

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2018

Present: Professor I Diamond, Professor M Greaves, Professor P McGeorge, Professor M Ross, Professor BD MacGregor, Professor P Hannaford, Dr G Gordon, Dr P Sweeney, Professor E Welch, Mr M Whittington, Professor G Paton, Professor S Heys, Professor I Guz, Professor H Hutchison, Professor A Jenkinson, Professor C Kee, Professor E Pavlovskaja, Professor J Masthoff, Dr R Neilson, Professor K Shennan, Dr M Ehrenscheidtner, Dr P Bishop, Mr E Usenmez, Mrs D Bruxvoort, Mrs L Tibbetts, Dr J Lamb, Professor N Hutchison, Dr A Sim, Professor J Schaper, Dr G Hough, Dr H Pierce, Dr P Ziegler, Dr R Shanks, Dr H Martin, Dr T Fahey, Dr B Tribout, Professor P Mealar, Dr P Glover, Dr A Simpson, Dr Z Yihdego, Mr S Styles, Dr M Mills, Dr A Oelsner, Dr A McKinnon, Dr T Argounova-Low, Professor D Anderson, Dr D Lusseau, Professor M Pinard, Dr J Baird, Dr A Rajnicek, Dr J Macdiarmid, Dr M Delibegović, Dr M Brazzelli, Dr N Vargesson, Dr D MacCallum, Dr J Hislop, Dr A Jack, Dr P Murchie, Dr N Mody, Dr S Fielding, Dr I Cameron, Professor A Lee, Dr F Thies, Professor G Nixon, Dr E Nordmann, Professor D Jovicic, Professor A Akisanya, Professor M Kashtalyan, Dr B Rea, Dr N Schofield, Dr J Oliver, Dr A Ebinghaus, Dr C North, Professor G Coghill, Dr M da Silva Baptista, Dr W Vasconcelos, Dr N Oren, Mr L Ogubie, Miss D Connelly, Mr O Kucerak, Miss M Leskovska, Miss M Jensen, Mr N Johansson, Miss I Ewart and Mr Y Dmitrov,

Apologies: Professor J Paterson, Professor M Campbell, Professor N Haites, Dr D R Smith, Dr M Bain, , Professor A Sahraie, Professor J Skakle, Professor D Jolley, Professor M Brown, Mr D Auchie, Dr M Hole, Professor R Wells, Professor W Naphy, Palma, Dr L McCann, Professor P Nimmo, Mrs M Stephen, Dr A Bryzgel, Dr T Rist, Dr A Lewis, Dr M Barker, Professor J Jayasinghe, Dr K Kiezebrink, Professor G Macfarlane, Dr D Scott, Dr G Jones, Dr A Venkatesh, Professor R Barker, Dr K Foster, Professor H Wallace, Dr M Jackson, Dr D Ray, Dr K Pilz, Dr O Menshykov, Professor J Feldmann, Professor C Grebogi, Dr B Martin, Mr K Thomson-Duncan, Miss K Metcalfe, Mr J Brown, Miss K Paterson-Hunter, Mr L Budrass, Miss I Donaldson, Mr K Rzetelski, Miss A McSeveney, Mr K Olivier and Miss K Smith

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 46.1 The Principal opened the extraordinary meeting, welcoming members of the Senate to the meeting.
- 46.2 The Principal invited members to approve the agenda. No objections or comments were raised and the meeting proceeded.

RECTORIAL ELECTION RULES

- 47.1 The Principal introduced the Rectorial Election Rules and confirmed that, following appropriate discussion, the Senate would be asked to (i) approve the revised Rectorial Election Rules and (ii) approve Professor Hannaford, Vice-Principal for Digital Strategy, as the Returning Officer for the forthcoming election.
- 47.2 Dr Lamb noted that the revised rules allowed Student Association societies to endorse a candidate, something previously excluded. Professor Ross, Vice-Principal for People Strategy and Chair of the Elections Committee, confirmed that advice had been sought

from the Students' Association in this regard and that the practice to allow Societies to endorse a candidate mirrored that of practice followed in Student elections. Dr Lamb further asked whether it would be appropriate to ensure the posters of candidates are given equal space where possible preventing saturation of the University by any one Candidate. Professor Ross, addressing the issue of saturation, confirmed that discussions had centred more election expenses and therefore on a spending limit for candidates and that it be left up to them and their campaign teams to determine how they spend their money. Professor Ross confirmed that the intent of the rules was to be permissive, with a ceiling applied in terms of cost.

47.3 The Principal asked Mr Ogubie, President of the Students' Association, to confirm that he and the Students' Association were content with the proposed Rules. Mr Ogubie confirmed that the Students' Association was generally comfortable with the rules. He noted, however, that it remained unclear as to how, and in what circumstances, disqualification could occur. Professor Ross, responding, noted that the rules aimed to address tiers of reaction rather than to limit the rules in terms of adding examples. She further noted that layers of Committee engagement should allow for clear debate in such circumstances.

47.4 The Principal confirmed a vote would now be taken on whether or not the Senate was content to approve the revised Rectorial Election Rules.

In favour of the approval of the Rectorial Election Rules:	80
Not in favour of the approval of the Rectorial Election Rules:	0
Abstaining from the vote:	2

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the rules had been approved.

47.5 The Principal confirmed a vote would also be taken on whether or not the Senate was content to approve Professor Hannaford as Returning Officer for the forthcoming election.

In favour of appointment of Professor Hannaford as Returning Officer:	72
Not in favour of appointment of Professor Hannaford as Returning Officer:	5
Abstaining from the vote:	6

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that Professor Hannaford's appointment had been approved.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE PRINCIPLES LAID OUT IN THE 'RECLAIMING OUR UNIVERSITY' MANIFESTO

48.1 Moving to the Motion to Adopt the Principles laid out in the 'Reclaiming Our University' Manifesto, the Principal welcomed Professor Ingold to the meeting of the Senate. The Principal noted that Dr Oliver had proposed two motions and sought clarity as to whether the first motion was replaced by the second. The Principal informed Senators that if this was the case, as the motion was submitted late, they would be required to approve this as a course of action. Dr Oliver confirmed this as the intention following the amendment of the motion as a consequence of successful interaction with a member of Senior Management. Dr Oliver sought the approval of the Senate in this regard.

48.2 Dr Lusseau noted concern that an outcome of the Senate Effectiveness Review had been to ensure the appropriate timing of papers to the Senate to ensure Senators could contact and receive feedback from constituents. Dr Lusseau expressed his feeling that as this paper was late, it should be rejected. Dr North, responding to Dr Lusseau, noted his understanding of this point with regards to substantive changes, however, stated that the revision in this case was not substantive and made the motion clearer and easier to understand and would allow for the saving of time in the meeting. Professor Schaper expressed that the revised version was the result of meaningful discussion with Senior Management.

48.3 The Principal confirmed a vote would now be taken on whether or not the Senate was content to allow the revised motion to be considered.

In favour of the consideration of the revised motion:	68
Not in favour of the consideration of the revised motion:	12
Abstaining from the vote:	5

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the vote had been passed and the second motion would be considered.

48.4 Dr Oliver introduced the motion seeking the endorsement of Senators for the 'Reclaim Our University' Manifesto as a principle source of academic and educational values for the purpose of setting in motion the transformation of the University. He stated that the intention is that this would help the University begin to more robustly reflect those values in its working practices in a UK Higher Education context where the academic and educational ethos of Universities has increasingly come under pressure. Dr Oliver noted that to do this, the motion asks the Senate to create an independent working party made up of elected Senators and senior University administrators, chaired by a senior elected senator, who would begin work on how we might begin to rebalance the University and change this. He further noted that the Committee would consult widely and report its findings to the Senate. Dr Oliver emphasised that the motion was not only intended to reinvigorate the academic and educational life of the University but to help make Aberdeen a beacon of what Universities should be for. Dr Oliver invited Professor Ingold to deliver his presentation.

48.5 Professor Ingold provided a presentation on the 'Reclaiming our University' manifesto (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute).

48.6 Further to the presentation, a discussion ensued, a summary of which is detailed below.

- Professor Masthoff welcomed the tone of Professor Ingold's presentation but noted concern that it was not reflected in the manifesto. Professor Masthoff agreed that the University should seek to reach high ideals and noted the importance of collegiality in doing so. She expressed concern that the tone of the manifesto was cautious of this and that the vision the manifesto sought to prevent was being made worse by the language used. With regards to Senior Management, Professor Masthoff stated that while she does not always agree with the decisions they make, she believes them to be putting in really long hours and trying their best for the University. In her role as Dean of Postgraduate Research, Professor Masthoff specifically noted the statement 'research will be driven neither by market demand nor by the expectation of novelty' (section 19 of the manifesto refers). She noted that when explaining to Postgraduate Research students what doing research is

about, it is explained that it is about making contributions to knowledge, which, in turn, means novelty. She therefore noted concern over this statement. Professor Masthoff further expressed concern with regards the document's references to Learning Outcomes and the statement that 'It is not therefore available for transmission, as is implied by models that measure teaching and learning by the achievement of predetermined outcomes. There can be no such outcomes, beyond training in skills of so superficial a nature that their transfer can be achieved and assessed through the completion of tick-box exercises' (section 20 of the manifesto refers). Professor Masthoff expressed the importance of learning outcomes in relation to critical thinking, problem solving, analysing and evaluating. She noted that these should not be tick box exercises and emphasised the importance of students being made aware of what a course would teach them.

- Dr Lusseau noted that the manifesto was a beautiful text but written from the top floor of the tallest ivory tower. He expressed concern that there was not the access to money the manifesto sought. Dr Lusseau stated that he had taken offence to a few of the points made and expressed concern that the tone set by the document and its view of the University is not one that he recognised. He took offence at the way students are portrayed within the document. While acknowledging that he seeks to do better and to engage students and ensure their employability, he expressed the need to engage as a society in order to do so. Dr Lusseau noted that taxpayers as research funders are paying and the importance of accountability to them. He stated that the University needs managers to ensure that what the University does is for the best for those paying for it. Finally, Dr Lusseau noted an objection with regards point 7 of the motion, where it is asserted that the proposal will not be to the detriment of the University's financial position. He expressed concern that despite recent passing by the Senate of a motion requiring evidence based proposals, no evidence is provided in this instance.
- Professor Heys referenced the comments made within the document on managers. He noted his interpretation of these as offensive and upsetting. Speaking on behalf of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, Professor Heys stated that the management team had worked exceedingly hard to support colleagues, with the primary intention of ensuring a fantastic student experience. He stated that managers had worked very hard to ensure the support of staff and students and where difficulties had occurred, managers had gone to extraordinary lengths and worked extra hours to ensure members of staff have jobs and are supported and mentored. Professor Heys also stated that when the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition embraced academic line management, they were overwhelmed by applications and appointed 48 and have a waiting list of appointees. He noted that those line managers are there to support colleagues and have allowed the School to move forward from the position it was in two years ago to a position of balance and improved student recruitment and an environment of collegiality. He noted that students were reporting an excellent undergraduate student experience in many disciplines. Professor Heys acknowledged this was evidenced by the three Athena Swan awards and reporting from the Athena Swan teams that the change most appreciated has been that of the support of academic line managers and annual review. Professor Heys stated that, in his experience, he did not recognise the points made within the manifesto.
- Dr Sweeney also expressed concern at the difference in tone between the presentation and the manifesto and stated that she had found the manifesto extremely divisive and the language misleading. She noted the use of the word 'profit' in the manifesto and expressed that this was inappropriate, and that the University seeks to create a surplus, to remain in the organisation, and must do so to invest in its resources and fulfil its purposes. Dr Sweeney further noted the claim that there is a business route which is being followed as misleading terminology. Dr

Sweeney expressed that while the University isn't a business, it is an organisation and must have an organisation route. She expressed that the University straddles both the public and private sectors and, as such, it comes with many controls brought about by a diverse body of stakeholders who can have very different and sometimes conflicting interests. While acknowledging that there were part of the manifesto which were of value, she expressed concern that it largely operates in a vacuum and ignores the external reality in which the University operates. Dr Sweeney concluded by noting serious concern that the role of the Senate had been lost. She stated the remit of the Senate as academic matters relating to teaching and research and emphasised that the consideration of a political manifesto was therefore not appropriate.

- Dr Schofield expressed his agreement with the points made by Dr Sweeney. Dr Schofield expressed his respect for the reclaim movement and the vigour shown but stated that he felt the manifesto was very inward looking manifesto and ignored the pressures on the University and why a management structure is required. He noted the issues facing the Higher Education sector as a whole in the UK, Europe and globally. He referenced the impact of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) as an example of this. He stated that the enthusiasm for the manifesto would be better placed to look externally and to address the situation across the UK. Dr Schofield also echoed concerns raised as to the potential financial disadvantage if the University doesn't engage with the external requirements made of it.
- Professor Delibigovic, on behalf of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition noted several overall positive messages from colleagues to the overall message of the manifesto but that they had expressed concerns over the language used and that it was sometimes militant. She stated that staff felt it was more of an ethos that was being presented and that there was a feeling of uncertainty as what they were being asked to approve. Professor Delibigovic stated that there had been concerns raised over statements made without any explanation of what the next step would be and upset around statements such as those around the novelty of research and the importance of public funded research. On behalf of the Foresterhill campus, Professor Delibigovic expressed sincere concern that they had not been engaged in manifesto. She stated that this was the first time colleagues at Foresterhill had been aware of the manifesto and, as such, a feeling of division and that the manifesto contained discipline specific statements which did not apply to the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition.
- Professor Guz expressed concern that the manifesto did not only represent division between Old Aberdeen and Foresterhill but also more widely. Within the School of Engineering he noted that only three non-Senate members were aware of the manifesto. On behalf of the School, he noted that staff wished to convey the message that one part of the University should not be allowed to tell others how to run the University. Professor Guz stated that there should be a consultation with all Schools before the matter is discussed. Professor Guz also expressed concern as to the language used within the manifesto and referenced the statement 'We will accordingly seek to reduce the proportion of the working day that is spent in front of computer screens' (section 28 refers) as an example of the nano-management contained within it.
- Responding, Professor Ingold acknowledged the comments made with regards to the language of the manifesto. He expressed that it is a manifesto and not a planning document and as such, it is robustly worded as manifestos generally are. He stated that the manifesto had its origins at the time of huge upset within the University and that its reason for launch in October 2015, was that morale was at rock bottom and that many staff were fearful, worried about their jobs and felt both threatened and pressurised from above. He further stated that the manifesto was set up not as a protest but as an opportunity for a University wide discussion on

what kind of University we want and on what principles it should operate. Professor Ingold stated that they had fallen over backwards to try and engage staff from across the University and to seek fair representation. He noted the difficulty of aiming to do so. He expressed that at no point was this one part of the University trying to exert its influence over others. He stated that it was 'a bit rich' to be told off by sections of the University who did not accept the invitation to engage and that there was a limit to what could be done. Regarding the language of the manifesto, Professor Ingold reiterated that it sought not to speak of individuals and that it was not suggested that managers were not working hard to make the University a great place. He emphasised that the University was terrific and that one of its particular characteristics was that it had a special spirit of community, hard to find in other places. He stated that the movement had begun as the genuine community of scholarship found at the University was being lost and those engaged sought to restore it. Professor Ingold stated that if there was language within the manifesto that people found offensive, then they would apologise as none was meant. He further stated, however, that the manifesto should not be misread nor what was stated be taken to the letter. He expressed to the Senate that the manifesto was offered as a basis for discussion and not as a fait accompli.

- Dr Rist, with reference to the comments made on the positive tone brought by Professor Ingold's presentation being in contrast to the manifesto, stated that the manifesto was meant to be an evolutionary process and that the movement sought the setting up of a sub-committee to better consider where the University is and appropriate steps forward. Dr Rist emphasised that the process was for listening and learning, and being inclusive referred to the openness of the reclaim movement.
- Professor Schaper stated that it was unfortunate no discussion had taken place on the substance of the manifesto. He stated he was disappointed with the comments made as he was aware these colleagues were less than happy with the University and have lots of criticisms to make. He noted that he felt it was disappointing they were not speaking to that. Professor Schaper asked colleagues whether they were happy in the University or did their experiences coincide with the reflection of unhappiness across teaching and learning, in the manifesto?
- Mr Ogubie, President of the Students' Association, stated that there was no clear evidence that the Students' Association was consulted throughout the preparation of the manifesto. He noted that a manifesto of this size should have student involvement and, while he was led to understand some students were engaged in its development, he was unsure of the number, or how representative this group was. He requested formal student representation and sought to understand how the movement planned to engage with the student body.
- Dr Lusseau expressed concern as to the fact the motion sought the acceptance of the manifesto as principles. He stated that the happiness of individuals had no bearing on this document and that the happiness of staff was predominantly driven by externalities. He noted that his question regarding point 7 of the motion and the financial position of the University remained unanswered.
- Dr Rea, responding, noted that the University had not commissioned the document and therefore it had not been appropriate for the reclaim movement to formally approach the Students' Association. He noted that at the meetings he had attended, there had been full and robust engagement from the student body. With regards the ethos of the document, Dr Rea stated that he felt he was being asked not to accept the manifesto as a whole but the principles within it. Dr Rea sought for people to look at the bigger picture and that it was currently a time during which the sector as a whole was being looked at and becoming increasingly politically sensitive. He stated that he felt it was an opportunity for the University to make a stand and not to comply with box ticking exercises. He referenced the National Student Survey (NSS) as an example of this. He emphasised the opportunity the University had to

draw a line in the sand and make a stand about where we want the University to be as a place and to do so by adopting the principles embodied in the manifesto. He stated that he felt the motion was to accept the 4 principles laid out and for a sub-committee to be set up to take this forward with the opportunity for dialogue and engagement with the University community.

- Dr Oliver, responding to Dr Lusseau, read point 5 of the motion as follows:
Senate moves that the principles established in the 'Reclaiming Our University' Manifesto be used as a baseline from which to create a core set of guiding values for the future development of the University. The principles cover the four pillars of Freedom, Trust, Education and Community.

Dr Oliver emphasised that the motion was not asking Senators to accept the manifesto word for word or as a policy document. Furthermore, Dr Oliver read point 7 of the motion as follows:

Senate submits that adopting these proposals would not be to the detriment of the University's current financial position but would instead lead to the enhancement of the University's international reputation and future opportunities for growth. In short, it would place Aberdeen on the road to becoming an international beacon of what universities *should* be for.

Responding to Dr Lusseau's request for evidence that the proposals would not be to the detriment of the University's financial position, he stated that the motion and manifesto were not policy documents but were designed to draw people into conversation and therefore it does not require evidence in support of it. He further stated that the motion was an invitation to take a brave step forward and to mark ourselves out from other Universities that are going down a particular pathway and be the very first to start a brave conversation about how things can be done differently.

- Dr Mills stated that he was a business orientated person and believed in practical, financial entrepreneurial opportunities. He noted he worked hard in those directions. Dr Mills stated that he felt the University was a business but that it followed the charitable business model and, as such, has a particular structure designed not for profit but for the charitable goals that it seeks to obtain. He further stated that the University should engage in entrepreneurial, business and trading activities as all the great Universities do, to support the teaching and research it does. Further to this, however, he noted that the teaching and research the University does, should not be determined by goals which are strictly financial. He stated that this was an important point, particularly in recognition of the fact the University is in an environment in which there are a considerable constraints on it. He expressed the importance of the University asking itself, if the cumulative weight of these constraints is setting Universities up to fail and whether the University sector was engaged in a game that it could not win. He suggested that the University give consideration to changing the rules or the environment in which it found itself and what a real, practical way for doing so would be. He reiterated that the document provided just the beginning of discussions in this regard. He noted that colleagues didn't like parts of the manifesto and agreed that there were parts he didn't like either but that it represented only a starting point for discussions internally and with other Universities.
- Dr Barker began by stating he was very happy. He stated that he found the manifesto to be a beautiful piece of writing, which he enjoyed reading, and that Professor Ingold's speech had been beautifully crafted. With regards point 4 of the manifesto, however, he noted with concern the statement, *'in our University we will create an environment for free, open-minded and unprejudiced debate, which stands out as a beacon of wisdom, tolerance and humanity'*. He acknowledged receipt of a copy of the manifesto accompanied by a note from Professors Ingold and Schnell stating, *'I urge you to come along and support this motion'*. He

expressed concern that he did not have to listen to the debate and, was instead, being strongly encouraged to vote in its favour. He noted he found this confusing and contradictory. Dr Barker confirmed that he had consulted his constituents, academic and non-academic, and while some moments of the manifesto were moments of great clarity, overall the document described a University they did not recognise. He sought clarity as to whether the Senate were being asked to support the manifesto in its entirety.

- Professor Ingold responded to confirm that this was not the case. He stated that the manifesto was a basis for discussion and evolution and represented where the group had gotten to following its meeting and consultations. He stated that the group hoped to establish a mechanism through which open discussion about the future of the University could take place.
- The Principal reiterated that the Senate was not being asked to support the manifesto. Professor Ingold confirmed this to be the case and that the Senate were asked only to support the principles enshrined within it.
- Dr Schofield stated that the essence of what was being heard suggested that the movement sought to 'reclaim our Universities' and not the University. He stated that the movement should be sector wide and not faced internally. He expressed his confusion over what was being asked of Senators.
- Dr Sweeney stated that it was difficult to vote on words extracted from a much larger document. While acknowledging that discussing issues such as freedom and trust would be welcomed, their meaning within the manifesto take on a very negative connotation. Dr Sweeney reiterated concerns raised as to what Senate was being asked to vote on.
- Professor Schaper stated that the manifesto was a snapshot of the results of a discussion at a certain point in time and that what was sought, was that this be made the starting point of a Working Group of the Senate. For clarity, the Principal, stated it was freedom and trust as defined within the manifesto on which Senate was being asked to vote.
- Professor Hutchison sought to propose an amendment to the motion (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minute*). Professor Hutchison acknowledged, like many people in the room, that she felt the University was hers having been a student or member of staff at the University since 1993. She stated that she had worked with many capable and dedicated colleagues and had some very inspiring students. She stated that she had never felt the University was not hers, nor a need for it to be reclaimed on her behalf. Professor Hutchison expressed concern that she did not recognise the picture of the University drawn within the manifesto nor accept the logic of the argument presented as to what an ideal University should be. She stated her confusion as to the language used in light of the discussions held and particularly with regards the view of management as portrayed within the document. She acknowledged that it was not helpful to invent new definitions of words and to use them in ways which are likely to be misunderstood. Professor Hutchison noted the first duty of a text, as clarity. She expressed concern that the document was not accurate nor constructive. She reiterated comments with regards the difference in tone between the manifesto and discussions held. Professor Hutchison stated that she could not endorse the document, as its view of the University was too different from her own. However, she acknowledged it was not wise to dwell on differences or to make them into battles and instead to look at what those in favour and those against have in common; freedom, trust, education and community. Professor Hutchison stated her happiness to be part of an organisation where people value these principles. She acknowledged that they may mean slightly different things to different people, however, accepted this difference of opinion as being what academic freedom is about and what a University is for and stated that it is possible to have agreement without conformity, or to be a community without all being alike.

Professor Hutchison noted the words respect, inclusion, trust and integrity. She stated that the reclaim group was not the only group on the University's campuses considering what kind of University the University would like to be. She noted the group chaired by Professor Ross, Vice-Principal for People, who have drafted an Employee Engagement Strategy. She noted that respect, inclusion, trust and integrity were its core values. Professor Hutchison acknowledged that many people in both groups had put long hours into considering as a University we might move forward. She stated that from the debate held it was clear the University had more work to do on this, in bringing constituencies together, to talk and to listen. She expressed she was heartened that both groups had identified trust as a core value. She noted that views within Senate would differ on what the term entails. She noted that it is easier to assume others should trust you than to take the step and to decide to trust someone else. She noted that trust should bring security and comfort, but in reality it is about being prepared to take a risk on someone else. Professor Hutchison noted that she had asked her 8 year old son what trust is. He responded to say trust is about forgiveness, it is about going back to speak to someone even after they have been mean to you. She noted that there were stormy times ahead for Higher Education and that External factors are moving very fast. She expressed concern that if we are too proud to listen to each other, the University will suffer. She stated that if the University is prepared to trust more, the University can thrive. Professor Hutchison stated that the motion is a step in the process. She moved to strike the original motion and replace it with this. Professor Hutchison confirmed that the motion had been developed by the Deans of teaching and learning and research and in conversation with Heads of School, members of the reclaim group and some members of Senior Management. She accepted that the motion as presented by the reclaim group was problematic as it implied the acceptance of the manifesto as a whole rather than looking to it for inspiration. Professor Hutchison proposed the motion, designed to provide an option for those who were interested in what the reclaim group had to say but who were willing to recognise that there were other voices which should be heard as the future of the University is discussed. She stated that the amendment was for those who sought further and respectful dialogue and positive change in the University. She noted the proposal of the acceptance of values and not a text and the proposed establishment of a working group, co-chaired by a member of Senior Management and a member of the reclaim group and with a slightly different remit to develop a set of shared values the University as a whole can endorse.

- The Principal noted that the amendment as proposed by Professor Hutchison was in effect a new motion. He stated that he would first ask Dr Oliver if he would accept the withdrawal of his motion. Dr Oliver stated his appreciation for Professor Hutchison's amendment and proposed outreach to the reclaim group. He noted, however, that the amendment made reference to the Employee Engagement Strategy which he had not read. On this basis Dr Oliver confirmed he was unable to accept the revised motion.
- The Principal informed the Senate that Professor Hutchison's motion would require a seconder. Professor Kee, amongst others, offered their support of the motion.
- The Principal proposed that the Senate vote on accepting Professor Hutchison's motion.
- Professor Schaper expressed concern over the procedure being followed. Dr Rist echoed Professor Schaper's concerns. He stated it would be wrong to move to a vote on Professor Hutchison's motion without appropriate discussion.
- Professor Anderson noted with concern that at the start of the Senate, Senators had been asked to vote on allowing Dr Oliver to propose a revised motion yet another motion was now permitted at this late stage. Professor Anderson confirmed he would like to take the issue back to his constituents for discussion.

- The Principal noted that amendments had been taken on several occasions during debate.
- Professor Schaper echoed Professor Anderson's comments and expressed concern that no vote to accept the motion was undertaken. The Principal assured the Senate (Senate Standing Order 15 applies) that motions arising directly from discussion are permissible.
- Professor Schaper stated his disagreement that the motion had arisen from discussions and noted his awareness that the proposal of the motion had been planned in advance of the Senate.
- Professor Coghill sought clarification as to whether the proposal was an amendment or a counter motion.
- Professor Hutchison noted that she was content for the proposal to be considered either as an amendment or as a motion, but that she sought for Senate to find a collaborative and workable way forward.
- Professor Hannaford stated that both sets of values proposed included the word trust, but that trust was not being demonstrated. He stated his agreement with other Senators with regards the change in tone from the manifesto, which he noted he had found offensive. He acknowledged the importance of the discussions held and specifically highlighted the importance of sustainability as a core element of the University.
- Dr Lamb proposed a vote be taken first on the original motion as proposed by Dr Oliver, followed, if appropriate, by a vote on Professor Hutchison's motion. The Principal agreed to take a vote on this proposed course of action.

48.7 The Principal confirmed a vote would be taken on whether or not the Senate was content to follow the voting process as proposed by Dr Lamb.

In favour of process as proposed by Dr Lamb:	64
Not in favour of process as proposed by Dr Lamb:	11
Abstaining from the vote:	6

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the vote had been passed.

48.8 The Principal confirmed a vote would now be taken on whether on the motion as proposed by Dr Oliver, to adopt the principles as laid out in the 'Reclaiming our University' manifesto.

In favour of the motion:	28
Not in favour of the motion:	54
Abstaining from the vote:	5

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the vote had not been passed and the motion would not proceed.

48.9 The Principal confirmed a vote would be now taken on whether or not the Senate was content to accept the consideration of the amendment to the motion as proposed by Professor Hutchison.

In favour of the amendment to the motion as proposed by Professor Hutchison:	69
Not in favour of the amendment to the motion as proposed by Professor Hutchison:	16
Abstaining from the vote:	3

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the vote had been passed.

48.10 In advance of a vote being taken on Professor Hutchison's proposed amendment, the Principal invited discussion from the floor. A brief discussion ensued, the main tenets of which were as follows:

- Dr Rea, considering both proposals, noted the recognised need and desire to have a new dialogue about several issues. Dr Rea stated the importance of discussion and expressed concern that a Vice-Principal act as co-chair in recognition of the fact that a Vice-Principal might exert more power and influence than the other co-chair. In the spirit of equality, Dr Rea proposed discussion on the issue and the makeup of the group as a whole.
- Professor Jenkinson noted the external drivers and influences as referred to in earlier discussion. She noted the importance of working collectively to address these issues. She acknowledged the opportunity for the University to pull together and focus on the outside world rather than spending a large amount of time occupied by internal debate.
- Dr Shanks, responding to Dr Rea, proposed Professor Hutchison act as co-chair in place of a Vice-Principal.
- The Principal confirmed with Dr Rea his proposed amendment, that the co-chair not be a Vice-Principal, however, taking into account Dr Shanks' proposal, could be a Dean.
- Professor Ross confirmed the work of the Employee Engagement Group in developing a core set of values. She confirmed that it was flat group, who instructed her rather than the other way round. She noted a great deal of input had been garnered from outside Senate and from non-academic staff. Professor Ross noted the strategy went through the University's Committee structure and were communicated to every member of staff. Professor Ross acknowledged she had attended meetings of the reclaim group at which she had voiced this information. She highlighted the importance of not covering old ground but in identifying common issues and moving forward for the good of the University.
- Professor Greaves expressed his concern that the document refers to trust but that a Vice-Principal could not be trusted to be equitable.
- Mr Usenmez stated the importance of engaging Professional Services in the group to be established.
- Professor Lee noted that composition of the current working group was unknown and therefore it was difficult to consider a revised group at this time.

48.11 The Principal confirmed a vote would be now taken on whether or not the Senate was content to accept the amendment to the motion as proposed by Dr Rea, to ensure the co-chair of the Working Group was not a Vice-Principal.

In favour of the amendment to the motion as proposed by Dr Rea:	34
Not in favour of the amendment to the motion as proposed by Dr Rea:	41
Abstaining from the vote:	12

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the amendment had not been passed.

48.12 The Principal confirmed a vote would be now taken on whether or not the Senate was content to accept the consideration of the motion as proposed by Professor Hutchison. The Principal stated that, if approved, the composition and terms of reference for the Working Group to be established, would come to Senate for discussion and approval.

In favour of the motion as proposed by Professor Hutchison:	63
Not in favour of the motion as proposed by Professor Hutchison:	19
Abstaining from the vote:	5

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the vote had been passed and the motion accepted. The Principal confirmed the expectation Professor Hutchison chair a group to establish the constitution of a group and to consult widely in doing so.

- 48.13 The Principal thanked Professor Ingold for his presentation. Professor Ingold stated that the discussion held had been enormously encouraging. He noted that the mood in the University had palpably changed over the last two years, partly because of the work of the reclaim group. He noted that it should be considered a victory for all that discussions in this regard were being held. He further noted that the University could now move forward in an open spirit. He stated he was enormously heartened, and that this was significant for the University of Aberdeen and Universities more widely.

QUESTIONS TO THE PRINCIPAL

- 49.1 Dr Rist was invited to ask his question of the Principal.

- 49.2 Dr Rist asked the following question:

- (i) *First, what has been the total cost to the University of Aberdeen of all its computerisation initiatives (for example, OneSource, Camtasia Replay, Techsmith Replay, Panopto, Curriculum Management) since the year in which the university's most recent Voluntary Redundancy Scheme took place; what has been the total cost of maintaining these initiatives since that year; and what has been the total cost of fixing and upgrading these systems?*
- (ii) *Second, how much return on investment (understood in terms of increasing student happiness and enhancing teaching-effectiveness) have these computer initiatives delivered in the same period of time?*
- (iii) *Third, which of these computerised initiatives have worked and which haven't; and what has been the cost of those that did not work?*
- (iv) *Fourth, how much has the university's IT department grown since the university's hiring-freeze on academic staff?*

- 49.3 The Principal asked Mr Henderson, Director of Digital and Information Services, to respond. Mr Henderson responded as follows:

- (i) Mr Henderson confirmed that as the last round of Voluntary Severance ended in December 2015, the costs he would reference referred to financial year 2016/17 and to date in financial year 2017/18. He confirmed the total figure across all spend for initiatives was £5.66 million. He noted that this did not include spend within individual schools but that it did cover all central initiatives including the IT Services, Digital Strategy and OneSource budgets. He noted the complexities of understanding what the budget covers but noted examples including the replacement of approximately 30% of PCs, maintaining wired and wireless infrastructure, projector maintenance and replacement and the replacement of the voting and microphone equipment within the Conference Centre.
- (ii) Mr Henderson acknowledged that return on investment would not be something typically measured and noted that cost, time saving and risk reduction would more likely be assessed. He noted a range of measures were

used to obtain student feedback on the student registration system in September 2017 in an attempt to gauge how students felt about the system. An example of this was provided as (i) a survey at the end of usage for every student and the end of their engagement with MyCurriculum, MyTimetable and any other systems applicable. He stated the positive response received, with the typical overall satisfaction rate being 4.5 out of 5. In providing another example, Mr Henderson noted the use of Net Promoter, a typical measure of the loyalty and trust between provider and customer. He informed that Senate that an score above 0 is seen as good and 50 is excellent with the student feedback score for the University across registration being 75. He acknowledged that this was the first attempt of this nature for gauging feedback from students about a significant University system. He confirmed that these would be rolled out further. Mr Henderson also noted demand as a proxy for student satisfaction. He reported, with regards lecture capture, a 56% rise in lectures being captured, a 28% rise in the number of lectures being viewed and a 5500% rise in the time students spend watching lecture content. Mr Henderson stated that technology cannot stand alone in its ability to enhance teaching, however, through the appropriate use of technology when appropriate.

- (iii) Mr Henderson acknowledged that the list was long in this regard, however, could be made available if requested. He confirmed there were currently 43 projects ongoing across the period in question. 37 of these were either successfully deployed or in progress, 3 which didn't work and 3 currently on hold. With regards costs, Mr Henderson confirmed that for those projects successfully deployed or in progress, the cost had been £4.6 million, for those which didn't work the cost had been £460k and for those projects on hold, the cost had been £55k.
- (iv) Mr Henderson confirmed that, with regards staffing within IT Services, since 2015 there had been a drop in staff of 9%.

The Principal clarified that there had not been a hiring freeze of University staff.

49.4 Professor Anderson was invited to ask his question of the Principal.

49.5 Professor Anderson asked the following question:

Senate has a duty to supervise teaching and research. At public meetings members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) have often been claimed that "research" is a financial drag on the health of the university with an often quoted statistic that between 70-74% of its cost recouped. In some presentations it is suggested that we should be doing less research in order to ensure our financial well-being.

Could the Principal explain to Senate the method by which this figure is calculated? In particular, my constituents would like to know how "research" is singled out as an activity bearing costs separate from "teaching". Does this figure focus exclusively on externally funded research contracts? Is it based on sets of assumptions, such as members of staff working 38 hour weeks, or that they have a contractual duty to spend 40% of their time on research? If this is the case, should not SMT ground its statements in the realities of how research informs teaching or how many, if not all, members of staff subsidize the university's research by working weekends and over holidays?

49.6 The Principal, responding, confirmed that the cost recovery figure of 74% is calculated using the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology. TRAC is an activity based costing system that compares the cost of various categories of activity to income

using an agreed methodology across higher education in the UK. He confirmed that TRAC is mandatory for all Higher Education Institutions in the UK. All academic members of staff have to complete an annual TRAC return to inform our costing assumptions, based on the actual amount of time spend on undertaking research. The Principal confirmed that this is used to calculate the full cost of teaching and research across the University which in turn informs the cost recovery rates used by various funders. He noted that different funders enable different rates of cost recovery, with the highest rates available from UK Government and Research Councils UK (98% and 75% respectively). The Principal confirmed that for the University, TRAC data shows that we undertake comparatively more research that is not funded by any external funded project grants. Instead, this research activity relies on the SFC Research Excellence Grant (REG) (approximately £20 million per year) and other core funds to meet costs. He stated this as an example of the importance of REF submissions. He confirmed that, as with many Universities, the University subsidises its research with teaching. The Principal stated that his expectation that Heads of School should enable staff by way of clear workload models, not to be required to work any more than 1650 hours in a year.

49.7 Dr Rea was invited to ask his question of the Principal.

49.8 Dr Rea asked the following question:

Could the Principal please provide an update on the current status, and thinking, with regards to the annual Promotions Exercise, as the normal announcement period has now passed? I had previously been informed that a significant review of the procedures was ongoing after the end of the 2017 exercise and it may be that this has impacted the timetable for this year. However, and of particular concern to some of my constituents, are the rumours of cancellation for this year. Such a decision would have major implications for career progression of many staff and could have a very negative impact on staff morale.

49.9 The Principal, responding, acknowledged that a significant review of the promotion process had been undertaken between September and November with a recommendation for a new process being approved at the meeting of Court in December. Following this approval the Principal confirmed that it had been agreed that the promotion process would continue and would be launched on Friday.

MOTION FROM SENATE ADDRESSED TO UNIVERSITY SENIOR MANAGEMENT (SECTIONS 1-4) AND TO THE UNIVERSITY COURT (SECTION 5) REGARDING THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE UNIVERSITY

50.1 The Principal invited Mr Styles to present his motion regarding the Financial Position of the University. Mr Styles introduced the motion as a request for information and participation with regards to the University's financial position.

50.2 Mr Styles confirmed that the date of Court detailed in the motion should be revised to the 16 February 2018. Mr Styles further noted the predicted budget shortfall of £5.6 million by 2020. He sought indication of the transparency of the Indicative Resource Framework (IRF) the mechanism by which departments and/or schools pay money into central services. He expressed the IRF was unclear and if necessary, a working party be established to help provide clarity. Mr Styles noted the request within the motion Senate that University Senior Management engage in a full and transparent discussion with Senate, University Academic Schools and Sections and all academic and professional services staff on the financial position of the University, what impact

that should have in the University's plans for the future and give staff the opportunity to make suggestions as to the way forward. He stated his awareness of discussions at a high level but not beyond. Finally, he stated the request of the Court that a joint working group be established to discuss the way forward. He acknowledged that this would be a decision for the Court, regardless of whether or not Senate were in support of it.

50.3 In advance of asking Professor Greaves to respond to the motion, the Principal noted the fluidity with regards to financial matters, and despite noting at the last meeting of the Senate he had expected flat cash to be reported for the Higher Education sector in the Scottish Government's budget, an increase of 1.8% was reported.

50.4 Professor Greaves reminded the Senate of the motion passed at the last meeting of Senate and the expectation that presentations on financial matters will be made to the Senate. He further noted that there is Senate representation on the Operating Board and the Court. He further reiterated that Court would be required to approve the motion.

50.5 A short discussion ensued in response to the motion, the main tents of which were as follows:

- Dr Sweeney, Head of the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy, noted her surprise with regards to the comments made that Heads of School are not involved in the setting of the IRF. Dr Sweeney confirmed her involvement as a Head of School. She noted the IRF as helpful and as an important point of reference. She acknowledged that the document can be confusing on first look. She noted that she had sought information regarding the IRF and the department of Finance had been happy to help. With regards point 5c of the motion, Dr Sweeney reiterated her earlier point, that the Senate should not lose sight of its role.
- Dr Smith, Head of the School of Education, reiterated the position as laid out by Dr Sweeney. He echoed the IRF lack of transparency. He confirmed that with regards the IRF he had received a lot of support from the Director of Finance and his team in understanding it. He noted meetings take place on a regular basis and that engagement is high. Dr Smith further noted his engagement with the School of Education and the provision for colleagues to ask questions or consult with him in this regard.
- Mr Styles noted that the information was not readily available and stated that it would be helpful if it was made available to any interested party. With that assurance, Mr Styles confirmed his contentment to withdraw the remainder of the motion.
- The Principal confirmed the importance of those interested being afforded the opportunity to look at, and understand, the IRF.
- Dr Rist echoed the critical nature of the proposal. He proposed that the information come to Senate as a whole. Dr Rist acknowledged the points made with regards the role of the Senate in Teaching, Learning and Research. He stated that economics was important to the Senate being able to fulfil this role.
- Mrs Tibbets noted that Heads of School don't, in all cases, appropriately cascade financial information. She noted, given the financial position of the University and the recurring risk of redundancy, colleagues are seeking reassurance that the underlying data is robust and reported robustly. Mrs Tibbets requested the information be shared throughout the organisation. The Principal noted that, for a variety of reasons, figures do change.
- Professor Anderson noted the production of the Monthly Management Report (MMR) and proposed it be distributed to senators. He further noted, with

regards to the IRF, the circulation to the Court of a single table on annual basis of the parameters for each school. He proposed its distribution to the Senate. Professor Anderson noted concerns regarding the IRF. The Principal urged him to speak to the Finance Director in this regard, to alleviate any concerns.

- Mr Gordon, Head of the School of Law, noted financial information had been provided within the school, albeit at quite a high level. He expressed his willingness to provide more granular information to the School as a whole.
- Mr Whittington, Head of the Business School, noted that attempting to sum up the IRF for a school on one page is a difficult thing and, as such, more discussion is often required. He noted that there is never a lack of willingness by the Finance department to explain. He further noted that presenting in a school is a key way in which to attempt to improve the distribution of knowledge.
- Dr Shanks, following discussions around trust and community, highlighted the importance of sharing the information with the Senate on behalf of the University. She noted that she had sought to receive the MMRs in order to be better informed. She proposed Senators be provided with the information, where appropriate.
- Professor Greaves reiterated that the Senate would receive regular presentations and updates on the University's financial position.
- Dr Lusseau proposed the Senate Assessors, acting as a communication channel between Court and the Senate, receive the MMR and report as appropriate.
- The Principal confirmed the MMR could be made available on request.
- Dr Oelsner stated that regular distribution of the MMR to the Senate would better allow for enhancement and contribution to discussion.
- Dr Oliver proposed that the MMR be made available on the Senate website.
- Professor Mealor noted Professor Greaves' statements regarding the presentations on financial matters to the Senate and proposed that he be trusted to do this.
- Dr Rist welcomed the proposal that financial information be made available to Senators and asked that this be done at the same time as information is circulated to the Court.

50.6 Mr Styles confirmed he was happy to amend 3 to welcome the circulation of the MMR. He confirmed no working party was now needed. He noted that section 5 stood. He stated the importance of the Senate's involvement in that process. He expressed his disagreement with the notion Senate be restricted to regulations.

[Clerk's Note: Following the meeting, section 3 was amended to read 'Senate welcomes the commitment by the Principal and University Senior management to share with all members of Senate the details of the operation of the Indicative Resource Framework for each school and also the University's Monthly Management Reports']

50.7 The Principal confirmed a vote would now be taken on whether or not the Senate was content to approve section 5 of the motion as follows:

Request from Senate to the University Court to establish a joint Court and Senate Working Group to address forecast financial deficit

5. (a) Senate respectfully requests of Court that a Joint Court and Senate Working Group on the Financial Position of the University be authorised by Court at the 29th January Court Meeting with the remit of assessing the financial position of the University and to consider what measures are necessary to improve the financial position of the University in order to best deliver its mission as set out in its Strategic

Plan 2015-2020. This working group to deliver a report with recommendations by the end of May or by such date as Court should deem appropriate.

(b) Senate further **respectfully requests** of Court that no major changes in the structure or expenditure of the University be approved of until the meaningful dialogue called for in sub paragraph (b) has occurred and until the Court-Senate Working Group called for in sub paragraph (c) above has delivered its report to Court and Senate.

In favour of section 5 of the motion as proposed by Mr Styles:	56
Not in favour of section 5 of the motion as proposed by Mr Styles:	26
Abstaining from the vote:	1

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the vote had been passed. The Principal proposed that the Senate Assessors take the issue to the Court for their consideration. He further proposed the identification of how the members of this group should be identified.

50.8 The Principal thanked colleagues and closed the meeting.