MINUTES OF UNIVERSITY COURT
25 June 2014

Present: Richard Hunter (Convener)
Principal Professor Sir Jim McDonald, Vice-Principal Professor Kenneth Miller, Dr Jack Perry, David Gray, Robin Crawford, Dr Archie Bethel, Marion Venman, Dr Jane Morgan, Margaret McGarry, Dr Rose-Mary Harley, Dr Veena O’Halloran (for Items 14-18), Professor Lisa Woolfson, Professor James Thomson, Professor Jim Fraser, Niall Sturrock, Kwaku Adjei, Roza Salih

Attending: Hugh Hall, David Coyle, Professor Tony McGrew, Professor Iain Hunter, Professor Susan Hart, Professor Scott MacGregor, Sandra Heidinger, Simon Jennings, Ray McHugh, Stella Matko, Dr Lewis Allan, Gary Paterson (Student President-elect), Mairi MacVicar (Student Vice-President-elect)

Apologies: Ronnie Cleland, Gillian Hastings, Jeremy Beeton, Councillor Stephen Curran, Professor Niamh Nic Daeid

Welcome and apologies

The Convener noted apologies and welcomed Gary Paterson and Mairi MacVicar as Student President-elect and Student Vice-President-elect respectively. There were no declarations of interest.

1. Minutes

The minute of the meeting on 1 May 2014 was approved.

2. Matters arising

Court congratulated University staff on the awards of:
- JISC iTech Awards 2014 - 'highly commended' citation for 'Murder Mystery MOOCs: A novel way of storytelling to introduce forensic science.'

3. Principal's Report

The Principal provided updates on the following key activities since the May meeting:
- National Physical Laboratory
- HE Policy and National Strategic Engagement – visit by Professor Alice Brown, Chair, Scottish Funding Council; SFC Strategic Dialogue Meeting; visit by Dr Lesley Thompson, Director of Sciences and Engineering, EPSRC
- Engagement with UK, Scottish and other political representatives
- International engagements, including visits to New York, Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte
- New senior appointments: Vice-Principal, Executive Dean of Science, Director of Estates Services, Vice-Deans and Heads of Departments
- Launch of the Oil & Gas Institute
- 2014 Space School and 10th anniversary events
- Children’s University Graduation
4. Q3 Business Report

The third quarter Business Report was presented. The Chief Financial Officer commented on the improvement in the forecast surplus compared with the budgeted surplus, stability in income compared with Q2 and improvements in expenditure reduction against budget. A significant underspend on the single campus project and the deferred implementation of the new Finance information system was noted. The Director of Strategy and Policy commented on the stability in student numbers compared with Q2, with some modest growth in postgraduate research student numbers.

The following points were noted in discussion:

- Improvements in the processing speed of taught postgraduate applications
- Improvements to the Business Reports for the following academic year
- The University's relatively low number of Rest of UK students and strategies to increase numbers
- Increasing further the number of students who study abroad during their degree course

5. 2014/15 Budget and Financial Forecast

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) presented the draft budget for academic year 2014/15 alongside the draft four year financial forecast for submission to the Scottish Funding Council. The CFO noted that:

- The budget is intended to facilitate the achievement of key strategic objectives, including the delivery of a surplus to provide the capacity for future investment
- Projected operating surpluses are modest compared to the UK sector average of surpluses of 4% of income – work will be undertaken to allow for the projection of larger surpluses providing the University with greater ability to invest in staffing, estates, studentships and IT systems
- Expected growth in SFC block grant income is likely to be modest
- In-line with the Estates Strategy, cash balances will be reduced during the planning period with the drawdown of the European Investment Bank loan completed by spring 2015

The Treasurer signalled support for the draft Budget and future work to grow projected surpluses and noted possible changes to employer pension contributions as an area of uncertainty over the four year forecast period.

The following points were noted in discussion:

- The assumption that the REF 2013 results are budget-neutral
- The repayment terms for the European Investment Bank loan
- The size of the University estate relative to income generation and on-going work to improve efficiency, including the new Combined Heat and Power system
- Student accommodation charges and related planned improvements to the estate
- Improved in-year monitoring of performance through Business Reports and SUnBIRD (Strathclyde University Business Intelligence Reports & Dashboard) system

Court approved the draft budget and financial forecasts.

6. Strathclyde Business School update

The Executive Dean of Strathclyde Business School provided an overview of the strategic priorities for the School and performance to date. Court noted indicators of excellence, including postgraduate and undergraduate UK and international rankings, quadruple accreditation for the School and the recent Small Business Charter Award. Increases in academic staff holding PhDs (to 72% of academic staff), a higher proportion of female staff than many UK benchmark institutions (36%), the ambition to double research income by 2016/17 and the major collaborative research themes for the School were noted.

Court discussed the Business School’s strong performance in recruiting students from MD20 and MD40 backgrounds (over 10% of intake), the number of students who undertake an international experience (35% of home undergraduate students), the balance of research and teaching income and the potential for
income generation from businesses, including developing integrated offers with other areas of the University (for example the Technology & Innovation Centre).

7. Faculty of Science update

The Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science provided an overview of the strategic priorities for the Faculty and performance to date. Court noted that the Faculty employs ~200 academic staff with a further 200 technical staff, 3100 undergraduate students, 157 taught postgraduate students and 450-500 postgraduate research students. It was noted that the Faculty has submitted 35 applications for funding under the EU’s Horizon 2020 initiative, is developing a strong research capability in quantum technologies and engages in knowledge exchange activities via the Chemistry Clinic and the Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences Knowledge Exchange Hub. With regard to teaching, the Faculty recently won all four Student Association teaching awards, will seek to grow taught postgraduate courses in areas of research excellence and has seen rises in undergraduate entry tariff scores while remaining committed to widening access.

8. USSA Financial Statements 2012/13 and Budget 2014/15

The Student President introduced the Financial Statements (2012/13) and draft Budget (2014/15) for the Students’ Association.

Court discussed plans to grow USSA reserves in future years, with the Chief Financial Officer to meet with the USSA Chief Executive and Student President to consider further over the summer period.

Court approved the draft USSA budget for 2014/15 and noted the 2012/13 Financial Statements.

9. Governance Code implementation

Court received an update on the implementation of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance and approved the following recommendations to assist in implementing the Code:

- appointment of the the Vice-Convener as ‘Court intermediary’, with an agreed process for meeting without the Convener present if requested
- adoption of the equality and diversity statement set out in the paper
- revision of the terms of reference and composition for Remuneration Committee, as detailed in the paper

In addition, two minor amendments to University Regulations were approved:

- including the terms of reference and composition of Court Membership Group in Regulations
- amendment to the Regulation stipulating the Senior Officer named as Convener of Estates Committee, following the appointment of a new Vice-Principal

10. Court and Committee Membership

Court approved the following recommendations from Court Membership Group:

- **Court Membership:**
  - renewal of membership for Dr Jack Perry for a three year term, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2017
  - appointment of Alison Culpan for a one year term in the first instance, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015
  - appointment of Malcolm Roughhead OBE for a one year term in the first instance, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015
  - appointment of Susan Kelly for a one year term in the first instance, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015
- **Convener of Court:** renewal of Richard Hunter’s appointment as Convener for a three year term, from 1 August 2014 until 31 July 2017
• **Vice-Convener of Court**: amendment to Ordinance 2.1.3 as drafted in the paper and appointment of Ronnie Cleland as Vice-Convener for a two year term, from 1 August 2014 until 31 July 2016

• **Treasurer**: renewal of Dr Jack Perry’s appointment as Treasurer for a three year term, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2017

• **Deputy Convener of Court (Estates)**: appointment of Marion Venman as Deputy Convener (Estates) for a two year term, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2016

• **Audit Committee**: renewal of Paula Galloway’s co-option for a three year term, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2017

• **Court Business Group and Court Membership Group**: appointment of Professor Lisa Woolfson for a two year term, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2016.

11. **Values update**

Court **noted** an update on the implementation of the University Values.

12. **Annual Health and Safety Report**

Court reviewed and **noted** the annual health and safety report, submitted by the Statutory Advisory Committee on Safety & Occupational Health.

13. **Senate**

Court **noted** the Senate report and **approved** the conferment of four titles of Emeritus Professor as recommended by Senate:

- Professor James Alexander, SIPBS (from 1 August 2014)
- Professor Graham Coombes, SIPBS (from 1 August 2014)
- Professor Alan Harvey, SIPBS (from 1 January 2015)
- Professor Donald Christie, School of Education (from 1 August 2014)

The following committee reports were noted by Court:

14. **Executive Team**
15. **Court Business Group**
16. **Audit Committee**
17. **Estates Committee**

18. **Valedictions**

The Convener thanked the following Court members leaving at the end of the academic year for their commitment and service:

- Vice-Principal Professor Kenneth Miller
- Lay members David Gray (Deputy Convener, Estates) and Robin Crawford
- Senate members of Court, Professor Niamh Nic Daeid and Professor Jim Fraser
- Student President Kwaku Adjei and Student Vice-President Roza Salih

**Date of next meeting**

- Thursday 2 October, 09.30 – 12.00, Court/Senate Suite, Collins Building

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LA, 30 June 2014