



UNIVERSITY COURT

8 February 2016

Minute

**Present:** Mr Steve Morrison, Rector (in chair)  
The Principal, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea  
Dr Anne Richards, Vice-Convenor  
Sheriff Principal Edward Bowen  
Ms Doreen Davidson  
Dr Alan Brown  
Mr Ritchie Walker  
Dr Marialuisa Aliotta  
Professor Jake Ansell  
Ms Angi Lamb  
Mr David Bentley  
Dr Chris Masters  
Mr Alan Johnston  
Mr Peter Budd  
Mr Jonny Ross-Tatam, President, Students' Association  
Ms Urte Macikene, Vice-President, Students' Association

**In attendance:** University Secretary, Ms Sarah Smith  
Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffrey  
Vice-Principal Professor Lesley Yellowlees  
Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl  
Mr Hugh Edmiston, Director of Corporate Services  
Mr Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer & Librarian to the University  
Ms Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning  
Mr Phil McNaull, Director of Finance  
Ms Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services  
Mr Gary Jebb, Director of Estates & Buildings  
Ms Zoe Lewandowski, Director of Human Resources  
Ms Fiona Boyd, Head of Stakeholder Relations  
Ms Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services  
Dr Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services

**Apologies:** Professor Sarah Cooper  
Dr Claire Phillips  
Dr Robert Black  
The Rt Hon Donald Wilson, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh  
Lady Susan Rice  
Ms Alison Grant

**2 Matters Arising** **Verbal**

Court congratulated the Vice-Convener on her appointment as Chief Executive of M&G Investments.

**3 Principal's Communications** **Paper B**

Court noted the content of the Principal's Report and the additional information on: ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government on higher education funding following the draft financial statement published on 16 December and receipt of an indicative funding letter; the progress of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill, with the Senatus Academicus signalling their unanimous opposition to the Bill in its present form; and funding negotiations for the Digital Health Institute.

In relation to the Governance Bill, Court reiterated its support for the 'Edinburgh model' of a Rector elected by staff and students who presides at Court and a Vice-Convener appointed by Court who acts as Chair of the institution and noted evidence from organisations who had introduced elected Chairs (the Co-Operative Group, Scottish NHS Trusts) and later reverted to appointing their Chairs.

Court recommended that the Scottish Funding Council be requested to commission a review of the Digital Health Institute with the University and the Glasgow School of Art represented on the review group, taking account of time constraints and funding for the Institute.

**4 Policy & Resources Committee Report** **Paper C**

The Vice-Convener summarised key items considered by Policy & Resources Committee, highlighting the importance of the Annual TRAC return and Full Economic Cost rates 2014/15 and noting that discussions on a proposed joint venture with a Chinese medical company are ongoing, with a paper to be submitted in due course.

**SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

**5 Student Experience Update** **Paper D**

A Student Experience update relating to visits by the Senior Vice-Principal and Deputy Secretary, Student Experience, to all Schools to discuss the 2015 National Student Survey results and wider issues in learning and teaching was presented. The following points were discussed:

- An update on discussions around rescheduling of the academic year;
- Improving the personal tutor system by disseminating best practice and providing benchmarking and training as appropriate;
- Implications for the growth in student numbers for the University estate – although pedagogical changes may change demand for teaching space;

- Simplification of processes, including performance management, linked to addressing staff workload concerns.

## **6 City Deal Update**

**Paper E**

Following initial discussion at the 21 September 2015 meeting, Court received an update on the proposal for a Edinburgh City Deal between local authorities in the region and the UK and Scottish governments. It was noted that formal discussion of the governance arrangements relating to the University's potential involvement have yet to take place but that if the UK Government announces a commitment to an Edinburgh City Deal, a process of detailed discussion and negotiation would commence prior to finalisation by June 2016. Court agreed to establish a City Deal Sub-Group comprising of co-opted members Mr Alan Johnston, Lady Susan Rice and Ms Alison Grant plus the Principal, the Senior Vice-Principal, the Director of Corporate Services and the University Secretary to act if significant decisions are required outwith the scheduled meeting pattern of Policy & Resources Committee and Court.

## **7 Strategic Planning**

### **• Draft Strategic Plan 2016**

**Paper F1**

A high level draft of the Strategic Plan 2016 was reviewed. Building on initial discussions with staff and students, it was noted that the Strategic Plan will be produced in a manner that is accessible to all stakeholders (in terms of format and language) and that highlights the University's distinctiveness, particularly in those aspects of the University's present and future deemed crucial to its success over a five to ten year period.

Court approved dissemination of the high level draft for consultation with staff and students between February and April, with a final draft to be submitted to the June meeting.

### **• Undergraduate Bursary Review**

**Paper F2**

An evaluation of the University of Edinburgh and Scotland Accommodation bursary schemes introduced in 2012/13 and 2013/14 respectively was considered. Members welcomed the evaluation and discussed the appropriate level of bursary expenditure in different household income brackets compared with offerings from comparable institutions. EUSA representatives welcomed the protection of undergraduate bursary expenditure and the high levels of support for the lowest income groups and added that they would also wish to see an increase in support for those from lower-middle income households.

Court agreed that the University of Edinburgh and Scotland Accommodation bursary schemes are effective and should not be substantially changed, but that more work should be done to: ensure that the full support available for students is more visible; to understand why retention rates for Rest of UK students in receipts of bursaries are lower than the norm; and, once information is available, to assess the impact

of the maintenance grant removal for English-domiciled students in receipt of bursaries. It was noted that the replacement of maintenance grants by loans for English-domiciled students from 2016/17 may lead to a further review in the following year, with the balance of bursary expenditure across different household income brackets to continue to be reviewed in future years.

- **Outcome Agreement Update**

**Paper F3**

Court noted the Outcome Agreement process update and agreed that discussion on the University's Outcome Agreement continue with the Scottish Funding Council, with meetings scheduled for mid-February and early March to conclude negotiations.

**8 UNPRI Responsible Investment Policy Statement**

**Paper G**

Court considered a policy statement summarising the approach the University takes to responsible investing and highlighting the progress made along with actions planned in response to policy decisions and strategic objectives relating to environmental, social and governance considerations. The student representatives welcomed the statement, including the pro-active stance taken and the intention to communicate the statement to students and to the wider public.

The approach taken in responsible investing and the responsible investment policy statement was approved.

**9 Roslin Technologies**

**Paper H**

The Director of Corporate Services introduced a summary of the business case and legal arrangements proposed between the University and JB Equity Ltd for the creation of Roslin Technologies Ltd, following consideration by Policy & Resources Committee and its Sub-Group. The Convener of the Sub-Group highlighted the scrutiny the proposal had been subject to and signalled that the Sub-Group and Policy & Resources Committee recommended the proposal to Court.

On the basis that the final legal agreements reflect the principles set out in the paper, Court agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Corporate Services to work with the Directors of JB Equity to conclude the legal agreements and to present them to the University for signature, with signing authority granted to the University Secretary.

**10 Finance Director's Update**

**Paper I**

The Director of Finance updated Court on the:

- Project to raise external funding – with the £200M European Investment Bank loan facility expected to be finalised within the coming weeks and the £100M private placement from a US investment fund agreed in December 2015;
- Latest iteration of the Ten Year Forecast, including projected cash movements and scale of capital investment implied by the emerging Estates Strategy;

- University Management Accounts to December 2015.

Members discussed inflation rates contained with the Ten Year Forecast, noting that inflation in the higher education sector is typically higher than in the economy as a whole, the inclusion of an estimate of the underlying surplus, projected reductions in Scottish Funding Council grants, with partial inclusion of the reductions and full inclusion to follow within the next iteration. The Principal welcomed the encouraging income growth figures contained within the Management Accounts.

## ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

### 11 EUSA President's Report

Paper J

The EUSA President reported on activities since the last meeting including the Democracy Review, with a student referendum to seek agreement to the recommendations of the review to be held in March. The President thanked other Court members for earlier approval of a number of student experience-related estates projects which are now underway.

Members discussed the recommendations of the Democracy Review; financial performance of the association including work to improve financial information provided to commercial managers and expected higher staffing costs owing to increases in pension costs, National Living Wage and national insurance contributions; and publicising student teaching awards.

### 12 Committee Reports

- **Exception Committee Report**

Paper K1

The following matter approved by the Exception Committee on behalf of Court was noted:

- *LARIF (Large Animal Research and Imaging Facility)*  
Approval of the proposed approach, including £13.2M funding support from the University Capital Investment Fund towards the LARIF construction, with £11.3M funding from Innovate UK, as part of the Centre of Innovation and Excellence in Livestock (CIEL). Delegation of authority to the Director of Corporate Services (in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal Services) to approve final arrangements for membership and governance of CIEL and the charge over or lease of the facility.

- **Nominations Committee Report**

K2

*The Vice-Convenor vacated the meeting for the duration of the item below.*

On the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Court approved the extension of Dr Anne Richards' appointment as Vice-Convener of Court until 31 July 2020.

*The Vice-Convener re-entered the meeting and was congratulated by members on the extension of her term.*

Court noted the appointment by Nominations Committee of Ms Jacqueline McCluskey as an external member of People Committee for a three year term with immediate effect.

• **Court US GAAP Sub-Group Report**

**K3**

Confirmation of the approval by the Court Sub-Group of the Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15 in accordance with the US GAAP requirements was noted. Members thanked the Audit & Risk and Court Sub-Groups for their work in scrutinising the documents.

• **Knowledge Strategy Committee Report**

**K4**

Key points in the report were noted, including the appointment of Mr Alistair Fenemore as Chief Information Security Officer and initial presentations on a 10 Year Strategy for Information Services Group.

• **Senatus Academicus Report**

**K5**

The report was noted, with the Principal highlighting the recent presentation and discussion at Senate on the theme of Edinburgh Global.

**13 EDMARC – Equality, Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee Report**

**L**

The Equality, Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee staff and student reports 2015 were approved.

**14 Dignity and Respect Policy**

**M**

The revised Dignity and Respect policy was approved following recommendation by Central Management Group.

**15 Genomic Investment update**

**N**

An update on Edinburgh Genomics following Court approval (3 November 2014 meeting) of capital funding to purchase an Illumina HiSeq X genome sequencing machine was noted. Members welcomed the higher than forecast utilisation rate of the technology and the expectation of further increases in utilisation rates.

**16 Bank Account for Latin American Office** **O**

The opening of a bank account with Santander Bank in Santiago, in the name of the Foundation of the University of Edinburgh, Chile (FUNDACIÓN ACADÉMICA THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH – CHILE) was approved.

**17 Resolutions** **P**

The following Resolutions were approved:

- Resolution No. 1/2016: Alteration of the title of the College of Humanities and Social Science
- Resolution No. 2/2016: Alteration of the title of the Morrison Chair of International Business
- Resolution No. 3/2016: Foundation of a Chair of Cognitive Ageing and/or Cognitive Epidemiology
- Resolution No. 4/2016: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neurobiology

**18 Donations and Legacies** **Q**

Donations and legacies received by the Development Trust from 17 November 2015 to 21 January 2016 were noted.

**19 Alan Turing Institute – subsidiary company** **R**

Court approved the delegation of authority to the University Secretary to approve certain matters in relation to the Alan Turing Institute, namely:  
(i) the incorporation of a wholly-owned trading subsidiary of the Alan Turing Institute subject to confirmation from the Director of Corporate Services that he is content with the business case for the subsidiary and agrees that the subsidiary should be incorporated; and  
(ii) any other 'reserved matters' under the Joint Venture Agreement (listed within an appendix to the paper) without further recourse to Court, subject to consultation with the Vice-Convener of Court, the Principal, the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Legal Services.

**20 Uses 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.

**21 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**22 Date of next meeting**

Monday, 25 April 2016 at Little France