

WEB COPY

Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 18 April 2012 in the Senate Room

Present:

Mr David Anderson General Council Member, Mr Ken Brown Co-opted Member, Mr Peter Daniels Co-opted Member, Ms Susan Dunsmore General Council Member, Dr Robin Easton Co-opted Member, Ms Amy Johnson SRC Vice President Student Support, Rt Hon Charles Kennedy MP Rector (Chair), Mr Kenneth Law SRC Member on Court, Mr Alan Macfarlane General Council Member, Cllr Jim Mackechnie Glasgow City Council Representative, Professor William Martin Senate Member, Ms Margaret Morton Co-opted Member, Professor Anton Muscatelli Principal, Dr Alan Owen Senate Member, Professor Miles Padgett Senate Member, Mr Alex Ross Employee Representative, Mr David Ross General Council Member (Convener of Court), Professor Michael Scott-Morton Co-opted Member, Dr Donald Spaeth Senate Member

In attendance:

Professor Anne Anderson (Head of College of Social Sciences and Vice-Principal), Professor Steve Beaumont (Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise), Mr Ian Black (Director of Human Resources), Professor Graham Caie (Clerk of Senate and Vice-Principal), Professor John Chapman (Head of College of Science & Engineering and Vice-Principal), Professor Frank Coton (Vice-Principal Learning & Teaching), Professor Anna Dominiczak (Head of College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences and Vice-Principal), Mr Robert Fraser (Director of Finance), Mr James Harrison (SRC President elect), Professor Neal Juster (Vice-Principal Strategy & Resources), Ms Deborah Maddern (Administrative Officer), Mr David Newall (Secretary of Court), Professor Andrea Nolan (Senior Vice-Principal), Professor Murray Pittock (Head of College of Arts and Vice-Principal), Ms Susan Stewart (Director of Corporate Communications)

Apologies:

Members: Ms Susan Ashworth Employee Representative, Professor Eleanor Gordon Senate Member, Mr Murdoch MacLennan Chancellor's Representative, Professor Adrienne Scullion Senate Member, Mr Kevin Sweeney General Council Member

CRT/2011/34. Announcements

Cllr Jim Mackechnie was attending his final meeting of Court. Court thanked him for his contributions to Court and wished him well in the future.

Court noted that Dr Gordon Hay had left the University Court since the last meeting, and recorded its appreciation of his contribution to Court throughout his term as Senate Representative.

CRT/2011/35. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 February 2012

The minutes were approved.

CRT/2011/36. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

CRT/2011/37. Report from the Principal

CRT/2011/37.1 Review of Restructuring- Action Plan

At its December meeting, Court had received a report on the first year assessment of Restructuring, which had included input from staff surveys. Court had had particular concerns about the staff survey feedback on the need for improvements to the decision making process and on communication above local level.

Professor Andrea Nolan explained that there had been seven main areas for action arising from the review, including; improving internal communications, in particular face to face communication practice, and developing and delivering mechanisms/strategies to improve and strengthen staff engagement and transparency in decision making processes. Court's feedback on the action plan would be welcome. Court agreed that it would be important that internal communications be accessible and swift. It noted that the Staff Attitude Survey, which was ongoing, contained a section on communications and that staff input from the survey would inform the communications strategy.

Dr Donald Spaeth welcomed the aims of inclusiveness and transparency in the decision making process but expressed concern about some of the outcomes; he suggested that focus groups include staff members below the level of Heads of School and Heads of Subject; and that the remits of Schools might also be looked at in terms of giving School plenary meetings a role in decision making. Court noted from Professor Nolan that there was a commitment to review the operation of College Councils at the end of this academic year, and also noted that the ways of operating that occurred within Schools and Colleges would be looked at through the commitment to clarify locus of decision making in a range of areas and fed back to the review process.

Court noted that there was a further formal report scheduled at the end of year 3 and that progress would be kept under review in the meantime.

CRT/2011/37.2 Scottish Funding Council Grant 2012/13

Court noted the main allocations in the SFC funding letter for 2012/13 and that more information on the proposed Outcome Agreements should be available later in the year from the Funding Council. With regard to the recent UK government proposals on tax relief on charitable donations, Court heard that the HE sector had made its views clear on the potential detriment to donations for educational and research purposes.

The Principal was congratulated on his recent appointment to the Scottish Funding Council.

CRT/2011/37.3 Key Activities

Court noted a summary of some of the main activities in which the Principal had been involved since the last meeting of Court, covering internal and external activities beyond daily operational management and strategy meetings. The activities were under the broad headings of: Academic Development and Strategy; International Activities, where Court noted in particular the successful visit to Singapore to promote existing and future collaborative arrangements; Lobbying/Policy Influencing and Promoting the University; and Internal activities and Communications.

CRT/2011/38. Report from the Secretary of Court

CRT/2011/38.1 Review of Higher Education Governance

At the last meeting, Court had noted that the report of the Review of Higher Education Governance, chaired by Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski, had been published on 1 February. Court had agreed to establish a working group to assist in formulating input to any subsequent consultation process, and the views of the working group had been shared with Court members for comment. The version circulated to Court had since been edited, though with no major changes, and the current version supplied to Court for the present meeting.

Court approved the document as a fair reflection of its views on the von Prondzynski Report. If a formal response to the Report was invited, the document would be the basis for that response, and cognisance would also be taken of input from Senate, referred to in the Communications from Senate circulated for the present meeting. Given the similarity in the views of Court and Senate, it was hoped that a single University submission could be made. At present, however, it was not clear how Ministers would be taking forward the outcomes of the review.

CRT/2011/38.2 Management of Organisational Change: Accounts Receivable function

Court had received a proposal to restructure the accounts receivable function within the University. This involved the transfer of activity from Registry to Finance Office, to help ensure a better integrated approach to debt collection and accounting. David Newall explained that a key aspect of the proposal was that the business process had become more automated. The transfer would mean that 3 posts, currently based in the Registry, would no longer be required. The proposal had been considered and approved by the Senior Management Group. Court was being asked to approve the establishment of a Structural Change Committee and a Redundancy Committee to oversee the management of the staff reduction. A focus of the Management of Organisational Change process would be on steps in mitigation, for example redeployment.

Mr Newall advised Court that UCU had asked if the process could be delayed until the June meeting, given that Court's approval of any recommendations arising from the Management of Organisational Change process would not be sought until its October meeting, because of the timescales required under the procedure; however, Mr Newall was asking Court to approve the proposal so that the staff affected could be formally engaged in the process immediately and thereby have clarity about the position.

A question was raised by Ken Brown about the potential impact of any staff reduction on student debt recovery, where problems had occurred with processes during the current year and where additional temporary staff had been engaged to advise students; it was asked if the skill sets of the posts which were proposed as no longer required might in fact be required in the future in these circumstances. Court heard that this was not the case. Alex Ross commented that there was an obligation to assist the staff in obtaining the necessary skills, and it was not clear if local management had been given the opportunity to look at the issues ahead of the current proposal, to try and come up with a solution that did not involve potential redundancy.

Amy Johnson expressed concern on behalf of the SRC that student facing services must not suffer, for example because Finance Office was not based in the centrally located Fraser Building and its staff were generally less experienced in student support matters than Registry. Dr Alan Owen added that the timing of the proposal to lose staff with student support experience was not good, given that there would be a major test of the MyCampus in September. Mr Newall acknowledged that ongoing student support was important, and would be looked at in the context of the proposal were it to be approved; however, local management had been involved in the proposal before Court and the case for reducing staffing levels remained. Professor William Martin agreed with concerns about the need for student support to be maintained, and that the timing of the proposal was not optimal in this respect, but it was

important for the staff affected to know formally what their position was, and the Management of Organisational change process would enable this through its consultation and mitigation requirements; a delay would in fact add to uncertainty and potential stress for the staff concerned. Ian Black added that there was an obligation on any Structural Change and Redundancy Committees to look at all possible steps in mitigation.

Court agreed that it wished the position to be clear for the staff affected and that Management of Organisational change process would provide the necessary clarity. Court approved the recommendations that a Redundancy Committee be established in accordance with the provisions of the Management of Compulsory Redundancy Protocol; and that a Structural Change Committee be established to advise the Redundancy Committee for the purposes of the Management of Compulsory Redundancy Protocol. Court also agreed that Mr Newall should provide information at the June meeting on how the University would ensure that there was no detriment to the quality of front-line support service to students.

ACTION DN

CRT/2011/38.3 Business School – Change of Name

The College of Social Sciences had approved a proposed change of name for the Business School, to The University of Glasgow Adam Smith Business School. The SMG and Senate were supportive of the change.

Court approved the change.

CRT/2011/38.4 Student Lifecycle Project /MyCampus

Court noted a progress report on the implementation of MyCampus, identifying in particular the steps being taken to help ensure that Registration and Enrolment would run more satisfactorily in 2012. Court also noted the 17 recommendations of the Lessons Learned Group and progress against each.

Dr Spaeth raised concerns about local testing of systems in the College of Arts having identified a technical problem which to date did not have a solution. He also flagged a concern about reminders being issued to students regarding their debt, and a concern that students in debt might not be allowed access to University facilities. Mr Newall advised that Colleges were being asked to conduct comprehensive programme plan testing and that he would investigate the particular problem referred to by Dr Spaeth at the next College of Arts MyCampus Liaison Group meeting. Regarding student debt, he reported that it was standard practice to issue reminder letters in the early spring to students with outstanding debt. This year, reminders had been issued to many students who were recorded as having debt only because University staff had failed to credit sponsorship income to their account. It was important to clarify staff responsibilities for this activity to ensure no recurrence of this in 2012/13. Mr Newall assured Dr Spaeth that, in 2012/13 as in 2011/12, students would be allowed temporary access to the Library and other University facilities in situations where matters relating to their source of funding required to be resolved. Advisors would be informed of this so that they could advise students appropriately. With regard to a question about possible upgrades to computers being needed to support the SLP functions, Mr Newall stated that Colleges would be advised on upgrade requirements.

Professor Miles Padgett requested that KPIs be developed in order to assess the effectiveness of the actions being taken to improve the Registration and Enrolment Process, and that performance against these should be reported to Court. Mr Newall welcomed this suggestion and agreed to take it up with the Project Board.

ACTION DN

CRT/2011/38.5 Stevenson Building Extension/Glasgow University Union

At its October meeting, Court had supported Estates Committee's approval in principle of the proposed Stevenson Building Extension, subject to satisfactory plans being developed to address Glasgow University Union's needs for a suitable social facility to replace the Hive extension. Since then, University officials had been in continuing dialogue with officials of the GUU, and outline proposals had been developed that seek to address Court's concerns. After consideration by Estates and Finance Committees, it was intended to bring the proposals to Court in June.

CRT/2011/38.6 Scottish Enterprise: West of Scotland Science Park

As agreed by Court at the last meeting, a group had been established to consider and, if agreed, progress the possible disposal of, and/or leasehold arrangements for, a number of properties and sites at the Garscube estate. Ownership of two properties (Number 1 Todd Campus and Block 7 Kelvin Campus) had been transferred to Scottish Enterprise, together with a pre-emptive right to acquire other property at market value, should the University decide at a future date to sell it. This land covered by the pre-emption right was currently occupied by sports pitches and by the Wolfson Conference Centre and Residences.

CRT/2011/38.7 Media Report

Court noted the latest media report and that a briefing on external communications, including strategy, would be provided by Susan Stewart at the pre-Court meeting in June.

CRT/2011/38.8 Nominations Committee

In 2011, an advertisement had been placed in the press for 2 Co-opted Committee members, for the Finance Committee and Human Resources Committee. The Finance Committee appointment had been approved in June 2011. The Nominations Committee was now recommending that Mr Stephen McCafferty be appointed to the Human Resources Committee position. Court approved the recommendation.

CRT/2011/38.9 Endowments in School of Critical Studies (Theology & Religious Studies)

Court noted the approval by the Secretary of Court of a number of changes to the current use of endowment funds in Theology & Religious Studies. The changes were principally aimed at updating terminology and were in line with the spirit of the original bequests and gifts.

CRT/2011/38.10 Grievance

Court noted summary details of a grievance outcome.

CRT/2011/38.11 Headship Appointments

The following appointments had been made:

College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences

Head of the Institute of Cancer Sciences

Professor Jeff Evans from 1 April 2012 until 31 March 2016

Professor Evans had previously been acting Head from November 2011, in succession to Professor Karen Vousden.

College of Science and Engineering

Head of the School of Physics & Astronomy

Professor Martin Hendry from 1 August 2012 until 31 July 2016, in succession to Professor Andrew Long

CRT/2011/38.12 Resolutions

The following draft Resolution had been approved and was with the Senate and General Council for comment

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW No. 654 - CHANGE OF NAME OF THE MCLEOD/ARTHRITIS & RHEUMATISM COUNCIL CHAIR OF RHEUMATOLOGY (AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION NO 331)

The following Resolution had been approved

RESOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW No. 653 - CHANGE OF NAME OF THE CHAIR OF GREEK

CRT/2011/39. Report on Research

Professor Steve Beaumont, Vice Principal Research & Enterprise, provided a report on Research performance, KPIs and the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Court was reminded of the significant environmental changes that had taken place before its last update in 2011. The spending review had protected the UK Science budget in cash terms at £4.58bn, although universities were expected to make 'efficiency savings' through cuts to the proportion of Full Economic Cost overhead rates paid by Research Councils; capital budgets had been cut; Research Councils were adopting measures to manage demand following the EPSRC's lead; funding was being focused on Early Career Researchers and 'outstanding' performers; and EPSRC intended to shape the research landscape, changing the balance of funding between different areas of research. In Scotland, the Research Excellence Grant had been protected in cash terms: funding for 4* and 3* research had been protected in real terms by axing support for 1* research and cutting support for 2*. The Knowledge Transfer Grant had been cut by 10%, £3M had been sliced from budgets for Research Pools, and the budget for competitive Knowledge Transfer funding had been halved.

Since the last report in 2011, most of those changes had taken effect and had begun to take effect as anticipated. Their impact on the University had not been as severe as had been feared, however. The EPSRC's 'shaping' exercise had increased funding in many areas that the University had prioritised for expansion and singled out only a small number of areas for contraction where Glasgow was particularly strong. The SFC had increased the University's grants for Research and Knowledge Transfer by £2.25M (4.3%) compared to the previous year. The cut in funding for Research Pools had been restored, but targeted on working with industry. New factors included proposals for a single Technology Transfer Office in Scotland, and Universities had been required to adopt the (Glasgow) EasyAccessIP scheme. Court noted that Research Council demand-management policies were acting to brake applications, with a positive effect on success rates.

Court noted KPIs relating to Research, covering Research income per FTE, percentage of staff holding research grants, research output quality, PGR students per academic FTE, and PGR satisfaction. There were signs of an improvement in awards volume but overall application rates remained below previous levels, partly a result of demand-management. European funding showed a strong upward trend, with a significant number of projects led by Glasgow: there had been a doubling of both applications and awards in this area between 2008 and 2011.

With respect to PG Research, the overall satisfaction rate had fallen below the Russell Group average; there was improved performance in some measures, especially those subject to low scores in the previous survey, but others had deteriorated. Corrective action plans were in place in all graduate schools.

Court noted that the latest University risk workshop had elevated the level of threat from a number of research-related themes; these included the impact of the forthcoming REF, ability to recruit and retain high calibre staff and the global downturn affecting grant income.

The REF would occur in 2014. The three components of assessment were: Outputs, in the form of publications, creative works, patents, with four examples to be assessed for each submitted member of staff by peer review; Environment, in the form of research income, PGR students, resources, strategy; and Impact, in the form of economic and societal impact of research assessed using case studies. There were 36 Units of Assessment. Panel criteria and guidance had been published. The REF would publish a research quality profile, as in 2008, with ratings 4* - world leading; 3* - internationally excellent; 2* - internationally recognised; 1* - nationally recognised. The University's submission to REF would be selective, with selection decisions informed by mini-REF, and the assessment of more recent outputs. Appointments since the mini-REF were expected to augment the number of staff selected. The most likely scenario for a minimum selection threshold was shared by RPSC with Senate and Court. Court would receive further details on selection, for approval, in June, following consideration by SMG.

Court thanked Professor Beaumont for the briefing.

CRT/2011/40. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2011/40.1 Finance Committee

CRT/2011/40.1.1 Investment Managers Report

Court noted the Endowment Investments Report.

CRT/2011/40.1.2 Pensions Liability

Court noted that a fall in the gilt yield, arising from the UK government's Quantitative Easing programme, would involve liabilities being discounted at a lower rate, and therefore would increase the size of the University of Glasgow Pension Scheme (UGPS) deficit. The increased deficit was expected to have a material impact on the University's balance sheet for 2011/12 and on its Income and Expenditure statement for 2012/13 and potentially for subsequent years. It was noted that all Universities with their own pension schemes were in the same position and that if, as was expected, the gilt yield rose in due course, the deficit was likely to fall accordingly, but that it was still necessary to reflect the current position at this time. In addition, the Pensions Regulator was looking at Universities' approach in general to funding pension fund deficits, and specifically had asked the Trustees of the UGPS to re-examine the proposed recovery plan for the Scheme, with a view to eradicating the deficit over a shorter period of time. Court would be updated on the matter at future meetings.

CRT/2011/40.1.3 Overview of Performance at Period 7 2011/12

Court noted the Period 7 2011/12 Overview of Performance. Court noted that there were some negative variances in College fee income, arising in part from uncertainties and perceptions on the part of potential overseas students about UK immigration policies and employment opportunities.

CRT/2011/40.2 Audit Committee

The report was noted.

CRT/2011/40.3 Estates Committee

Court endorsed Estates Committee's approval of CapEx applications in respect of: Boyd Orr Building Roof in the sum of £800k; Boyd Orr Building (Level 10 Laboratories) in the sum of £1.042m; and Post Graduate Social Space in the sum of £900k. Court noted that a campus masterplan was being developed.

CRT/2011/40.4 Human Resources Committee

CRT/2011/40.4.1 Code of Practice

Court approved the Code of Practice for the Selection of Staff for REF2014.

CRT/2011/40.4.2 Performance and Development Review

David Anderson recorded thanks to colleagues who had been involved in developing policy in this area. The Convenor of Court noted that lay members had expressed some concern about the proposed changes to the number and definitions of performance ratings and their link to achieving objectives. Court agreed that the lay members should have an opportunity to discuss these concerns and that a meeting would be set up involving David Anderson, Alan Macfarlane, Professor Nolan and Ian Black. They would report back to the HR Committee and to Court.

CRT/2011/40.4.2 Review of Management of Organisational Change processes

Court noted that a proposed new process for potential redundancy situations was still at an early stage and that consultation with the Trade Unions was continuing, as was consideration of appropriate mechanisms for consultation where organisational change involved academic areas.

CRT/2011/40.5 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee

The report was noted. It was agreed that a briefing on health and safety matters would be provided to Court at a future meeting.

CRT/2011/41. Report from the Rector

The Rector's report was noted. The Rector had drawn Court's attention to the proposed redevelopment of the John MacIntyre Building and to his concern that proper and prominent space was made available to visitors for the SRC presence and role. It was confirmed by Amy Johnson that the matter was now in hand to the satisfaction of the SRC.

The Rector asked about arrangements for Wednesday afternoons, where practice was not to have compulsory classes, in order to allow students to pursue sporting and other extra-curricular activities. Professor Graham Caie confirmed that Colleges were reminded about the desirability of keeping these afternoons free of teaching, but that it was not always possible to achieve this. Court noted that the Management of Teaching Space project, and the future availability of additional teaching space at the Western Infirmary site, should make it easier in future to free up time on Wednesday afternoons.

CRT/2011/42. Communications from meeting of Senate 12 April 2012

CRT/2011/42.1 Partnerships

Court noted that Senate had approved proposed partnerships with two overseas institutions.

CRT/2011/42.2 Response to Scottish Government Review of Higher Education Governance

Court noted that at the request of the Clerk of Senate, the Senate Communications Working Group had met to consider draft responses to the report of the Review of Higher Education Governance. At its meeting on 12 April, Senate had noted that, as yet, there had been no formal request from Government for responses to the report but it was understood informally that many universities were preparing their own commentaries on the review report. To assist the Working Group, Professor Caie had invited members of Senate to submit their comments to him. The responses had been considered at the meeting. Mr Newall had attended the meeting and had reported that a sub-group of Court was also considering the review report, and he had informed the Senate Group of the Court group's views on the review. It was hoped by the Working Group that it would be possible to submit, in due course, a single University response. In the event that it proved necessary, the response could note any areas where the views of Senate and Court differed.

The Working Group was also finalising a Guide to Governance which would include information on the roles of Court and Senate and on effective communication and cooperation.

CRT/2011/42.3 Appointment of Senate Assessor on Court

Court noted that an election would be held shortly for the appointment of a Senate Assessor to succeed Dr Gordon Hay.

CRT/2011/43. Any Other Business

CRT/2011/43. Review of Court's effectiveness

Court noted from David Ross that a review of Court's effectiveness would be undertaken and that this might include input from members by way of interview. Members would be kept updated.

CRT/2011/44. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Court will be held on Wednesday 20 June 2012 in the Senate Room