



CENTRAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

8 November 2016

Minute

Present: Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl (Convener)
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 Phil McNaul, Director of Finance
Dr Ian Conn, Director of Communications and Marketing
Ms Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services
Ms Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning
Mr Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
Professor David Argyle, Head of School of Veterinary Medicine
Professor Ewen Cameron, Head of School of History, Classics & Archaeology
Professor Jeremy Robbins, Head of School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures
Professor Arthur Trew, on behalf of Vice-Principal Professor Yellowlees
Dr Catherine Elliott, on behalf of Vice-Principal Professor Sir John Savill

In attendance: Ms Michelle Brown, Head of SRS Programmes (for item 7)
Ms Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services

Apologies: The Principal
Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffery
Mr Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer
Mr Gary Jebb, Director of Estates
Ms Zoe Lewandowski, Director of Human Resources
Vice-Principal Professor Sir John Savill
Vice-Principal Professor Yellowlees
Professor David Gray, Head of School of Biological Sciences

1 Minute

Paper A

The Minute of the meeting held on 4 October 2016 was approved.

2 Principal's Communications

Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl, on behalf of the Principal, reported on the following: the Home Office UKVI Audit team were currently in the University undertaking a review; there continued to be positive engagement with the Scottish government; spending review discussions were ongoing; the Principal recently gave evidence to the UK government Scottish Affairs Committee; EU recruitment was

holding up post Brexit, despite a 9% drop nationally, the University had only experienced a 1.5% dip; there had been a recent agreement signed with Hua Xia, with more detailed proposals to follow in due course.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 Finance Director's Report

Paper B

The Finance Director tabled updated Management Accounts for September 2016 with a summary report of key metrics to be monitored in year. The very early indications were that progress towards the budgeted surplus was on track. The funding position of the USS pension scheme was likely to be challenging at the next valuation, despite the work that had been put in to stabilise the position, due to the external economic environment. The SBS pension scheme was also in a challenging position and had recently been redesigned to address its deficit. There was discussion of the key metrics and it was noted that the current economic environment would require budget holders to contain costs and seek to generate revenue in the next planning round.

4 Delegated Authority Schedule

Paper C

CMG noted that the current DAS was approved by Court in December 2015, an annual review and update was good practice and in addition updates were required as a result the restructure of ERI, with the relocation of the Research Support Office to Corporate Services Group and the consolidation of Legal Services within University Secretary's Group. The revised DAS reflected those structural changes and also clarified the delegated authority arrangements for Court signatory. CMG noted there would be some minor clarifications to the circulated document and it would then be forwarded to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and recommendation to Court for approval.

5 Strategic Plan: Targets and KPIs Progress Report

Paper D

CMG noted that this was the final year of reporting on the current strategic plan and that the circulated paper was a work in progress, with some targets and KPIs to be updated as data became available in the next month.

CMG noted the targets that had not been achieved were mainly areas where there was already a high level of awareness and remedial actions in place, such as the targets relating to student experience as measured by the National Student Survey.

There was discussion about the presentation and whether, without changing the data, it was possible to clearer about which targets had

been more widely missed and those where significant progress had been made. This would be helpful in understanding the significance of the data and ensure focus on key areas of concern. Once area noted was the graduate employability measure and it was reported that work was ongoing on an employability strategy, with a progress report to come to a future meeting.

There was discussion on whether some targets had been unrealistic, unhelpful or too aspirational and it was agreed that there were useful learning points in developing targets and KPIs for the new Strategic Plan, which would be circulated to CMG for consideration in due course.

6 Research Strategy

Paper E

CMG considered the Research Strategy and noted that this was intended to be a broad and overarching document and that detailed metrics and KPIs were not included in the Plan, in alignment with the approach to the new University Strategic Plan. It was intended as a statement of values, ethos and approach, setting the context for research within the University, rather than providing a detailed roadmap.

CMG welcomed the strategy and during discussion, members noted some suggested edits to be forwarded directly for consideration, prior to publication.

7 Modern Slavery Statement

Paper F

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 required organisations with a total turnover of £36m or more to produce a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year and to publish this on their website. CMG considered and endorsed the University's draft Statement as circulated with the papers. This would be forwarded to Audit and Risk Committee for consideration and recommendation to Court for approval.

8 Space Strategy Group

Paper G

There had been severe challenges around the teaching estate provision during the 2015/16 academic year. The start of the 2016 session had been far better, with any continuing difficulties managed effectively. As part of addressing the issues, the Space Enhancement and Management Group had been refreshed with a revised membership and terms of reference and was now the Space Strategy Group, with both strategic and operational responsibility for all space, with its initial focus on learning and teaching space. CMG discussed and endorsed the remit and membership of the SSG, noting the importance of academic representation, oversight of educational

technology developments and the importance of a whole University approach.

9 Enlightenment Scholarships

Paper H

CMG considered a proposal for a new style of PhD scholarship, intended for recruitment to a prototype programme in the 2017-18 academic year. Following circulation of the paper, the UK government had issued a consultation on loans for postgraduate research students which could substantially change the context for the proposal.

CMG broadly welcomed the proposal but noted that there were a number of areas which required further clarification, including a fuller understanding of resource, which combined with the changing external landscape suggested that the current proposed timescale may not be realistic. Following discussion it was agreed that there would be further work on this to refine the proposal and take account of external developments prior to progressing any further.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

10 Proposals for Chair Establishment and Changes

**Paper I1
Paper 12**

CMG approved the foundation of two Chairs of Economics and a Chair of Business in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, as set out in the paper.

11 Fees Strategy Group

Paper J

CMG approved the student rent and tuition fee proposals, as set out in the paper.

12 Annual Report on Complaint Handling

Paper K

The annual report was noted.

13 Principal's Strategy Group

Paper L

The report was noted.

14 Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 17 January 2017 at 10.00 am in Raeburn Room, Old College