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**Court**

**Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 22 November 2023 held in the Advance Research Centre**

**Present:**

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Professor Sarah Armstrong (Elected Academic Staff Member), Kerry Christie (Co-opted 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), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Pablo Moran-Ruiz (SRC Assessor), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Lady Rita Rae (Rector), Professor Richard Reeve (Trade Union Nominee), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member),Hailie Pentleton-Owens (SRC President), Professor 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), Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith (Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching)), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Helen Butcher (Director of Academic Policy & Governance/Assistant Director of Academic Services) and Dr Veena O’Halloran (External Facilitator – Court Effectiveness Review).

**Apologies:**

Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Jonathan Loukes (Co-opted Member), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate), Dr Christine Middlemiss (General Council Assessor), Shan Saba (Co-opted Member).

**CRT/2023/11. Announcements and declaration of Interests**

The Convener welcomed Kerry Christie (Co-opted Member) and Pablo Moran Ruiz (SRC Assessor) as new members of Court, 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 interdisciplinary research by Professor Chris Pearce (Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange)), Professor Daniele Faccio (Professor of Quantum Technologies), Dr Azadeh Emadi (Senior Lecture (Theatre, Film and Television Studies)), Professor Deborah Dixon (Professor of Geography) and Professor Cecilia Tortajada (Professor in Practice – Environmental Innovation). Court’s thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court also noted a display by Clare Paterson (Assistant Director – Library collections) and Michael Gallagher (Archivist) from Archives which included an order for a rangefinder that travelled to the Antarctic with Captain Scott and the design for a carpet fit for the Golden Age of transatlantic ocean travel, made by the Templeton factory in Glasgow, which had been recently on exhibition at the V&A. Court’s thanks for the display were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

**CRT/2023/12. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 27 September 2023**

A query was raised about the minutes about item *CRT/2023/05.1 Principal’s Report* and the level of detail included in relation to the mitigating actions being taken by SMG.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the minutes would be approved without amendment.

**CRT/2023/13. Matters Arising**

*CRT/2023/13 .1 Principal’s Report - CRT/2023/05.1*

Court noted that it had been agreed that a paper would come to the November meeting which would summarise the University’s assessment and strategies to address the challenges being faced in student admissions to ensure that targets were achieved in future years. Following the Court meeting in September the Finance Committee had agreed that January would give a better snapshot of data and therefore a detailed papers would be presented to Court in February 2024.

**CRT/2023/14. Finance Committee**

*CRT/2023/14.1 Financial Statements 2022/23*

Court having received the statements, the Executive Director of Finance, Gregor Caldow, gave a presentation on the University’s financial statements for the year to 31 July 2023. The presentation summarised the position, highlighting the strong financial performance and growth during the year, with a management accounts surplus of £68.2m pre the movement in the USS pension scheme. The significant movement in the USS pension scheme this year had led to a surplus after tax reported in the financial statements as £128.0m.

Court noted the main movements within the Management Accounts. Court also noted the main movements between the Management Accounts and the Statutory Accounts

Court further noted: the main underlying movements in the Operating Surplus; movements in the Balance Sheet; and Cash & Deposits (cashflow) movements; the change in classification and disclosure of the GSV leases.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee reported that the External Auditors, PWC were expected to issue an unqualified audit opinion and that the Audit and Risk Committee had recommended the Financial Accounts for approval. Court noted that there were no material areas of disagreement with management but there were a number of areas of judgement.

The Chair of Finance Committee reported that Finance Committee also recommended the Financial Accounts for approval.

During the discussion it was noted that Court welcomed the changes to the Reports and Financial statements and the steps to modernise the presentation and move towards Integrated Reporting, and that going forwards there would be a greater balance between achievements, and risks and challenges in the Financial Statements. Court noted that a sub-committee of the Finance Committee had been established to review the cash investments strategy. Court also noted that the USS Pension Scheme recent valuation once finalised would have a significant impact on the Financial statements for 2023/24.

Court approved the Financial statements for 2022/23 of the University of Glasgow.

Court noted that the USGAAP would be reviewed by Audit and Risk Committee and the Finance Committee in January 2024.

*CRT/2023/14.2 Finance Committee*

Court noted that the Committee had received a number of papers which outlined the current financial position of the University. The Committee noted that work continued to be progressed to understand the overall sector end-of-cycle position in relation to international student recruitment. There was a significant amount of effort underway on scenario modelling and savings for this year as well as budget preparation for next year. Court noted that the Finance Committee had agreed that Scenarios 1-3 as outlined in the paper would be modelled and that a qualitative description of the type of circumstance that could lead to each Scenario would be set out for discussion at the next Finance Committee meeting.

It was also noted that the Committee had received an update from GC on: RAAC review and findings; RCF review and next steps; and the issues surrounding the CBRE contract and next steps, including the use of a high proportion of the contingency set aside for this contract.

**CRT/2023/15. Learning and Teaching Strategy**

Court received a presentation by Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith (Vice Principal - Learning and Teaching) on Learning and Teaching Strategy implementation. The presentation provided an update on: the enabling of Learning and Teaching Strategy; communication activity; Transforming curricula; Curriculum for life; Assessment & feedback Practice & Policy: delivery plan; and L&T Strategy Benefits Group Terms of Reference.

During discussion Court noted that there was a large amount of work still to be done on the implementation of the strategy and understanding the impact on the different degrees - including UG and PGT, across all four colleges. Court welcomed the progress being made and commented that it was important that students were not disadvantaged by any changes in the curriculum.

Court thanked Professor Fischbacher-Smith for the update.

**CRT/2023/16. Report from the Principal**

*CRT/2023/16.1 Ross Report – Gender Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct*

The Principal reported that on 25 November, the University would be launching a campaign titled Together Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) to raise awareness and signpost support available from the University for those who have experienced GBV. The campaign was being spearheaded by VP/Head of College of Social Sciences and Gender Equality Champion Professor Sara Carter and built on the recommendations made in the Independent Review of the University’s approach to addressing GBV published by Morag Ross KC in November 2022. The campaign had been developed by the same University team responsible for the Together Against Racism campaign which had recently received The Herald’s Diversity Campaign of the Year Award. The launch coincided with the UN’s16 Days of Activism against GBV. The campaign made a clear statement that there was no place for GBV at the University of Glasgow.

*CRT/2023/16.2 Principal’s Report*

Court also received the report from the Principal – Paper 6. The following areas were noted:

* Independent Review of University Spinouts – Court noted the publication of the review commissioned by DSIT and HM Treasury. It was noted that the University was keen to develop partnerships with other Health Boards and this was an area that MVLS was looking into;
* Queen’s Anniversary Prize – Court noted that the University had been successful in the Queen’s Anniversary Prizes once again, winning the prize for the work of the Centre for Robert Burns Studies. This was the University’s 4th win in the last 6 rounds. Court passed on their congratulations to all those involved;
* The Times Higher Education (THE) 2024 – Court noted that the University had been ranked 87th (82nd in 2023). The University ranked 10th in the UK, 2nd in Scotland and 10th amongst Russell Group institutions.
* Leiden Rankings – Court noted that the annual rankings but it was noted that this was useful for internal purposes only.

The Convener thanked the Principal for the update.

**CRT/2023/17. Report from the University Secretary**

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

*CRT/2023/17.1 Middle East Conflict*

Court noted that with deep sadness the unfolding events in Israel and Palestine since the horrific attacks on 7 October. It was noted that the University had called for the immediate release of all hostages and a humanitarian ceasefire so that aid could reach those suffering.

All colleagues and students had been invited to support the British Red Cross Appeal Fund. This appeal supported the work on the ground of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Magen David Adom (MDA) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), whose staff had been responding to the emergency.

The University Secretary highlighted a letter to Court Members which had been submitted by Glasgow Against Arms and Fossil Fuels and the Glasgow University Palestinian Society. It was agreed that the letter would be circulated to all Court members along with previous correspondence with the groups after the meeting. Court noted that the UCU had also made similar calls to the University.

Court acknowledged that it was an extremely difficult time for all those involved with or affected by the ongoing conflict and that it was important that all staff and student were supported. Court agreed that there was no place in the University for antisemitism or Islamophobia.

Court noted that Rachel Sandison, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Relations) as the University’s Sanctuary Champion was currently looking into the steps that could be taken to support the students affected by the conflict.

*CRT/2023/17.2 Court Effectiveness Review – Autumn 2023*

It was reported that Court Effectiveness Review was currently ongoing and that the final report was due to be presented to Court at its next meeting.

*CRT/2023/17.3 Organisational Change*

Court noted a proposal that had been put forward:

* Health, Safety & Wellbeing to be rebranded as University Safety & Resilience. The change in name better reflected the inclusion of Business Continuity within the service’s area of activity and the fact that wellbeing was now dealt with by Occupational Health.
* The formation of a new department bringing together Student Conduct, Student Complaints, Legal and Court office to be called Legal and Governance.

Following discussion it was agreed that both proposals would come back to Court with further information on the rationale for the changes requested.

*CRT/2023/17.4 Pay and Pensions – industrial action*

Court noted that Unison and Unite currently hold a mandate for strike action but at present no further dates had been published. It was also noted that UCU had failed to meet the necessary threshold for a mandate to hold strike action.

**CRT/2023/18. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update**

*CRT/2023/018.1. Rector update*

Court noted that since the last Court meeting the Rector had been dealing with a range of student cases concerning tuition fee issues, scholarships and financial issues. The Rector reported that students had been engaging with her via the surgeries set up by the SRC and it was noted that she was keen to re-engage with students at Dumfries.

*CRT/2023/18.2. SRC update*

The SRC President reported that the start of the academic year was progressing well and that a new appointment had recently been made by the SRC in the Advice Centre. The SRC had also been heavily involved in the new Together Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) campaign which was due to launch on 25 November. Court also noted that a number of the SRC sabbaticals were due to visit China so that the SRC could meet with the students based at the campuses.

*CRT/2023/18.3. Student Experience Committee*

Court noted that the Student Experience Committee had met recently and noted that there had been discussions in relation to hardship funds, sports facility access issues. The meeting had also touched on academic issues.

The Convener thanked the Rector and the SRC President for their reports.

**CRT/2023/19. Reports of Court Committees**

*CRT/2023/19.1 Estates Committee*

Stuart Hoggan, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which provided an update on the issues in relation to planned maintenance contract and the progress in implementation of the sustainability measures on the estate. The Committee had also received a further report on the progress of the Keystone development and next steps. Court noted that as part of the business case for Keystone it would be beneficial to have more information about the campus plan including the wider impact on the buildings either earmarked for closure or for redevelopment.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2023/19.2 Audit & Risk Committee*

Elspeth Orcharton, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. Court noted that the Committee had received the University's financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2023. 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.

Court noted that the Committee had received the internal auditor’s annual report and for the 11 reviews completed in 2022/23: 2 were green; 6 were green‐amber; 1 were amber‐red; and two was an advisory reports. The internal auditors had issued an annual report for 2022/23, which included an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control, and of the University’s economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money) arrangements. The opinion for 2022/23 was that “significant assurance with minor improvement opportunities” could be given on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation’s framework of governance, risk management and control.

Court also noted the approval of the Annual Statement on Compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2023.

The report and the Annual report to Court were noted.

*CRT/2023/19.3 IPSC*

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee reported that that the Committee had covered several topics including KPMG Cyber Security Final Report, an update on the work that had been started on the 2024/25 investment plan and a review of the programme/project reports.

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

The report was noted.

*CRT/2023/19.4 People and Organisational Development Committee*

Kerry Christie, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had received an update on the vision behind the future P&OD operating model and heard how the function would transition over the coming years to a user-centric model with wider adoption of self-service principles whilst enhancing the approach to strategic business partnering, backed by increased investment in new and emerging technologies.

Court also noted that the Committee had reflected on its remit and future plans, discussing and debating a range of considerations including the length and cadence of meetings, how the group may be optimally structured and how alternative approaches and/or reduced formality may add value (particularly from lay members) earlier in the formation of proposals.

Court noted that work was ongoing to ensure that any future cases reported using the online reporting tool for bullying, harassment and sexual violence were logged and actioned appropriately to ensure that outcomes were clearly recorded.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2023/19.5 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee*

Court noted the report and no substantive items were raised.

*CRT/2023/19.6 Remuneration Committee*

SMG members left the meeting for this item.

*CRT/2023/19.6.1 SMG and Principal’s Remuneration*

Kerry Christie, chair of the Committee, reported that 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 Committee had agreed with the proposal outlined by the Principal at the meeting, that SMG would receive the 5% national pay uplift. It was also noted that the Committee had agreed with the proposal outlined by the Convener of Court at the meeting, that the Principal would receive 5% national pay uplift. 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.

SMG members returned to the meeting.

**CRT/2023/20. Annual Report for the Scottish Funding Council – Institution Review of Quality Academic Year 2022-23**

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 2022-23. 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 noted that the report did not include information about Equality and Diversity or Sustainability but it was acknowledged that the content was specified by SFC rather than by the University. It was agreed that this would be raised with the SFC. It was also acknowledged that the report did not expand on the international student population or any specific steps being taken to support this group of students and that going forwards more information on this area would be included.

Court approved the Annual report to the Scottish Funding Council.

**CRT/2023/21. Senate Matters**

Court noted the report from the Senate meeting held on the 5 October 2023. Helen Butcher, (Director of Academic Policy & Governance/Assistant Director of Academic Services) outlined the key areas which included an update on REF 2028, Horizon Europe, student numbers, Senate Effectiveness Review and an amendment to the Honorary Degree Regulations.

The Convener of Court thanked Helen Butcher for the update.

**CRT/2023/22. Any Other Business**

*CRT/2023/22.1 Court members*

Court noted that Professor Kirsteen McCue had attended her last Court meeting. Kirsteen had been on Court since August 2017 and during that time had been on a number of committees including Estates Committee and People and Organisational Development Committee.

Court recorded its thanks to Professor McCue for her huge contribution and dedication to the University and wished her all the best for the future.

*CRT/2023/22.2 Meeting disruption*

The Convener of Court thanked all members of Court for dealing with the interruptions to the meeting in a professional manner. The Convener of Court also thanked all the Security staff for dealing with the situation in a professional and courteous manner.

**CRT/2023/23. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 14 February 2024 at 2pm. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm.