****

**Court**

**Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 27 September 2023 held in the Advance Research Centre and via Zoom**

**Present:**

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Professor Sarah Armstrong (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Nicola Dandridge (Co-opted Member), Mr David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Stuart Hoggan (General Council Assessor), Dr Bo Hu (Chancellor’s Assessor), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative),Professor Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khalique (Co-opted Member), Jonathan Loukes (Co-opted Member), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Professor Richard Reeve (Trade Union Nominee) Shan Saba (Co-opted Member), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member),Hailie Pentleton-Owens (SRC President), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member).

**Attending:**

Gregor Caldow (Executive Director of Finance), 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), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate), Kerry Christie (Co-opted member from Oct 2023).

**Apologies:**

Dr Christine Middlemiss (General Council Assessor), Lady Rita Rae (Rector).

**CRT/2023/01. Announcements and declaration of Interests**

The Convener welcomed Dr Bo Hu (Chancellor’s Assessor) Professor Sarah Armstrong (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Richard Reeve (Trade Union Nominee) and Hailie Pentleton-Owens (SRC President), as members, 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 Trustee of USS, as an ongoing declaration, given the updates on the scheme; and Dr David Duncan as a member of the UCEA - National Negotiating Team.

A pre-Court briefing took place on the College of Science and Engineering with a presentation by Professor Dame Muffy Calder. Court’s thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

**CRT/2023/02. Minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 20 June 2023**

The minutes were approved.

**CRT/2023/03. Matters Arising**

No substantive items were raised.

**CRT/2023/04. University Risk Register**

Court received a presentation by Gregor Caldow, Executive Director of Finance on the updated Risk Register. Court discussed the overview of the Risk Register and its role in the organisation’s risk management. The top risks included data governance, information security, climate change, geopolitical landscape, and operational aspects such as cash flow and campus development.

During the discussion key areas noted were:

* The importance of identifying strategic themes and key actions, particularly focusing on ongoing industrial action, research power challenges, enabling growth and estates maintenance;
* Addressing emerging themes such as talent management, AI and the mitigations put in place to ensure they were not counter-productive;
* Also acknowledging the challenge of unknown risks and emphasising the importance of a continuous risk assessment process to uncover and manage them.
* More emphasis would also be put on the importance of clear governance and effective mitigations for identified risks, ensuring that risk management was embedded in various committees and processes and that it was integrated across different levels of the organisation.

Court approved the Risk Register for 2023/24.

**CRT/2023/05. Report from the Principal**

*CRT/2022/05.1 Principal’s Report*

Court noted the report from the Principal. Court discussed in detail student admissions including International and RUK students. Court noted that:

* There had been lower than expected international postgraduate taught student admissions.
* At this stage it was unclear the extent to which this was a market effect or a result of the approach taken this year by UoG to making offers. It was also noted that there had been a decline in the offer-to-enrollment ratio for PGTs for UoG. As further details on the figures for 2023/24 intake become available the University would be able to undertake a comparison with enrollment trends in other universities particularly within the Russell Group.
* SMG have agreed to reverse some of the measures put in place in 2023-24 to limit enrollments, so as to ensure that the 2024/25 intake hits targets agreed with Court in our budget submission in June 2023. It would also look at increased scholarship offerings to attract students from key markets.
* More emphasis would also be put on dispelling possible market misunderstandings around international student recruitment and accommodation availability for PGTs.

During the discussion it was noted that it was important that lessons were learned from past experiences of student growth. This included ensuring there was a commitment to maintaining high standards and providing support for international students. Court also acknowledged the financial impact of the shortfall and noted that the Finance Committee would be looking at this in more detail at its next meeting, noting that the initial assessment was that through balancing actions there would be no net impact on the 23-24 cash generation.

Court agreed that a paper would come to the next meeting which summarized the University’s assessment and strategies to address the challenges being faced in student admissions to ensure that targets were achieved in future years.

The following areas from the Principal’s Report were also noted:

* Beatson Institute – Court noted that following a comprehensive review of the Beatson Institute led by an independent panel of international cancer experts, Cancer Research UK (CRUK) had announced investment of up to £123m for the Institute – which would now be known as the CRUK Scotland Institute.
* University Rankings – Court noted that the University had been named the Scottish University of the Year by the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024 and was now ranked 12th in the UK. In the Guardian University Guide, the University had dropped by two places from 11th to 13th. In the QS World Rankings, the University had risen five places from 81st in 2023 to =76th. The inaugural QS Europe league table had been published and the University had been placed 14th in Europe and 9th in the UK.
* NSS – Court noted that overall satisfaction had decreased to 77.5% (compared to 80.1% last year), placing Glasgow 8th in Scotland, down one place from last year. Students were very positive about the quality of teaching, with 86% of students responding positively to questions about the teaching on their course. However, they were less positive in some of their responses around student voice with only 50% of students agreeing that it was clear that students’ feedback from their course had been acted on. Court noted that SMG had discussed the results and had agreed a plan to look at the results in more detail at a school level.

The Convener thanked the Principal for the update.

**CRT/2023/06. Report from the University Secretary**

Court noted the report from the University Secretary – Paper 6. The following areas were discussed in further detail.

*CRT 2023.06.1 Gender Based Violence & Sexual Harassment*

Court noted that the University continued to implement the recommendations of the report by Morag Ross KC and had largely completed the implementation process before the start of academic year 2023/24.

*CRT 2023.06.2 Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)*

Court noted that an investigation to establish if any University building contained Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) was at an advanced stage. At the time of writing, 286 out of 309 surveys had been completed and so far only eight had been found to contain RAAC. Only a few minor issues had been identified in these 8 cases.

*CRT 2023.06.3 Court Strategy Day 2023*

The Court Strategy day was noted, and it was recorded that it had provided an opportunity for Court to be updated on, and to discuss, several areas including planning for the start of the academic session. Areas covered included:

* Current & future growth and shape trajectories;
* The University and the City;
* Glasgow – Global View;
* Research Environment.

It was noted that updates on the student experience, learning and teaching, impact on staff, and Glasgow Green would be coming to future Court meetings. The Court Secretariat would also reflect on the presentation of materials to Court, emphasising the need for concise, accessible, and informative presentations. It was noted that a feedback form had been sent out to Court members and all members were encouraged to complete this.

*CRT 2023.06.4 New and continuing Court Members*

Court noted that Dr Bo Hu had begun his term on Court on 1 July 2023 as the Chancellor’s Assessor for four years. Hailie Pentleton-Owens had begun her term on Court on 1 July 2023 *ex officio* as SRC President, for one year. It was also noted that Professor Sarah Armstrong had begun her term on Court on 1 August 2023 as Elected Academic Member of Staff for four years and Professor Richard Reeve had begun his term on Court on 1 August 2023 as Trade Union Nominee for four years.

Court noted that the Nominations Committee was recommending the appointment of Lesley Newdall and Iain McKenzie to the Audit and Risk Committee as External Lay members for four years from 1 October 2023 to 31 August 2027. Court approved the appointments.

Court noted the approval of Kerry Christie as the Chair of the Remuneration Committee and People & Organisational Development Committee when June Milligan steps down 1 October 2023.

Court approved the appointment of Dame Nicola Dandridge as the Chair of Nominations Committee*.*

*CRT 2023.06.5 Court Business 2023/24*

Court received the Schedule of Court Business for the coming year, together with the Statement of Primary Responsibilities of Court and a list of remits/memberships of Court Committees for the session.

The attendance lists for meetings of Court and its Committees for 2022/23 had been reviewed; there were no issues for action in connection with this.

The University Secretary reported that a Court Effectiveness Review would take place in late autumn 2023 as previously discussed.

*CRT 2023.06.6 SFC Outcome Agreement 2023/24 and Self-Evaluation 2022/23*

Court received the SFC Outcome Agreement for 2023/24 which reflects upon the progress towards meeting key SFC and Scottish Government priorities. This document was the main assurance and accountability mechanism in place between the University and the SFC, the non-departmental public body responsible for the release and management of public funds to Further and Higher Education providers in Scotland.

Court also received the Self-Evaluation for the previous academic year (22/23), which reflected on the commitments made in our published 22/23 Outcome Agreement, with specific reference to the data included in the SFC’s National Table of Measures.

Court approved the Self Evaluation for 2022/23.

*CRT 2023.06.7 Student Contract*

The student contract, to which all students sign up at registration, had been updated for academic session 2023-24. Court noted that the University Secretary had approved the updated contract on behalf of Court. Court agreed that the Student Contract would be sent out in a timely manner to Court members in future years.

*CRT 2023.06.8 Pay and Pensions – industrial action*

Court noted that the University and College Union (UCU) had notified the University that the Marking and Assessment Boycott (MAB), which began on 20 April, had been called off. Strike days planned for the 26 and 28 September had been cancelled. In keeping with an existing agreement between the University and local UCU representatives, any outstanding marking was now being progressed.

*CRT 2023.06.9 Trusted Research*

Court noted the update on trusted research and the controls and processes that were being put in place.

*CRT 2023.06.10 Head of School Appointments*

Court noted the following changes, and congratulated the individuals on their new roles:

College of Arts and Humanities

*Head of the School of Humanities*

Professor Michael Brady had been re-appointed as the Head of the School for one month until 1 September 2023.

College of Social Science

*Head of the Adam Smith Business School*

Professor Eleanor Shaw had been appointed as the Head of the School for four years from 3 August 2023 for 4 years.

*Head of the School of Law*

Professor Claire McDiarmid had been appointed the Head of School for four years from the 1 October 2023 for 4 years.

College of Science and Engineering

*Head of the School of* Geographical & Earth Sciences

Professor Todd Ehlers had been appointed as Head of the School for four years from 2 May 2023 for 4 years.

College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences

*Head of the School for Head of School of Biodiversity, One Health & Veterinary Medicine*

Professor Chris Loughrey had been appointed as the Head of the School for four years from 1 August 2023 for 4 years.

*CRT 2023.06.11 Named Chair - Pontecorvo Chair of Pharmacogenomics*

Court approved Resolution 701 - Named Chair - Pontecorvo Chair of Pharmacogenomics.

*CRT 2023.06.12 Honorary Fellowship*

Court approved the Honorary Fellowship for David Crawford.

*CRT 2023.06.13* Rectors Election 2024

Court approved the process for the Rectorial Election.

*CRT 2023.06.14* Cochno Farm

The University Secretary provided an update on Cochno Farm which had been discussed at a previous Court meeting following a visit. SMG had recently discussed the farm and buildings and it had been agreed that the site would primarily be used for veterinary students, animal research and various sustainability projects. Funding had been agreed for essential repairs on the House and options would be explored to move the teaching rooms from the basement of the house into other accommodation on the farm. It had also been agreed that professional advice would be sought on viable options for the house and a review of infrastructure would be undertaken.

**CRT/2023/07. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update**

*CRT/2023/07.1. Rector update*

Court noted the Rector’s apologies and it was noted that since the last Court meeting the Rector had been dealing with a range of student cases to do with student disability issues, tuition fee issues, scholarships and financial issues, admissions, issues, and also complaints about the marking and assessment boycott and the impact on graduation and degree classifications. In addition, the Rector had spoken at the freshers’ address at Dumfries.

*CRT/2023/07.1. SRC update*

The SRC President reported that there had been an excellent start to the year, with upwards of 15,000 attendees at the welcome fair during Freshers week. A new SRC app had also been launched and it had a total of 6000 users to date *–* the app allowed students to engage with societies and events. It was noted that the SRC remained committed to amplifying the student voice and continued to do so through discussion.

*CRT/2023/07.1. Student Experience Committee*

Court noted that the Student Experience Committee had met recently and noted that 5 projects had been approved as part of the Student Experience Strategy action plan. There had also been a presentation on the upcoming GBV campaign that would be jointly run in October by the University and the SRC.

The Convener thanked the SRC President for her report.

**CRT/2023/08. Reports of Court Committees**

*CRT/2023/08.1. Finance Committee*

Gavin Stewart, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. The members had received an update on the long-term cash flow which had been updated for 22/23 year*–*end result and also for the expected downside on 23/24 international student numbers together with mitigating actions identified by management. The Committee had also approved the scenarios which would be prepared for further discussion in January 2024, noting the importance of this being ready prior to further requests for material capital investment. Court noted that the Committee had also received a paper on benefit realisation which outlined the progress that had been made across benefits management and agreed to review this on an annual basis.

Court noted that the Committee had approved: the investment request for £4.6m for the International Strategy; the investment request for £3.5m for the Centre for Data Science and AI; the investment request for £6.4m for Glasgow Changing Futures (noting that these three were within the original budget); the investment request for £7.25m for the design costs for Church Street and Lilybank Gardens student residences and Plot J Innovation (noting this was additional to budget, being primarily a bringing forward of spend that would be incurred if the full SPID project was approved and that this spend should add value to the plots); and the TRAC plan for 2022/23.

Court noted that the Finance Committee had approved the Financial Regulations for 2023/24.

Court noted that the Committee had reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Court approved the amended ToR for the Finance Committee.

During the discussion a query was raised about breakdown of staff membership on Committees and also if a Sustainability committee should be established. It was agreed that these matters should be considered during the Court effectiveness review.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/09.2 Estates Committee*

Stuart Hoggan, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which updated on the progress of the planned commercial developments for Church Street and Lilybank Gardens. Court also noted that there were issues with the implementation of the new maintenance contract and steps were being taken by both parties to address these. An update on the Keystone development was also discussed by the Estates Committee.

Court was pleased to note the handover of the new Adam Smith building.

Court noted that the Committee had reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Court approved the amended ToR for the Estates Committee.

During the discussion it was noted that the Glasgow Green update would be coming to Court shortly which would highlight progress in this area.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/09.3 Audit & Risk Committee*

Elspeth Orcharton, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had received a briefing on the updated Risk Register. It was agreed that the updated Register would be included in Court papers for September 2023 for approval. The Committee also received internal audit reports on: Project Eos; Research Ethics; TRAC; Operational Risk Management; and Careers Service.

Court noted that the Committee had reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Court approved the amended terms of reference for the Audit and Risk Committee.

A query was raised about TRAC data and it was agreed that this would be passed to the Finance Committee to review as appropriate.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/09.4 IPSC*

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee reported that IPSC had covered a number of topics including presentations on Technology Futures by Professor Ana Basiri and Grace Ferrell of Gartner, updates on cyber security, a Risk Assessment outline on the University’s use of Microsoft products, an update on Project EOS, a review of the Programme/Project reports, and the Committee’s Terms of Reference were reviewed.

During discussion a concern was raised about the monitoring of MyMac and PC users following the enhancement of cyber security measures. Court noted that all the key policies were highlighted to users before they logged on to appropriately secured devices and that the policies had not been changed to accommodate MyMac users. It was reported that the policy currently stated that direct monitoring of an individual’s IT activity (i.e. browsing through an identified user’s activity) would require the permission of the University Court or its nominee).

Court noted that the Committee had reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Court would review these at its next meeting.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/09.5 People and Organisational Development Committee*

June Milligan, chair of the Committee reported that the committee had heard a strategic update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activity majoring on reporting and KPIs, the Together Against Racism Campaign and the University’s approach to addressing gender-based violence. The Executive Director of People and OD had provided a strategic update highlighting the progress aligned with the P&OD Strategic Plan, including the future Operating Model for P &OD, Employee Relations, Colleague Engagement and New Ways of Working, alongside other substantive items covered on the agenda. Colleagues from the Occupational Health & Wellbeing Team presented an update on the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and outlined plans for the new Health & Wellbeing function which will drive a more proactive, embedded and digitally enabled service provision whilst driving culture change that places wellbeing at the heart of the employee experience.

Court also noted that the Director of Performance & Reward had given an update on progress in relation to Career Pathways that will encapsulate a broader career framework inclusive of role profiles, case studies, career pathways and internal mobility mechanisms which will support colleagues in driving their careers, supported by the relevant line management structure, and enabled by the University.

Court noted that engagement with declarations for areas such as disability or EDI remained an issue.

The report was noted.

**CRT/2023/09. Any Other Business**

*CRT/2023/09.1 Members of Court*

Court noted thanks to the following:-

Theo Frater – was attending his last meeting as SRC Assessor on Court and had been in this role since October 2022.

June Milligan – Co-opted member – was attending her last meeting as a Co-opted Member as she would be stepping down in October before the next meeting. June had been a member of Court for 8 years, and of Remuneration Committee and People and Organisation Development Committee including Chairing of the Committees. Over that time, she had made a substantial contribution to the University and was leaving the University in a significantly stronger position.

Court recorded its thanks to those members for their huge contribution and dedication to the University and wished them well for the future.

**CRT/2023/10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Court would be held on Wednesday 22 November 2023 at 2pm with the venue to be confirmed. A Pre-Court briefing would take place at 12pm.

The Convener, on behalf of Court, wished the University the very best for the current Academic Year.