



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

19 January 2018

Minute

Present: Ms Anne Richards (Convener)
University Secretary, Ms Sarah Smith
Vice-Principal Professor Jonathan Seckl
Professor Sarah Cooper
Dame Susan Rice
Ms Alison Grant
Ms Doreen Davidson
Mr Patrick Kilduff

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 McNaul, Director of Finance
Mr Gary Jebb, Director of Estates
Dr Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services

Apologies: The Principal
Mr David Bentley
Dr Frank Armstrong

1 Minute

**Paper A1
Paper A2**

The minute of the meeting held on 13 November 2017 and the minute of the electronic meeting concluded on 11 December 2017 were approved.

2 Matters Arising

Verbal

The Committee congratulated Susan Rice on her award of DBE in the 2018 New Year's Honours. It was noted that Paper G – Naming Policy, would be withdrawn from the agenda and resubmitted at a later date.

3 Principal's Communications

Verbal

The Senior Vice-Principal reported on: the memorial event held in the Playfair Library in honour of Assistant Principal Professor Jon Oberlander; University staff recognised in the 2018 New Year Honours; a 12% increase in research awards; the appointment of UK Government Ministers with higher education responsibilities – Secretary of State for Education Damian Hinds and Minister for Higher Education Sam Gyimah; evidence given by the Principal and Student President at the joint Parliamentary Select Committee on Human Rights regarding freedom of speech in universities; the extension of a pilot streamlining the visa

process for non-EU Masters students to the University of Edinburgh and 22 other institutions; and, preparations for the arrival of Professor Peter Mathieson as Principal and Vice-Chancellor in February 2018.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

4 Business Planning Round – Funding Context Paper B

The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning, outlined the wider financial and policy context expected to impact on the University's business planning cycle. Summaries of recent UK and Scottish Government policy developments, the Scottish Government's Draft Budget Bill and next steps in Brexit negotiations were noted. Improving the scope for re-investment and improvements in transparency in budgeting at College and Support Group level were discussed.

5 Finance Director's Report Paper C

The Director of Finance provided an overview of the Period 4 (November) Management Accounts, the Quarter 1 Full Year Forecast, the latest iteration of the Ten Year Forecast and UK-wide negotiations regarding the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). It was noted that if an agreement is not reached by the UK Joint Negotiating Committee a cost sharing rule will be implemented at a later date. The Court USS Sub-Group continues to be consulted on responses to Universities UK requests for evidence.

Post-meeting note: it has since been confirmed that 1 April 2019 would be the implementation date of the cost sharing rule should no agreement be reached.

6 Chinese Collaborations Overview Paper D

Following a request at the previous meeting, the Director of Corporate Services presented a summary of current and proposed collaborations between the University and Chinese higher education institutions and commercial partners. The establishment of an internal International Ventures Group to strengthen University-level oversight of international collaborations and ventures was welcomed. Members discussed progress with the Hua Xia Healthcare collaboration, the likely evolution in Chinese partnerships in the medium to long term, and using the International Ventures Group and other forums to share and capture best practice across the University. The Convener welcomed the paper and requested that an updated version be submitted to the Committee on an annual basis.

7 City Deal Update Paper E

The Senior Vice-Principal provided a summary update on progress in moving towards a detailed agreement with the UK and Scottish

Governments on the City Deal, including the Data Driven Innovation programme led by the University. Noting that the Court City Deal Sub-Group met earlier to consider a more detailed update, members noted progress made and the possibility that a rapid governance approval may be sought via the Exception Committee should a detailed agreement be reached outside the normal cycle of Court and committee meetings.

8 Estates

• Strathclyde Rowing Centre and Boat Store

Paper F1

The Committee endorsed entering into a 30 year ground lease with North Lanarkshire Council at Strathclyde Country Park to build a new rowing centre and boat store.

• Disability Access Improvements Programme

Paper F2

The findings from the Disabled Go access audits were noted and the Committee agreed to recommend to Court approval of expenditure from University Corporate Resources to implement the recommendations to improve access to buildings across the University estate.

• Estates Committee Terms of Reference

Paper F3

Proposed revisions to the Estates Committee Terms of Reference were approved with immediate effect, as detailed in the paper.

9 Zero by 2040 Investments

Paper L

A proposal to cease investment in companies engaged in fossil fuel extraction – reflecting the University’s ‘Zero by 2040’ commitment – was reviewed. Noting that, following the 2015 Fossil Fuel Group review, less than 1% of the University’s total funds are presently invested in companies engaged in fossil fuel extraction, the Committee agreed to endorse a commitment that the University will cease to invest in fossil fuels as soon as practicable in the next three years.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

10 Estates Committee Report

Paper H

The report was noted and an analysis of demand for teaching space in the Central Area discussed.

11 Investment Committee Report

Paper I

The report was noted.

12 People Report

Paper J

The report was noted and a summary update on the HR Transformation project requested.

13 Research and Commercialisation Statistics – Q1 Report

Paper K

The positive Q1 2017-18 outcome was welcomed.

14 Any Other Business

The Director of Corporate Services advised the Committee of expected future papers relating to the: BioQuarter; commercialisation strategy update; and, a student accommodation strategy. It was requested that the commercialisation strategy update be reviewed by the Commercialisation Sub-Group in the first instance.

15 Date of next meeting

Friday, 6 April 2018 at 10 am, Raeburn Room, Old College