



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

22 October 2018

Minute

- Present:** Peter Mathieson (Convener)
David Argyle, Eleri Connick, Leigh Chalmers, Chris Cox, Gavin Douglas,
Hugh Edmiston, David Gray, Gary Jebb, Gavin McLachlan,
Wendy Loretto, Theresa Merrick, Dorothy Miell, Tracey Slaven, Sarah Smith
and Moira Whyte.
- In attendance:** Barry Neilson (for items 4 and 5), Lee Hamill, Fiona Boyd and
Kirstie Graham.
- Apologies:** Charlie Jeffery, Richard Kenway, Phil McNaull, Andrew Morris, Jane Norman,
Dave Robertson, James Saville, Jonathan Seckl and James Smith.

1 Minute Paper A1

The Minute of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 was approved.

2 Matters Arising Paper A2

The Action Log was noted. Members requested an update on the final approval of the Policy on Intimate Relationships and the decision on the Reimbursement of Immigration Fees and it was noted that formal communications on the outcome of both of these items were in preparation and would be circulated in due course.

3 Principal's Communications

The Principal reported on the following: the planned senior team away days on 1 and 2 November; the staff survey was now closed with next steps to be considered by the Leadership Forum on 21 November; the ongoing discussions on the University Superannuation Scheme, reporting the University would respond to the Universities UK consultation to support the recommendations of the Joint Expert Panel including the proposal for a second phase of work; progress on a number of deep strategic partnerships with comparable universities in continental Europe, discussions on joint work with Glasgow University and consideration of partnerships beyond Europe; a recent successful trip to Hong Kong and mainland China with opportunities emerging from the 'Greater Bay Area Initiative'; the Chancellor's visit to the University today to open the Bayes Centre and Lister Building.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4 Review of Delivery of Advice and Support to Students

Paper B

The Executive considered a proposal to review the delivery of advice and support for students including the Personal Tutor (PT) system and Student Support Teams (SSTs). As the Service Excellence Programme (SEP) will review the SSTs, who provide the administrative support for PTs, the proposal was for a holistic review of the PT and SST systems using change management methodology and capability within the SEP, with the leadership and governance of SST through the Student Administration and Support Programme and the PTs through the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee, with a 'Design Group' established to bridge the two groups.

During discussion it was noted that this was a considerable addition to SEP and would require adequate resource, it was important that this approach strengthened rather than diluted the work of the SEP, student representation should be included on the proposed 'Design Group', PTs were effective in many schools so the review should learn from best practice while aligning with core University values, effective communication must be considered carefully and built into the programme.

Taking into account the issues discussed, the Executive was supportive of the direction of travel, recognising there was more work to be done in developing a fully worked up and costed programme and that the proposed change in scope and resources would go the SEP Board for further consideration and approval.

5 Service Excellence & Core Systems Procurement Updates

**Paper C1
Paper C2**

The Executive considered an update on the SEP, noting that the SEP Board met on 18 October and approved the Blueprint and Business case for the Finance Transformation Programme which would now move to implementation. The project sponsor, the Director of Finance (designate) recorded his thanks to all in reaching this stage. The work on the Student Administration and Support Programme was noted, including the planned launch of the single timetabling service.

The Executive was also updated on the Core Systems Procurement Programme within the SEP. Following a substantial amount of work, the Invitation to Submit Final Tenders will be issued to the 2 remaining qualified bidders. As these were both 'Tier 1' vendors and given the complexity of the requirements, there is expected to be an increase in the anticipated cost. The Executive noted progress and the ongoing work on costing.

6 Finance Director's Report

Paper D

The Executive considered the report, noting the 'quarter zero' meetings provided an early indication that the overall position was on track, while noting this did not include any incremental net benefit from the City Deal. The strategic target surplus range of 3% - 5% of turnover was raised, recognising the challenge of achieving this in the short term due to a number of strategic initiatives. In this context, there was discussion of role of the 10 year forecast, and it was noted that the latest update of this would go to the December meeting of Court, and this could also helpfully be circulated to budget holders when available.

7 UK/EU Undergraduate Student Recruitment Trends & Targets 2019/20

Paper E

The Executive was asked to note the increasingly competitive environment, with demographic changes and Brexit uncertainties expected to impact on recruitment cycles across the three year planning horizon. There was discussion on the future balance of the student intake, the variation of impact across the Schools in terms of headroom to increase international intake to balance any potential loss of EU students, and a shared understanding that, although recruitment remained buoyant, there was no space for complacency in ensuring the University continued to admit the best students.

The Executive approved the planning assumptions and targets outlined in the paper for SEU non-controlled UG intake and the expectation of SIMD20 (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 20% least advantaged postcodes) entrants. The Executive also approved the initiation of preparation for engagement in Clearing during the 2019/20 undergraduate UCAS cycle, noting that all programmes will be available in SIMD20 Clearing, with the expectation that almost all programmes would also engage in A-level Clearing.

8 Venture Funding Update

Paper I

The Executive considered a summary of venture funding, noting that over the last 2 years a model has been developed for external professional venture funds working with the University on a non-exclusive complementary basis, each bringing their own particular expertise to support the exploitation of the University's research portfolio. The Commercialisation Sub-Group of Policy and Resources Committee had met on 17 October and considered the interaction between Investment Committee, Policy & Resources Committee and the University Executive, noting that for novel and/or potentially contentious investments, initial review by University Executive is expected before a strategic decision by Policy & Resources Committee, for implementation by Investment Committee.

There was discussion on the future of Old College Capital (OCC), which is the University's own fund that has been in existence for 8 years. It has received 2 rounds of investment, has funded 19 companies and there are indications that there could be a number of exits over the next 12-14 months. The future of OCC was currently being considered, whether to collapse, continue in its current form or evolve into a more substantial fund, which would require additional resources. An evidence case was being developed for the most appropriate approach and this will return to the University Executive for a decision.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING:

- 9 Fee Strategy Group** **Paper F**
- The Executive approved: the proposed student accommodation rents for 2019/20, noting the indicative rent increase for 2020/21 and 2021/22; the fee rates for the Outdoor Education Programmes; and noted the routine fees approved by Chair's Action. The Executive also approved the Turkish Scholarship Agreement, while requesting that FSG consider developing a formal ethical assessment process for scholarship agreements.
- 10 Proposals for Chair Establishment and Changes** **Paper G1
Paper G2**
- The Executive approved the establishment a Chair of Inorganic Chemistry and the re-naming the currently vacant established Chair of Mathematics (Third – Ord 22/2007) as the Chair of Operational Research in the College of Science and Engineering and the establishment of a Chair of General Practice and a Chair of Primary Care and Multimorbidity in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.
- 11 Health and Safety Quarterly Report: Quarter 4: 1 June 2018 – 31 August 2018** **Paper H**
- The Health and Safety report for the period 1 June 2018 to 31 August 2018 was noted.
- 12 Date of next meeting**
- The University Executive will next meet on Tuesday, 20 November 2018 at 10.00am in the Raeburn Room, Old College.