



**UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE**

**30 July 2019**

**Minute**

- Present:** Peter Mathieson (Convener)  
David Argyle, Leigh Chalmers, Gavin Douglas, Hugh Edmiston, Lee Hamill, Gary Jebb, Charlie Jeffery (to item 6), Richard Kenway, Wendy Loretto, Gavin McLachlan, Dave Robertson, James Saville, Jonathan Seckl, Tracey Slaven, Andrew Wilson and Moira Whyte.
- In attendance:** Rob Tomlinson (for Theresa Merrick), Tony Weir (for item 4), Fiona Boyd and Kirstie Graham.
- Apologies:** Chris Cox, David Gray, Dorothy Miell, Theresa Merrick, Andrew Morris, James Smith and Sarah Smith.

**1 Minute**

**Paper A1 & A2**

The Minute of the meeting held on 25 June 2019 and the note of Strategic Away Day held on 13 June 2019 were approved as a correct record. The proposed messaging from the Strategic Away Day was approved, subject to some rewording around the language to clarify that the intention was to create financial capacity to invest in strategic priority areas.

**2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log**

**Paper A3**

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

**3 Principal's Communications**

**Verbal**

The Principal reported on the successful graduations and thanked all involved; the results of the National Student Survey which were a marginal improvement on the previous year but still behind where we want to be and while commending impressive improvements in some areas, it was important to remain focussed on the holistic change programme which would take time to impact on the overall headline results; an inaugural meeting in Paris of a new University alliance 'U7', based on the G7 group; the potential impact of the Lothian Buses strike, with a group convened to scenario plan and mitigate impact; the increased likelihood of a 'no deal' Brexit, for which the University had previously developed contingencies.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**4 Network Presentation**

**Verbal**

Tony Weir, Director of IT Infrastructure, provided a brief presentation on replacing the whole campus data network to provide increased stability and security and enhanced performance. This would be implemented building by building and outside core office hours wherever possible, to minimise disruption. It was noted that, while

all areas would benefit significantly, some older buildings would not be able to access the full benefits of the new network due to legacy cabling. This will be gradually addressed through targeted investment. The implementation of new core systems was raised and the Executive was reassured that work was taking place to ensure these projects were aligned.

## **5 Major International Collaborations**

**Paper B**

The Executive considered a paper setting out the process for consideration, support and approval of major international collaborations, based on discussions at a previous strategy session. Members were asked to note the definition of 'major international collaborations' set out in the paper to be clear this was targeted at institutional level arrangements with some complexity. It was proposed to reconfigure the International Ventures Group (IVG) with expanded membership in order to provide support with the relevant financial, academic, commercial assessment and due diligence processes. This would be convened by the Vice-Principal International, reporting directly to the Principal. There was discussion on ensuring this did not inhibit entrepreneurialism but was an enabling structure providing a supportive framework for developing complex projects that kept the Senior Leadership Team informed and it was noted that IVG was not an approval body. There was some discussion on the definition of 'novel and contentious' and members agreed that this was an evolving area, with the paper providing an initial approach that could be reconsidered as necessary.

## **6 Pensions Communication and the Wider Communications Context**

**Paper C**

The Executive noted proposals for communicating to staff about forthcoming pension changes, to raise awareness and to provide a clear package of guidance and support for staff. Members welcome the proposed approach, with staff experience the 'golden thread' throughout all these communications, to demonstrate how the University is informing and supporting staff across a range of initiatives

## **7 Handling of Student Complaints which Relate to Staff Conduct**

**Paper D**

The Director of Legal Services informed members that this paper was part of a larger piece of work around preventing and responding to sexual misconduct and focussed specifically on the complaint procedure. The Executive recognised this was an area where there was a gap to be addressed and welcomed the specific training of staff to investigate reported cases in order to ensure parity of support for staff and students through the process. It was noted the procedure required further discussion with trade unions and EUSA Sabbatical Officers and taking this into account the Executive was content to endorse the proposed procedure.

## **8 Director of Finance's Report**

**Paper E**

The Director of Finance reported on the most recent forecast for the year as we approach year-end, with performance in line with plans. There was a Special Focus Update on Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) benchmarking data for the years 2016-17 and 2017-18 which showed that the University compared favourably with its peers but there were areas where we could improve our position.

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

### **9 People Report**

**Paper F**

The People Report was noted and the joint work of Human Resources and the Institute for Academic Development in Career Development Support for Technicians was commended.

### **10 Strategic Plan**

**Paper G**

The final text of the new University strategy approved by Court on 17 June 2019 was noted.

### **11 Export Control and Sanctions Policy**

**Paper H**

The Export Control and Sanctions Policy was approved, noting that there would be further work on a procedure document to support implementation.

### **12 Data Protection Update**

**Paper I**

The report on compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation one year since it became law was noted.

### **13 Access Protocols to Golden Copy Data**

**Paper J**

The two Access Protocols to Golden Copy Data to support compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation were noted.

### **14 Windows 10 Programme Update**

**Paper K**

This report on the current status of the Windows 10 Programme was noted and the resources required to maintain and transition the legacy Windows client device estate. Members noted the increased complexity due to the number of different devices which underlined the benefits of the sustainable IT policy that was currently under consultation.

### **15 Health and Safety Update**

**Paper L**

The Health and Safety Quarter 3 Report, 1 March 2019 – 31 May 2019 was noted.

### **16 Proposal for the Establishment of a Chair**

**Paper M**

The Executive approved the creation of a Jason Reese Chair of Multiscale Fluid Mechanics in the College of Science and Engineering, noting there were exceptional circumstances supporting the creation of this named chair that did not establish a precedent.

## **17 University Executive Communications**

**Verbal**

The Executive agreed there would be communication on the network replacement project; major international collaborations; handling of student complaints relating to staff conduct; and the Export Control and Sanctions Policy.

## **18 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 29 August 2019 at 10 am in the Raeburn Room.