



Court

Minute of Meeting held on Tuesday 22 June 2021 via Zoom

Present:

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Mr Graeme Bissett (Co-opted Member), Mr Liam Brady (SRC President), Dr Chris Cassells (Trade Union Nominee) Ms Heather Cousins (Co-opted Member), Dr Craig Daly (Trade Union Nominee), Mr David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Professor Carl Goodyear (Elected Academic Staff Member), Ms Julia Hegele (SRC Assessor), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Dr Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khaliq (Co-opted Member), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson (General Council Assessor), Mr Ronnie Mercer (Co-opted Member), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Lady Rita Rae (Rector), Ms Lesley Sutherland (General Council Assessor), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member)

Attending:

Gregor Caldwell (Executive Director of Finance), Professor Frank Coton (Vice Principal Academic Planning and Technological Innovation), Bonnie Dean (Vice-Principal Corporate engagement & Innovation), Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith (Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Professor Neal Juster (Senior Vice-Principal and Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Ella McCabe (SRC President Elect), Professor Jill Morrison (Vice-Principal & Clerk of Senate), Rachel Sandison (Vice-Principal External Relations), Mhairi Taylor (Head of Equality & Diversity).

Apologies:

Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Mr David Milloy (Co-opted Member).

CRT/2020/52. Announcements

The Convener welcomed Bonnie Dean (Vice-Principal Corporate Engagement & Innovation) Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith (Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching), Ella McCabe (SRC President Elect), Rachel Sandison (Vice-Principal External Relations), and Mhairi Taylor (Head of Equality & Diversity) to the meeting.

The Convener also welcomed Lady Rita Rae who had been elected as the Rector for a period of 3 years until April 2024.

There was the following declaration of interest in relation to business to be conducted at the meeting: Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli as a Trustee of USS, as an ongoing declaration, given the updates on the scheme.

It was recorded that Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith Vice-Principal (Learning and

Teaching) and Uzma Khan (Deputy Secretary) had briefed Court at the pre-lunch session on the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Court's thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2020/53. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 14 April 2021

The minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 14 April 2021 were approved.

CRT/2020/54. Matters Arising

Court noted that under previous item *CRT/2020/43. University Strategy – KPIs* – a small number of KPI's were still to be finalised and Court would be sent those that had been finalised since the last meeting, with the final KPI's discussed at the meeting in September.

CRT/2020/55. Covid-19 Update and Planning

Court noted Paper 4 which included updates from the Dr David Duncan, Professor Neal Juster, Professor Frank Coton and Rachel Sandison on the current planning and progress made following the reopening of the campus. Particular attention was drawn to the following:

- Ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government on social distancing requirements in the classroom setting;
- The Working from Home Group transition to a new group to consider how the University could embed new ways of working post-pandemic;
- Project Aurora which was focusing on teaching delivery, admissions support and dual intake planning;
- Admissions figures for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

During the discussion it was noted that staff were under pressure due to the intake in January 2021 and that long-term planning for additional intakes looked closely at staffing levels.

Court thanked staff and students for their continued efforts and recognised all the hard work that had been undertaken during the pandemic to keep the University running especially during the recent lockdown.

CRT/2020/56. Budget 21/22 and Financial Forecasts

Court received a presentation from Professor Frank Coton, Vice-Principal (Academic Planning and Technological Innovation) and Gregor Caldwell, Executive Director of Finance on the Budget for 21/22 and the financial forecasts. Professor Frank Coton outlined the main themes from the budget submission.

It was noted that both the College of Social Sciences and College of Science and Engineering faced significant challenges in managing the rapid anticipated growth in student numbers and using the resource provided to consolidate and strengthen the research base and the global standing of their Schools. While both College of Arts and MVLS are also experiencing student number growth, the focus in the coming year would be on providing a firmer basis for consolidated growth across all activity in the outer years. University Services had taken the opportunity provided by the Covid period to look critically at its cost base to achieve savings

and identify areas for future service evolution with the support of the World Changing Glasgow Transformation team. It was also actively developing its approach to defining service strategies and delivering service excellence.

The following points were noted:

- Although the opening of the JMSLH and the commitment to proceed with the ASBS/PGT Hub project increased overall teaching capacity on the estate, anticipated student FTE growth placed considerable pressure on the estate as a whole and in local areas to accommodate additional staff and laboratories;
- The projected growth in research income over the budget period was 9% or £14m above the 2020/21 budget. This compared to 12% projected in last year's budget round and reflected concerns over the fragility of the external funding landscape;
- As in previous years, there was general recognition that the relationships with and income from industry needed to be strengthened, including support for staff and student spin outs which needed to be more coherent and connected;
- University Services had indicated a range of priorities from supporting the Covid recovery, through value optimisation of service provision to ensuring effective support for the implementation of strategy. University Services also outlined steps that have been taken to deliver savings through the budget cycle. The importance of successfully delivering major IT and Estates projects was also highlighted.

The financial framework also outlined key principles around cash generation requirements, specifically operational cash targets, minimum infrastructure spend requirements, capital spend and finally additional investment levels.

Court approved the budget for 2021/22 and the financial forecasts.

CRT/2020/57. Annual Report on Research & KPIs

Court received a presentation from Professor Chris Pearce, Vice Principal (Research) on the Annual Report on Research and KPI's. The Vice Principal drew Court's attention to the following:

- Three pillars of the research strategy – Collaboration, Creativity and Careers – and how the underlying principles were being built on;
- Workstreams established to look at the delivery of the strategy;
- The contribution by the University to the national effort to understand the nature of the virus, its transmission dynamics and its effects on health, alongside hosting the Lighthouse Lab Covid-19 testing centre at the Clinical Innovation Zone at the QEUH;
- The impact of lockdown on research activity and the research mitigations that had been put in place;
- The actions for ramping up research were also outlined.

Professor Pearce also outlined the Research Excellence Framework submission and indicated that the results were due in Spring 2022. During the discussion Court noted that a large amount of staff effort had been put into the submission and Court thanked everyone involved. It was also noted that research staff had been heavily involved with blended learning over the last year which had impacted their ability to undertake research and it was important that staff were supported going forwards.

Court thanked Professor Pearce for his presentation and recorded their thanks to the staff involved with all aspect of research over the last 18 months.

CRT/2020/58. Report from the Principal

CRT/2020/58.1 Geopolitical Trends and the University

Following discussion at the last Court meeting it was agreed that Court members would be provided with more detail on the impact of geopolitical trends on the University and any mitigating steps being taken. The Principal outlined the context currently facing the HE sector and it was noted that the University was experiencing a period of greater geopolitical uncertainty now than at any stage since the late 20th Century. Following the end of the Cold War era post-1990, the geopolitical landscape had favoured greater integration and collaboration in research, as well as substantially increased student mobility across the globe.

The integration of research (particularly in science and technology) had seen Universities at the centre of this movement. Universities had always benefited from seamless interactions across borders, bringing free flows of talent and ideas. In many respects the University does not have complete freedom of strategic action in this sphere. The 'business model' for research-intensive Universities in the UK and many anglophone countries was not determined by individual Universities, but it's the way in which national higher education funding systems operate. The lack of full economic cover for publicly-funded research and publicly-funded teaching had driven those Universities which were research-intensive and wished to maintain high-quality teaching to look for other income sources and commercial opportunities to cross-subsidise teaching and research. Similarly, providing the best opportunities for the students and research & teaching staff involved with international collaboration: internationalisation drives excellence in both teaching and research.

The key issues were seen as how the University could best mitigate the risks from potential geopolitical shocks, as well as from any changes in UK government policy, to the current pattern of student mobility and research collaboration. SMG members Gregor Caldwell (Executive Director of Finance), Rachel Sandison (Vice-Principal External Relations) and Professor Chris Pearce, (Vice-Principal Research) gave a presentation on how the University intended to manage any shocks and mitigate risks in the short to medium run. The following was noted from the presentation:

- Geopolitical risk to UK HE institutions was rising rapidly up the agenda raising issues around vulnerability/resilience and broader security risks;
- Student recruitment – 59% of the overseas student population was from China and steps were being taken to diversify the student population including regional market strategies, the use of transnational education, additional partnerships (which is currently hampered by Covid travel restrictions) new product development and targeted scholarships;
- Trusted research had been developed by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure and National Cyber Security Centre with the key objective to protect the integrity of international research collaborations. This was a fast-evolving area and most institutions were at a fairly early stage of developing a response. Research staff would be supported to ensure that all policy changes were put in place as they became clearer;
- Financial modelling and exposure – reduced cash generation would lead to reduced investment and cost savings processes that had been identified following the pandemic could easily be reintroduced. Scenario planning had now become part of regular financial planning with a variety of responses mapped out;
- Next steps – international income and partnerships were a considerable strength and these would be capitalised on whilst pursuing and investing in diversification. Financial framework provides mechanisms and flexibility to manage short term shocks. Work would continue to manage a Trusted research agenda.

During the discussion Court noted concerns on the reliance in key markets for international

student income. It was noted that Chinese students continued to apply to study abroad despite concerns about whether these trends would continue in future, but this would be monitored closely. It was also important for the University to continue to be an institution of choice for major markets like China and India. It was also reported that Colleges were taking a number of steps to diversify their student populations with certain programmes being capped to allow for the development of new programmes.

Court raised a query with the regards to the overseas student income proportion across UK universities and it was agreed that this would be circulated to members.

Court noted that the current increase in student numbers was largely due to international students and it was queried if numbers should be capped, given the previous discussion around capacity issues on campus. It was noted that currently it was hard to predict capacity on campus due to the ongoing pandemic mitigations and the structure of programmes going forward, with a significant amount of teaching being moved online. It was also reported that a large amount of planning and work was being undertaken around space capacity and timetabling to ensure that the University was making the best use of the space it had available.

The Convener thanked the Principal and SMG members for their presentation and noted that Court would continue to monitor the geopolitical landscape and potential impact on the University.

CRT/2020/58.2 Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Grants 2021/22

Court noted that the final allocations had now been published, and there was negligible change to the indicative allocations reported at the last meeting. Funding had increased from 2020-21, with an overall increase of 4.6% for Teaching, Research and Innovation.

CRT/2020/58.3 Higher education developments

The Principal updated Court on recent developments in higher education and noted:

- SFC Review of Higher Education – the University had continued to engage with SFC on its review into coherent provision and sustainability of the sector. Publication of the review was expected in June;
- Spending review – would take place in a challenging fiscal context, with the Treasury keen to reduce borrowing and address the deficit caused by the Covid pandemic. The government still intended to increase R&D spending to £22bn per year in the medium term, but the increase in UKRI budgets might be limited in 2022-23;
- Augar review and wider funding issues in England – UK Government had committed to providing a final response to the Augar review as part of the 2021 Spending Review. In the government's interim Augar response, concerns were expressed about 'the significant, and growing, taxpayer subsidy' in the higher education student finance system. With the introduction of the Lifelong Loan Entitlement – meaning more learners will be eligible for loan finance to undertake shorter courses and over longer periods – we would expect the situation to become yet more challenging;
- League Tables – Complete University Guide 2022 the University had risen three places to 16th in the UK; QS World University Rankings 2022 the University had improved by four places in the rankings from 77th to 73rd in 2022.

The Convener thanked the Principal for his report.

CRT/2020/59. Report from the University Secretary

Court noted the report from the University Secretary – Paper 8. Court discussed the following areas in further detail.

CRT/2020/59.1 Understanding Racism Transforming University Culture

At its April meeting, Court received the report on “*Understanding Racism - Transforming University Culture*” which was approved by SMG in November 2020. The associated action plan aimed to address issues of systemic racism. The action plan was based on four principles:

- The University of Glasgow takes an anti-racist approach to race equality work and addresses structural inequalities;
- Racial harassment in any form is not acceptable on campus;
- Our curriculum and learning community will thrive when it is reflective of global perspectives and race equality is embedded;
- We want all our staff and students — particularly those from ethnic minorities — to achieve their potential through excellent learning and career development opportunities.

Court received an oral update on progress with the action plan from Mhairi Taylor, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. During discussion it was noted that there had been a number of events involved with decolonising the curriculum and at the start of the next academic session there would be an anti-racism campaign. Staff were being supported and guided to see if a new network for staff should be established. It was also noted that additional resources would be provided for a staff post. Court welcomed the action being taken and noted that it was important that this work was resourced appropriately both in terms of infrastructure and support.

It was noted that Court would be given regular updates on the progress with the action plan.

CRT/2020/59.2 Organisational Change

Court noted the proposed changes in the Institute of Neuroscience & Psychology (currently within MVLS) and the School of Psychology. It was intended that the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences (MVLS) and the College of Science and Engineering (CoSE) would bring together the Institute of Neuroscience & Psychology (currently within MVLS) and the School of Psychology (currently within CoSE) in to a combined Academic Unit of Neuroscience & Psychology within MVLS, since the academic direction of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University was more closely aligned with MVLS.

A further update would be given to Court at its next meeting in September

CRT/2020/59.3 Directors of Research Institutes and Heads of School Appointments

Court noted the following changes:

College of MVLS

Institute of Cancer Sciences

Professor Laura Machesky had been appointed as the Director of the Institute for 5 years from 1 May 2021.

Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences

Prof Christian Delles had been appointed as the Interim Director of the Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences with effect from 1 September 2021 pending the recruitment of a new Director.

Institute of Infection, Immunity & Inflammation

Court noted that Professor Gerry Graham had been appointed as Interim Director of the Institute of Infection, Immunity & Inflammation in the College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences (MVLS) from 16 November 2020, initially for a period of six months, which was then extended to 31 July 2021. Professor Graham had recently been appointed as MVLS Dean of Research with effect from 1 July 2021 and Professor Iain McInnes, Vice Principal and Head of College of MVLS, would now appoint an alternative Interim Director of the Institute from 1 July 2021 pending finalisation of the MVLS Research Strategy and appointment of new leadership of the Institute.

CRT/2020/60. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update

The SRC President noted that Court had received reports from the 18 May 2021 meeting. Key points raised included the student hardship and financial issues; home student working; expected conditions for the next academic session; Turing scheme; Freshers week. Court also noted that the Rector had joined the Committee and was working with the SRC to identify issues that she could take forward.

The SRC President gave a presentation to Court on the SRC Annual Review 2020-21. During the discussion it was noted that a large amount of time and effort had been put in over the last 12 months to ensure that students felt part of a community and were supported during the pandemic. Despite all the challenges there was an increase in engagement and a number of the workshops moved online which had proved to be very positive with over 423 students undertaking Mind Your Mate training. A scheme had also been established – Find a mate while you isolate and had helped to ensure that students were supported at the start of the academic session. The SRC had continued to work closely with the Careers service to help support students in finding part-time work which had been adversely affected by lockdown.

In a year consumed by COVID-19 and its many challenges, 2020-21 had still been a success for the SRC. It remained an integral part of the student experience and the University, continued to respond to student needs and expectations in a fast-changing environment. None of this would have been possible without every individual involved with SRC, both staff and students and an immense amount of work had gone on behind the scenes to keep the SRC afloat and Court wished to pass on their thanks to all involved.

The Convener thanked SRC President, Julie Hegele and Dr Duncan for their reports.

CRT/2020/61. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2020/61.1 Finance Committee

The Committee addressed two main topics – Innovation Strategy and the University Budget and Capital Plan. The Committee also noted that the University continues to respond strongly to the COVID crisis and that the financial position had shown further improvement since the Committee's March meeting, primarily as student numbers and fee income projections for 2021-22 had again moved forward positively. The Committee approved: the replacement and

opening of a new 31-day Euro notice account; an additional 95-day notice account with the Nationwide Building Society; an increase in the authorised counterparty limits per institution to take account of increased short term cash holdings; and changes to the banking mandates as outlined in the Executive Director of Finances report.

Court noted the discussion on the Innovation Strategy and the proposed investment of £8.3m over 5 years and it was noted that the Finance Committee had oversight of the expenditure and was an allocated budget rather than authority for expenditure. It was agreed that once the strategy was defined it would be beneficial for Court to receive a detailed presentation on the Innovation Strategy.

The Chair of the Investment Advisory Committee outlined a number of revisions to the Committee which included revisions to membership, remit and the policy on socially responsible investment. The Chair of the Investment Advisory Committee also reported on fossil fuel investment recommending continuation of the existing policy in relation to these investments.

It was noted that the policy on socially responsible investment would require managers who undertook active investment on its behalf to properly consider Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) issues in their investment decisions. The Court also noted that IAC would also require all managers to monitor the activities of companies with regard to ESG and to have a policy of engaging with companies on these issues to encourage positive changes.

Court also noted the current fossil fuels policy and proposed next steps on divestment following discussions with SMG and student representatives. Court had requested that the alternative be tested against its impact on the climate change issue and against the financial impact. Court agreed that the University would continue to reduce holdings and approved the ongoing commitment to full divestment in Fossil Fuels.

Given the significance of these matters the key decisions had been taken under item CRT/2020/56 Budget 21/22 and Financial Forecasts and Financial Forecasts earlier in the meeting.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/61.2 Estates Committee

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which incorporated an update on Capital programme including Professor Cole's Construction Contract Review report and Project progress/approval.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/61.3 IPSC

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee reported that IPSC had welcomed Laic Kalique as a new member. The Telephony and Unified Communications project full business case and project plan will be provided for IPSC approval in October 2021. IPSC had also approved the terms of reference for the new short-life Information Risk and Security Working Group convened by the Chief Operating Officer.

Court noted that IPSC had discussed several factors and risks around the IT investment plan budget submission including the potential impact of future ways of working for staff, integration of Smart Campus activity, meeting student expectations and the needs of the research community and the challenges in financial forecasting created by the continual and rapid

evolution of technology. It was also noted that overall University cash flows included additional unallocated resource for IT spend in recognition of this uncertainty and approved the expenditure plan for submission to Finance Committee noting that work in progress should create the capacity to address technical debt and put the University in a leading position.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/61.4 Audit and Risk Committee

Heather Cousins, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had received internal audit reports on reviews of: Glasgow International College, Glasgow Student Villages Review, Treasure and Cash Management and Consumable spend review. The Committee also received a report setting out the proposed External Audit approach for the year to 31 July 2021. The Committee noted fraudulent activity had been identified in relation to the payment of international tuition fees. The Committee also noted that a Cyber Security working group had been set up to identify key areas that needed to be addressed.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/61.5 People and Organisational Development Committee

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, gave a verbal report to Court from the meeting held on the 17 June 2021 with the key areas highlighted: Covid Update – impacts on staff and support being provided; Organisational development; Equality and Diversity and the action plan following the understanding racism report.

CRT/2020/61.6 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

Court noted the report. A query was raised about the 4 violent incidents noted in the report and Dr Duncan agreed to look into these matters and raise any concerns with Court. Court acknowledged the hard work undertaken by all the staff involved with Health and Safety, particularly during the last year.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/61.7 Nominations Committee

Lesley Sutherland, chair of the Committee, reported that Committee had noted that the process for some positions on Court were done by nomination or election and were often set out with distinct criteria by the University Resolutions or Ordinances so potential changes were limited.

Court noted that the Committee had approved the recommendation to reappointment of David Finlayson for 4 years. It was noted that Graeme Bissett Chair of the Finance Committee was due to step down from his Court Role in December 2021. Gavin Stewart had therefore agreed to be nominated as the Chair of the Finance Committee. It was also noted that Heather Cousins Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee was due to step down from her Court Role in March 2022. Elspeth Orcharton had therefore agreed to be nominated as the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Court approved the following appointments: David Finlayson term of office extended for a further four years until 31 October 2025; and the appointment of Gavin Stewart as the Finance Committee Chair and Elspeth Orcharton as the Audit and Risk Chair.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/61.8 Remuneration Committee

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee discussed the Principal's report relating to SMG performance and reward; Grade 10 professorial and professional staff performance and reward; Salary Augmentation Policy Review; Voluntary Severance and Salary Augmentation Approvals since the last meeting; Contractual/appointment changes (SMG); expenses report.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/62. Senate Matters

The Clerk of Senate outlined the report to Court from the Senate meeting on 10 June 2021. The following items were noted:

- Work continued to plan and prepare for the start of the next academic session in terms of learning and teaching planning, including setting basic expectations of what might be possible under different pandemic scenarios;
- Mental Health Group – Dr Duncan provided Senate with an update on the recent work of the University's Mental Health Group.

Court also noted that Senate had approved the reappointment of the following Elected Academic Staff Members on Court for a period of four years from July 2021:

- Professor Simon Kennedy (College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences)
- Professor Kirsteen McCue (College of Arts)
- Dr Bethan Wood (College of Social Sciences)

Court thanked the Clerk of Senate for the update.

CRT/2020/63. COP26 Update

Court noted the presentation by Rachel Sandison, Vice-Principal (External Relations) which outlined the University's involvement with COP26 and the events programme. It was noted that the University would be involved with an on-campus events programme which would help to position the University as a key climate change player by showcasing key strands of 'Glasgow Green'. It was noted that the University had been successful in three bids for the Green Zone submission with one still in contention. It was also noted that the University was looking at ways to create a COP26 Legacy.

Court thanked Rachel Sandison for the update.

CRT/2020/64. Learning and Teaching Strategy

Court noted the presentation by Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and Uzma Khan (Deputy Secretary) which outlined the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy. It was noted that the Senate had also received a presentation on the strategy and had approved the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

During the discussion at the pre- Court briefing it was noted that the core educational purpose was to develop and support the students through an excellent University experience so that they would fulfil their academic potential and contribute in the fullest way possible to culture, society and the economy locally and globally throughout their lives. The strategy aimed to stimulate evolutions in the approach to teaching, to curriculum and assessment design, and in students'

skills development. The three pillars of the strategy were noted:

- Evolving approach to student-centred active learning;
- Transforming curricula and assessment;
- Students' professional and skills development.

Court thanked Professor Fischbacher-Smith for the presentation.

CRT/2020/65. Any Other Business

CRT/2020/65.1 Membership changes

As noted earlier Court welcomed the new SRC President Ella McCabe to the meeting and Court also noted that the current SRC President, Liam Brady, was attending his final meeting. Court thanked him for all his hard work over the last year, particularly given the impact of the pandemic and wished him well.

CRT/2020/65.2 Note of thanks

The Convener thanked all members of the University community for their continued contributions, flexibility and commitment during the last year.

CRT/2020/66. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 29 September 2021 at 2pm.

The Court Strategy Away Day will be held on Friday 17 September 2021 – further details will be confirmed shortly.