council, and that no amendments having been received, formally approved the Resolution.

#### **VACATION POWERS**

- 370 The Court noted that during the period 25 June 2013 and 2 October 2013, matters requiring urgent decision would be undertaken under the standing delegated authority as previously agreed by Court, being:
- (i) that routine decisions required to be taken between meetings be delegated to a small group consisting of the Senior Governor, the Principal and the Senior Vice-Principal, subject to any such decisions being reported to the next meeting of Court.
  - (ii) that decisions on financial or estates matters that would otherwise require Court approval, but which for reasons of urgency cannot be deferred to the next meeting of Court, should be delegated to a small group consisting of the Senior Governor, the Convenor of the Operating Board, the Principal and Senior Vice-Principal or three of the four should one be unavailable.
  - (iii) that decisions on matters related to governance that would otherwise require Court approval, but which for reasons of urgency cannot be reserved to the next meeting of Court, should be delegated to a small group consisting of the Senior Governor, Convenor of the Governance & Nominations Committee and the Principal.

#### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

- 371 The Court noted a summary of the Finance Management Reports for the period to 31 May 2013. (*See Minute 348*).

#### **DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2013/2014**

- 372 The Court noted the dates of meetings for 2013/14 as follows:

Wednesday	2 October 2013	(9.00-5.00pm)
Monday	9 December 2013	(9.00-1.00pm)
Tuesday	25 March 2014	(9.00-1.00pm)
Tuesday	1 July 2014	(9.00-1.00pm)