



**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**23 January 2017**

**Minute**

**Present:** Ms Anne Richards (Convener) (by telephone)  
The Principal  
Ms Sarah Smith, University Secretary  
Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl  
Professor Sarah Cooper  
Ms Doreen Davidson  
Ms Alison Grant  
Dr Chris Masters  
Lady Susan Rice  
Mr Alec Edgecliffe-Johnson

**In attendance:** Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffery  
Mr Hugh Edmiston, Director of Corporate Services  
Ms Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning  
Ms Zoe Lewandowski, Director of Human Resources  
Mr Phil McNaull, Director of Finance  
Mr Gary Jebb, Director of Estates  
Dr Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services  
Mr Barry Neilson, Director, Student Systems (for Item 7)  
Mr Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University (for Item 8)

**Apologies:** Mr David Bentley

**1 Minute**

**Paper A**

The Minute of the meeting held on 14 November 2016 was approved.

**2 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**3 Principal's Communications**

The Principal reported on: the Scottish Government's 'Scotland's Place in Europe' document published in December 2016; visits to staff across the University before the festive period; a University delegation to India led by the Principal, which included visits to the University of Delhi, the Bangalore National Centre for Biological Sciences campus and the British Education Centre in Delhi; the Scottish Draft Budget 2017-18, with research and core teaching grants ring-fenced; the recruitment process for a new Director of the Roslin Institute; a small rise in undergraduate applications for 2017-18 entry.

Members discussed SIMD20 and SIMD40 entrant numbers in relation to other Scottish universities and limitations of the postcode-linked measure.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

- 4 Strategic Plan Performance Measurement Framework** **Paper B**
- The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning presented a draft performance measurement framework to assess the University's performance against the Strategic Plan 2016. The Committee welcomed the proposed measures and discussed measures relating to research-learning links with the aim of capturing curriculum enhancements experienced by students and measures relating to the Global Academies and the University's global outreach more broadly. The performance measurement dashboard and approach to agreeing targets was endorsed and the next steps agreed.
- 5 Business Planning Cycle – Funding Context** **Paper C**
- The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning outlined the public sector financial and policy context expected to impact on the University's business planning cycle and provided an update on the planning timetable. Summaries of recent UK and Scottish Government policy developments, the Scottish Government's Draft Budget Bill and the Prime Minister's 17 January Brexit statement were noted. Implications for future EU research programmes that assume staff mobility across participating institutions were discussed.
- 6 Finance Director's Report** **Paper D**
- The 2016-17 Quarter 1 forecast outturn was reviewed.
- 7 Service Excellence Programme & Digitalisation Envelope** **Paper E**
- An update on the Service Excellence Programme (SEP) and a request for approval of in-year expenditure within the 'digitalisation envelope' approved by Court to support the continued progress of the four sub-programmes (Student Administration & Support; HR Transformation; Student Recruitment & Admissions; Finance) was received.
- Expenditure within the digitalisation envelope to support the continued progress of the four sub-programmes was approved.
- 8 University Core Systems Strategy** **Paper F**
- The Chief Information Officer presented an initial information paper with a high level suggested governance path and decision timeline for a core systems strategy. The following points were raised in discussion:
- A growing number (approximately 15-20%) of large universities use an Enterprise Resource Planning 'all in one' system;
  - Cloud based systems are increasingly common and offer significant advantages but cannot be capitalised;

- There are significant risks in delaying a decision given the expected lifespans of some of the current systems;
- It is important to learn from those with experience of implementing similar core systems – this will be achieved through site visits, peer reviews and the composition of the Strategy Group (which may also benefit from College academic representation); and,
- Coupling a core systems strategy with a business change programme such as the Service Excellence Programme is key to maximising benefits.

## **9 City Deal Update**

**Paper G**

The Senior Vice-Principal presented an update on negotiations to establish a City-region Deal with the UK and Scottish Governments aimed at stimulating economic growth in Edinburgh and South-East Scotland. Governance processes were discussed, including utilising the Court City Deal Sub-Group and Exception Committee if decisions are required by late March.

## **10 Industry Engagement**

**Paper H**

The Director of Corporate Services presented an outline proposal – to be developed further over the coming months – to establish a strategic funding model to support the exploitation of the University’s intellectual property through spin-out companies, services and consultancies.

PRC welcomed the proposals and discussed developing clear financial models, being mindful of investment concentration, effects of the EU Referendum vote, and the notable success of the Entrepreneurs in Residence scheme within the Medical School.

## **11 Review of University Subsidiary Companies**

**Paper I**

A review of the University’s subsidiary companies, with recommendations made and subsequently accepted by the Directors of Corporate Services, Finance and Legal Services, was received. The review and recommendations, including the intention to improve the gender balance of subsidiary boards, was welcomed.

### **ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

## **12 Investment Committee Report**

**Paper J**

The report was noted.

## **13 People Report**

**Paper K**

The report was noted.

## **14 Estates Committee Report**

**Paper L**

The report was noted.

**15 Research and Commercialisation Statistics**

**Paper M**

The report was noted.

**16 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**17 Date of next meeting**

Monday, 3 April 2017 at 2.30 pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College