



UNIVERSITY COURT

23 April 2018

Minute

Present: Ann Henderson, Rector (in chair)
The Principal, Peter Mathieson
Anne Richards, Vice-Convener
Edward Bowen, Chancellor's Assessor
Frank Ross, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh
Alan Brown, General Council Assessor
Doreen Davidson, General Council Assessor
Ritchie Walker, General Council Assessor
Elizabeth Bomberg, Senate Assessor
Sarah Cooper, Senate Assessor
Claire Phillips, Senate Assessor
Alexander Tudhope, Senate Assessor
Jo Craiglee, Non-Teaching Staff Assessor
Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member
David Bentley, Co-opted Member
Robert Black, Co-opted Member
Perdita Fraser, Co-opted Member
Alison Grant, Co-opted Member
Alan Johnston, Co-opted Member
Susan Rice, Co-opted Member
Patrick Kilduff, President, Students' Association
Esther Dominy, Vice-President, Students' Association

In attendance: Angi Lamb, Rector's Assessor
University Secretary, Sarah Smith
Senior Vice-Principal Charlie Jeffery
Vice-Principal Dorothy Miell
Vice-Principal Dave Robertson
Vice-Principal Moira Whyte
Vice-Principal Jonathan Seckl
Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer & Librarian to the University
Phil McNaul, Director of Finance
Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services
Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning
Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
James Saville, Interim Director of Human Resources
Rob Tomlinson, Acting Director of Communications and Marketing
Fiona Boyd, Head of Stakeholder Relations
Eleri Connick, President-elect, Students' Association
Kai O'Doherty Vice-President Welfare-elect, Students' Association
Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services
Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services

1 Minute

Paper A

The Vice-Convenor welcomed the Rector, Ann Henderson, and the Rector's Assessor, Angi Lamb, to their first Court meeting following the February 2018 election.

The Rector thanked the Vice-Convenor and on behalf of Court, thanked Student President Patrick Kilduff and Vice-President Welfare Esther Dominy, whose terms of office conclude in early June, for their service to the student body and the University over the past year and welcomed Eleri Connick, Student President-elect and Kai O'Doherty, Student Vice-President Welfare-elect, observing the meeting as part of their induction.

The Rector congratulated Professor Sarah Cooper and Dr Claire Phillips on their re-election as Senate Assessors, from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2022.

Court noted the passing on 3 March of Violet Laidlaw, the first Non-Teaching Staff Assessor on Court, who served from 1978-1981.

The Minute of the meeting held on 5 February 2018 was approved.

2 Matters Arising

Verbal

It was noted that an update on the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pensions dispute would be considered within the Principal's Communication item.

3 Principal's Communications

Paper B

Court noted the contents of the Principal's Report and the additional information on: senior appointments and retirements, with Professor Moira Whyte appointed as Vice-Principal and Head of the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine from 1 April, Theresa Merrick appointed as Director of Communications & Marketing from 4 June, Professor Conchúr Ó Brádaigh appointed as Head of the School of Engineering and Professor James Dunlop appointed as Head of the School of Physics & Astronomy – both with effect from 1 August, and the announcement of the retirement of Phil McNaull as Director of Finance at the end of the calendar year.

The Principal provided an update on the USS pensions dispute, with 14 strike days called by the University & College Union (UCU) over a four week period in February and March and additional action short of a strike. Following a revised proposal by Universities UK, including the establishment of an expert panel nominated in equal numbers by Universities UK and UCU, UCU members voted to suspend ongoing and planned industrial action from 13 April.

Court discussed variance in the impact of industrial action across the University and the potentially significant costs to employers and USS staff members if the USS Trustees impose an interim solution to satisfy the Pensions Regulator before the expert panel proposes a solution.

Student admission and research grant statistics were noted, with a future paper covering online learning requested and the international political environment and domestic demographic trends that may impact on student applications discussed.

4 Policy & Resources Committee Report

Paper C

Key items considered by the Policy & Resources Committee were summarised.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

5 Student Experience Update

Paper D

The Senior Vice-Principal introduced a regular update on the University's student experience enhancement activities, with the Head of College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine summarising a metrics-and-narrative based report, including key student survey findings and work underway in response. Court discussed initiatives to improve the training of NHS staff involved in student medical teaching, improving lecture timetabling, plans to develop a teaching building at Little France and the advantages and disadvantages of setting numerical targets for improvements in student satisfaction measures.

The Heads of the Moray House School of Education and the School of Physics & Astronomy presented on the approach to recognition and incentives for teaching within their Schools. Challenging a perception that research is valued over teaching was discussed, including reframing language and fully considering teaching contributions in promotion, appointment and annual review processes. It was requested that a future update include the contribution that professional services staff make to improving the student experience.

6 Widening Participation Strategy

Paper E

A draft Widening Participation strategy was reviewed, to build on the University's leadership in the development of contextualised admissions and innovative outreach programmes. Taking a broader approach to widening participation than the SIMD20 measure (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation least advantaged 20% of postcodes), using successful case studies, outreach to secondary school teachers, regional collaboration with other universities, mentoring schemes, potential for additional funded places and communication appropriate for a wide diversity of prospective students was discussed.

Court approved the guiding principles for the strategy and the approach to external communications, with the implementation plan and outline communications plan to progress to the University Executive for approval.

7 Outcome Agreement 2018/19

Paper F

The draft Outcome Agreement for 2018/19 was approved and authority delegated to the Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning, to finalise and

submit the Outcome Agreement to the Scottish Funding Council by 30 April 2018.

8 Finance Director's Report

Paper G

The period 7 (February) Management Accounts, the Quarter 2 Full Year Forecast for 2017/18 and the latest iteration of the Ten Year Forecast was reviewed. Court discussed the framework set by the Risk Appetite Statement, prioritisation of estates capital projects, improvements in financial controls and financial training for staff and the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) results.

9 City Deal Update

Paper H

A summary update on progress towards a detailed City Deal agreement with the UK and Scottish Governments was received. It was noted that discussions are continuing and it was agreed that the City Deal Sub-Group and Exception Committee may be utilised should any decisions be required outside of the scheduled Court meeting cycle.

10 EUSA & EUSU

• **EUSA and EUSU Planning Round Submission**

Paper I1

The proposed University budget allocations to the Edinburgh University Students' Association and Edinburgh University Sports Union for 2018-19 were approved.

• **EUSA Budget 2018-19**

Paper I2

Following approval by the Board of Trustees, the proposed Edinburgh University Students' Association Budget for the 2018-19 financial year was approved.

• **EUSA President's Report**

Paper I3

The Student President provided an update on a fire in King's Buildings House on 16 April that has led to the temporary closure of the facility, with the cause and extent of damage under investigation. The report was noted.

11 Development & Alumni

• **Development Trust Governance**

Paper J1

Following approval in June 2017 of the recommendations of a review of the University of Edinburgh Development Trust, a proposal to implement the recommendation that the Development Trust is retained primarily to receive legacy pledges and is streamlined was considered. Noting:

- that a proposal to implement the recommendation of greater Court oversight of philanthropic and alumni relations activity is under development and will be submitted to Court for approval;
- that the external Trustees support the proposal; and,
- the intention to appoint a lay Court member to the streamlined Trust;

Court approved with one abstention an amendment to the Trust Deed to support a streamlined Development Trust.

[Post meeting note: Further discussions are being held to respond to a point raised at the meeting.]

- **Naming Policy**

Paper J2

A draft policy to replace the existing Policy for Naming of Buildings, Rooms and other Facilities was reviewed. The following points were raised in discussion:

- The potential for a greater number of namings in recognition of philanthropic donations;
- The intention to reflect diversity in namings while treating each case on its merits in line with the policy was welcomed;
- Risk in accepting a donation is assessed at the point the donation offer is made, with the Ethical Fundraising Advisory Group considering cases as appropriate; and,
- Any donors who wish to remain publicly anonymous will be known to the University and reviewed before acceptance as appropriate.

The Naming Policy: Recognising Philanthropic Contributions and Individuals of Distinction was approved.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

12 Equality, Diversity Monitoring & Research Committee (EDMARC) Staff and Student Reports 2017

Paper K

The EDMARC staff and student reports 2017 were approved for publication, with a report on the undergraduate black and minority ethnic student journey from application to outcome to follow.

13 Committee Reports

- **Exception Committee**

Paper L1

The following matters approved by Exception Committee on behalf of Court were noted:

- Student Accommodation: Pentland House – approval for the University to enter into a 20 year lease for the property subject to agreement of satisfactory Heads of Terms was granted
- Vice-Principal and Head of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine – the appointment of Professor Moira Whyte for a five year term of office with effect from 1 April 2018 was endorsed.

- **Nominations Committee**

Paper L2

The appointment of Richard Terry as an external member of Estates Committee for a period of 12 months in the first instance was noted.

- **Audit and Risk Committee**

Paper L3

The report was noted and the appointment of PwC as External Auditor for a period of three years from the 2018-19 audit with the option to extend for up to a further two audit years was approved.

- **Knowledge Strategy Committee**

Paper L4

The report was noted.

- **Senate**

Paper L5

The report was noted.

14 Resolutions

Paper M

The following draft resolutions were referred to the General Council and to Senate for observations:

Draft Resolution No. 10/2018: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations

Draft Resolution No. 11/2018: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

Draft Resolution No. 12/2018: Higher Degree Programme Regulations

The following resolutions were approved:

Resolution No. 4/2018: Foundation of a Chair of Brain Inflammation and Repair

Resolution No. 5/2018: Foundation of a Chair of Translational Molecular Medicine

Resolution No. 6/2018: Foundation of a Chair of Immunology and Infectious Diseases

Resolution No. 7/2018: Foundation of a Chair of Forest Ecology

Resolution No. 8/2018: Foundation of a Chair of Antimicrobial Resistance

Resolution No. 9/2018: Foundation of a Chair of Immunology

15 Donations and Legacies

Paper N

Donations and legacies received by the Development Trust from 20 January 2018 to 31 March 2018 were noted.

16 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.

17 Any Other Business

It was noted that a transport strategy is in development and will be submitted to Court. The format of the annual Meet the University Court event was discussed. The Rector requested that Court members who wish to raise items under Any Other Business should notify her prior to the meeting.

18 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 18 June 2018