



Court

Minute of Meeting held on Tuesday 21 June 2022

Present:

Elizabeth Passey (Co-opted Member (Convener of Court)), Dr Craig Daly (Trade Union Nominee), David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Professor Carl Goodyear (Elected Academic Staff Member), Duncan Henderson (SRC Assessor), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Laic Khalique (Co-opted Member), Jonathan Loukes (Co-opted Member), Ella McCabe (SRC President), Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson (General Council Assessor), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Ronnie Mercer (Chancellors Assessor), June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member), Lesley Sutherland (General Council Assessor), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member).

Attending:

Gregor Caldwell (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 Jill Morrison (Vice-Principal & Clerk of Senate), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Item 5 - Professor Chris Pearce (Vice Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange)), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate Elect), Rinna Väre (SRC President Elect), Stuart Hoggan (General Council Assessor Elect).

Apologies:

Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Lady Rae (Rector), Shan Saba (Co-opted Member)

CRT/2021/49. Announcements

The Convener welcomed Professor Chris Pearce Vice Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate Elect), Rinna Väre (SRC President Elect), Stuart Hoggan (General Council Assessor Elect) to the meeting.

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

It was recorded that Court had received a tour of Cochno Farm, School of Veterinary Medicine. Court's thanks for the tour were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2021/50. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 20 April 2022

The minutes were approved.

CRT/2021/51. Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

CRT/2021/52. Budget 22/23 and Financial Forecasts

Court received a presentation from Professor Frank Coton, Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), and Gregor Caldow, Executive Director of Finance on the Budget for 22/23 and the financial forecasts. Professor Frank Coton outlined the main themes in the budget submission.

The financial framework outlined key principles around cash generation requirements, specifically operational cash targets, minimum infrastructure spend requirements, capital spend and finally additional investment levels. It was also noted that prudent assumptions had been included in the budgets for future energy costs.

Court noted the capital plan was broadly consistent with plans previously outlined and there was also likely to be further demands on capital investment to support student unions and sports facilities. The SRC President noted that the student body activity was under significant pressure particularly in the area of student support and any additional funding would make a difference to the student experience. The SRC President also reported that any increase in tuition fees reflected value for money for students and that it was important that this did not disadvantage students from low/middle income countries.

It was also reported that the size/shape and capacity of student numbers would be brought back to Court at a later date for discussion following input from a wide range of stakeholders.

Court also noted that sustainability costs continued to be included at a total of £70m across the cash flow period to mirror the investment outlined in the Glasgow Green strategy. This would need to be monitored and refined to ensure the University could meet its commitments.

During discussion Court noted that there were ongoing discussions in relation to staff pay to find a mutually acceptable way forward that would more appropriately compensate colleagues while contributing in a small way towards addressing pay relativity issues. It was noted that the Remuneration Committee was sighted on and had approved a proposal under consideration regarding the current positioning of various pay & non-pay related items but any agreement in this regard would be subject to certain commitments, including a commitment by the campus trade unions not to damage the student experience through industrial action in 2022-23. It would also not deviate from the provisions of national bargaining to which both the University and the campus trades unions remain committed.

Court approved the budget for 2022/23 and the financial forecasts.

CRT/2021/53. Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

It was noted that at the last Court meeting Professor Pearce had provided an annual update on Research. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 results had now been published and the University of Glasgow was recognised for its world-leading research and

the positive impact it had had on society. Professor Pearce gave a presentation which highlighted Glasgow's position as a world-changing university which produced research of global and national importance.

The REF 2021 submission also highlighted Glasgow's commitment to making a difference beyond academia. The University submitted 118 impact case studies to expert panels, showcasing the University's wide-ranging collaborations with external partners to deliver societal and economic impacts locally, nationally and globally. The University also had one of the broadest research bases in the UK with a wide range of disciplines reflected in our academic community.

The Vice Principal drew Court's attention to the following:

- Excellent institutional performance showed significant improvement from REF2014 (and RAE 2008), with 93.1% shown to be world-leading (3*) or internationally excellent (3*).
- There was strong performance across most of the disciplinary units. The focus on output quality and research environment had borne fruit. Overall GPA was 3.43, with the University =13th in the UK, 10th= in the Russell Group and 1st in Scotland. This was the first time that in terms of the quality measure, Glasgow was top in Scotland.
- Looking ahead, increased emphasis on Impact was required. As the University grows in size, it was important that focus on quality must be maintained.

Court thanked Professor Pearce for his presentation and recorded its thanks to the staff involved with all aspects of research and the REF submission.

CRT/2021/54 Report from the Principal

CRT/2021/54.1 Higher Education Developments & Scottish Government Budget

Court noted the Principals report - Paper 6 and the following areas were noted:

- Horizon Europe - In April Court noted that the UK Government had announced the extension of the funding guarantee for Horizon Europe grants, and that uncertainty remained around the UK's association to Horizon Europe. Unfortunately, it appeared increasingly unlikely that the UK would be permitted to join Horizon Europe, so the UK Government 'Plan B' may now be adopted.
- Scottish Government Resource Spending Review Framework - On 31 May, Finance & Economy Secretary Kate Forbes MSP gave a statement to the Scottish Parliament on the Resource Spending Review Framework. The multi-year spending review framework, published to 2026-27, highlighted the Scottish Government priorities as well as reforms and actions to deliver these.
- UKRI budget allocation - The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Kwasi Kwarteng MP had confirmed the UKRI's detailed three-year budget allocations. £25 billion was to be invested over 3 years in world-class research and innovation.
- Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak had been appointed as the new Chief Scientist (Health) to the Scottish Government.
- The Commissioner for Fair Access for Scotland, Sir Peter Scott, released his most recent annual report on 31 May 2022. Scotland leads the UK on the proportion of university students from deprived areas.

- SFC Grants 2022-23 - Final allocations confirmed an uplift in research funding, reflecting success in REF. Glasgow's overall funding settlement has seen a 1.5% increase from 2021-22, with REG funding increasing by 2.3% and teaching grant increasing by 1.1%. The small uplift would lead to an erosion due to inflation of the teaching unit of resource for home undergraduates, and core research funding which will put more pressure on Scottish universities to recruit international students and non-publicly funded students (mainly postgraduate taught).
- League Tables - Times Higher Education Impact Rankings - Glasgow ranked 19th globally, a tremendous result in this league table reflecting our contribution to the UN SDGs. Complete University Guide 2023 - the University had fallen 7 places to 23rd in the UK. QS World University Rankings 2023 - the University had fallen 8 places to 81st in the world.

CRT/2021/54.2 Appointment of Assistant Vice-Principals

Court also noted that two new Assistant Vice-Principals had been appointed to support SMG in strategy delivery. Professor Wendy Anderson had been appointed as Assistant VP (Learning & Teaching) and would support Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith, VP L&T, in implementing the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Professor Carl Goodyear had been appointed as Assistant VP (Strategy & Resources) to support Professor Frank Coton, Senior VP and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), in leading the implementation of the University's Strategic Plan and in aspects of institutional resource planning.

The Convener thanked the Principal for the update.

CRT/2021/55. Report from the University Secretary

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

CRT 2021.55.1 Gender Based Violence & Sexual Harassment

Court noted that the report by Morag Ross QC was expected towards the end of the summer. In the meantime, the University was taking forward the GBV action plan developed by colleagues in P&OD / EDU.

It was agreed that Court would receive a further update at its next meeting in September.

CRT 2021.55.2 Learning from Complaints

Court noted the paper which outlined the key reasons for the complaints and actions being put into place to help prevent further complaints. There had been notable growth in the number of complaints relating to confusing/conflicting communications, teaching space and facilities, student support and wellbeing, harassment/bullying/discrimination.

Some of the most complex and intractable problems related to research students, those with disabilities and the effectiveness of academic advising. It was noted that the University continued to learn lessons from complaints relating to industrial action and the pandemic.

CRT 2021.55.3 Mental Health Provision

Court noted the paper, which provided an update from the Mental Health working group. Members of the group were drawn from across the University community and included representation from the on-campus GP practice (Barclay Medical Practice). The group

continued to meet on a regular basis to oversee mental health provision for students and members of staff.

CRT 2021.55.4 Court Strategy Day 2022

Court noted the draft schedule and members were invited to email the Clerk of Court with any suggestions on the format/content for the Strategy day.

CRT 2021.55.5 USS and Strike Action update

Court noted that the local branch of UCU had decided not to proceed with the planned marking boycott; this meant that all examinations and assessed work were being dealt with on schedule and that students would graduate or progress to the next stage of their studies without interruption.

University representatives and local UCU reps had agreed a statement on the future of the USS pension scheme; this statement was subsequently endorsed at a national UCU conference.

Court noted that discussion with the UCU and other campus trade unions about how best to address issues of pay and working conditions were ongoing. It was noted that the University was committed to addressing the concerns of the trade unions and colleagues across the University, and thereby seeking to avoid the possibility of further industrial action in the coming year.

CRT 2021.55.6 Organisational Change Governance Committee

Court noted that annual report from the Committee. Court discussed the remit as outlined in the papers.

Court approved the remit of the Committee.

CRT 2021.55.7 Directors of Research Institutes and Heads of School Appointments

Court noted the following changes:

College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences

School of Molecular Biosciences

Professor Helen Walden had been appointed as Head of the School for four years from 1 August 2022 until 31 July 2026.

School of Psychology and Neuroscience

Professor Gregor Thut had been extended for a 6 months until 31 December 2022 as the Interim Head of School of Psychology and Neuroscience until the permanent Head of School had been recruited.

College of Science and Engineering

School of Geographical and Earth Sciences

Dr Cristina Persano had been appointed as Interim Head of the School for one year from 1 August 2022 until 31 July 2023.

The Convener thanked the University Secretary for the update.

CRT/2021/56. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update

CRT 2021.56.1 SEC Strategy

The SRC President outlined the Draft SEC Strategy, which underpinned the principles of the student experience and grouped activities under the three pillars of opportunity, wellbeing and inclusion. Three enablers - partnerships, safe flexible space and sustainability - were identified.

Court agreed that the strategy was hugely ambitious and recognised that it would take several years to deliver. It was noted that student continuity was key and that all 4 student bodies supported the strategy. The Chair of the Finance Committee welcomed the framework which would allow the evaluation of projects and costs alongside the benefits.

Court agreed that the updated SEC Strategy would come back to Court at its next meeting in September 2022.

CRT 2021.56.2 SEC Report

Court noted the report of the meeting of the Student Experience Committee (SEC) held on 18th May 2022. Key points raised included: cost of living and provision of financial aid, update from student bodies, home student working group action plan, mental health group residences strategy and accommodation.

Court noted that students continued to be impacted by the increase in the cost of living.

CRT 2021.56.3 SRC Annual Report

The SRC President gave a presentation to Court on the SRC Annual Review 2021-22. During the discussion it was noted that a large amount of time and effort had been put in over the last 12 months to ensure that students felt part of a community and were supported during the pandemic. Despite all the challenges there was an increase in engagement and a number of the workshops continued online which had proved to be very positive with over 556 students undertaking Mind Your Mate training. The SRC had continued to work closely with the Careers service to help support students in finding part-time work.

It was noted that the SRC Strategic Plan covered 2015-2020 but due to the pandemic the strategy was delayed. A new plan was endorsed by SRC Council in May 2022, would come into operation on July 1st 2022, and covered the 5-year period to 2027.

In a year continued to be impacted by COVID-19 and its many challenges, 2021-22 had still been a success for the SRC. It remained an integral part of the student experience and the University, continued to respond to student needs and expectations in a fast-changing environment. None of this would have been possible without every individual involved with SRC, putting in an immense amount of work to keep the SRC afloat.

The Convener thanked the SRC President for her report.

CRT/2021/57. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2021/57.1 Finance Committee

Gavin Stewart, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. Court noted that the Committee had received a presentation from the Executive Director of Finance on the

current financial position. It was noted that the Committee had approved the proposal and process for budgets and investment for 2022/23 with the final budgets which had been discussed early in the Court meeting. Court noted that in relation to Cybersecurity, discussions were ongoing with insurers.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/57.2 Estates Committee

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee and reported that the Strategic joint venture was now entering negotiations with 2 parties which were due to conclude in September 2022. A decision was due shortly on the design team for the Multi-use building. The rectification work on IHW was ongoing, with anticipated completion by November.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/57.3 Information Policy and Strategy Committee

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee, provided a verbal report from the Committee. Court noted that Information and cyber security was a key priority with a new staff appointment recently being made.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/57.4 Audit and Risk Committee

Elsbeth Orcharton, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. Court noted that the Committee had received internal audit reports on reviews of: Cyber Security, Sustainability and green credentials, Leavers and IT Procurement. It was noted that the Committee also received an update on Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22 and approved the Internal Audit programme for 2022/23.

Court also noted that the Committee had discussed the process for the replacement of the External Auditors in more detail and had confirmed the procedure for future appointments of both internal and external auditors. A policy for Non-Audit services would also be put forward to the next committee for approval. The policy would to establish a clear policy and document the prevailing ethical standards, conflicts of interest and safeguarding for non-audit services.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/57.5 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

Court noted the report.

CRT/2021/57.6 Nominations Committee

Lesley Sutherland, chair of the Committee, gave a verbal report from the Committee. Court noted that the Committee had approved the recommendation to appoint Nicola Dandridge as a Co-Opted member of Court from 1 July 2022 until 1 July 2026.

Court approved the appointment of Nicola Dandridge as a Co-Opted member of Court from 1 July 2022 for four years initially.

The report was noted.

CRT/2021/57.7 Remuneration Committee

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee discussed the Principal's report relating to SMG performance and reward; Grade 10 professorial and professional staff performance and reward; Salary Augmentation Policy Review; Voluntary Severance and Salary Augmentation Approvals since the last meeting; Contractual/appointment changes (SMG); and the expenses report.

The Principal left the meeting.

The Convener of Court reported that the Committee had confirmed a recommendation that the Principal's contract of employment be extended for one further year, until 30 September 2025. This was to ensure continuity at an institutional level following the appointment of a new Convener of Court in September 2024 and to allow the incoming Convener to lead the appointment of the new Principal.

Court approved the extension of the Principal's contract of employment by one year until 30 September 2025.

The report was noted.

The Principal returned to the meeting.

CRT/2021/58. Senate Matters

Court noted the report from the Senate meeting held on 21 June 2022. The Clerk of Senate reported that Senate had received a presentation on the draft budget; an update on the Mental Health Group and a presentation on Research Excellence Framework 2021.

The Clerk of Senate also reported that Senate received an update from the Principal on the summary of actions taken by the University in response to the war in Ukraine.

Court also noted the forthcoming ceremonial events which included catch-up graduation ceremonies for students whose ceremonies had been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Senate had joined the chair of the meeting in thanking the Clerk of Senate, Professor Jill Morrison, for her service to Senate and the University, on the occasion of her retirement.

Court also recorded its thanks to Professor Morrison, for her service to Court and the University.

The Convener thanked the Clerk of Senate for the report.

CRT/2021/59. Other Business

CRT/2021/59.1 Cochno Farm

Court noted that Cochno Farm was a valuable resource and important facility for both the staff and students. The possibility of using Cochno for sustainability/glasgow green was exciting but it was important to acknowledge the tensions between farming and conservation.

CRT/2021/59.2 Members of Court

Court noted thanks to the following:-

Lesley Sutherland and Morag McDonald-Simpson – both had been General Council Assessors on Court for 8 years. Lesley had also been the chair of the Nominations Committee and a member of Audit and Risk Committee. Morag had been a member of Student Experience Committee and had supported a number of other areas in the University.

Ella McCabe – SRC President was attending her last meeting and had been the President since July 2021.

Duncan Henderson – SRC Assessor was attending his last meeting and had been on Court since October 2021.

Professor Carl Goodyear – Elected Academic Member – had been on Court for 8 years. Latterly as the Senior Academic member. Professor Goodyear was moving on to become the Assistant – Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources).

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

CRT/2021/60. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Court will be held on 28 September 2022 at 2pm. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm.

Further details on the venue and location of the meeting would be circulated to members shortly.