University of Strathclyde

COURT

Minutes: 9th October 2007

Present: Mr J F Livingston, Convener of Court (in the Chair except for items CM 4037 and CM 4054)
Mr T Monaghan (in the Chair for item CM 4037 and CM 4054)
Principal, Vice-Principal Professor J Love, Mr R Crawford, Mr J Fergus, Mr P Goldfinch, Dr D Grierson, Dr P Hughes, Mr R J A Hunter, Mr T J Monaghan, Ms K Morrison, Dr P MacKenzie, Ms F McMenamin, Professor M Pacione, Professor A Patterson, Mr M Ross, Mr G Singh, Dr C Vance, Ms L Whiteford, Dr G Wilson, Mr M Wishart

Attending by invitation: Pro Vice-Principal Professor K Miller, Deputy Principal Professor R Condie, Deputy Principal Professor A Ferguson, Deputy Principal Mrs A Hughes, Deputy Principal Professor J McDonald, Professor B Furman (Dean of Science), Professor C Harvey (Dean of Strathclyde Business School), Professor N Hutton (Dean of Law, Arts & Social Sciences), Mr I R M Smith (Dean of Education)

Attending: The Secretary to the University, Ms J Whitley (Deputy Secretary) Mr D Coyle (Director of Finance), Mr G Roddick (Director of Estates Management), Mr W Sutherland (Director Human Resources), Professor D Law (Librarian and Head of Information Resources Directorate), Mr R Chapman, (Vice-Dean Academic, Engineering for item CM 4035), Dr D McBeth (Director, Research & Innovation for item CM 4048), Mr J Martin (Director, Student Affairs), Mr N Sturrock (Head of Centre for Sport & Recreation), Mrs G McArthur (Court Secretary)

Apologies: Mr D Gray, Mr M Strachan, Dr C Tedford, Professor C Grant (Dean of Engineering), Mr A Taylor (Director of Marketing & Communications)

CM 4038 WELCOME

On behalf of Court the Convener welcomed the new members to the meeting as follows: Mr R Crawford, Dr D Grierson, Mr M Ross and Ms L Whiteford.

CM 4039 MR RENNICK

The Convener informed Court that, unfortunately due to ill health, Mr B Rennick had resigned from membership of Court. Court was sorry to hear this and sent him all best wishes for a speedy return to health.

CM 4040 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2007 were approved subject to the following correction:

CM4011 Estates Strategy Committee: Building Condition Report
Resolution – first bullet point should read:
‘Lift refurbishment in the Thomas Graham Building (both passenger and goods lift)’.
CM 4041  SENIOR OFFICER APPOINTMENTS AND PORTFOLIO’S (CM 4005)

At its last meeting Court had been informed that the Senior Officer portfolios had not been finalised. However, these had been finalised shortly thereafter and the Convener had taken action on behalf of Court and approved them. Court homologated the action taken by the Convener and

RESOLVED that

i. Professor R Condie be re-appointed Deputy Principal under the terms of Statute VI and for the period 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2008;
ii. Professor A Ferguson be re-appointed Deputy Principal under the terms of Statute VI and for the period 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2010;
iii. The portfolios for the Senior Officers be approved as detailed in the file copy of the minutes.

CM 4042  PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Court noted a report from the Principal which included the following information:

- The Principal was delighted to inform Court that Professor J Bourne had been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Education with effect from 1 November 2007 (See also CM4049);
- Court was pleased to learn that the University had been very successful in winning funding from the EPSRC, having secured a total of £23M in grant funding from this body during the year;
- Court congratulated Professor W Banks who had been awarded the 2007 James Alfred Ewing Medal for special meritorious contributions to the science of engineering in the field of research; and also Professor B Furman who had been awarded an honorary degree by the International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur;
- The Careers Service had recently won an award, the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services’ Research Award, for their report ‘What do Graduates do? Scotland;
- The Principal congratulated Mr Keating, of the Hunter Centre, and Mr M Sheridan, of the Department of Creative and Aesthetic Studies, on the award of a licence to Celtic Music Radio. Court was delighted to hear of the recent success of the webcast version of the Celtic Music Radio’s broadcast of the International Piano Competition;
- The Principal commended to Court the recently published Sainsbury Report, ‘Race to the top’, which had been commissioned by the Treasury and was available on the Treasury website.

CM 4043  UNIVERSITY STRATEGY (CM 4006)

Pro Vice-Principal Professor Miller updated Court on progress with the implementation of the University Strategy. Court noted the following:

- The Senior Officers had recently held a residential meeting with an external facilitator to consider the implementation of the strategy and the next steps to be taken. This had proved to be a useful team building exercise and had identified a number of actions that needed to be progressed. The main outcomes from this session had been the need to emphasise the outcomes of implementing the strategy
to the wider University community and the need to reflect on the implementation of
the strategy at various points during the process. A meeting with the Deans was
scheduled so that a wider discussion about how best to take this forward could be
held;

- Two (departmental) excellence reviews were nearing completion with a third in
  progress. The next round of excellence reviews would be starting in the new year;
- Other reviews that had been initiated and were nearing completion were the
  recruitment of postgraduate instructional students (under the leadership of Professor
  Furman) and staff recruitment (under the leadership of Professor Grant). The
  marketing review had commenced;
- A new review group was being established, this would look at the appointment of
  senior academic managers (see CM 4056 for further information);
- All Faculties, departments and administrative and academic service (CAS) areas had
  now produced their strategy statements. Indeed, Professor Miller reported that he
  had attended a CAS meeting the previous day where they had discussed these
  statements and were now considering how best to progress them. This had been a
  very positive meeting and the important messages emerging from this meeting had
  been trust and partnership, and streamlining and working effectively;
- The Vice-Principal and the Director of Finance were leading a review of the
  resource allocation process within the University. Good progress was being made.

The next meeting of Court would consider implementation of the strategy and institutional
performance in more depth. Court welcomed this report.

CM 4044 RESEARCH ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (CM 3988)

Deputy Principal Professor Ferguson updated Court on progress with the preparations for the
Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Court noted that the census date for staff being
submitted to the RAE was 31 October 2007, with the submission date being 30 November
2007. This had been a major exercise with colleagues from across the University providing
support. The final stages of preparation were now underway so that the submission could be
made in advance of the deadline. The overall view was that there had been an improvement
in the University’s research performance since the last RAE. More information would be
provided to the next meeting.

CM 4045 STAFFING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (CM 3886)

Court received the Equality in Employment Practice Report 2006 and an update on progress
with strategic issues relating to staffing matters. The Director HR reminded Court that his
report last year had been dominated by the pay modernisation process. He was pleased to
report that this process was now complete. External evaluation of this process (which was a
condition of grant set by the Funding Council) had been conducted by the Office of Public
Management on behalf of the Funding Council. This had confirmed that implementation at
Strathclyde had been satisfactory. The University had had fewer appeals than some other
institutions which confirmed the quality of the process entered into at Strathclyde.

In considering the Equality in Employment Practice report Court was pleased to note that the
University was continuing to respond to legislative developments and to progress action
plans, strategies and priorities aligned to equality and diversity good practice. The
Excellence agenda was impacting on recruitment activities of the University. The Director
HR cited the example of the John Anderson Lectureships which had been a particularly
successful initiative. At professorial level the University was now appointing more external
candidates than in previous years, with some of these already being at professorial level
when appointed, and more single candidate interviews were being held. This was due to the
staff in the department/Faculty identifying who the leading experts were in their field, hereby narrowing the pool of potential candidates. External assessors provided assurance that the candidates presented were indeed of the calibre required by the University. Experience to date confirmed that this approach was working well for the University.

Court noted that the University was seeking reaccreditation of Investors in People status. The assessment visit would take place in the first week in December. Targets in the strategic plan also required to be addressed in staff development terms. Eight development priorities had been approved by Staff Committee as part of the Staff Development Framework and the Director HR provided further information on two of these as exemplars. On behalf of Court the Convener thanked the Director HR for his report.

CM 4046 STRATHCLYDE BUSINESS SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT (CM 3888)

Professor Harvey, Dean of the Strathclyde Business School, presented the annual report from the Faculty. He reminded Court of the mission of the Business School and particularly its aim to be recognised as one of the leading business schools in Europe. The Dean provided the recruitment figures for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Court was interested to note that the Business School had a significant number of overseas part-time postgraduate students who had been recruited through the ten international centres that the School now had. Overall the postgraduate activities accounted for a significant proportion of the Business School’s income. The Dean provided Court with information on the challenges facing the Business School and how these were being addressed. This was a very competitive area, both nationally and internationally, and there was fierce competition amongst institutions to recruit the best staff. The outcomes of the next RAE would be critical to the reputation of the Scottish Business Schools. The Dean reported that, through the activities of the Association of Business Schools, they were now working collaboratively to enhance their reputation.

The Business School had already begun implementing its own strategy which was consistent with the objectives in the University’s strategic plan. The undergraduate and postgraduate offerings had been reviewed and reformed to ensure a more attractive and sustainable portfolio. In terms of research some areas were performing well while others needed some further attention. The Dean was keen to develop a culture of excellence throughout the whole Faculty. The Centre for Executive Education had been established which was reformulating the knowledge exchange activities of the Business School and had already achieved some early success.

Court welcomed this report and particularly the Dean’s clear explanation of the various changes that had been made and those that were currently taking place. In terms of streamlining systems there could be information emerging from this that might help other parts of the University faced with similar situations. One of the main challenges facing the Business School was to further develop its relationship and reputation within the Scottish Business community. Whilst Strathclyde’s reputation was already high it was critical to continue to enhance this. Various events were being organised in order to showcase the excellent provision at Strathclyde and the wealth of talent available in the Business School.

On behalf of Court the Convener thanked the Dean for his report.

CM 4047 RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Court received the Risk Management report from the University Management Committee (UMC) for 2006/07. This report had been discussed by both the UMC and the Audit Committee before coming to Court. This was a comprehensive report that drew substantially on the annual operational risk assessment reports provided to UMC, as well as discussion of other significant developments that took place at meetings of UMC and Court itself.
External factors, such as feedback from the External Auditors and information obtained from horizon scanning, were also used to inform this risk report. The University had to achieve a balance to ensure that any risk could be justified and managed accordingly. The Principal drew attention to the main risks the University had faced during the year and those it had identified for the coming period. The Convener of the Audit Committee confirmed that the Audit Committee had been very encouraged by the progress made by the University in addressing risk management and was satisfied with the arrangements in place. Court welcomed this report.

CM 4048 BUSINESS VENTURES GROUP REPORT (CM 3890)

Court received the annual report from the Business Ventures Group (BVG). In presenting this report the Acting Convener of BVG, Mr Monaghan, drew Court’s attention to the format of this report, which had changed significantly this year. The role of BVG was changing as it was becoming more strategic in its approach. The Strategic Plan set some challenging targets for the University to achieve in relation to commercialisation activities, one of these being for the University to be in the top ten in the UK for the number of spin-out companies formed annually in proportion to annual research income. The University had not achieved its target in this area in recent years due to a number of factors. However, BVG would be working with Research & Innovation and the wider University community to achieve these new targets. Indeed, BVG had supported the launch of the Strathclyde Innovation Fund, in partnership with Braveheart Ltd, in order to raise £12M for the exclusive purpose of investing in Strathclyde opportunities; and had also supported the Commercialisation Initiative in Electronic and Electrical Engineering which was having a positive impact. The Technology Talent Initiative was also having a beneficial effect. Court welcomed this report.

CM 4049 PRIZES AND SCHOLARSHIPS (SM11232.2)

On the recommendation of Senate, Court RESOLVED that the Neil Rafeek Oral History Prize (£750) be approved for inclusion in the Calendar with immediate effect.

CM 4050 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION (SM 11234.2)

The Dean confirmed that Professor Bourne had already been appointed as a member of the Faculty of Education. On the recommendation of Senate and under the terms of Statute XVI and Ordinance 7, Court RESOLVED that Professor J Bourne be appointed Dean of the Faculty of Education from 1 November 2007 to 30 September 2012, with the option of continuing beyond this date for the period to 31 July 2013.

CM 4051 CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR (SM 11243)

Court homologated the action taken by the Convener, who had acted on the recommendation of Senate, and had approved the conferment of the title of Emeritus Professor on the following members of staff who had, or were about to, retire: Professor S Shaw, Marketing; Professor J Gennard, Human Resource Management; and Professor H Williams, Management Science.
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CM 4052  RESTRUCTURING COSTS – FUNDING ISSUES

The University Management Committee recently considered guidelines setting out how restructuring costs could be funded for both a ‘normal’ retirement scheme and any formal scheme introduced. On the recommendation of the University Management Committee, Court

RESOLVED that

i. restructuring costs in the normal course of business should continue as currently arranged, whereby the capital cost of the retirement would be met from general University resources in the first instance and repaid over time by the Faculty/Department concerned. Budget holders would not be allowed to access any savings resulting from the early retirement until such time as the capital cost had been repaid in full;

ii. where a formal redundancy committee was set up a Faculty/Department would not be expected to bear all the costs. The equivalent of one year’s salary costs would be funded centrally and the Faculty/Department would meet any restructuring costs in excess of the total of one year’s salary for that group of employees. As would be the case with ‘normal’ retirements the posts would, typically, be left vacant until any capital cost had been repaid;

iii. these guidelines become effective immediately;

iv. in order to identify a source of funding to meet the central share of restructuring costs in the period to 2009/10 the University’s General Reserve be enhanced from its current level of £10.5M by £3M, in order that there would be additional funds available to draw down. This would be achieved by retaining unused budget contingencies (apart from those already earmarked for the EDF), allocating a portion of any favourable mid year variances and any other unallocated budget surpluses to the General Reserve.

CM 4053  NEW STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FUND

It was noted that the University Management Committee had identified a budget resource that could be used to fund strategic investment in the three key elements of the University’s Strategic Plan, namely: Research, Education and Knowledge Exchange. These funds were being managed by the relevant groups/committees responsible for these strategic areas under the leadership of the relevant Senior Officer. The Deans had been engaged in the discussion to establish these funds and the elements they could support and each of the groups had representatives from the Faculties in their membership. Three Deputy Principals, Ferguson, Hughes and McDonald, were taking the lead in ensuring that these funds were being used to maximum effect within the University in support of the strategy and some exciting developments had already been identified for support. It was noted that it was also the intention to create investment funds for CAS areas.

CM 4054  ESTATES STRATEGY COMMITTEE (CM 4010, 4011)

Mr T J Monaghan, Vice-Convener, was in the Chair for discussion of this item.

Court received the report from the meeting of the Estates Strategy Committee held on 4 September 2007. Due to the absence of the Deputy Convener (Estates) the Convener of Court had chaired this meeting. The following matters were discussed:
.1 **Delegated Authority (ESCM 136)**

The Treasurer and the Directors of Finance and of Estates Management had met to review the current levels of delegated authority of the Committee. Recent experience had shown that such a review would be timely. The Committee had considered and endorsed their proposals. On the recommendation of the Estates Strategy Committee, Court

**RESOLVED** that

i. on an annual basis the Estates Strategy Committee should agree a cash flow target for the level of investment to be applied to backlog maintenance within the overall allowance in the EDF;

ii. cash flow targets be kept under review and any significant changes would have to be approved by the Committee and Court at the earliest opportunity;

iii. the Committee have delegated authority to approve the drawing down of funds set aside in the EDF for backlog maintenance, with Court being kept advised for information;

iv. all other major projects would continue to be submitted to Court for approval following receipt by the ESC of a suitable business plan/case for investment;

v. the Convener of the Estates Strategy Committee be delegated authority, on behalf of ESC and Court, to approve appropriate virement of funds up to a maximum value of £50k between individual projects, subject to report back to the next meeting of ESC;

vi. the above proposals were subject to confirmation that the Head of Internal Audit was satisfied with these arrangements.

[Secretary’s Note: the Head of Internal Audit has confirmed that these arrangements are satisfactory]

It was also noted that Court would receive early warning of any potential or actual over-runs on the estates projects and what the financial implications would be for the University.

.2 **Sports and Health Facility (ESCM 146)**

Deputy Principal Professor McDonald updated Court on progress with the development of the new Sports and Health facility. At its last meeting Court had been informed that the local FE Colleges, who would be developing a new joint campus on Cathedral Street, had expressed an interest in joining forces to provide a shared sports facility. The Funding Council (SFC) was very supportive of this proposal and was prepared to assist with the funding of such a development if it should proceed. Pan Leisure, who had conducted the initial work on this development for the University, had been asked to consider this further and provide detailed analysis of the options open to the University. They had looked at the cost of providing the two separate facilities (one for the University and one for the Colleges) and the cost of a combined facility. Their analysis showed that a combined development would provide a much better range of facilities than either could achieve on their own and the cost was less than the sum of the two separate facilities.

The University had advised the SFC and the Colleges that it was willing to proceed with a combined facility on the understanding that it owned the facility and could reach mutually acceptable service level agreements with the Colleges regarding access to the facility for both academic and leisure use. It was the intention that an Executive Board would be established for this facility with representatives from the University and the Colleges, and the Colleges would pay an annual fee for access to the facilities and to meet their share of the operational costs involved. The Colleges would provide the University with the ground lease for the part of the building that would be situated on the land owned by the Colleges,
and the University would have the right to buy this portion of land under certain circumstances. However, these matters needed to be negotiated with the SFC and the Colleges first to achieve a mutually acceptable agreement.

In discussion Court members expressed their support for continuing to progress the development of a combined facility. Court also discussed the branding of the facility and the effect this might have on the students. It was noted that it was the intention to locate the University’s Sports Union offices in this building which would give a clear focus for Strathclyde students. However, there was no desire to create two separate communities of students. This matter would be considered further to ensure that it benefited all students. Consideration was currently being given as to how to add facilities management expertise to the existing skills of the Sport and Recreation team and further information would be brought to Court at an appropriate time. In relation to meeting the operational costs of this facility then the service level agreements would be crucial to ensure that the University would not be disadvantaged. A robust business plan had been developed at the time when this project was approved which took account of the running costs and the income. It was the intention to follow these principles for the larger combined facility. Approaches had also been made to potential external sponsors and some £500k had been raised so far towards this facility.

In light of the above discussion and on the recommendation of the Estates Strategy Committee, Court

RESOLVED that

i. discussions with the Funding Council and the Colleges continue on the basis of a combined facility being developed and the University’s position being made known;

ii. the Design Team be instructed to proceed with the combined facility subject to the Funding Council agreeing to underwrite up to £200k fees during the period of detailed negotiations with the Colleges.

.3 Audit Scotland Report on Estate Management in Scottish HEI’s (ESCM 149)

Court was aware that the University had volunteered to take part in an Audit Scotland investigation into the management of estates in Scottish higher education institutions (HEI’s). It now had a summary of the key messages emerging from this report before it for information. This showed that the overall condition of Scottish University estates was worse than in the UK as a whole and that there was a substantial maintenance backlog. Court noted that the Audit Scotland report had been presented to the Audit Committee of the Scottish Parliament which had raised a number of issues, including why there hadn’t been more joint approaches to the sharing of buildings/facilities. If the University did proceed with the combined Sports and Health facility as outlined above then this would go some way to help satisfy the Parliamentary Committee. Court noted this report.

CM 4055 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Court received the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 3 September 2007 and noted the following items in particular:

.1 Capital Development Programme (AM 797)

The Director of Estates Management had attended the recent meeting of the Audit Committee to discuss progress with the capital development programme (the EDF) and the various controls and monitoring arrangements that were in place. The Committee had been impressed by the thoroughness of the approach taken to these matters. However, they had
asked for two further refinements, namely: that Court should receive an annual summary of the costs involved in the EDF; and that the escalation procedures be reviewed and strengthened as appropriate.

.2 Internal Audit Annual Report (AM 800)

The Committee was concerned that there were some matters that appeared in a number of audit reports issued by the Internal Audit Service that seemed to be raised on a number of occasions. The Committee had proposed certain actions to be taken and would encourage departments to address these matters.

CM 4056 STAFF COMMITTEE

Court received the minutes of the meeting of Staff Committee held on 18 September 2007 and noted the following items in particular:

.1 Appointment of Senior Academic Managers (S1303)

It was noted that a small group was being established to review the procedures for the appointment of Senior Academic Managers, i.e. Deans, Deputy Principals, Pro-Vice Principal and Vice-Principal. This would be a joint Senate/Court group with membership drawn from both bodies and would report to both bodies. Senate had appointed the Principal (as Convener of the Group), the Vice-Principal and Professor A Paterson. Court

RESOLVED that the Convener of Court and Dr Wilson should join the membership of this group.

.2 New Performance Review Procedures (S1298)

In light of completion of the pay modernisation procedure Staff Committee was now in the process of reviewing the performance review procedures for staff. Changes to process would be introduced in 2008. Changes to criteria were only at a very early stage of development and would not be brought in until 2009, after extensive consultation.

CM 4057 MEMBERSHIP OF COURT AND COURT COMMITTEES 2007/08

Court noted its current membership and the membership of its various Committees for session 2007/08.

CM 4058 SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS, DATES OF MEETINGS AND DEPARTMENTAL VISITS IN 2007/08

Court noted its schedule of business, dates of meetings and departmental visits in session 2007/08.

CM 4059 CONVENER’S ACTIONS

The following action taken under delegated authority by the Convener of Court was homologated by Court:
.1 Isaac Sclar Scholarships

Funding had been provided to establish two scholarships as follows:
The Isaac Sclar Scholarship which has been created to ‘enable further development of, or research in, the field of electronics, electrical engineering or in associated subjects by postgraduate students at the University of Strathclyde’;
And
The Isaac Sclar Pharmacy Scholarship which has been created to ‘enable further development of, or research in, the field of Pharmacy or in associated subjects by postgraduate students at the University of Strathclyde’.

The Convener had approved the establishment of these scholarships on behalf of Court in order to allow the relevant legal documentation to be signed and the funds released to the University.

.2 Head of Department Appointments

**Accounting and Finance:** Professor A Marshall appointed for the period 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2010;
**Management:** Professor C Huxham appointed for the period 1 October 2007 to 31 July 2010;
**Marketing:** Professor A Wilson to be appointed for the period 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2010.

.3 Appointment of Governor of Stirlingshire Education Trust

The Convener has nominated Mr Paul Goldfinch as the University’s representative to serve as a Governor of the Stirlingshire Educational Trust.

CM 4060 REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Court noted that the Secretary to the University had written to all members of Court asking them to complete a declaration of interests form. He was able to confirm that both he and the Head of Internal Audit had scrutinised the returns and were satisfied with them.

CM 4061 USE OF THE UNIVERSITY SEAL

Court noted that the use of the University Seal as recorded in the Seal Book for the period of the academic year 2006/07 had complied with the relevant Regulations governing such use.

CM 4062 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be the Residential meeting on Friday 16 and Saturday 17 November 2007. Further information would be issued shortly to Court.