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Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 20 June 2018 in Room 114, Western Infirmary Lecture Theatre

Present:

Mr Dave Anderson Employee Representative, Mr Aamer Anwar Rector (from item 49 inclusive), Mr Graeme Bissett Co-opted Member, Ms Heather Cousins Co-opted Member, Professor Lindsay Farmer Senate Assessor, Mr David Finlayson Co-opted Member, Professor Carl Goodyear Senate Assessor, Professor Kirsteen McCue Senate Assessor, Mr Ronnie Mercer Co-opted Member, Dr June Milligan Co-opted Member, Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli Principal, Mr Elliot Napier SRC Assessor, Ms Elspeth Orcharton Co-opted Member, Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Ms Kate Powell SRC President, Mr Gavin Stewart Co-opted Member, , Dr Ken Sutherland Co-opted Member Ms Lesley Sutherland General Council Assessor, Dr Bethan Wood Senate Assessor

In attendance:

Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Mr Robert Fraser (Director of Finance), Professor Neal Juster (Senior Vice-Principal), Ms Deborah Maddern (Administrative Officer), Ms Liz Winders (consultant)

Apologies:

Members: Cllr Susan Aitken Glasgow City Council Assessor, Professor Nick Hill Senate Assessor, Dr Simon Kennedy Senate Assessor, Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson General Council Assessor, Ms Margaret Anne McParland Employee Representative, Mr David Milloy Co-opted Member

CRT/2017/46 Announcements

Liz Winders, who was undertaking an external review of Court, was welcomed to the meeting. It was noted that the SRC President-elect, Lauren McDougall, would normally have attended the meeting as an observer ahead of taking up office on 1 July, but she had tendered apologies.

Carl Goodyear and Kate Powell were attending their final meeting. Court thanked them for all their contributions to Court business and wished them well.

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 triennial valuation of the scheme.

It was recorded that Professor Neal Juster, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, had briefed Court about the Strategic Plan/KPIs, budget, financial forecasts and capital plan, at the pre-lunch briefing session.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2017/47. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 11 April 2018

The minutes were approved.

CRT/2017/48. Matters Arising

Professor Lindsay Farmer requested clarification about the process for appointing new Vice-

Principals, noting that a recent appointment, reported at the last meeting, had been of an individual who was not a member of academic staff. The Principal advised that there was a precedent for non-academic appointments to Vice-Principal positions and that he felt the Vice-Principal title relating to the recent External Relations and Marketing appointment was appropriate, given the external profile and professional networks involved. The Principal would discuss the appointment process for Vice-Principal positions with the Director of HR and chair of the HR Committee.

CRT/2017/49. Strategic Plan/KPIs, Budget 2018/19 and Financial Forecasts; Capital Plan

Professor Neal Juster, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, had briefed Court earlier in the afternoon. Professor Juster was thanked for the briefing. There had been a question and answer session, the main areas covered having been the following, with detailed responses having been given and noted:

- what ‘capacity’ would look like in terms of student numbers and the need to accommodate teaching and exams;
- the importance of the assessment and feedback project timetable not resulting in delays to improvements to these areas;
- the continuing appropriateness of the current suite of KPIs and whether they would be reviewed;
- how an appropriate balance could be struck in budget planning, to allow some continuing flexibility;
- how national league tables were compiled;
- how any future capital overspend might impact on the capital plan;
- a request for clarification with regard to a forecast dip in cashflow;
- and how growth in overseas student numbers compared to past figures.

Court received a paper providing an update on the University’s current performance against its strategic KPIs, the 2018/19 budget, the four-year financial forecast and the capital plan’s anticipated spend profile to 2023/24.

The budget showed that income would continue to increase year-on-year over the forecast period. The investment priorities over the next few years remained broadly unchanged from last year: developing underlying student infrastructure; improving the student experience; developing new student markets; building towards REF 2020; developing the Gilmorehill Campus; data-driven decisions; and transformation programmes. The forecast period indicated growth in staffing costs, including the potential for increases in pension contributions, placing significant cost pressures on the budget. The forecast showed cash generation at or above the targets presented to Court in December 2016. This was achievable through growth in international student numbers, the continued implementation of a premium fee policy for popular PGT courses, the delivery of administrative savings, small growth in the level of contribution from research and commercial activity, and control of consumable costs.

The paper also contained a summary of the University’s annual performance against the primary and secondary KPIs previously approved by Court. Details of trends in league tables, both global and domestic, were also provided.

The current strategic plan had set a cash generation KPI target of £24.5m/year. The capital plan presented to Court in December 2016 had altered this forecast slightly to take account of borrowing and expenditure on the capital plan. The revised targets and the forecast cash generation in the budget were noted, as were the global assumptions on which the budget forecasts to 2021-22 were based. At the end of 2021/22, the closing cash position was expected to be £11.9m higher than forecast in 2017. This was driven by improved operational cash flow in 2017/18, due primarily to increased PGT tuition fee income and lower than budgeted salaries; an increase in the capital grants forecast, with capital grants now forecast to remain relatively flat, instead of reducing over the budget period; and

increased capital spend during the period, due to the re-profiling of campus redevelopment spend and an increase in equipment spend.

Court received details of risks relating to financial sustainability. SMG kept major risks under continual review, with mitigating actions discussed at monthly SMG meetings. There were also a number of challenges that SMG was continuing to consider with respect to financial sustainability and enhancement in performance and reputation; Court noted the main areas in this regard.

The Capital Plan 2016-2023 had been approved by Court in December 2016. The plan was formally updated every year as part of the planning cycle, the last update having been in June 2017. The approved June 2017 capital plan had anticipated £115m of spend during 2017-18; the forecast spend was £70m, including equipment spend. All of the revenue spend for the year had been allocated and some 60% of spend had already been incurred. Court received details of the reasons for the slower capital spend in 2017-18, which included re-profiling of the spend on Learning and Teaching Hub and delays caused by timing of building warrants being issued. Court heard that the Finance and Estates teams had been focused in recent months on improving the accuracy of cash flow projections.

Court received details of projects completed and in progress during 2017-18.

Court was reminded that in approving the capital plan, as it was being invited to do, it was possible that not all the projected spend would occur, since each major capital project within the plan required individual approval of a full business case.

The Finance Committee chair, Graeme Bissett, reported that the Committee had received similar information to that being presented to Court, providing the Committee with the opportunity to understand movements since the previous budget and capital plan. The Committee had concluded that there were no serious concerns about assumptions being made and that there were no reasons not to recommend the budget and plan to Court. Court noted that long-term forward cashflows were now included in the capital plan. This was particularly important in order to reflect the benefits arising from the significant (peak) capital spend in the next 3-4 years. These benefits, which included cash income, would not accrue for some 4-6 years. Such visibility would aid SMG, the Finance Committee and Court and provide an early indicator if cash reserves began to be stretched.

Court approved the 2018/19 Budget, the 4-year financial forecast 2017/18 to 2020/21 for submission to the SFC, and the Capital Plan forecast spend to 2023/24. Court thanked those involved in their preparation.

CRT/2017/50. Report from the Principal

CRT/2017/50.1 Higher Education Developments

Scotland Higher Education Budget for 2018-19

At the last meeting, Court had noted the indicative funding allocation, the Teaching grant, Research Excellence grant and University Innovation Fund percentage increases having all been in line with the overall sectoral increase. At that time, the outcome of some strategic grants, such as the museums grant, had still been awaited. In early May it had been announced that the University would continue to receive a Museums, Galleries and Collections grant from the SFC. The Hunterian, as Scotland's largest university museum, would receive £2.178 million over three years from a total pot of £3.6m.

Brexit

There were ongoing discussions with the UK and Scottish Governments regarding the future of the UK's participation in the European Research and Innovation Area and regarding EU student funding.

The European Commission had presented its proposals for Horizon Europe (FP9), which set out the rules on third country association. It created a new category of eligible countries, which would give the UK the option to negotiate association to Horizon Europe. However, this was subject to the Brexit negotiations.

Court noted an update on the recent collaborative agreement between the University and Leuphana University, which was based in Lüneburg, in the German state of Lower Saxony. The agreement had established a European Centre for Advanced Studies in Lüneburg. It would aim to assist with the advancement of science, research and education with a mixture of joint courses, research collaborations, and student and staff exchanges, on a non-exclusive basis. Access to European research funding would be possible for projects based at the Centre.

CRT/2017/50.2 Transformation Programme

In April, Court members had been updated on the appointment of the Chief Transformation Officer, Chris Green. There would be a briefing paper and update on the Transformation Programme, at the October meeting of Court.

CRT/2017/50.3 Outcome Agreement – Dumfries/Crichton Campus

At the previous meeting, Court had approved the University's updated Outcome Agreement, which set out what the University would deliver in return for Government funding. In addition to this Agreement, the University had worked with other HE providers in Dumfries to produce a Consolidated Outcome Agreement for the activities on the Crichton Campus. The document's focus was on the contribution made towards improving life chances, supporting world-leading research and creating sustainable economic growth in the South West of Scotland.

Court approved the separate agreement relating to the Crichton Campus.

CRT/2017/50.4 USS/pensions update

At the previous meeting, Court had heard that a proposal had been made under the auspices of ACAS, to establish an independent joint expert panel (JEP) for the purpose of reviewing the 2017 valuation of USS.

The University and other employers had been supportive of the establishment of the JEP. Following a ballot of members, the UCU had suspended industrial action.

The JEP had now been formed, with three members from each of UCU and UUK, and was chaired by an independent person with extensive experience of pensions. The JEP had begun to gather evidence and hoped to report in mid- to late September.

CRT/2017/50.5 University Rankings

There had been three recently-published UK League Tables. In the Complete University Guide, the University was up three places to 24th since 2017 (29th in 2016, 30th in 2015 and 2014); it was now 24th in the Guardian (2019) league table, one place down from last year (previous years 26th, 24th and 25th). With respect to QS Rankings, Glasgow had slipped 4 places to joint 69th in the ranking.

Court noted that use of NSS data in league tables and in KPIs was the subject of ongoing discussion in the HE sector, since there were some problems relating to the methodology.

CRT 2017/50.6 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; Internationalisation activities; Lobbying/Policy Influencing and Promoting the University; Internal activities and Communications.

CRT/2017/51. Report from the University Secretary

CRT 2017/51.1 Open/Stakeholder meeting

An Open meeting had been held on 19th June, jointly with the General Council half-yearly meeting. The agenda had included presentations from the Convener of Court, Principal and Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The meeting had been well received. The format for such meetings would evolve.

CRT 2017/51.2 Student Fatalities

Dr Duncan reported three recent fatalities involving students. He thanked the Rector and University Chaplain for the support they had provided to the students' families and friends. Court's sympathies to the families and friends were expressed.

CRT 2017/51.3 Safeguarding Policy

The University had long-standing arrangements relating to the protection of vulnerable groups to ensure that, where relevant, applicants, employees and students were members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme, which had been introduced by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

In the light of Court discussion about wider safeguarding matters, including the possibility of guidance and/or regulations for members of the University who might be engaged in activities with vulnerable groups abroad, a more wide-ranging policy had been developed. The policy had been approved by the Equality & Diversity Strategy Committee earlier in June. Court noted the policy.

The University's internal auditors would also be undertaking a review of this area over the summer, with the report to be considered at a meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee thereafter.

CRT 2017/51.4 Student-University Contract

Until recently, the legal basis of the University's relationship with its students had not been expressed by means of a single document, but in information from a number of sources. To clarify the relationship and in the interests of transparency and accessibility, a single contract document had been developed. The new document did not amend the terms and conditions affecting the University-student relationship. The contract covered the terms on which the University would provide programmes and courses, regulations that students must comply with, how the contract might be ended by either party, data use, financial information and sources of additional support, should they be needed. At registration, all new and continuing students would be required to confirm that they had read and agreed to the terms and conditions set out in the contract.

CRT 2017/51.5 Ordinance: Election of Chancellor and General Council Assessors

Court had approved the draft Ordinance in the autumn of 2017. Current Ordinances for the elections required postal voting and included very specific wording about all aspects of the process. To modernise the elections and provide a degree of flexibility for administrative changes that might be needed in the future, the wording had been amended to permit electronic voting and to take out very detailed process descriptions, so that the latter could be included instead in local regulations. The opportunity had also been taken to consolidate three Ordinances into one; there were currently three documents that required to be cross-referenced, because of amendments made to the original.

Following Court's approval of the draft, there had been informal interaction with the Scottish Government, which was now the early point of contact for the Ordinance process ahead of formal

submission of documents to the Privy Council. There had been an eight-week consultation period, including consultation with the General Council Business Committee and Senate. No substantive comments had been received during this process.

The finalised Ordinance was now approved by Court, ahead of submission to the Privy Council.

CRT 2017/51.6 Fire and Road Safety

At the last meeting, Court had heard that a systematic process to identify fire safety improvements was in place, overseen by the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee. Court now noted further details, which had been provided in a report for the present meeting. Court noted that tracking of any works required for fire safety, such that SMG and Court would be aware of any issues or delays, was done via notification from the health and safety team to Dr Duncan as chair of the HS&W Committee and thereafter by report to the Estates Committee. It was also noted that in terms of risk assessment, health and safety matters notified to Estates & Buildings by the health and safety team would always be a priority for action.

Court noted that, since the last meeting, the University had been in discussion with Glasgow City Council about how road safety in the vicinity of the campus could be improved. As members of Court were aware, there had been a fatality in mid-April, as a result of a road accident on University Avenue. Major changes were under consideration, but as these would not be in place for the start of the next academic year, other interim steps were being considered. The University was also reviewing road safety arrangements at the junction of University Avenue and Kelvin Way.

CRT 2017/51.7 General Data Protection Regulation - update

At the last meeting, Court had been briefed on the background to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which had come into force on 25 May 2018, and on the University's approach to compliance with the new regime.

Since then, further awareness-raising had been undertaken across the University, including circulation of a set of key facts on GDPR. A summary programme plan had been developed, augmenting the earlier action plan and including points arising from a recent follow-up internal audit of GDPR preparedness. Web-based training materials had also been developed. The plan and the key facts were noted by Court.

In discussion, it was noted that to assess compliance, the area would be audited, including by the University's internal auditors. It was also noted that any breaches would be handled via the Data Protection Office, with Court being notified by Dr Duncan.

At the suggestion of Professor McCue, it was agreed that a checklist for academic staff would be developed to assist data management. The Audit & Risk Committee would provide an update on action in this area, via its next report.

CRT 2017/51.8 Gender-Based Violence

At the previous meeting, Court had received the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Strategy Group Action Plan and a summary of specific actions taken to date. The group had met again since the last Court meeting. The group was currently focusing on four main priorities: general awareness raising across the University community; training of key personnel (including a revitalised network of Respect Advisers); policy development; and development of an online reporting tool.

With regard to policy development, a Personal Relationships Policy had been approved by Human Resources Committee and the Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee had approved a Safeguarding Policy. The group was in the process of developing an online reporting tool.

Court noted a report from the Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee, on the Committee's work in the above and other areas, during 2017/18.

CRT 2017/51.9 Student Experience Committee – Strategy

As part of the Committee's work, the co-chairs had drafted a strategy and action plan, which would be put before the committee at its next meeting.

The work of the Student Experience Committee and the Student Finance Sub-committee would be kept under review to ensure they were well aligned.

CRT 2017/51.10 Media Report

Court noted a digest of recent media coverage and summary details of social media interaction with the University.

CRT 2017/51.11 Use of withheld pay

In March and April, the University had been affected by industrial action called by the University & College Union (UCU) in response to proposed changes to USS pensions benefits. Pay had been withheld from members of staff who had participated in the industrial action. Following discussion with the SRC and consultation with the UCU, it had been agreed that the withheld pay be put towards: abolition of the General Council fee in 2018; scholarships for asylum-seekers or students from Low Income Countries; student hardship; additional support for student mental health provision; and additional support for student clubs and societies.

In response to a question from the Rector, it was confirmed that the General Council fee would not apply in 2019 or beyond. The Rector also asked if the procedure for students being required to hire graduation gowns could be reviewed, in terms both of affordability and hire currently being mandatory if students wished to participate in graduation ceremonies. He suggested that grants from the student hardship fund, which had been suggested as a possible source to help some students with hire costs, was perhaps not the best use of the fund. Dr Duncan advised that in effect there was only one provider who could manage the volume and complexity of gown hires. It was not the University's intention to make gowns optional for ceremonies. Given that the University would not wish to prevent a student from participating in a ceremony through lack of financial resources, the hardship fund's terms had been amended to cover this area.

CRT 2017/51.12 Funding of student bodies

As reported at the last Court meeting, an additional £200,000 of funding had been set aside for student bodies, subject to evidence that they were working to a defined set of common objectives. The Student Finance Sub-committee had duly agreed the distribution of these funds at its meeting in April.

CRT 2017/51.13 Summary of Convener's Business

Court noted a summary of activities undertaken by the Convener since the last meeting.

CRT 2017/51.14 External Review of Court

A review of Court was being undertaken, following previously agreed terms of reference. The reviewer had attended key Committee meetings and was attending the present Court meeting, ahead of meeting with the Court Governance Working Group later in the summer and attending the Strategy Day in late September. The report would be finalised in the autumn.

CRT 2017/51.15 Higher Education (Governance) Act 2016

The Act's provisions included a requirement for Trade Union-nominated members of Court. A Court-Senate working group had been set up to look at options for the various staff memberships of Court, including members from Senate, the Trade Unions and the wider staff body.

The group had been mindful of the guidance given by Court to keep as close to current arrangements as possible. Proposals would be brought to Court later in the year, once consultation with affected groups was complete. In order to provide for two Trade Union representatives, part of the proposal for the configuration of staff members on Court would include reducing the number of academic staff members (currently titled Senate Assessors) from six to five. Court recorded a concern from Professor Carl Goodyear about the potential effect of such a reduction on the workload of the remaining academic staff members, noting also that the matter had been discussed at the Council of Senate, with a suggestion having been made that other Senate members might take on some roles currently undertaken by Senate Assessors. Court noted a comment that the latter option might also have the benefit of providing good experience and encouraging staff to stand for Senate Assessor positions on Court.

CRT 2017/51.16 Organisational Change – UoG Sport

At the February 2018 meeting, by way of update on the restructuring of UoG Sport, Court had heard that the University and unions had been working to limit as far as possible the number of redundancies and that efforts had been made to ensure that remaining members of staff did not suffer loss of income because of the restructuring.

New working arrangements has been implemented at Gilmorehill in March. The dispute with the campus trade unions regarding the proposed changes at Garscube had formally ended. The trade unions had informed their members and new arrangements would be implemented there from 1 August.

It was noted that there would be a review of the new arrangements, which would involve the unions. Dr Duncan would advise Court about the timescale for this.

CRT 2017/51.17 Organisational Change Governance Group

David Finlayson, co-opted member of Court, would fill a vacancy on the group. The role and purpose of the group was currently under review through the HR Committee.

CRT 2017/51.18 Heads of School Appointments

College of Arts: School of Culture and Creative Arts

Professor Kate Oakley, currently Chair of Cultural Policy at the University of Leeds, had been appointed as Head of the School of Culture and Creative Arts from 1 October 2018 until 31 July 2022.

College of Science and Engineering: School of Mathematics & Statistics

Professor Ian Strachan had been appointed as Head of the School of Mathematics & Statistics for 4 years from 1 August 2018.

CRT/2017/52. Report from the Rector

The Rector apologised for not having been able to attend the April meeting, owing to professional commitments.

The Rector advised Court that he had met with the Court Convener and Vice-Convener earlier in the day, the meetings having included a discussion about the Rector's approach to his role, which he believed was to act on his election mandate of being a campaigning Rector, who would meet with students and staff. The Rector noted that he felt that this had sometimes led to argument, comment and observations at Court meetings. The Rector did not consider that it was his role to stay quiet.

The Rector advised that he wished to raise two matters at the present meeting.

The first related to the recent death of a student. The Rector recorded his thanks to the University Chaplain for his support for the student during an extremely difficult time for her, and his support for her family following her death. He added that the University community had also supported other students during this time and that the memorial service for the student had shown the University at its best.

The second matter related to the Rector's concerns about cases of alleged racial harassment and about reporting processes for student complaints in this and other areas. The concerns were noted by management.

In discussion following a short break after the Rector's report, it was agreed that the HR Committee would discuss staff reporting mechanisms relating to any harassment cases.

CRT/2017/53. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2017/53.1 Human Resources Committee

CRT/2017/53.1.1 Personal Relationships Policy

A Personal Relationships policy had been approved for presentation to Court. The chair of the Committee, Dr June Milligan, advised that the policy had received input and advice from several Court and management committees, and from expert external sources, and that the HR Committee was content that the policy had been considered in depth ahead of the draft being finalised. In discussion, it was noted that Elliot Napier would meet with management to discuss the policy's implications for some categories of students who were also staff; and that wording referring to the 'University community' would also cover external Court members, who would be reminded of the policy's existence on an annual basis.

Court approved the policy, subject to the discussion taking place with Mr Napier and subject to a small number of minor corrections to wording. Court recorded its thanks to Mhairi Taylor, of the University's Equality & Diversity Unit, for her work in drafting the policy.

CRT/2017/53.1.2 Other Committee Business

The Committee had received an update from Chris Green, the Chief Transformation Officer, on the World Class Glasgow Transformation Programme. The Committee had also discussed the governance role carried out by the Organisational Change Governance Group and the need for a review of some elements of the policy and guidance provided in this regard. There had been a paper initiating a discussion on University benefits for new parents. The strategic update from the HR Director had covered a range of topics including the latest developments with regard to the USS pension scheme, pay negotiations and ongoing work in relation to the University approach to tackling harassment and gender-based violence.

The HR Committee report was noted by Court.

CRT/2017/53.2 Student Experience Committee

Court noted a report of the first meeting of the Student Experience Committee, held in April. The

Committee had discussed and agreed a finalised Constitution, Membership and Remit, which Court now approved.

Court noted the report, in particular the discussions on key topics including the development of the Student Experience Strategy and Action Plan, referred to earlier in the meeting.

Court's thanks to Kate Powell for her work in connection with the setting up and operation of the Committee were recorded.

CRT/2017/53.3 Finance Committee

CRT/2016/53.3.1 Budget, financial forecast and capital plan

The budget, four-year forecast and capital plan had been considered by the Finance Committee, which had discussed minor adjustments to the commentary in the areas of capital spend on IT projects and equipment; and had recommended the documents to Court for approval. Approval of these items had been given by Court earlier in the meeting under item CRT/2017/49.

The Committee had noted the long-term cash flow forecast based on the 2018/19 budget outlook and associated Capital Plan. A number of scenarios had been outlined to highlight key risks and sensitivities in the long term. The paper had also set out a detailed 48-month forecast for the forecast low point in the University's cash balances and an updated balance sheet forecast and debt covenant outlook. The Committee would receive an updated cash flow paper twice a year going forward.

With regard to the cashflow position, and in response to a question about the visibility of this to Court, it was noted that while the Finance Committee would continue to monitor the matter regularly, details would also appear in reports to Court and that Court might receive additional, related, papers from time to time.

CRT/2016/53.3.2 Campus development

The Committee had received an overview of progress on the campus development, noting that the programme was currently at a very complex stage, with four projects at strategic briefing stage, two projects at detailed design stage, the Learning and Teaching Hub and infrastructure project on site, and the Research Hub due to be on site soon. The Committee recognised that this was the stage during which most movement in programme would be seen and some movement in cost was also expected. Finance Committee had noted the movement of some costs from Phase 1B to Phase 1A, aligning with the Capital Plan for 2018/19.

CRT/2017/53.3.3 CapEx Projects

The Committee had considered and approved seven Capex applications, with aggregate capital spend of £9.29m. Funding for all projects was included within the Capital Plan 2018/19 or provision included in equipment budgets. Court noted the details.

CRT/2017/53.3.4 Investment Sub-Committee

The future operation of the Endowment Investment Advisory Committee and the Investment Sub-Committee was under review to assess whether there was a more efficient way to monitor the aggregate of endowment and liquid funds.

CRT/2017/53.3.5 Financial reports

The Committee had noted a report showing the Overview of Performance as at 30 April 2018; Court now noted the details.

The Finance Committee report was noted.

CRT/2017/53.4 Audit & Risk Committee

The Committee had received internal audit reports on reviews of: Cyber security, Compensating controls, Procurement strategy and tendering, James Watt Nanofabrication Centre/Kelvin Nanotechnology Ltd and GDPR follow-up. The Committee had discussed the Internal Audit Risk Assessment and Plan 2018/19, agreeing that audits of Safeguarding and GTA-related areas be brought forward; in the context of this agreement, the Committee chair, Heather Cousins, noted that it reinforced the value of having Court members on the Committee, since it facilitated Court's particular areas of interest or concern being brought to the Committee's attention.

The Committee had approved the external auditors' approach to preparing the financial statements for the year to 31 July 2018. The Committee had received the updated University Risk Register. The Committee had received an update on implementation of outstanding recommendations from prior internal audits.

Court was advised that as part of its annual self-assessment, the Committee would be contacting University managers to clarify the processes in place for securing value for money in the University's operations, given that this area was included in the Committee's remit.

With regard to the Risk Register, Dr Duncan explained that there were different levels of risk assessment and management at the University, with both College/University Services and institutional-level registers in existence, the latter being reviewed by SMG on a regular basis, including SMG examining a specific area of the register in detail at each meeting. At the request of the Committee, both the format and content of the register had been revised in recent months. The register was provided annually to Court, as previously agreed during the review of Court's involvement in Risk Management arrangements.

In discussion, in the context of a comment about a perceived lack of engagement with industry and the need to track this and include reference to it in the register, it was noted that industrial engagement was covered by the Research-related risk, although it was agreed that this might be brought out to a greater degree in the text. It was also noted that recent and forthcoming senior management appointees in Research would be working to improve the University's profile in this area, which would be kept under review.

In response to a question about references made at the Court briefing to 'emerging risks' including pensions-related risks, and how such risks sat within the register, it was noted that USS was covered in the register, both specifically and in the context of finance-related risks.

In response to a question about how the University's risk profile – including for example the proportion of red/amber/green risks – was monitored over time, whether risk appetite was adjusted accordingly and if benchmarking against other HEIs occurred, it was noted that the Committee had requested a summary paper at each of its meetings, to include movements in risk profile. The internal auditors also provided an overall analysis of risks in the HE sector, on an annual basis. It was also noted that the University's risk management policy included a reference to risk appetite; this would be reviewed to ensure that quantification of risk appetite was included.

Court noted the Risk Register and agreed the revised format, which the chair of the Committee advised had also been approved by the Committee. Ms Cousins recorded the Committee's thanks to those involved in the revision of the register.

The Audit & Risk Committee report was noted.

CRT/2017/53.5 Estates Committee

CRT/2017/53.5.1 Capital Projects

Court noted: the anticipated reduction in 2017/18 capital spend from £122m to £79m; and the updated total capital expenditure profile of £915.4m, an increase of £12.4m from the last capital plan update. Court noted the planned 2018/19 capital spend of £148m and the new major projects identified during the last twelve months. Revised spend profiles and proposed additional works had been covered in the paper/presentation on the capital plan, received and approved earlier in the meeting.

CRT/2017/53.5.2 Capex Applications

Court noted Estates Committee's approval of Capex applications relating to: Gilmorehill/Boyd Orr/Mechanical and Electrical Upgrades £1.7m; Gilmorehill/Joseph Black Building/Skabara Laboratory £1,025,000; Purchase of Illumina Novaseq Sequencer £820k; Gilmorehill/James Watt/JWNC/Plasma Etch Tool £530k; Replacement of Superconducting Quantum Interface Device (SQUID) £620k; IT Services/IPSC Pervasive Wi-Fi £3,544,769; and Audio Visual/Video Conferencing Service Enhancement £976,100.

The Estates Committee report was noted.

CRT/2017/53.6 Remuneration Committee

The Committee's chair, June Milligan, reported that, at its last meeting, the Committee had welcomed the addition of new members, these being a member of staff and a student member. The Committee had discussed: recent guidance for Remuneration Committees, including the CUC HE Remuneration Code; arrangements for determining senior staff salaries, which had included a briefing on policy and approach, ahead of details being reported to Court later in the year; and Voluntary Severance and salary augmentation approvals since the last meeting.

In response to a question about the Remuneration Committee minutes recording the Principal as an attender at the meeting, and whether his attendance would be the norm, Court noted that the Principal would attend the Committee's meetings to inform discussions on senior management pay other than his own – at which point he would not be present – and had also attended the recent meeting in order to receive the briefing on policy and approach. Given that the meetings always considered senior management pay, it was likely therefore that he would always be an attender at meetings, for the purposes described.

The Remuneration Committee report was noted.

CRT/2017/53.7 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee

The Committee had received: updates on the launch of the travel safety protocol, on TU safety representatives within Sport and on the Stress Management policy review; and a presentation on the new EMF regulations - The Control of Electromagnetic Fields at Work Regulations 2016. The Committee had discussed road and fire safety and adverse weather issues. The Committee had noted a paper on Healthy Workplaces: Management of Dangerous Substances. The Committee had covered its usual range of business in reviewing standard reports on Occupational Health activities, audit updates, accident reporting and employee counselling.

With regard to the role of TU safety representatives, there had been an initiative to raise the profile of the role, including visits to Schools by staff in SEPS.

The University had recently received an HSE assessment of biological safety and would address points made in it.

Referring to the recent road traffic accident on University Avenue, the Rector asked about the City

Council's response to the University's request to limit speed on that road to 20mph, which had been that this was not seen as necessary. Court heard that discussions with the Council were continuing, with assistance from Cllr Aitken.

The report from the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee was noted.

CRT/2017/54. Communications from Council of Senate

The Council of Senate had: received a report on the recent industrial action and the associated implications for Learning, Teaching and Assessment; received an update report on the estates strategy; received a briefing on the draft budget and financial forecasts and a report from the Student Experience Committee; received a Convener's report on the Scottish Funding Council Letter of Guidance and on USS Pension Reform; and received an update from the Clerk of Senate on implementation of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and on honorary degrees.

Council of Senate had joined the chair of the meeting in thanking the Clerk of Senate, Professor John Briggs, for his service to Senate and the University, on the occasion of his retirement.

Court also recorded its thanks to Professor Briggs, for his service to Court and the University.

The communications from Council of Senate were noted.

CRT/2017/55. Any Other Business

The Convener thanked members of Court for all their work during the 2017/18 year.

CRT/2017/56. Date of Next Meeting

The Court Strategy Day will be on Friday 28 September 2018.

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 10 October 2018 at 1.45pm in the Senate Room.