

**MINUTE OF A MEETING** of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh held in Room G0.7, Informatics Forum on Monday, 27 September 2010.

**Present:** The Rector (in chair)  
The Principal  
The Rt Hon Lord Cameron of Lochbroom  
Professor A M Smyth  
Mrs M Tait  
Dr M Aliotta  
Professor J Ansell  
Professor D Finnegan  
Professor L Yellowlees  
Dr J Markland, Vice-Convener  
Mr P Budd  
Mr M Murray  
Professor S Monro  
Ms A Richards  
Ms G Stewart  
Ms L Rawlings, President Students' Representative Council  
Ms S Wise, Vice-President Students' Representative Council

**In attendance:** Ms S Beattie-Smith, Rector's Assessor  
Vice-Principal Professor Fergusson  
Vice-Principal Professor J Haywood  
Vice-Principal Professor A McMahon  
Mr M D Cornish, University Secretary  
Mr N Paul, Director of Corporate Services  
Dr I Conn, Director of Communications and Marketing  
Dr A Cornish, Deputy University Secretary and Director of Planning  
Mr A Currie, Director of Estates and Buildings  
Mr J Gorringe, Director of Finance  
Ms S Gupta, Director of HR  
Dr K Waldron, University Secretary Designate  
Mr T Ward, Head of Academic Services, CHSS  
Ms F Boyd, Principal's Policy and Executive Officer  
Dr K J Novosel, Head of Court Services

**Apologies:** The Rt Hon G Grubb, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh  
Professor J Barbour  
Mr D A Connell  
Mr D Workman  
Mr D Brook

## A FORMAL BUSINESS

### 1 MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 JUNE 2010

Paper A1

The Minute of the meeting held on the 21 June 2010 was approved as a correct record.

Court welcomed Ms Liz Rawlings EUSA President to this her first meeting of Court as a member; she had been in attendance at the Court meeting held on 24 May 2010. Court further welcomed Dr Kim Waldron, University Secretary Designate to her first Court meeting.

Court noted that this would be the last Court meeting to be attended by Mr Melvyn Cornish. Court wished to thank Mr Cornish for his long and distinguished service to the University, particularly in his role as University Secretary and the immense contribution he had made to the governance of the University and the effectiveness and operation of Court. Court wished Mr Cornish a long and happy retirement.

## **2 VACATION COURT**

**Paper A2**

Court noted and homologated the decisions taken by the Vacation Court by correspondence on 13 August 2010 in respect of the Iona Cathedral Trust, University Ordinance 208 and Grouping of University Bank Accounts.

## **B PRINCIPAL'S BUSINESS**

### **1 PRINCIPAL'S COMMUNICATIONS**

**Paper B1**

Court noted the items within the Principal's Report and the additional information on: the UK Prime Minister's comments on the University's research on climate change; the significant donation of £10m by the author J K Rowling to found a centre for research into Multiple Sclerosis; the formation of 40 companies in 2009/2010; Vice-Principal Professor Sir John Savill's appointment as Chief Executive of the Medical Research Council and the governance arrangement put in place within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine to cover Professor Sir John Savill's part-time absence from the College, and assurance regarding any potential conflict of interest issues; and the 2010 National Student Survey Results and the work being taken forward by Vice-Principal Professor Hounsell to assist those areas where there could be improvement. A letter from the Principal to Lord Krebs and a letter from Lord Krebs to the Rt Hon David Willetts MP both commenting on the mobility of world-class researchers and graduate students were tabled at the meeting and noted by Court.

It was intimated that further consideration would be given to ensuring that Court members were briefed on important matters between Court meetings.

### **2 HONORARY ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

**Paper B2**

Court approved the appointment of Professor Johnstone, CBE to the position of Honorary Assistant Principal, Mental Health Research Development with effect from 1 September 2010 for a period of 2 years in the first instance.

## **C SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

### **1 REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Dr Markland presented the papers previously circulated.

Report from Central Management meetings of 16 June, 10 August and 1 September 2010 **Paper C1.1**

The update on the academic and financial planning issues for the School of Education was noted and Court welcomed that the changes had been achieved through voluntary means. Court further noted the position on the UK Border Agency and the actions being taken by the University and the excellent work being taken forward by the Standing Consultative Committee on Redundancy Avoidance. Assurances were provided on the discussions being undertaken to address the matter of nursery provision at the King's Buildings and it was confirmed that the level of undergraduate home/EU student over-recruitment was very small and that there had been no escalation of anti-social behaviour associated with final exams.

Court noted the satisfactory progress report in respect of the EUCLID project and that the Finance and General Purposes Committee was now content to monitor the project through exception reporting; Court congratulated all those involved in this project. It was further noted that it was the intention of the Committee to undertake a review of the current finance strategy, in respect of both capital and revenue, early next calendar year following the announcement of the comprehensive spending review to ensure that the strategy reflected the new financial environment. The activities of ERI as set out in its 2009/2010 annual report were commended and the information contained in the annual report on voluntary retirement was welcomed including the pay back period. Assurances were provided on the University's actions in respect of the proposed legislative changes to the retirement age and the on-going work to develop revised staff policies and procedures. Court further noted the impact of tax changes on higher earners in respect of pension provision.

Court approved the revised terms of reference of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the proposal to liquidate the Distillers endowment.

**2 VICE-CONVENER OF COURT**

**Paper C2**

The process to nominate the next Vice-Convenor of Court was approved. All nominations were to be submitted by 31 October 2010 to the University Secretary and each nomination required a proposer and a seconder from amongst current Court members.

**3 EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF ART**

**Paper C3**

Court noted that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had met twice since the last meeting of Court: on the 2 and 15 September 2010, and that at both meetings there had been detailed consideration of the proposed merger with the Edinburgh College of Art based on the documentation available. Based on discussion at these two meetings, the Finance and General Purposes Committee was content to advise Court to seek to achieve a merger based on the merger proposal document. Court noted that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had also established a small Sub-Committee comprising: Dr Markland, Mr Connell, Mr Murray, Professor Monro and Ms Rawlings to provide advice to the Principal on behalf of the Committee and approved the utilisation of this Sub-Committee on behalf of Court should the need arise between Court meetings. It was confirmed that the Board of Governor's of the Edinburgh College of Art at its meeting on 21 September 2010 had agreed to proceed and seek Scottish Government approval for a merger with effect from 1 August 2011 subject to specific funding being available.

There was detailed discussion on the paper and concern was expressed on the tight timescale and the minimal time to consider all the information: consideration would be given to providing additional information to Court. The funding requirements as set out in Annex B were particularly noted by Court and it was also noted that there may be further revision of these financial figures. In particular, flexibility was required around estates costs to allow for immediate action to be taken if specific health and safety issues were identified. It was noted that the Vice-Principal Planning, Resources and Research Policy, Director of Finance and Director of Estates and Buildings continued to have regular meetings with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and that the Principal also continued to have separate meetings with the SFC.

There were some issues still to be fully resolved including the exact detail of required legal documentation. It was proposed that the College would merge with the

University's current School of Arts, Culture and Environment to form an academic entity known as the Edinburgh College of Art sitting within the College of Humanities and Social Science akin to and functioning as a School. There were also specific issues affecting the Edinburgh College of Art and these difficulties would be addressed by the Edinburgh College of Art prior to a merger.

The academic benefits of a merger to both the University and the Edinburgh College of Art were recognised leading to further collaborative working, introduction of new programmes and research opportunities as well as the financial benefits around economies of scale and the generation of new income streams from research and postgraduate learning. Court noted that current staff and students in both organisations were very supportive of the proposal but that there had been some opposition from Edinburgh College of Art alumni reported in the media.

Having considered all the information, Court unanimously approved the proposal to merge with the Edinburgh College of Art with effect from 1 August 2011 subject to adequate funding from the SFC in respect of merger enabling and estates costs. Court further granted authority to Vice-Principal Professor Fergusson to make minor, non-material adjustments to the merger document, if required, prior to the document being submitted to the Scottish Government.

**4 REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Paper C4**

On the recommendations of the Nominations Committee, Court approved the following appointments:

Professor S Monro and Professor A Smyth to be appointed members of the Knowledge Strategy Committee with immediate effect: Professor Monro until the end of the 2012/2013 academic session and Professor Smyth until the end of this academic session.

The Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind's and Ms Christine Montgomery's current appointments as Trustees of the Development Trust to be extended for a further four years until the end of the 2013/2014 academic session and their current positions as Chairman and Treasurer respectively also be extended concurrent with the extended period of appointment.

**5 REPORT FROM ESTATES COMMITTEE**

**Paper C5**

Court approved the recommendations as set out in the coversheet to the paper, welcomed the progression of the King's Buildings Library and Learning Resource Centre to the tender stage and approved the reduction in the small works programme allocation pending any additional funding becoming available.

**6 UNIVERSITY'S ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW STATEMENT TO THE SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL**

**Paper C6**

The Annual Statement was endorsed by Court and the intention to provide Court with further information on enhancement quality activity was welcomed. The process to take forward the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review was also noted.

**7 SUPPORT FOR COURT MEMBERS AND THE OPERATION OF COURT**

**Paper C7**

Court noted the outcome and the recurring themes emerging as a result of discussions over the summer with Court Members which would be progressed during 2010/2011 particularly the two specific items from the Court effectiveness review.

**D ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTE**

- 1 INDIA OFFICE – BANK ACCOUNT Paper D1**
- Court approved the opening of an account in the name of the University of Edinburgh – India Liaison Office with the HDFC Bank Limited, Mumbai to be operated by the India Office Manager.
- 2 COMMISSIONERS’ ORDINANCE Paper D2**
- The approval of Ordinance 207 by the Privy Council was welcomed by Court and the process to take forward the approval of Ordinance 208 noted.
- 3 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES Paper D3**
- Court was pleased to note the donations and legacies to be notified received by the University of Edinburgh Development Trust between 1 May and 31 August 2010.
- 4 SBS TRUSTEES Paper D4**
- The resignation of Lord Cameron as Trustee and Chairman of the Staff Benefit Scheme with effect from 31 December 2010 was accepted. It was noted that the next meeting of the Nominations Committee would give consideration to his successor and also discuss the position of the Principal as a Trustee of SBS.
- 5 USE OF THE SEAL**
- A record was made available of all the documents executed on behalf of the Court since its last meeting and sealed with its common seal.

