



CENTRAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

12 April 2016

Minute

Present: Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl (Convener)
Vice-Principal Professor Chris Breward
Vice-Principal Professor Dorothy Miell
Vice-Principal Professor Jane Norman
Vice-Principal Professor James Smith
Vice-Principal Mr Chris Cox
Ms Sarah Smith, University Secretary
Mr Hugh Edmiston, Director of Corporate Services
Mr Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer
Mr Phil McNaull, Director of Finance
Mr Gary Jebb, Director of Estates
Ms Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning

In attendance: Professor Andy Mount, on behalf of Vice-Principal Professor Yellowlees
Dr Catherine Elliott, on behalf of Vice-Principal Professor Sir John Savill
Mr Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
Mr Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Professor Charlotte Clarke, Head of School of Health in Social Science
Mr Brian MacGregor, Director of User Services Division
Ms Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services

Apologies: The Principal
Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffery
Vice-Principal Professor Mary Bownes
Vice-Principal Professor Jeff Haywood
Vice-Principal Professor Richard Kenway
Vice-Principal Professor Andrew Morris
Vice-Principal Professor Sir John Savill
Vice-Principal Professor Sarah Welburn
Vice-Principal Professor Lesley Yellowlees
Ms Zoe Lewandowski, Director of Human Resources
Dr Ian Conn, Director of Communications and Marketing
Ms Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services

1 Minute

Paper A

The Minute of the meeting held on 1 March 2016 was approved.

2 Matters Arising

It was reported that the outcomes from the teaching space review agreed at the last meeting were being taken forward, with plans to be

progressed via a reshaped Space Enhancement and Management Group.

It was reported that Vice-Principal Professor Jane Norman was convening a group to review the University's disability services. During discussion it was suggested that the review consider arrangements to support both staff and students and aim to identify immediate actions as well as longer term considerations.

3 Principal's Communications

Vice-Principal Jonathan Seckl, on behalf of the Principal, reported on the following: thanks to staff for their forbearance during the recent occupation and demonstrations at Charles Stewart House and Old College; thanks to Charles Hill in Corporate Services and team for being able to offer 4000 places this week to Edinburgh City Council for school children displaced as a result of school building safety concerns; the successful International Science Festival, with thanks to staff and students for their contributions; the University's success in securing £16m from the MasterCard Foundation for scholarships for African students; the current review into semester times; that graduate entry discussions with SFC are currently paused; the University has been awarded 8 advanced ERC awards, its largest number ever and was currently shortlisted for 4 Wellcome Centres.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

4 Draft Planning Round Submissions

Paper B

CMG considered an overview of the draft plans, noting the current uncertainty in the external funding environment and the challenges due to funding reductions, mitigated to an extent by successful intervention by the Principal in relation to research funding.

The draft plans had been presented to Policy and Resources Committee and the message was that efficiencies were expected to enable investment in income growth to contribute to an acceptable level of surplus for long term financial sustainability.

CMG noted that budget holders were currently revising the plans and there had been positive engagement through the planning round discussions with transformational projects planned in estates, agriculture, IT and other areas that should have long term benefits for the University. There was discussion of the importance of linking growth with infrastructure investment in order to capacity plan. Roundtable discussions by Vice-Principals were identified as a useful part of the planning process.

Revised plans, reflecting feedback from PRC, PSG and CMG will be considered at the 17 May 2016 Central Management Group and 6

June 2016 PRC meetings before presentation to Court on 20 June 2016 for approval.

5 Predictive Analytics

Paper C

CMG considered Predictive Analytics and whether it may be an appropriate tool to understand and improve student satisfaction, with particular focus on the Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES) and the National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes. There was discussion of the ethical use of student data and the appropriateness of ESES data as a pilot programme due to the volume and quality of the data collected.

CMG noted that this could be a sensitive area for students and the student body would need to be engaged and able to contribute to shaping the project. Noting this, whilst Predictive Analytics may be worth considering, further consideration should be given as to whether student satisfaction was an appropriate pilot, how this could be handled sensitively, taking into account the current work in this area being led by the Senior Vice-Principal and whether a different area should be considered as a pilot.

6 Worktribe Research Management System Update

Paper D

CMG was reminded that the implementation of Worktribe Research Management System was to enable the devolved costing of research grant applications to Schools and Researchers. At its meeting on 1 September 2015, CMG considered the issue of access to salary information and requested this was reviewed prior to go live.

The paper outlined significantly strengthened controls around accessing salary data, including a mandatory training programme; the need for authorisation from the user's Head of School; restrictions on the number of salary records transferred to Worktribe; and robust reporting including exception reports to identify users accessing salary costing details.

CMG endorsed the additional controls outlined in the paper, which appropriately balanced compliance with data protection legislation with the benefits of devolved costing and suggested that the exception reports be reviewed after an appropriate implementation period to provide reassurance on the robustness of the controls.

7 Sustainable Travel Advice

Paper E

CMG considered information and advice, including a proposed communication plan, to inform sustainable travel choices. It was clarified that this was intended to be advice and not guidance that may encourage consideration of alternative transport methods or use of technological alternatives, where appropriate.

There was discussion of the tension between discouraging air travel and the University's global role and the importance of fostering relationships, in the UK and overseas, which often benefited from personal interaction.

Members welcomed the factual information that may influence decision making but felt some of the suggestions were inappropriate and may detract from the core message of advice rather than guidance. It was felt that more information on technological alternatives and how to access them could support behaviour change.

It was agreed that there should be further consideration of the style and content on the advice, to strengthen the factual information and provide more useful pointers on how to access technological alternatives.

8 Finance Directors Update

Paper F

The Director of Finance spoke to the latest financial update, noting that the balance between academic and support staff is moving more to academic staff, in line with long term income growth plans; work was ongoing to address the SBS pension deficit; the Scottish University Finance Directors Group was considering financial sustainability metrics based on Edinburgh's example; the Audit Scotland report was expected to be published in late June/July.

The Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning provided a positive update on recruitment to date, noting that undergraduate applications had increased by nearly 4% against a sector average fall of 1.7%, postgraduate applications from the UK and EU had increased by over 20%, international PG applications had also increased with a 17% increase from India, and distance learning applications had increased by 45% on this point last year. Members commended this positive picture.

9 Procurement Law Update

Paper G

CMG noted changes to procurement legislation and that the Procurement Risk Management Executives (PRiME) group previously agreed by CMG was briefed on the detail for implementation to ensure legislative compliance.

10 Health and Safety Quarter 2 Report

Paper H

CMG noted the summary of health and safety related incidents during the period 1 December 2015 to 29 February 2016 and relevant health and safety issues and developments. Members noted that HSE Fee For Intervention (FFI) invoices (currently suspended) and legal costs relating to the HSE occupational asthma interventions were currently

being met from the corporate Health and Safety Department's budget and it would be necessary, at an appropriate juncture, to discuss appropriate apportioning of costs. The sums involved would not become clear until the HSE intervention finally comes to a close.

11 Service Excellence Programme

Paper I

CMG noted the key bullet points and the latest programme plan for the Service Excellence Programme, which was set up to review and promote service excellence across professional services in the University to ensure it was delivering the best from the sum of the parts across the devolved structure. The Service Excellence Programme Board, chaired by the University Secretary, reported to CMG and included representation from academic and professional staff across the University. It was noted that the focus was achieving greater effectiveness and was not driven by the need for efficiency savings, but rather seeking ways to redeploy resources to add value and provide better services to support the University in achieving its strategic goals.

12 CMG Review

Tabled

Over the summer, there had been a series of one to one discussions with CMG members and attendees to discuss what they feel CMG is doing well and any areas for improvement. The outcome of the review had been slightly delayed as a result of work on PSG membership and attendance. A paper was tabled in order to be able to reflect any comments from PSG where it was discussed on Friday. PSG was content with the proposed direction of travel.

The review outcome was broadly positive, with CMG considered to provide a useful and necessary role, with some suggestions emerging. These included strengthening the communication role through an explicit remit for Communications and Marketing; further consideration on how to monitor and manage performance; and increased membership from Heads of School to strengthen the link between learning and teaching and operational management. Taking account of the recent opening up of PSG to Vice-Principals and the desire to expand CMG membership to include more Heads of School, it was suggested that Vice-Principals no longer be formal members of CMG, although they would continue to receive all papers and were welcome to attend any meeting. The roundtable meetings as part of the planning round were an opportunity for Vice-Principals with cross University remits to share ideas and engage with staff with budgetary responsibilities. CMG were supportive of the proposed changes and it was agreed to circulate the tabled paper to Vice-Principals not present for comment.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

13 Fees Strategy Group

Paper J

CMG approved the tuition fee proposals set out in the paper.

14 Principal's Strategy Group

Paper K

The report was noted

15 Any Other Business

The Convener advised that it was essential to ensure all published output was open access in PURE in order for it to be considered for the next Research Excellence Framework and that PSG had agreed there would be a light touch 'mock REF' to ensure that all outputs were returnable.

16 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 17 May 2016 at 10.00 am in Raeburn Room, Old College.