



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

25 June 2019

Minute

- Present:** Peter Mathieson (Convener)
David Argyle, Leigh Chalmers, Gavin Douglas, Hugh Edmiston, David Gray, Gary Jebb, Charlie Jeffery, Richard Kenway, Wendy Loretto, Gavin McLachlan, Dorothy Miell, Dave Robertson, James Saville, Jonathan Seckl, Tracey Slaven, Sarah Smith, Moira Whyte and Andrew Wilson.
- In attendance:** Rachael Robertson (for Lee Hamill) , Antony Maciocia (for item 5), Fiona Boyd and Kirstie Graham.
- Apologies:** Chris Cox, Lee Hamill, Andrew Morris and James Smith.

1 Minute Paper A1

The Principal welcomed Andrew Wilson, EUSA President, to his first formal meeting of the University Executive.

The Minute of the meeting held on 14 May 2019 was approved as a correct record.

2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log Paper A2

There were no outstanding matters arising and the action log was noted.

3 Principal's Communications Verbal

The Principal reported on his all staff email covering the following areas: Court approval of the Strategic Plan; the need to create financial headroom to achieve our strategic priorities; the decision at the recent away day to be carbon neutral by 2040 by progressively reducing our carbon footprint and implementing carbon-offset measures; following Vice-Principal Jane Norman's departure, Sarah Cunningham-Burley would be University lead on equality diversity and inclusiveness across the University. He also reported on the external challenges around Brexit, Augar and the USS pension scheme and finally the positive celebration of achievement that was the graduation season.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4 Teaching and Academic Careers Group Interim Report Paper B

The Executive considered an update from the short life Teaching and Academic Careers Task Group and discussed the progress made and issues raised. The Executive welcomed the approach and discussed the need for recognition of institutional citizenship and student support and the interface of this work with work around the staff experience. The Executive approved the revised Exemplars of

Excellence in Student Education, the recommendations on professional development in teaching and the further programme of work for the task group to be led by the new Vice-Principal Students.

5 Enhanced Doctoral Training Provision

Paper C

The Executive considered a paper setting out plans to develop a 'doctoral college'. In discussion, concerns were raised about duplication and creating an additional tier, but there was support for a co-ordination role. The synergies with the Service Excellence Programme were noted in seeking to reduce duplication by streamlining processes. The Executive approved the proposal to set up a short life working group to progress the initiative, with future updates in due course, with a recognition that although there are no additional resource requirements initially, there are likely to be going forward.

6 Course Enhancement Questionnaires – Review and Recommendations

Paper D

The Executive considered the Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQ) review with members noting the reduced completion rate. In discussion, the review approach was felt to be too operational, rather than taking a more radical look at the purpose, timing and format of CEQs. Members suggested that to be effective, there needed to be a single interface, ideally via smartphone, to a simpler online questionnaire that would take 10-15 minutes to complete, in class, on a set date that that was clearly communicated in advance and the review team was asked to give this further consideration.

7 People

• Staff Experience

Paper E1

The Executive considered a proposed approach for addressing staff experience, building on work already underway, mirroring the approach to student experience with a holistic, multi-strand programme of work. This would be built around the following key themes: equality, diversity and inclusion, including addressing bullying and harassment; employment lifecycle; engagement; leadership and management; performance management, including addressing poor performance; and managing change. It was proposed to establish a standing committee of the Executive, convened by Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance, to replace People Committee, with membership and objectives complementary to the Student Experience standing committee. It was further proposed to replace the current committees overseeing equality, diversity and inclusiveness (EDI) across the University with another standing committee of the Executive, to raise the profile of EDI issues, to enable a more strategic approach and to encourage more joined-up activity across groups with protected characteristics.

During discussion members requested clarification on the current standing committee structure and it was noted that there would be a paper on this for a future meeting. Members also noted that the next survey staff survey was scheduled for

Spring 2021, to avoid the start of the academic year and the implementation of new core systems.

The Executive approved the establishment and delegation of authority to two new standing committees on Staff Experience and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), agreed the focus of future prioritisation and associated resources and noted that Policy and Resources Committee will be asked to agree that People Committee be replaced by the activity led by the new Staff Experience and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committees.

- **People Report**

Paper E2

The People Report was noted.

8 Global Academies

Paper F

The Executive considered the conclusion from the review of the Global Academies that was completed early this year, proposing the formation of one, restructured Global Academy. There was discussion of the terminology, noting that the review did not consider the Global Academy of Food Security and Agriculture, which has a different genesis and likely trajectory towards a substantive subject area/school. The proposed single Global Academy is intended to be an enabler to implementation of the University's values led strategy and there was general support for the direction of travel, noting this will need to be kept under review.

9 Finance

- **Director of Finance's Update**

Paper G1

The Executive noted the management accounts (excluding subsidiaries) position up to the end of April 2019 (period nine) and a forecast Group comprehensive income position for 2018/19, noting the impact of the USS pension movement on the financial statements. The Executive considered the Special Focus Update on catering and accommodation spend in quarters one and two from 2016/7 to 2018/19 which highlighted that the amount being spent with external providers had disproportionately increased. Members were reminded to always consider using internal venues for their events as well as in house catering and accommodation options and the issue of preferential internal rates, as discussed at the recent Strategy Away Day was raised as requiring further consideration.

- **Project Bearing Update**

Paper G2

The Executive noted progress on the latest financial controls project covering the four workstreams of: subsidiary companies, spin outs and start ups; business ethics policies and processes; counter fraud; and procure to pay.

- **Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy**

Paper G3

The Executive approved the updated Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy for progression to Court, noting this would close out a number of outstanding internal audit actions.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

10 A new University approach to health surveillance for staff Paper H

The Executive approved the introduction of a consistent University approach to statutory health surveillance for all staff.

11 REF Update Paper I

The Executive noted an update on Research Excellence Framework activities.

12 Closure of Agreed Management Actions from Internal Audit Paper J

The Executive noted the paper and members were requested to drive closure of open management actions within their areas of responsibility and to contact the Head of Internal Audit if they wished to query the continued relevance of any of the long standing actions.

13 Implementing the Prevent Duty: Annual Update Paper K

The Executive noted the annual update on the implementation of the Prevent duty from July 2018 to June 2019.

14 Proposals for the Establishment of Chairs L1 L2

The Executive approved the establishment of a Chair of Chemical Engineering Technology in the College of Science and Engineering and a Chair of Infectious Diseases and HIV in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

15 University Executive Communications Verbal

The Executive agreed there would be communication on the Teaching and Academic Careers Task Group, the proposed doctoral college and work on the Staff Experience.

16 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 30 July 2019 at 10 am in the Raeburn Room.