

Central Management Group



Monday, 14 November 2011

MINUTE

Present: The Principal (in the chair)
Senior Vice-Principal Professor N Brown
Vice-Principal Professor M Bownes
Vice-Principal Professor C Breward
Vice-Principal Professor S Hillier
Vice-Principal Professor D Hounsell
Vice-Principal Professor R Kenway
Vice-Principal Professor D Miell
Vice-Principal Professor L Yellowlees
Professor J Seckl
Acting Vice-Principal Professor S Cunningham-Burley
Mr N A L Paul
Dr K Waldron

In attendance: Dr I Conn
Dr A R Cornish
Mr A Currie
Mr J Gorringe
Ms S Gupta
Mr D Waddell
Ms A Ridge (for item 15 only)
Dr K J Novosel

Apologies: Vice-Principal Professor C Jeffery
Vice-Principal Professor J Haywood
Vice-Principal Professor L Waterhouse
Ms F Boyd

1 MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2011 Paper A

The Minute of the meeting held on 11 October 2011 was approved as a correct record.

2 PRINCIPAL'S BUSINESS

2.1 Principal's Communications

The Principal reported on the following: Remembrance Service; recent positive media coverage of various activities within the University; current position on student applications for 2012/2013; current progress on improving student experience around academic and pastoral support; issues around the border agency; and various interactions with Scottish politicians.

2.2 Principal's Strategy Group Paper B

CMG noted the PSG report.

FOR DISCUSSION

3 FINANCE UPDATE (CLOSED)

Paper C

It was noted that the draft Reports and Financial Statements would be considered at the next meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Audit Committee prior to consideration and approval at Court on 12 December 2011. The Accounts recorded a surplus in 2010/2011 of £42m. CMG further noted the current position in respect of the USS valuation and that although a deficit assumption had been made this was not anticipated to result in required increases in either employer or employee contributions. It was confirmed that in respect of research grants the euro exchange rates were being closely monitored.

4 MAJOR PLANNING ROUND ISSUES 2012/2013 (CLOSED)

Paper E

The planning assumptions for 2012/2013 were approved by CMG noting these were based on the expectation that the Scottish Government's proposed Spending Review 2011, the draft budget for 2012/2013, and the draft Student Fees (Specification) (Scotland) Order 2011 would be approved and on the Scottish Funding Council's implementation of the Ministerial Letter of Guidance. CMG noted that, nevertheless, because the economic climate remained uncertain, both globally and particularly in the Eurozone, the risk of an emergency Spending Review at Westminster with consequent revisions to the Scottish Government budget and SFC settlement could not be ruled out.

CMG noted that the University continued to deliver a strong academic and financial performance and that Colleges and Support Groups had expeditiously built up reserves, maintained expenditure and increased income thus ensuring that the University was in a healthy position going forward. CMG took cognisance of the various cost pressures including salaries and pensions, utilities and financing of the capital programme as well as the continuing need to maximise income. Based on these assumptions an indicative uplift to core budgets of 3% was approved for 2012/2013. It was noted that further information on indicative changes to core budgets for 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 would be circulated shortly. CMG further suggested that it may be appropriate to review the current proposed funding available to the staff reward process.

5 STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2012 TARGETS – ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Paper F

CMG commended this useful report, noting the status of each of the 33 targets and that the majority had now been met, exceeded or were on track to be achieved. The targets which now were unlikely to be achieved were noted particularly including those associated with student satisfaction as measured by the NSS and philanthropic giving by alumni; the actions being taken to progress in these areas were also noted.

6 CHANCELLOR'S FELLOWSHIPS

Paper G

The proposals were fully supported and welcomed by CMG.

- 7 REPORT FROM STAFF COMMITTEE Paper H**
- CMG noted the report and welcomed the intention to convene a meeting of the Staff Committee early in the new year to focus on discussion on the people aspects of the new Strategic Plan. The Group further noted the information on taking forward a University wide mentoring scheme and progress on the development of a REF Code of Practice particularly welcoming the consultation with Colleges and Schools on the draft Code and recognising the importance of ensuring that the proposed process was robust. In terms of the new Appeals process the Group noted the number and outcome of appeals lodged from 1 April to 30 June 2011.
- 8 ENHANCED GUIDANCE ON ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS (CLOSED) Paper I**
- The proposal to initiate a project to develop guidance to improve the understanding of the current academic promotion process in respect of excellence in learning and teaching and other areas such as public engagement was approved by CMG.
- 9 DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI UPDATE (CLOSED) Paper J**
- CMG welcomed confirmation that the current University Campaign was close to achieving the target of £350m and was supportive of the opportunity taken to review the current successes. CMG endorsed the proposed changes to the delivery of Development & Alumni services including a restructuring of the department. The proposals would assist in better integration with Colleges and Support Groups and focus fundraising activity around the four themes of: research, heritage and culture, scholarship and bursaries, and capital projects.
- 10 SENATUS RESEARCHER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE TASK GROUP REPORT: A STUDY OF PG CONVERSION RATES (CLOSED) Paper K**
- CMG was very supportive of the review undertaken by this Senatus Committee Task Group and commended and approved the excellent recommendations to improve the current conversion of an offer of a postgraduate place into acceptance and matriculation. It was noted that these recommendations were subject to appropriate resources being available.
- 11 UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE (UN RCE) IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Paper L**
- The proposal to progress to the next stage of the United Nations RCE application process was approved, noting the intention to bid for the status of Scottish Regional Centre and the support of external stakeholders.
- FOR INFORMATION/FORMAL APPROVAL**
- 12 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THREE MONTHS TO 31 OCTOBER 2011 (CLOSED) Paper M**
- CMG noted the very positive position at the end of the first quarter, noting some slight concern on the decrease in research expenditure compared to the same period last financial year.

13 NPRAS SPACE RATES FOR 2012-2013 Paper N

CMG approved the revised NPRAS space rates to be applied for 2012/2013 planning and budgeting purposes which reflected the uplift required to meet building maintenance costs and increases in utility prices.

14 HIRING AGENCY WORKERS Paper O

It was noted that the Agency Workers Regulations 2010 had come into force on 1 October 2011 and that this Policy had been developed in light of the requirements of this new legislation. CMG approved the Hiring Agency Workers Policy to be applied across the University which would be challenging in those areas such as Accommodation Services with currently high levels of agency workers.

15 PRINCIPAL'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT PhD SCHOLARSHIPS Paper P

CMG fully supported the proposals set out in the paper and to increase the funding available to this scheme.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 25 January 2012 in the Raeburn Room, Old College.

Note of Electronic Meeting concluded on 9 December 2011

1 FEES STRATEGY GROUP: NOTE OF MEETING OF 18 NOVEMBER 2011 Paper A

CMG approved the proposals in respect of the PGT Distance Education Initiative, outstanding fee proposals, tuition fee policies 2012/2013 onwards and the timing for setting PGT tuition fees.

2 ACCOMMODATION SERVICES: STUDENT RENTS FOR 2012/13 AND INDICATIVE INCREASES FOR 2013/14 AND 2014/15 Paper B

It was noted that these proposals had been endorsed by the Fees Strategy Group and CMG approved the cross-subsidy of £1.831m from commercial surplus to student rents, the base increase in student rents of 2% for 2012/2013 and indicative increases for 2013/2014 of 2.5% and for 2014/2015 of 3.5%.