University of Strathclyde

COURT

Minutes: 31 March 2010

Present: Dr J F Livingston (Convener of Court), Principal, Vice-Principal Professor K Miller, Mr R Cleland, Mr R Crawford, 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, Dr C Prior, Mr N Sturrock, Dr S Tagg, Dr C Tedford, Ms L Whiteford, Dr G Wilson, Mr M Wishart.

Attending: Dr P West (Acting Chief Operating Officer), Mr D Coyle (Chief Financial Officer), Professor A Ferguson (Deputy Principal), Mrs A Hughes (Deputy Principal), Professor D Gani (Deputy Principal), Professor P Winn (Deputy Principal), Professor J Love (Special Adviser), Professor S Hart (Dean of Business), Professor S MacGregor (Dean of Engineering), Dr J Mills (Vice-Dean of Law, Arts & Social Sciences), Mr B Green (Vice-Dean of Education), Ms J Whitley (Director of Corporate Services), Mr G Roddick (Director of Estates Services), Ms S Heidinger (Director of Human Resources), Mr T Collins (Director of Marketing & Development Services), Mr J Hogg (Project Manager), Mrs G McArthur (Governance & Policy Manager).

Apologies: Mr D Dunbar, Dr J Fergus, Councillor J Findlay, Mr D Gray, Mr P Whyte, Professor I Hunter.

OPEN BUSINESS

CM 4411 WELCOME

On behalf of Court the Convener welcomed Mr T Collins, the recently appointed Director of Marketing and Development Services, and Mr J Hogg, Project Manager, to the meeting.

CM 4412 PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

The Principal reported on the following matters:

i. Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) – the Principal was pleased to report that he had received a letter from the QAA confirming that the University had received the highest rating of ‘confidence’ following the recent ELIR visit to the University. He paid tribute to the Convener and Mr Wishart, who had met with the review team on behalf of Court, and all those who had contributed to the successful outcome. In particular he paid tribute to Mrs A Hughes, Deputy Principal (Teaching and Learning), and Ms S Hansen, Head of Governance, Management and Policy, who had been responsible for preparing the submission and organising the visit.

ii. Funding Letter – the funding letter for next year had been received within the University. This confirmed that the University would receive a reduction in funding of 0.3% from the Scottish Funding Council. This reduction in funding was largely due to the University’s performance in the last RAE exercise. However, within the detail of the funding the University had secured a significant increase, of 8.1%, in its Postgraduate Research Grant (the sector increase was 0.9%).

iii. Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences – Court noted the progress being made in recruiting the Dean of the new, merged Faculty. It was hoped that an appointment would be confirmed shortly.

iv. Student Demonstration – the Principal reported that there had been a student demonstration earlier in the day protesting against the cuts in funding for higher education, and the threats to some of the courses offered by the University.
CM 4413  STRUCTURE FOR THE NEW FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
(CM 4395)

(Professor Poustie declared an interest in this matter)

1 Academic Structure

At the last meeting Court had been informed of the proposals emerging from the Merger Implementation Group (MIG) regarding the formation of the new Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. A new academic structure was proposed that would comprise a matrix arrangement with the formation of Schools, rather than Departments, and cross-cutting activities managed by the Vice-Deans. This had now been discussed at Senate (at its meeting on 17 March 2010) where the proposals had been supported subject to some further refinement of detailed elements. In approving this Senate was aware that there would be some organisational differences between the new Faculty and the other Faculties, that there was a need to ensure institutional coherence and that there would be a continuing need to work with other Faculties to identify their points of engagement with the new Faculty. Moreover, it was recommended that the views of the new Dean should be taken on these matters to ensure their involvement and influence.

Dr Wilson, who had volunteered to attend MIG at Court’s last meeting, confirmed that he was satisfied with the work undertaken by the MIG, which had been extensive. Staff had been provided with the opportunity to contribute to this process and their views had been listened to. Staff savings had already been identified and further efficiency gains would be made by introducing this new structure.

In considering the proposals before it Court noted the following points:

- Communications would be very important, both within the Faculty and across the wider University, so that all were clear how this new Faculty was structured and operated.
- Feedback from the staff had confirmed that the new Faculty included the right subject mix and already coherence was emerging round particular academic areas. It was noted that programme management would be Faculty-based with support teams as appropriate, and inter- and multi-disciplinary approaches would be encouraged and supported.
- External market testing had been conducted and this had confirmed that many potential external partners and funding bodies were already taking a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing particular matters. The approach adopted by the new Faculty was, therefore, viewed as the correct one and this would be made known to potential students, employers and other interested parties.
- Further information on the financial position of the new Faculty was currently being prepared and would come forward as part of the new budgeting process. Within the Faculty the Dean would be the main budget holder and would decide how and to whom any budgets would be devolved.
- The appointment and succession planning processes for the Heads of Schools and the Vice-Deans would be rigorous, and some further consideration would be given to the load anticipated for the Vice-Deans given the range of responsibilities these posts would have. Also staff development and support would be provided to the staff appointed to these positions.
- The role of the new Dean would be critical to shape and lead the new Faculty and how it would interact with the rest of the University and with external parties.

In light of the above information, Court

RESOLVED that approval be given to the following

i. the Vision and Mission Statement for the new Faculty;
ii. the macro-level organisational arrangements, subject to further discussions regarding institutional coherence, points of engagement with other Faculties and the views of the new Dean;
iii. the replacement of the existing Faculty of Law, Arts and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Education, and the Departments within these two Faculties, with the new Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences structure comprising Schools with effect from 1 August 2010;

iv. the establishment of a Faculty Management Team;

v. the job descriptor and appointment process for Heads of Schools, subject to discussion with the new Dean

all as detailed in the paper presented to Court.

Court further

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Merger Implementation Group to appoint Heads of Schools (according to the job descriptors and appointment process approved above) in consultation with the Conveners of Senate and Court.

Court congratulated the Merger Implementation Group on the work that it had undertaken, the process used and the production of such a comprehensive report. In particular Mr J Hogg (Project Manager), Ms Brigid McClure (Strategic Project Officer), Ms L Dougall (Faculty Officer – Education) and Ms B Dallat (Faculty Officer – LASS) were thanked for all their considerable contributions.

.2 Support Staff Structure

The Merger Implementation Group (MIG) had also considered the support staff structure for the new Faculty. The structure now proposed was aligned with the academic structure of the Faculty and had been designed to minimise duplication and ensure smooth interfaces between Professional Services and Faculty activities. It would support the Faculty Management Team, the academic development of the new Faculty and would relieve the administrative pressures on academic staff. These new arrangements would contribute to the overall reduction in staff costs. Initially there would be a transition phase, with staff continuing to work over a split site. However, in 2012 there would be a move to a single campus, and departments already located on the John Anderson Campus would also move so that the Faculty would be co-located. A further review of the support arrangements would be undertaken at that point as some further efficiencies might be achievable. Discussion with the new Dean would be necessary to ensure that s/he was satisfied with these arrangements.

It was noted that the support structure proposed was also a new arrangement for the University and would be monitored with interest. The Executive Team had considered and approved these proposals at its meeting the previous day. The MIG was keen to move ahead, in conjunction with Human Resources, to confirm the support staff arrangements as soon as possible. Court

RESOLVED that

i. the Support Staff Structure be approved as presented, recognising that this was subject to further discussion with the new Dean, Trade Unions and affected individuals,

ii. appointments to the new structure be progressed in conjunction with Human Resources and an appropriate Redundancy Committee.

CM 4414 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND ACTING SECRETARY TO THE UNIVERSITY

Court noted the action taken by the Convener in the light of the report from the Joint Committee of Court and Senate established to appoint the Chief Operating Officer. Court homologated the action taken by the Convener and

RESOLVED that, under the terms of Statute VIII, the Chief Operating Officer also be designated Acting Secretary to the University for the period 1 April 2010 until the Privy Council approves the revised Charter and Statutes.
CM 4415  DR P WEST

The Convener paid tribute to Dr West on his last day as Secretary to the University and Acting Chief Operating Officer. On behalf of Court he thanked Dr West for his guidance and advice and wished him well for the future.