University of Strathclyde

COURT

Minutes: 1 December 2009

Present: Dr J F Livingston (Convener of Court), Principal, Vice-Principal Professor K Miller, Mr R Cleland, Mr R Crawford, Mr D Dunbar, Dr J Fergus, Dr D Grierson, Dr P Hughes, Mr R Hunter, Professor R Kalin, Mr T Monaghan, Ms M McGarry, Dr J McInnes, Mr L McMonagle, Professor M Poustie, Mr N Sturrock, Dr S Tagg, Ms L Whiteford, Mr P Whyte, Dr G Wilson, Mr M Wishart.

Attending: Dr P West (Acting Chief Operating Officer), Mr D Coyle (Chief Financial Officer), Deputy Principal Professor A Ferguson, Deputy Principal Mrs A Hughes, Professor J Love (Special Adviser), Professor C Grant (Dean of Engineering), Professor I Hunter (Dean of Science), Dr J Mills (Vice-Dean of Law, Arts & Social Sciences), Mr B Green (Vice-Dean of Education), Professor S MacGregor (Dean Designate, Engineering), Ms J Whitley (Director of Corporate Services), Mr G Roddick (Director of Estates Services), Ms S Heidinger (Acting Director of Human Resources), Dr V O'Halloran (Director of Student Experience and Enhancement Services), Ms S Hunt (Head of Communications), Ms S Hansen (Head of Governance, Management & Policy), Ms K MacLeod (Assistant Finance Director), Mrs G McArthur (Governance and Policy Manager).

Apologies: Councillor J Findlay, Mr D Gray, Dr C Prior, Dr C Tedford, Professor D Gani, Professor P Winn, Professor S Hart.

OPEN BUSINESS

CM 4364 WELCOME

On behalf of Court the Convener welcomed Dr V O’Halloran, Director of Student Experience and Enhancement Services, to the meeting.

CM 4365 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 6 October and 20 November 2009 were approved.

CM 4366 PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

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

- Following meetings between Universities Scotland, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), a new public affairs strategy was emerging that would help the general public better understand the role of higher education and the contributions it could make;
- An independent review of Initial Teacher Education structural sustainability had just been launched under the leadership of former HMI G Donaldson;
- It was thought likely that the outcomes of the SFC Teaching Price Group review would be implemented in 2011/12, which would give institutions time to plan for the changes this would bring;
- In relation to the Horizon Fund, SFC were now taking proposals from institutions and were also proposing projects that institutions might consider;
- The Scottish Government were considering sectoral/institutional reporting and governance issues for Conveners of Courts;
- As part of the preparations for the Research Excellence Framework an audit of research activity would be undertaken within the University in the first quarter of 2010. A new appointment was being made within the University to drive this activity forward. Also the delivery of the Research Information Management Systems would be accelerated to assist with this;
• The University had been successful in a number of research pooling initiatives, namely: SUPA-2 (Physics), MASTS (Marine Science) and Science Bridges (Photonics). A new Advanced Space Concepts Laboratory had recently been opened under the leadership of Professor C McInnes, Mechanical Engineering;
• 20 John Anderson Research leadership posts had been advertised across three Faculties – Science, Engineering and Business – and a further 5 would shortly be advertised in Humanities and Social Sciences. These posts were a critical part of the University strategy;
• It was the intention that a new Strathclyde Campaign would be launched early in 2010 in support of the University’s vision. Further information would be brought to Court in due course.

CM 4367 ANNUAL REPORT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING (CM 4348, 4321)
.1 Deputy Principal Hughes presented the Annual Report on Teaching and Learning. This was the first of the new style reports to Court on the main themes of the University’s Strategic Plan. Court was pleased to note that the University had generally met its targets for the theme of Education. The only target that had not been achieved was that of increasing recruitment of international postgraduate instructional students by 10% per annum. On reflection it was considered that this target had been set too high and without an underlying strategy to ensure it was achieved. This target was being reviewed and a more realistic target would be set for the future.

Court was pleased to note that there had been significant activity to enhance the student learning experience, including the work done to improve the first year experience of students and the framework to support Faculties to increase interdisciplinarity in the curriculum. Indeed, there had been significant work undertaken to re-design the undergraduate curriculum in order to underpin the delivery of the vision of Strathclyde as a leading international technological University. A number of programmes had been externally recognised and accredited, and feedback obtained showed that student satisfaction had improved in almost all areas.

In looking ahead further curriculum renewal and reshaping would take place including the development of infrastructure to facilitate collaborative working across disciplines and the provision of opportunities to encourage students to adopt a more international outlook. Faculties were working hard to develop appropriate attributes in their students not only to increase their employability opportunities but also to produce graduates fit for the 21st Century.
.2 In discussion it was noted that consideration was being given to how best to diversify the degree programmes the University offered in order to make them more attractive to students and employers but without compromising the professional standing of such programmes. Further work needed to be undertaken with the professional bodies and employers to demonstrate the added value such distinctive degree offerings would bring. The University was also keen to provide more internships for students with a range of employers, not just large companies. Consideration would also be given to what key performance indicators might be used as future measures, as well as those relevant to the University at present. This would help ensure the University was on the right track.

Court was pleased to note that attitudes and behaviours were starting to change and greater multi- and inter-disciplinarity was being brought into degree programmes. Strength in disciplines was essential to deliver excellent and attractive degree programmes. It was considered that such moves would enhance Strathclyde’s reputation for producing strong graduates that would be sought after by employers.
Court welcomed this report.

CM 4368 ENHANCEMENT LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (CM 4321)

Deputy Principal Hughes reminded Court of the rationale behind the Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) that the University would shortly experience in February and March 2010. She informed Court of the process that the University was following for the
final production of the Reflective Analysis, which was the self-evaluation that would guide the Reviewers during their visits to the University. Court was pleased to note that the University had addressed the points raised in the previous ELIR visit in 2005, and had also made improvements in a number of other areas, including the first year experience, graduate attributes, innovation in assessment and curriculum design and student feedback. In preparing for the next ELIR extensive consultation had taken place within the University on the draft Reflective Analysis. It was acknowledged that the University was currently undergoing transformational change but it was essential to maintain and improve the quality of the student learning experience. In addition to the improvements mentioned above there had also been much greater student engagement in decision-making and a partnership approach to improving the educational experience had been adopted so that students could input directly to this process.

Court welcomed this report and was pleased to note that external consultations with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) had also taken place to ensure that the University was taking the right approach. It was acknowledged that such reviews tended to concentrate on the paperwork produced, but Court was assured that the Reflective Analysis was an active document that provided a clear insight into the activity and energy taking place in the University. Additionally, staff and students would have the opportunity to meet with and talk to the reviewers to convey this information. It would also be essential to convey the clear message that whilst the University was undergoing a period of transformational change, a number of activities to maintain and improve the educational quality were taking place, and the University was clear about the direction it was going in.

In considering the possible outcomes Court noted that there were three possible judgements, and that it was possible to have caveats with the judgement of ‘confidence’. Court was clear that it attached great importance to the University obtaining a judgement of ‘confidence’.

Court thanked Deputy Principal Hughes and her team for all the work being undertaken in this area.

CM 4369 ESTATES DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (CM 4322, 4298)

1 Estates Development Framework 2
Court received the Estates Development Framework (EDF) 2 which had been prepared following extensive consultation throughout the University. This report outlined the estates development for the period 2010 – 2024 which supported the University’s vision to be a leading international technological University. This plan would see the University’s estate consolidate on the John Anderson Campus, with the focus of investment being to the north of the existing campus. Four main academic quarters would be developed with a teaching and learning spine running across the heart of the campus. The bulk of investment would take place in the early years with the completion of the SIPBS building, the development of the new Sports and Health Centre, and the upgrading of other buildings central to this framework. It would provide a sustainable campus that would be more environmentally friendly, more flexible and more attractive to staff and students, with an overall improvement in quality. It would also release assets and reduce the overall size of the University’s accommodation holdings.

In considering the financing of the EDF Court was aware that investment in the estate was a key element of the University vision, along with investment in staff. A balance in investment was essential if the University was to reap the benefits and achieve its vision. The EDF would cost in the region of c£350M during the first ten years and would be funded from a variety of sources including cash the University already had and bank borrowings. Other funds would be available from asset disposals, other income streams and a development campaign. However, other funding options, as alternatives to bank borrowing, were also being considered and decisions would be taken at appropriate points to ensure that the University chose the most financially suitable option. There were also pause points in the timetable for the EDF to allow time to reflect on progress made, what the next phase of development would be as well as its affordability. A business case
would be developed for each project within the EDF that would be subject to rigorous scrutiny before any decision to commit funding was taken. Environmental scanning would also take place to ensure that the University was achieving value for money for the works. External consultants, Quayle Munro, had reviewed the financial report and confirmed that the approach was sound. They had also been asked to consider a range of potential funding options and report back to the University on the suitability of these.

Court welcomed the EDF and congratulated the Director of Estates Services and his team on the excellent work undertaken. The Chief Financial Officer and his team were also congratulated on the work they had undertaken in looking at the financing of the EDF and the options available to the University. Court was encouraged by the rigour of the process undertaken to develop the EDF and considered this to be a cohesive and innovative estates development plan. Court was aware that the external economic environment could change quickly and welcomed the reassurances that the University could afford this plan and would have pause points to take stock as the development progressed. However, Court was aware of the risks involved, particularly if the University was not able to dispose of its assets at the right time and if the construction costs escalated rapidly. Both of these factors would have a significant effect on the affordability of the EDF and could lead to tough decisions having to be taken.

In light of the above discussion, and on the understanding that it would have the opportunity to consider the case for investment in each of the major projects associated with it, Court

RESOLVED that the Estates Development Framework (2010 – 2024) be approved.

.2 Priority Projects
A number of priority projects had been identified which were essential to progress as part of the first stage of implementing EDF 2. On the recommendation of the Estates Committee, Court

RESOLVED that the following projects be approved:

i. **Lord Hope Refurbishment** - a design team be appointed to complete the design to Gateway 1 and £300k be allocated to meet the cost of fees for this work;

ii. **Jordanhill Associated moves** – a design team be appointed to complete the design to Gateway 1 and £300k be allocated to meet the cost of fees for this work;

iii. **Curran Building Refurbishment** - a design team be appointed to complete the design to Gateway 1 and £300k be allocated to meet the cost of fees for this work;

iv. **Sports & Health Building** - the existing design team for this project be re-appointed to undertake further design and procurement activities and deliver the project previously designed to RIBA Stage D at a maximum cost of £33.1M;

v. **Business Faculty Masterplan** - the Case for Investment / Business Case was approved and the project could be delivered to completion at a cost of £7.66M;

vi. **Power Networks Demonstration Centre** – a design team be appointed to complete the design to Gateway 1 and £85k allocated to meet the cost of fees for this work. (It was noted that this project would follow a similar model to the AFRC and the capital works would be fully funded by Scottish Enterprise). Secretary’s note: the Faculty has agreed to underwrite this cost should there be any difficulties with the funding.
Principal, which was a new addition this year. This set the context that the University was operating in. Whilst the financial outcome for the year was a deficit of £7.4M (as compared to a surplus of £9.7M in the previous year) this had been planned and was largely due to the implementation of an Early Retirement and Voluntary Severance scheme (ERVS). Similar charges would be made to the Financial Statements next year, as the University continued with its restructuring plans. However, the Treasurer was satisfied that the University had a coherent financial plan for the next ten years that would see it move back into surplus in the future.

.2 The Chief Financial Officer provided information to Court on the main factors that had affected the Financial Statements. In relation to income there had been increases in tuition fees and SFC grant income, as well as a significant increase in research contract income. The University had also increased its cash balances to £104M, an element of which would be used to invest in the development of the estate. The biggest increase in expenditure had been in relation to staffing costs, which was the main reason behind the introduction of the ERVS scheme. Uptake of this scheme had been, and continued to be, very positive so that the University was confident of significantly reducing its overall salary bill from 2010.

Court welcomed this information and was pleased that such positive action had been taken at an early stage to address the University’s financial position. The University had considerable financial reserves and had the capability to finance major strategic investments as well as to ensure future financial sustainability.

.3 Court noted that both the Audit Committee and the Executive Team were satisfied with the Financial Statements. The External Auditors had confirmed that they would be issuing an unqualified report and they had raised no matters in their Management Letter. On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, Court

RESOLVED that the draft Financial Statements for 2008/09 be approved and the relevant officers be authorised to sign the printed statements in due course.

On behalf of Court the Convener thanked the Chief Financial Officer and his team for all their hard work in preparing the Financial Statements.

CM 4371 REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (SM 11363.2)

The Student President presented proposals to revise the Constitution of the Students Association. He informed Court that these proposals had been developed following wide consultation with both staff and students in the University, with the Association’s legal advisers and with other appropriate bodies. The proposals now emerging would modernise the structures and procedures of the Students Association and encourage wider participation and representation of the student body. At the same time they would reduce bureaucracy. It was noted that, if approved, the revised Constitution would take effect from 1 July 2010, save those regulations regarding student elections that would take effect immediately so that the elections in February 2010 would be run under the new arrangements.

On the recommendation of Senate, Court

RESOLVED that the revised Constitution of the Students Association be approved as presented to take effect from 1 July 2010, save those provisions relating the election of student officers that would be approved with immediate effect.

CM 4372 REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY CHARTER AND STATUTES (CM 4347; SM 11357)

.1 Proposed amendments to the University Charter and Statutes
At its last meeting Court had agreed revisions to the University Charter and Statutes and had passed a Special Resolution to that effect. These amendments had been considered by Senate, had been publicly displayed within the University for a period of 28 days, and were now back before Court for final approval before being forwarded to the Privy Council for consideration and approval. Court

**RESOLVED** that

i. the previous Special Resolution to amend the Charter be approved and the Charter be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the minutes;

ii. the previous Special Resolution to pass a new Statute to amend the Statutes of the University be approved and the Statutes of the University be replaced with the Statutes also as set out in Appendix 2 to the minutes.

.2 **Further Amendments to the Statutes**

At the meeting of Senate where discussion of the above Special Resolution had taken place, a proposal to revise the wording of the new Statute 3.5.4, regarding the procedure to re-appoint members of Senate to membership of Court, had been considered and was recommended to Court. Court was supportive of this proposal.

Also, Court had just approved the revised Constitution of the Students Association (see CM 4371 above) which had implications for the students’ representation on Court. Under the terms of the revised Constitution the post of Honorary President of the Students Association would no longer exist. This post, together with the President of the Students Association, were currently the officers appointed under Statute to Court. In proposing the amendments to the Constitution, the Executive of the Students Association had been of the view that there should continue to be two representatives of the Students Association who would be members of Court, one of these being the Student President, but the Executive should have the authority to appoint the second member. In taking this approach the Executive were of the view that the second appointment should also be a student. The Court Membership Group had met to consider this matter and, taking account of practice in other Universities, supported this proposal. Court concurred with this approach and a Special Resolution to further amend the Statutes to reflect these two points was now before Court for approval.

In considering this Special Resolution to revise the Statutes a further proposal was made. It was considered that the provisions regarding the re-appointment of the member of the Professional Services to Court should be the same as for re-appointing members of Senate. Court agreed with this proposal and

**RESOLVED** to amend the Special Resolution to include the following proposal

Statute 3.5.8
Delete: ‘not’
So that the Statute 3.5.8 now reads:
‘One person appointed by the Professional Services staff of the University, who shall be a member of Court for three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment immediately thereafter and who shall be subject to a maximum period as a member of Court of six years.’

Court

**RESOLVED** that the following resolution be passed as a Special Resolution

i. It being noted that, in order to amend the Statutes of the University, the Court must pass a new Statute by Special Resolution;

ii. Accordingly, the Court approves the following Statute subject to any amendments required by the Privy Council, to subsequent further approval of this Special Resolution
by the Court of the University no less than one month and no more than three months after the date of this Special Resolution and to the approval of the Privy Council:

A STATUTE TO AMEND THE STATUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE

The Statutes of the University of Strathclyde are hereby replaced with the Statutes contained in Appendix 3 to this minute.

CM 4373 EARLY RETIREMENT AND VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME (CM 4345)

Court received a report on the uptake of the Early Retirement and Severance Scheme to date. This confirmed that the scheme had met its original targets and that further applications were still being received and considered. At the last meeting it had been agreed that the general scheme should close at 30 September, but that it should continue until 30 April 2010 for staff employed in areas undergoing re-shaping activities. Court welcomed this report.

CM 4374 REVIEW OF SOCIAL SCIENCES: MERGER OF FACULTIES (CM 4349.2, 4316; SM 11358)

At its meeting in June Court had agreed that the Faculties of Education and of Law, Arts and Social Sciences should merge with effect from 1 August 2010. Following consultation a name for the new Faculty had emerged. On the recommendation of Senate and under the terms of Statute XIII.4 (E), Court

RESOLVED that the title of the new Faculty created from the merger of the Faculties of Education and of Law, Arts and Social Sciences be the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, effective from 1 August 2010.

CM 4375 APPOINTMENT OF DEAN OF ENGINEERING (SM 11363.1)

On the recommendation of Senate and under the terms of Statute XVI, Court

RESOLVED that Professor S McGregor be appointed Dean of the Faculty of Engineering for the period 1 January 2010 to 31 July 2015.

CM 4376 PRIZES AND SCHOLARSHIPS (SM 11363.3)

On the recommendation of Senate, Court

RESOLVED that the additions, amendments to and withdrawal of Prizes and Scholarships be approved as detailed in Appendix 4 to the minutes.

CM 4377 REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE TEAM

Court noted a report from the Executive Team (meetings of 22 October and 17 November 2009) and particularly the following:

.1 Estates: Decision-Making Framework and Delegated Authority

On the recommendation of the Executive Team, Court

RESOLVED that the proposed Decision-Making Framework and Schedule of Delegated Authority for Estates matters be approved as presented. It was noted that these arrangements would be reviewed after one year and would be the template for other areas of the University to use when revising their decision-making structures and processes and the Schedule of Delegated Authority.

.2 Scottish Funding Council: Strategic Dialogue Meeting
It was noted that the Strategic Dialogue Meeting with representatives of the Scottish Funding Council would take place on 14 January 2010.

CM 4378 REPORT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

Court noted the report from the meeting of Audit Committee held on 3 November 2009 and particularly the following matters:

.1 Annual Reports

Court noted the Annual reports from the Audit Committee and the Internal Audit Service for 2008/09. Court was pleased to note the Audit Opinion:

'The Committee is satisfied with the adequacy of the University's procedures for risk management and for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (i.e. value for money), and the adequacy and effectiveness of its internal financial and management systems of control and governance arrangements. This view is based on the information and comment provided to the Committee from the Internal Audit Service through their audit reports, annual report and regular activity reports; from the External Auditors, through their report on the financial statements and the Management Letter; and from various other enquiries and information sought by the Committee from a range of areas within the University, not least through the annual risk report process (which was transitional in 2009) and is due to be developed and improved in late 2009 and through 2010.

The Committee is satisfied that the University has complied with the CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK, and that the Governing Body's responsibilities as defined in the Statement of responsibilities of the University Court in the Financial Statements, have been satisfactorily discharged.'

On behalf of Court the Convener thanked the Audit Committee and the Internal Audit Service for all their hard work through the year.

.2 Appointment of External Auditors

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, Court

RESOLVED that Ernst & Young LLP be re-appointed External Auditors for a further two years (i.e. for the audit of the Financial Statements for the years 2009/10 and 2010/11) at an annual fee of £55,000 (excluding VAT), subject to the standard annual review of performance.

.3 Risk Management Procedures and Processes

Court was aware that a Risk Management Workshop, led by Ernst & Young, had been held in October. The report produced from this had provided a number of recommendations, some of which had been acted upon already and others that were being considered further within the University. The Audit Committee would be monitoring progress and Court would be kept informed of developments as appropriate.

CM 4379 CONVENER'S ACTION

1. Head of Department Appointment Department of Modern Languages: Professor J Farrell has been appointed for the period 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010.

2. Law School Course Fee: A correction to the fee for the part-time LLB graduate entrant accelerated programme was approved (the wrong figure had been presented earlier in the year).

3. Schedule of Delegated Authority – Amendment: The current arrangements provide for UMC and Senate to approve these, with the Convener having an oversight on behalf of Court. However, with the demise of UMC it has been agreed that the Chief Financial Officer will review proposed Tuition Fees and make recommendations directly to Senate for approval.
4. **Honorary Membership of Ross Priory**: The Convener has recommended to the Ross Priory Club Committee of Management that Mr Roy Cook, Director of Residence and Catering Services, be made an Honorary Member of Ross Priory in recognition of his service and commitment to Ross Priory.

**CM 4380 SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS (CM 4344)**

Court approved its revised Schedule of Business. This had been amended to take account of the change in dates for the meetings of Court Business Group.

**CM 4381 PROFESSOR C GRANT**

This was Professor Grant's last meeting and, on behalf of Court, the Convener thanked him for his contributions to Court.

**CM 4382 NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 23 February 2010 at 9.30 a.m.