



Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 24 November 2021

Present:

Mr Ronnie Mercer (Chancellors Assessor (Chair)), Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Mr Graeme Bissett (Co-opted Member), 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), Duncan Henderson (SRC Assessor), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Professor Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khaliq (Co-opted Member), Ella McCabe (SRC President), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson (General Council Assessor), Mr David Milloy (Co-opted Member), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Lady Rita Rae (Rector), Ms Lesley Sutherland (General Council Assessor), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member)

Attending:

Christine Barr (Executive Director of P&OD), Gregor Caldwell (Executive Director of Finance), Ian Campbell (Executive Director of Estates), Nicola Cameron (Director of Property Development and Investment) Professor Frank Coton (Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)), Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court).

Apologies:

Ms Elizabeth Passey (Co-opted Member (Convener of Court)), Mr Graeme Bissett (Co-opted Member), Professor Jill Morrison (Vice-Principal & Clerk of Senate), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member).

CRT/2021/13. Announcements

Court noted that the Elizabeth Passey, Convener of Court was unable to attend the meeting and noted that Ronnie Mercer, Chancellor's Assessor, would chair the meeting.

The Chancellor's Assessor welcomed to the meeting Duncan Henderson, SRC Assessor to his first meeting. The Chancellor's Assessor also welcomed Christine Barr Executive Director of P&OD, Ian Campbell Executive Director of Estates and Nicola Cameron Director of Property Development and Investment to the meeting.

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

It was recorded that Professor Iain McInnes, Vice-Principal and Head of College MVLS had

given a presentation on the implementation of the new structure and strategies being developed within the College. Court's thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2021/014. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 29 September 2021

The minutes were approved.

CRT/2021/15. Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

CRT/2021/16. Finance Committee

CRT/2021/16.1 Financial Statements 2020/21

Court having received the statements, the Executive Director of Finance, Gregor Caldwell, gave a presentation on the University's financial statements for the year to 31 July 2021.

Court noted the strong financial performance and growth during the year, with a Management Account surplus of £121M (£39.6M in 2020) despite the impact of Covid-19 pandemic throughout the year.

During the discussion the Court noted that the USS deficit reduction plan provision had increased by £5.5m in the year, moving from £99.1m to £104.6m, which still reflected the deficit recovery plan put in place as part of the March 2018 valuation. Court noted that there would be a significant impact on 2021/22 financial statements from the USS 2020 valuation. This was estimated as a charge of either £250m or £420m depending on whether benefits reforms were agreed.

It was noted that although there was a significant increase in the management account surplus, a number of future commitments would need to be met in the coming years, particularly in relation to the surplus required for the size of the estates maintenance deficit, IT investment and USS pension liability. As well as meeting these commitments it was also noted that the University would continue to reinvest the surplus in improving infrastructure, resourcing and improving the student experience.

Elsbeth Orcharton confirmed that the Finance Committee had reviewed the statements at its meeting in November and had been content to recommend the financial statements to Court.

Court approved the Financial statements for 2020/21 of the University of Glasgow.

CRT/2021/16.2 Universities Subsidiaries and Trust Financial Statements as at 31 July 2021

Court approved the financial statements of the subsidiaries and the Trust, which had also been approved where applicable by the respective boards and trustees.

CRT/2021/16.3 Finance Committee

It was noted that the Committee had received a number of papers which outlined the current financial position of the University.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/16.4 Remit of the Finance Committee

Court approved the updated remit of the Finance Committee.

CRT/2021/16.5 Estates Capital Plan – Scenario Update

Court received a presentation from Ian Campbell, Executive Director of Estates and Nicola Cameron, Director of Property Development and Investment on a proposed refinement of the capital plan. Mr Campbell gave a detailed presentation on the proposal. It was noted that this would allow construction of a permanent “Multi-use” building to increase capacity for both teaching and labs, whilst allowing the exit of the Rankine, St Andrews and Adam Smith Buildings given their significant maintenance issues. It also removed the need for temporary buildings and deferred work on Boyd Orr. A cash flow comparison was included within the slides showing a reduction of approximately £42m to the cash low point but a saving overall of £26.4m by 2036. The comparison was shown to the November 2021 forecast.

During the discussion concerns were highlighted in relation to the fire and capacity issues of Boyd Orr, but the mitigations that were being put in place were outlined. A query was also raised in relation to the student experience and ensuring that the capacity of the teaching space was not exceeded; in response it was noted that with careful planning and management this problem should not arise.

Ronnie Mercer, Chair of Estates Committee reported that the Estates Committee had also considered the proposal and was very supportive of the proposal.

Court was supportive of the overall approach but noted that due to the aging estate there were risks and it was important that there was ongoing monitoring of the critical systems. Court noted that approval was sought on the overall direction and the updated plan to allow progress with design work, and that there was no financial commitment at this stage aside from initial design fees. Design fees and approval of costs would be subject to the normal approval and governance process.

Court approved that the proposal should move to the next stage as outlined in the papers and noted that the Finance Committee would undertake a more detailed assessment of affordability through the January cash flow review and prior to detailed design (expected Q4 2022).

CRT/2021/17. University Strategic Plan - KPIs

Court received a update by Professor Frank Coton Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), on the progress of the KPIs. It was noted that at the Court meeting on 14 April 2021, 16 of these had been signed off, and a further five KPIs had been under development. Court noted that two of these - metrics capturing Colleague Engagement and Large Grant Capture - had now been finalised. Three remaining KPIs that formed part of early discussions would be subject to ongoing development but would not be included within the final KPI list.

Court noted that there was difficulty with some of the data in relation to certain KPIs as many colleagues were reluctant to report certain characteristics. Court also noted that in relation to the CO2 KPI, environmental impact assessments were carried out before all significant building work.

Court approved the additional KPI and noted that Court would be kept updated on progress

towards confirming the remaining 3 KPIs.

CRT/2021/18. Report from the Principal

CRT/2021/18.1 Gender Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct

The Principal reported that on 12 November, he had announced that Morag Ross QC had agreed to carry out a review of the University's current staff and student procedures and support arrangements in relation to Gender Based Violence and sexual harassment. Court noted that all evidence would be made available to Ms Ross and she would be free to speak with anyone she wished to, including trade unions and student representatives. The review would begin formally in December and was expected to take a number of months. The University was committed to implementing any recommendations arising from the review.

Prior to announcing the independent review, the Principal had written to staff and students to apologise that any member of the University had been subjected to abuse or harassment. It was recognised that more work needed to be done to prevent abuse, to educate, to call out inappropriate and harmful behaviours and to build further on the support that was provided to survivors of gender-based violence and other forms of sexual misconduct.

Christine Barr, Executive Director of P&OD outlined an action plan which had been prepared by People and Organisational Development and discussed by EDSC and SMG.

Court welcomed the review of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. It agreed that it was important that any member of the University community could engage with the process in a confidential way.

Court noted that it would receive an update on the progress of the review at its next meeting.

CRT/2021/18.2 Higher Education Developments and University Rankings

Court received the report from the Principal – Paper 6 and the following areas were noted:

- The SFC Review – HE Minister Jamie Hepburn had written to universities on 26 October to outline the Scottish Government's (SG) own response, which welcomed the review and expresses broad support for its recommendations;
- University Rankings – Times Higher Education Reputation Rankings – The University was placed 117th, a fall of 7 places from 110th in 2020;
- The THE World University Rankings by subject were published and the University continued to perform strongly in the rankings

The Principal also updated Court on further changes to SMG: Dr David Duncan as COO would take on responsibility for oversight and leadership of the Estates Capital Plan and would become the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Operations) deputising for the Principal in sector and government meetings in relation to professional service matters; Rachel Sandison would take on additional responsibilities in relation to deputising for the Principal with external organisations including international organisations, and would become the Deputy Vice Chancellor (External Engagement). Court noted that in relation to the Clerk of Senate a Finding Committee had been convened and nominations would close on 5 January. Following formal interviews and informal engagement with SMG members, recommendations on the best candidate or candidates would be conveyed to Senate at its meeting on 1 February.

The Principal also reported that the University had recently received 3 awards

- The James McCune Smith Learning Hub collected two prestigious titles, being named as Project of the Year and also won the Pupil/Student experience category at the prestigious Learning Places Scotland Awards;
- Claire Lowe was also named as Security Manager of the Year at the Security and Fire Excellence Awards;
- Fay Henderson a University of Glasgow student and recipient of a Sports Bursary, had been selected to represent Great Britain at the World Student Games in Switzerland.

The Chancellor's Assessor thanked the Principal for the update.

CRT/2021/19. Report from the University Secretary

Court noted the report from the University Secretary - Paper 7. The following areas were discussed in further detail by Court.

CRT 2021.19.1 Disability Services Review

Court noted that at its meeting in September 2021 it had received an update on an ongoing Disability complaint and review actions. A precursor for implementation was the recruitment of additional staff, which had proved challenging: these skills were in short supply. The University had also seen large numbers of students registering with the Disability Service: 2,254 to date this year cf. 2,460 for all of 20/21.

Nonetheless, Student and the Academic Services had: implemented an interim process enabling them to transfer admissions information; described requirements for a case management system; and relaunched a student feedback system. In addition, an inclusive assessment working group had been meeting and work was progressing to improve accessibility of library materials. The staffing situation was improving and the implementation group would reconvene in January.

CRT 2021.19.2 Glasgow Green – The University of Glasgow's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Court noted that a written report would come to its next meeting on 16 February 2021.

CRT 2021.19.3 SFC Outcome Agreement

Court approved the SFC Outcome Agreement which reflected the progress towards meeting key SFC and Scottish Government priorities.

CRT 2021.19.4 New and continuing Court Members

Court noted that Duncan Henderson had begun his term on Court from the 1 November 2021 as Assessor for SRC, for one year.

CRT 2021.19.5 Organisational Change

Court noted a proposal for the future shape of MVLS, which had been informed by the MVLS staff consultation, and had been approved by MVLS CMG on 27 October 2021 and by University SMG on 1 November 2021. It was noted that there were no planned redundancies as part of the organisational change.

Court approved the organisational change as outlined in Annex 2.

CRT 2021.08.6 Directors of Research Institutes and Heads of School Appointments

Court noted the following changes:

College of Science and Engineering - Head of the School of Mathematics and Statistics

Professor Ian Strachan had been re-appointed as Head of the School of Mathematics and Statistics until August 2023.

College of MVLS St Mungo Chair of Surgery

Professor Paul Hogan had been appointed as the St Mungo Chair of Surgery with effect from 27 September 2021.

CRT/2021/20. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update

The Rector reported that she continued to engage with students and the SRC on a number of issues and at present did not have any substantive items to raise with Court. It was noted that she had started to hold surgeries with students on campus.

The SRC President highlighted that the SRC had recently released a statement in support of the UCU strike action on 1-3 December but called upon the University to do all it could to mitigate the impact of the action on students. Dr Craig Daly thanked the SRC for its support.

Dr David Duncan reported that the University would do all it could to minimize the disruption to students.

The Chancellor's Assessor thanked the Rector and SRC President for their reports.

CRT/2021/21. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2021/21.1 Estates Committee

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/21.2 Audit & Risk Committee

Heather Cousins, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had received a pre meeting briefing on two areas of the Risk Register. Court noted that the Committee had received the University's financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2021. The Committee heard that on the basis of the work performed, the external auditors anticipated issuing unqualified audit opinions on the Group and University's financial statements, and on the University's subsidiary financial statements.

The report and the Annual report to Court were noted.

CRT/2021/21.3 IPSC

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee outlined the report from the Committee. Court noted that the Committee had reviewed the draft Internal Audit report on Ransomware; it also noted that short-term work on information and cyber security was underway; the University was partnering with external security specialists and sector technology specialists; and a strategic framework was being developed for review in the new year by a joint workshop involving Audit and Risk Committee and IPSC members.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/21.4 People and Organisational Development Committee

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which included discussion of the review being undertaken by Morag Ross QC and issues relating to it.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/21.5 Nominations Committee

Lesley Sutherland, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which included the current recruitment process for the Co-opted members of Court and the recommendations of the Selection Panel. The Committee also received a presentation from Mhairi Taylor, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on the current breakdown of Court membership and agreed the next step.

Court noted that the Committee had approved the recommendation to appoint Jonathan Loukes and Linda Hanna as Co-opted Members of Court from 1st December 2021 until 1st December 2025.

Court approved the appointments of Jonathan Loukes and Linda Hanna.

The report was noted.

CRT/2020/21.6 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

Court noted the report and no substantive items were raised.

CRT/2021/21.7 Remuneration Committee

SMG members left the meeting for this item.

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, summarised the meeting as the report was not available for the Court meeting. The Committee had met in November to discuss senior staff remuneration. Business at the meeting had also covered the Committee's annual report, which had included: a summary of the current strategic context and institutional performance; the Principal's report on SMG performance and reward; the review of the Principal's performance, which had been undertaken by the Convener of Court and the Chair of the Remuneration Committee, following consultation with Court members; Grade 10 Professorial and Professional Staff performance and reward; and Voluntary Severance cases.

Court noted that the Principal's salary uplift had been in line with the contractual arrangements agreed by Court and had been subject to satisfactory performance, which had been confirmed.

CRT/2021/22. Annual Report for the Scottish Funding Council – Institution Review of Quality Academic Year 2020-21

Court had received a copy of the University's draft annual report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on institution-led review of quality for 2020-21. The contents were specified by the SFC. The statement summarised activity undertaken by the University in reviewing its provision for students, including: Periodic Subject Review; annual monitoring, course evaluation and Graduate School review; professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) activity; the University's strategic review of student-related services; and reflective overview, including the University's use of contextual information such as performance data and data from student surveys, both external and internal.

Having noted details of how the University assured the effectiveness of arrangements for

maintaining academic standards and quality, Court agreed that the Convener of Court could sign off the required statement of assurance.

Court approved the Annual report to the Scottish Funding Council.

CRT/2021/23. Senate Matters

Court noted the report from the Senate meeting held on the 5 October 2021.

CRT/2021/24. Any Other Business

The Chancellor's Assessor reported that David Milloy, Co-opted Member of Court would be stepping down shortly and that this would be the last meeting of Court that he could attend. David had been a member of Court for 8 years, and a member of Estates Committee for 9 years. Over that time he had made a huge contribution to the University and was leaving the University in a significantly stronger position. Court thanked David warmly for his huge contribution and dedication to the University and wished him well for the future.

CRT/2021/25. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 16 February 2022 at 2pm in the Senate Room. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm.