



UNIVERSITY COURT

6 February 2017

Minute

- Present:** Mr Steve Morrison, Rector (in chair)
The Principal, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea
Ms Anne Richards, Vice-Convener
Sheriff Principal Edward Bowen
Dr Alan Brown
Ms Doreen Davidson
Mr Ritchie Walker
Professor Elizabeth Bomberg
Professor Sarah Cooper
Professor Alexander Tudhope
Dr Robert Black
Mr Peter Budd
Mr Alan Johnston
Dr Chris Masters
Lady Susan Rice
Ms Angi Lamb
Mr Alec Edgecliffe-Johnson, President, Students' Association
Ms Jenna Kelly, Vice-President, Students' Association
- In attendance:** Mr Sandy Ross, Rector's Assessor
University Secretary, Ms Sarah Smith
Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffery
Vice-Principal Professor Dorothy Miell
Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl
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
Dr Ian Conn, Director of Communications and Marketing
Mr Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
Ms Fiona Boyd, Head of Stakeholder Relations
Ms Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services
Dr Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services
- Apologies:** The Rt Hon Donald Wilson, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh
Dr Claire Phillips
Mr David Bentley
Ms Alison Grant

Pre-Court Presentation – ‘Connecting for Good’

Court received a presentation on Development & Alumni activities and priorities, including an alignment of all alumni and donor activity with the Strategic Plan 2016 and the role of Court in ‘Connecting for Good’ with alumni, potential donors and influencers and advocates.

1 Minute

Paper A1-3

The Minute of the meeting and note of the seminar held on 5 December 2016 and the Minute of the special meeting held on 30 January 2017 was approved.

On behalf of Court, the Rector thanked the Vice-Convener, University Secretary, Director of Human Resources and all those involved in the recruitment process leading to the appointment of Professor Peter Mathieson, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong as the next Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh.

2 Matters Arising

Verbal

The Principal provided updates on:

- i) a proposed property acquisition, with a decision from the vendor expected before the next Court meeting;
- ii) Roslin Technologies Ltd, with the legal agreements expected to be finalised shortly.

3 Principal’s Communications

Paper B

Court observed a minutes silence in memory of Tam Dalyell, former Rector (2003-06), Member of Parliament for West Lothian (1962-83) and Linlithgow (1983-2005) and great supporter of the University, who died on 26 January 2017.

Court noted the content of the Principal’s report and the additional information on: recent engagement with the Scottish Government; 2017/18 application statistics; and the University’s position of 13th in the Times Higher Education World’s Most International Universities 2017 ranking.

4 Assistant Principal Extension

Paper C

Court approved the extension of Professor Arthur Trew’s term of office as Assistant Principal Computational Science with immediate effect until 31 July 2018.

The Principal indicated that, in consultation with Professor Peter Mathieson, terms of office for Vice and Assistant Principals which conclude in summer 2017 will be recommended for one year extensions.

5 Policy & Resources Committee Report **Paper D**

The report was noted.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

6 Student Experience Update **Paper E**

The Senior Vice-Principal reported on ongoing work to enhance the student experience following the December Court seminar. The intention to develop a holistic plan for learning and teaching to support the ambition to achieve a top ten placing in UK league tables was discussed. It was noted that a pilot project to subsidise a public bus link between King's Buildings and the Central Area will begin shortly and the Main Library will open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from 20 March, with a successful communications campaign having been launched.

7 Strategic Plan Performance Measurement Framework **Paper F**

The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning, presented a performance measurement dashboard illustrating the health and impacts of the University for use in assessing performance against the Strategic Plan 2016. Members welcomed the intention to develop an online version with further detail below each measure and discussed measuring social and economic impacts on a regional, Scottish, UK and international basis and measuring the return on investment of estates projects.

Noting that the 'work in progress' measures will continue to be developed, Court endorsed the performance measurement dashboard and agreed the proposed targets and next steps set out in the paper.

8 Edinburgh Global Update **Paper G**

The Vice-Principal International presented the new University Global Engagement Plan and provided an update on the MasterCard Scholars Program, Zhejiang University Joint Institute and planned Hua Xia Healthcare collaborative initiatives. Opportunities arising from the Cross-Government Prosperity Fund, further improving Chevening and Commonwealth Scholarship student numbers, the ability to offer an international experience at Edinburgh with 20,000 international staff and students; and, peer support schemes that match domestic and international students were discussed.

9 Finance Director's Report **Paper H**

The first quarter 2016/17 financial outturn, the latest iteration of the Ten Year Forecast and results of stress testing of inflation assumptions in the Ten Year Forecast were reviewed. Court discussed cashflow projections over the Ten Year Forecast period and measuring the return from capital invested on individual projects.

10 City Deal Update **Paper I**

The Senior Vice-Principal presented a progress update on negotiations to establish a City Deal for the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region. Court endorsed the direction of travel and noted that the Court Sub-Group and Exception Committee may be utilised.

11 Core Systems Strategy **Paper J**

The Chief Information Officer presented an initial information brief to raise awareness of the evolving University Core Systems Strategy – to operate the underpinning business and administration software systems in an integrated fashion. The risks of not replacing existing systems, the opportunity to improve the student and staff experience, ensuring realistic measurement of expected savings and the Strategy’s close alignment with the Service Excellence Programme were discussed. Court noted the requirement for a University Core Systems Strategy and the proposed governance process and timeline.

12 Non-Teaching Staff Assessor Election Regulations **Paper K**

Regulations governing the conduct of the Non-Teaching Staff Assessor Election 2017 were approved subject to a change to the duration of the term of office of the Non-Teaching Staff Assessor to three years – linked to the conclusion of the transitional period in 2020 for compliance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

Secretary’s note: the Standing Orders of the University Court will be revised to reflect the change in duration of the next term of office.

13 EUSA President’s Report **Paper L**

The EUSA President reported on activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events, including the annual Gather Festival (20-28 February) to celebrate the diverse University community, the Sustain.Ed Festival (16-18 February) to celebrate sustainability at the University and in the city and the opening of nominations for the annual Impact Awards, Teaching Awards and the EUSA elections.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

14 Committee Reports **Paper M1**

- **Nominations Committee**

Updates on the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act and the recruitment process to recruit new Co-opted Court members from 1 August 2017 were noted. It was agreed that the Rector would be involved in discussions regarding the roles of the Rector and Senior Lay Member at the appropriate time.

- **Knowledge Strategy Committee** **Paper M2**

Key points from the report were noted.

- **Senate**

Paper M3

Key points from the report were noted. The Principal provided a update on an initial discussion of options to revise Senate's membership in line with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act, with a formal report to follow.

15 Resolutions

Paper N

The following resolutions were approved:

Resolution No. 1/2017: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Common Law

Resolution No. 2/2017: Foundation of a Chair of Economics

Resolution No. 3/2017: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Agriculture and Food Security

Resolution No. 4/2017: Foundation of a Chair of Economics

Resolution No. 5/2017: Foundation of a Chair of Business

Resolution No. 6/2017: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Paediatric Infectious Diseases and Global Health

Resolution No. 7/2017: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Corporate Finance

Resolution No. 8/2017: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computational Biology

16 Donations and Legacies

Paper O

Donations and legacies received by the Development Trust from 16 November 2016 to 16 January 2017 were noted.

17 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.

18 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

19 Date of next meeting

Monday, 24 April 2017