



**CENTRAL MANAGEMENT GROUP**

**17 January 2017**

**Draft Minute**

- Present:** Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffery (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 Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer  
Mr Phil McNaull, Director of Finance  
Mr Gary Jebb, Director of Estates  
Ms Zoe Lewandowski, Director of Human Resources  
Ms Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services  
Ms Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning  
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:** Mr Niall Bradley, on behalf of Dr Ian Conn  
Mr Noel Lawlor, Chief Internal Auditor (for item 7)  
Ms Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services
- Apologies:** The Principal  
Vice-Principal Professor Sir John Savill  
Vice-Principal Professor Yellowlees  
Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl  
Professor David Gray, Head of School of Biological Sciences  
Dr Ian Conn, Director of Communications and Marketing  
Mr Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

**1 Minute**

**Paper A**

The Minute of the meeting held on 8 November 2016 was approved.

**2 Principal's Communications**

Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffery, on behalf of the Principal, reported on the following: the Prime Minister's speech today, which was expected to set out the Government's approach to leaving the European Union and the need for further advice and support for EU staff and students and external communication to emphasise the

University's continued commitment to and engagement with Europe; the latest undergraduate recruitment figures from UCAS which showed RUK and international recruitment had increased significantly, the reduction in EU applicants continued to be less than the sector average, but Scottish domiciled applications were down in comparison with the sector, there would be further work to understand the reasons for this and to mitigate any impact on recruitment of SIMD20 students; Court at its December meeting had decided the University would not participate in the Teaching Excellence Framework at this stage.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

### **3 Strategic Performance Measures**

**Paper B**

Following approval of the new Strategic Plan 2016, a performance measurement framework had been developed to assess the University's performance against the Plan and CMG considered the proposed measures and targets, with a different set of measures proposed for oversight by CMG and by Court.

Members noted areas where further work was required to identify appropriate metrics and there was discussion of these, particularly around social and economic impact and industry engagement. The need to focus on a small number of key measures was also reinforced.

Views emerged that there could be further work on how the University interacts with the private sector and the role of the University as an economic attractor to the area. In relation to social impact, SRS could contribute to indicators in this area. For the Court dashboard, reputation was recognised as important to capture in a measure, if possible.

Noting that CMG's comments and feedback would be taken forward in the development of the final performance measurement framework, the proposed approach was commended and endorsed.

### **4 2017- 20 Planning Round Guidance**

**Paper C**

CMG considered the draft 2017- 20 Planning Guidance and noted the continued pressure on core funding, which with the need to resource external debt funding secured to drive the capital programme, meant a phased move to a reduction in central baseline allocations over the three year period while anticipating continued growth in external income.

The challenging nature of the next three year period was noted and there was a wide ranging discussion with the following issues emerging: in-year underspend management; undergraduate RUK fee allocation; staff cost projections; the importance of student facing facilities keeping pace with growth in student numbers.

In terms of next steps, there would be further consideration of the assumptions around the current projections of staff costs and further clarity and guidance on the process for in-year underspend. The allocation of RUK income will be revised through the new Resource Allocation Model, which was being run in shadow form this year to enable consideration of the implications of the RAM. It was recognised there was a longer term issue, in relation to the wider strategic coherence of individual plans, to be considered.

Subject to some revisions to address the key points made, CMG approved the Planning Guidance.

## **5 The Data Steward Role for Core Business Data Sets**

**Paper D**

CMG considered and endorsed the proposed formalisation of the Data Steward role and the establishment of the role across all of the University's core business data sets, as set out in the paper, with further progress updates to be received in due course.

## **6 Finance Director's Update**

**Paper E**

CMG considered the Quarter 1 forecast outturn, noting that as a result of FRS102, the report was split to show budget and forecast as Unrestricted and Restricted. The planned sale of a major asset in 2016/17 had been rescheduled to next financial year, reducing this year's outturn but increasing the planned surplus in 17/18. As a result of this, for 2016/17, budget holders and their teams may need to consider remedial actions to achieve the Court approved budget for the year.

There was a recognition that the tight financial margins within which the University operated meant that rescheduling a single item could have a significant impact. Members raised the need to ensure there were not competing messages, as budget holders were encouraged to maintain their spend in the first half of the year as there is a historic trend of an unexpected underspend at year end, where the resource may have been better invested in year. In addition, there needed to be a better understanding of the potential overall impact across the University of any in year remedial actions to ensure these did not have unintended consequences. The quarterly forecasts were the opportunity to have this conversation and there would be further consideration of developing processes around discussion of the quarterly figures, which linked into the issue of ensuring coherence of individual plans in managing in year underspends raised in relation to the Planning Guidance paper.

**7 Zhejiang University Collaboration** **Paper F**

CMG considered an update on the Zhejiang University - University of Edinburgh (ZJU-UoE) Joint Institute. When Court approved formation of the Joint Institute in December 2014, this had been a new venture for the University and experience over the past two years could provide useful lessons for any future similar ventures.

The paper summarised the activities over the past two years and there was discussion of the issues around governance, finance and tax, IT and student systems, student support and the curriculum. The paper was open about the challenges faced and how these had been addressed and the continuing work that was taking place.

CMG considered how the knowledge developed could be leveraged for other international opportunities and discussed the potential for growth of this model. The paper was welcomed as an opportunity to look more broadly at international opportunities.

**8 Development and Alumni 2015-16** **Paper G**

CMG considered a new report, providing an analysis of philanthropic income and fund raising activity within the University, which was intended to be an annual report. Members welcomed the lay out and content of the report.

**9 Health and Safety Quarterly Report** **Paper H**

CMG noted a summary of health and safety related incidents that took place during the period 1 September 2016 to 30 November 2016 as well as relevant health and safety issues and developments and noted the report from the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee on Thursday 10 November 2016.

**10 Any Other Business**

The University Secretary reported that recruitment of the new Principal was progressing as planned and the Principal designate should be announced by early next month.

**ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

**11 Fees Strategy Group** **Paper I**

CMG noted and endorsed the fee proposals approved by the Principal by Chair's action on behalf of CMG, as set out in the paper.

**12 Creation of new Chairs and renaming of existing Chairs**

**Paper J1  
Paper J2  
Paper J3**

CMG approved the establishment of Chairs in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine and College of Science and Engineering and the renaming of a Chair in College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences as set out in the papers.

**13 Principal's Strategy Group**

**Paper K**

The report was noted.

**14 Date of next meeting**

Tuesday, 28 February 2017 at 10.00am in the Raeburn Room, Old College.