MINUTES OF UNIVERSITY COURT
22 / 23 NOVEMBER 2012

Present: Richard Hunter (Convener)
Principal Professor Sir Jim McDonald, Jeremy Beeton, Ronnie Cleland, Robin Crawford,
David Gray, Dr Rose Mary Harley, Rebecca Maxwell Stuart, Margaret McGarry, Professor
Kenneth Miller, Malcolm Moir, Dr Jane Morgan, Professor Niamh Nic Daeid, Dr Veena
O'Halloran, Jack Perry, Niall Sturrock, Marion Venman, Malcolm Wishart, Professor Lisa
Wolfson, Professor James Thomson, Gillian Hastings

Attending: Lord David Hope, Tom Collins, David Coyle, Professor Tony McGrew, Hugh Hall, Sandra
Heidinger, Professor Iain Hunter, Simon Jennings, Chrissie Finnigan, Professor Scott
MacGregor, Jim McConnell, Professor Val Belton, Professor Colin Grant, Professor Tim
Bedford, Iona Beveridge, Cathy Milligan, Dr Andrew McLaren, Professor Andrew Goudie,
Professor David Littlejohn, Dr Jillian MacBryde, Dr David McBeth

Apologies: Professor James Fraser, Dr Archie Bethel, Councillor Stephen Curran, Professor Susan
Hart, Stuart Brough

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Convener welcomed members and outlined the context and objectives across the residential meeting
would be to explore progress in delivery of the strategy across all five key pillars of the strategy with
research excellence, internationalisation and operational efficiency being covered in this business meeting
and knowledge exchange and education being covered in the strategy session the following day.

2. Minutes / Matters arising

- The minutes of the meeting on 2 October 2012 were approved.
- The Chief Operating Officer updated Court on the Review of the Graduates Association. Court
  noted that the Review Group had met several times, had undertaken horizon scanning to explore
  sector-wide best practice as well as examining innovative internal practice, and was on schedule to
  report to the February meeting of Court

3. Principal’s Report

The Principal provided Court with the following updates on key activity since the October meeting:

- The University’s Outcome Agreement negotiating team continues to work constructively with the
  Scottish Funding Council (SFC).
- The SFC is investing in additional numbers to widen access, expand articulation and grow taught
  postgraduate and undergraduate places. Additional undergraduate places for widening access,
  articulation and undergraduate skills for growth have been awarded to the University. The
  Engineering Academy (articulation) and Biomedical Engineering degree (skills for growth) as well as
  the University more widely (widening access) will benefit from these additional places.
The University is working constructively with Universities Scotland in advance of legislation on Post-16 Education expected to be published in draft prior to the end of the month.

The Principal continues to engage with cross-party political leadership and has been invited by the Secretary of State for Scotland to join the Wilson Review of Scottish Exporting. In addition, the Principal has met with a number of Scottish Government Ministers.

The Executive Team’s Strategic Session in October focused on delivery of the Strategy and the delivery message has since been discussed at Leadership Group. The Principal is holding Department Engagement meetings to listen to how members of staff are delivering the Strategy.

The University has been awarded a number of significant research grants.

The Strathclyde Public Policy Institute will launch in the New Year.

A range of engagements has taken place since the October meeting with high profile stakeholders.

The University continues to link up with a number of high profile international partners. The USSA President suggested there may be scope to further develop these links at the Student Association level.

The Convener, on behalf of Court, congratulated the Principal on receiving his Knighthood at Buckingham Palace.

4. REF Progress Report

Associate Deputy Principal David Littlejohn introduced a paper on preparations for the REF 2014 submission. Court noted the detailed update and the significant progress across all areas of the REF 2014 submission and took the view that the University was in a stronger position at this stage in the REF submission compared to the equivalent period leading up to RAE 2008. It was noted that recent departures of a number of high performing staff have posed challenges to the REF submission in some subject areas, although it was noted that strategic appointments had also been made. Court acknowledged the rigorous and robust approach to preparation of the submission. The following points were raised in discussion:

- The total eligible staff population, currently 625 FTE, is not expected to change significantly.
- There is a small number of remaining staff yet to be assigned to Units of Assessment. Assignment will take place shortly.
- The Deans, in conjunction with HR, are in the process of engaging with staff who have zero outputs.
- Where multiple authorship permits, high quality research outputs will considered for reassignment from staff with less than the required amount of outputs to eligible staff to be included in the submission.

5. Internationalisation Update

The Head of Student Recruitment provided members with a progress report on the implementation of the Internationalisation Strategy. Court Members noted that further improvements are needed for the University to realise its internationalisation strand of the strategy and boost international performance. Court heard that there are strong examples of internationalisation happening across the University and the EPSRC-funded Global Engagement initiative is having a significant impact in this area. Members noted that the Executive Team is actively engaged in reviewing internationalisation and it was noted that the identification of international strategic partnerships which will bring positive impacts across all Faculties was well underway. Court acknowledged that there are significant challenges in the external environment, including UKBA restrictions and the removal of post study work visas. The meeting noted that internal processes are being reviewed to improve international student recruitment and that work is progressing at pace to diversify the recruitment base; develop new partners; maximise opportunities and develop new pipelines. It was recognised that there is a considerable amount of knowledge amongst Court members in this area and scope for the University to use their expertise.
6. Financial Statements 2011/12

The Chief Financial Officer presented the Financial Statements for 2011 / 12 to Court. Following on from the recommendation of the Audit Committee and Treasurer, Court approved and noted its satisfaction with the Financial Statements. Points raised in discussion included:

- The fact that there has been a significant reduction in salary costs and a decrease in staff numbers.
- That the decrease of £8.8 million in SFC funding for 2011 / 12 represented the most significant impact on the budget.
- The accounts showed a deficit of £2.4 million which was to be expected in light of the significant decrease in SFC funding for 2011/12.
- There has been an increase in the University’s tangible fixed assets.
- The net pension liability for the Strathclyde Pension Fund has increased due to revised actuarial calculations
- That negotiations regarding the insurance claim for the James Weir fire are ongoing.
- That growing non-governmental income streams is a key priority for the University.
- That the University must continue to be an investing institution.

On behalf of Court, the Convener thanked the out-going Convener of the Audit Committee, Malcolm Wishart, for his hard work and commitment to the Audit Committee over the years. The Convener also welcomed Gillian Hastings as the new Convener of the Audit Committee and wished her well in her new role.

7. Business Report

The proposed approach to business reporting and the draft Q1 Report for 2012 were outlined to Court by the Chief Financial Officer. Court welcomed the combined targets, business reporting framework and business report as well as the progress made with the business reports, indicating that it was content with the management information presented. Key points included:

- An increase in tuition fee and overseas income is required and a series of actions to achieve this have been identified.
- The University has made significant savings in relation to its insurance premiums by moving to UMAL.
- Faculties and Professional Services responded positively in helping to collate the data and increased scrutiny of the data is already helping to improve data quality and consistency.

8. Update on 2013-14 Outcome Agreement Negotiations

Court was provided with an update on Outcome Agreement negotiations. Court noted that by December 2012, the content of the OA that relates to student number planning will have been agreed and the entire OA process will be concluded by late February 2013 with formal sign off by SFC scheduled for March. Members noted that whilst a small proportion of SFC’s budget was being distributed by means of bids submitted as part of the OA process, the overwhelming majority of future funding for teaching, research and KE will continue to be distributed by formulaic means. As outlined in the Principal’s Report, the University has secured additional SFC funded places for widening access, articulation and undergraduate skills for growth, subject to final confirmation by SFC. Court noted that it will be invited to approve the OA 2013-14 at its meeting in February 2013.
9. Corporate Risk Register

Court discussed the updated key risks and related register, endorsed the key risks and agreed that mitigating actions were reasonable. Members noted that the register had been reviewed and discussed by the Executive Team and Audit Committee who were satisfied that it represented the key risks and opportunities facing the University. Court noted the following points in discussion:

- A number of actions to improve systems, processes and procedures are being progressed following on from the James Weir fire.
- There may be benefit in developing a means by which to indicate the declining status risks as they are downgraded in light of mitigating actions.

10. Committee Reports

The Convener drew Court’s attention to the following reports provided for information.

- Senate: Meeting of 7th November 2012.
- Executive Team: Meetings of 25th September, 22nd & 30th October, & 13th November 2012.
- Audit Committee: Meeting of 5th November 2012 including Attachment 1 - Annual Report from Audit Committee to Court; Attachment 2 - Technology and Innovation Centre – Progress Update and Attachment 3 – James Weir Fire Lessons Learned Report.
- Estates Committee: Meetings of 28th August & 30th October 2012.
- Court Business Group Report.
- Key dates 2013 / 14.

11. Conveners Actions Report

Court homologated the actions outlined in the report.

12. AOB

The Convener proposed that the award of Fellowship of the University be conferred on Fraser Livingston in recognition of his exceptional contribution to the University over the years. Court unanimously endorsed the Conveners proposal to confer this award on Fraser Livingston.

13. Date of Next Meeting

- Members noted that the next meeting of the Court would take place on Tuesday 26 February, 9.30am.
- Dates for the remaining Court meetings in 2012/13 can be found on the Calendar of Dates.

CF / SJJ
10 December 2012