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**Court**

**Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 19 April 2023**

**Present:**

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Professor Craig Daly (Trade Union Nominee), Professor Nicola Dandridge (Co-opted Member), Mr David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Theo Frater (SRC Assessor), Professor Dan Haydon (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Stuart Hoggan (General Council Assessor), Professor Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khalique (Co-opted Member), Jonathan Loukes (Co-opted Member), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Mr Ronnie Mercer (Co-opted Member), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Lady Rita Rae (Rector), Shan Saba (Co-opted Member), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member),Rinna Väre (SRC President), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member).

**Attending:**

Gregor Caldow (Executive Director of Finance), Professor Frank Coton (Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)), Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate), Alistair Wilson (Deputy Secretary and Head of Legal) and Jonathan Jones (Change Director, International Student Experience) for item CRT/2022/44 only.

**Apologies:**

Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Dr Christine Middlemiss (General Council Assessor)

**CRT/2022/41. Announcements**

The Convener welcomed Alistair Wilson (Deputy Secretary and Head of Legal) and Jonathan Jones, (Change Director, International Student Experience) 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 Professor Jo Gill, Vice Principal and Head of College of Arts had provided a presentation on the opportunities and challenges faced by the College of Arts. Court’s thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court also noted that Information Services had put on a display of a number of items from the University’s Collection to afford Court Members greater awareness of some of the less visible assets of the University. The items were Shakespeare’s First Folio, a very rare copy demonstrating the depth of the University’s literary assets, and the University Mace, usually viewed from a distance, and carried by the Bedellus at all ceremonial occasions, to signify that the proceedings have official sanction.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

**CRT/2022/42. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 15 February 2022**

The minutes were approved.

**CRT/2022/43. Matters Arising**

No matters were raised.

**CRT/2022/44. Student Experience Strategy and Action Plan**

Court received an update from the University Secretary, SRC President and Jonathan Jones (Change Director, International Student Experience) on the Student Experience Strategy and Action Plan. The presentation highlighted efforts to provide students with an exceptional array of opportunities to pursue their social, volunteering, and international interests, enabling them to connect, develop new skills, enhance their prospects and wellbeing.

Since the last update to Court in June 2022, and following the approval of the overarching business case by the Investment Committee in December, the Student Experience Strategy Delivery Board has been guiding development of the implementation plan, with business cases for investment coming forward to the Investment Committee.

Court noted that the strategy continued to focus on three pillars: opportunity, wellbeing, and inclusion and belonging. It was reported that by the end of April, a consolidated project portfolio would be presented to the Delivery Board and SEC for approval; this would detail each project’s aims, investment band, business case and benefit realisation timings.

During the discussion it was noted that the strategy overlapped with a number of strategies and required careful co-ordination along with close monitoring of the capacity for change. It was reported that it would be beneficial to have case studies from different groups of students on how the changes will benefit their experience at the University.

Court thanked the University Secretary, SRC President and Jonathan Jones for the update.

**CRT/2022/45. Report from the Principal**

*CRT/2022/45.1 Higher Education Developments & Scottish Government Budget*

Court received the report from the Principal – Paper 5 and the following areas were noted:

* Innovation: GRID Discovery & GE HealthCare Memorandum of Understanding – As part of the University’s commitment to developing the Glasgow Riverside Innovation District (GRID), the University had been working with the Scottish Government to create the ‘GRID Discovery’ initiative. This would see GRID designated as Scotland’s first whole-system demonstrator, committed to supporting the establishment of a series of real-world innovation testbeds. This coincided with the University signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the major health and medtech innovator, GE HealthCare.
* Government Ministers – Court noted the appointment of First Minister and Scottish Cabinet members.
* SFC Indicative Funding Allocations 2023/24 – given the change of First Minister and the appointment of Ministers, the Scottish Government had asked the SFC to pause publication until after the Easter break. An update would be provided to Court once more information became available.
* Senior Management Group – Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith’s has been reappointed as Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching for a second 4-year term from 1 July 2023.

The Principal updated Court on the implications of Trusted Research and export licences. Court noted that the University was taking a number of steps to support staff and research students affected by the new legislation.

The Convener thanked the Principal for the update.

**CRT/2022/46. Report from the University Secretary**

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

*CRT 2022.46.1 Ross Report*

Court noted that the University continued to implement the recommendations of the report by Morag Ross KC and was on track to complete the implementation process before the start of academic year 2023/24.

*CRT 2022.46.2 Court External Review*

Court noted that the Scottish Code of HE Governance (2023) stated that university governing bodies were expected to undertake an effectiveness review every five years and that the last such review at the University of Glasgow took place in 2018.

During discussion it was agreed that the review would cover all aspects of the Court’s work. A sub-group comprising two lay members, an academic staff member, a member of the professional services staff, a student and the University Secretary would be established to support the review.

The University Secretary suggested that Dr Veena O’Halloran be approached to undertake the review. Veena was the principal author of the 2023 version of the Scottish code and therefore had a clear understanding of the Scottish context. Veena was a current board member of the Scottish Funding Council and was due to step down in October.

Following discussion Court agreed members would be sent further information about Dr O’Halloran and if members approved her appointment, she would be approached to undertake the Court External Review in Autumn 2023.

Court members were invited to serve on the sub-group and any interested members was asked to email the Clerk.

*CRT 2022.46.3 SFC Outcome Agreement*

Court noted the changes in the SFC Outcome Agreement and also noted that the final Outcome and Impact Framework projections for 22/23 would be published alongside the Outcome Agreement.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial for Court members to be provided with a presentation on the Outcome agreement.

*CRT 2022.46.4 Pay and Pension*

Court received an update on the national pay negotiations and noted that in relation to pensions the employees and the UCU had agreed a statement on USS contributions and benefits which anticipated a positive outcome to the 31 March 2023 scheme valuation (the results of which would not be available until 2024).

Court noted that the UCU had recommended to its members that they reject the terms of reference in a national ballot. If this was the outcome, the UCU had a mandate to resume industrial action, with a Marking and Assessment Boycott commencing 20 April.

If a Marking and Assessment boycott was implemented, the University would do everything it could to protect students and ensure that they graduated and/or progressed to the next stage of their studies on time. Pay would be deducted from all those taking part in the action. National talks on the non-pay items would be postponed until disruptive action was ceased.

*CRT 2022.46.5 Head of School Appointments*

College of Science and Engineering

         School of Mathematics and Statistics – Professor Nigel Mottram had been appointed as Head of the School for four years until 31 July 2027.

*CRT 2022.46.6 Chair of the Hunterian Strategic Development Board*

Court noted that Sir Muir Russell had indicated that he would like to hand over the chair of the Hunterian Strategic Development Board. The Hunterian had approached Lady Bridget McConnell, former CEO of Glasgow Life, to succeed Muir. Lady McConnell had indicated that she would be willing to take on the role.

Following discussion Court agreed that further information on Lady McConnell would be circulated and approval would be sought for her appointment as the Chair of the Hunterian Strategic Development Board via email.

*CRT 2022.46.7 Court Strategy Day 2023*

The Strategy Day is scheduled for Tuesday 21 November and the programme for the day was currently being drafted. Court members were invited to contribute to the planning of the agenda, any interested members were asked to email the Clerk.

*CRT 2022.46.8 Student Petition*

Court noted that the University Secretary had met with a group of students on 27 March regarding a petition they wished to present to Court related to the University’s engagement with certain industrial sectors. It was reported that Court had discussed disinvestment in June 2020 following a petition submitted by the Glasgow University Arms Divestment Coalition (GUADC) in December 2019. Court noted that the University had taken a number of steps over the last 3 years and that there were wider implications that needed to be considered in terms of research, dual use of technology and student choice.

Court agreed that the University Secretary would write to the students thanking them for their note and outlining the positive steps that the University had taken towards disinvesting from fossil fuels and steps being taken towards implementing the Glasgow Green action plan.

The Convener thanked the University Secretary for the update.

**CRT/2022/47. Student Matters, including: Rector’s Report; SEC Report; SRC President update**

*CRT 2022.47.1 Rector’s Report*

The Rector outlined her report which detailed the issues with which she had been dealing since the last Court meeting.

Key issues that had been raised with the Rector were:

* Marking and assessment boycott – students are concerned about the lack of information and the impact on progression and graduations;
* Students’ awareness of the role of Rector – improving engagement with students;

It was also reported that the Rector had recently visit the Dumfries Campus, along with the SRC President. The visit had been very informative, and issues had been raised in relation to lack of facilities for sport, clubs and societies. Issues in relation to IT and the Glasgow student life app had also been raised.

*CRT 2022.47.2 SEC Report*

Court noted the SEC report which included updates on accommodation, cost of living action group, student facing professional services review and approaches to gender-based violence.

*CRT 2022.47.3 SRC President’s Report*

The SRC President reported that the Sabbatical officers elections had taken place recently and that the SRC Council had agreed to changes to its constitution to increase PG representation on the Council. It was also noted that students were still concerned about the cost of living and finding suitable accommodation for the start of the next academic session.

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

**CRT/2022/48. Reports of Court Committees**

*CRT/2022/48.1 Finance Committee*

Gavin Stewart, chair of the Committee outlined the report from the Committee. Court noted that the Committee received a presentation by Uzma Khan, Vice Principal (Economic Development and Innovation) and Declan Weldon, Executive Director of Innovation and Engagement on the Innovation and Economic Development Strategy. During the presentation it was noted that the strategy had been refreshed and that it set out a clear vision, priorities and the actions required to deliver on our ambitions by 2025.

Court also noted that the Committee had approved an investment request of £5.7m for the Innovation Strategy and complimented the presenters on the clear strategy and the stretching and measurable targets; an investment request for £5.3m for the Keystone enabling works, noting that prior to further costs being approved it was intended the full project would be presented for approval; an investment request for £3.23m for the High-resolution Mass Spectrometers and estates work; and an investment request for £4.3m for Accommodation Life Cycle Maintenance.

During discussion Court noted that in advance of the Keystone building business case, members would benefit from more detailed information on the size and shape of the University, future efficiency planning, and financial projections.

Court agreed that a workshop would be organised to provide further detail on these matters.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/48.2 Estates Committee*

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report, noting that the Estates Risk Register continued to record a lack of space as the top risk for the University. Court noted that a strategy paper on the Cochno Estate was presented and discussed, and that Senior Management would consider the paper further and report back.

Court noted that the Committee had agreed to proceed with ground clearance for the possible construction of the Keystone building. It noted that this work would be required on the Western Site whether or not Keystone was eventually approved.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/48.3 IPSC*

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. It was noted that the meeting had covered several topics including cyber security with an update on the University’s progress towards enrolment of staff and student in Multi-Factor Authentication, an overview of the approach taken for managing system vulnerabilities, a presentation on a proposed approach for Technology Strategy and Governance, and a live demonstration of the digital tools supporting the change of approach to infrastructure management in the University.

It was reported that access to core operational systems in the University such as CoreHR, Moodle, and MyGlasgow now required Multi-Factor Authentication.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/48.4 Audit and Risk Committee*

Elspeth Orcharton, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. It was noted that the meeting had covered a deep dive in to the Estates risks which had covered the governance process in relation to the Keystone Building.

Court noted that at present there was no central point for co-ordinating compliance with various legislative and regulatory requirements set out by UK and Scottish Governments and professional bodies. It was agreed that the Deputy Secretary would take this forward.

The report was noted

*CRT/2022/48.5 People and Organisational Development Committee*

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. It was noted that the meeting had covered an update from the Head of Strategic Global Mobility & Academic Resourcing surrounding service excellence, diversity and inclusion, talent attraction strategies and changes to global mobility/UKVI. The Executive Director of People and OD provided a strategic update and the Head of Equality & Diversity updated the Committee on the KC led investigation into gender-based violence (GBV) and progress against the recommendations as part of the GBV Action Plan. It was also noted that the Vice Principal and Head of College, and Head of People & OD (Arts) presented an overview of strategic activity within the College of Arts including the development of the College strategy and their key priorities.

The report was noted

*CRT/2022/48.6 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee*

Court noted the report.

*CRT/2022/48.7 Nominations Committee*

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. It was noted that the meeting had agreed to recommend the updated Nominations Committee remit for approval.

Court approved the updated Nominations Committee Remit.

It was also reported in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 (the Act) a Senior Lay Member Election and Appointment policy had been drafted. The policy outlined the rules and process for the appointment of the Convener of Court.

Court approved the Convener of Court/Senior Lay Member policy and appointment process.

Court noted that June Milligan was due to step down from Court in October 2023 and that the Committee was recommending a candidate for a single candidate interview. Th Committee was satisfied that the candidate being put forward had the required knowledge and expertise. Concerns were raised about the use of single candidate interviews for Court members, and it was agreed that an open call for applications would be issued before any further appointment of lay members.

Following discussion, it was noted that a policy for recruiting co-opted lay members of Court would be discussed and drafted by the Nominations Committee which would take into account the different routes to becoming a co-opted lay member of Court.

Court approved the single candidate interview.

The Committee recommended to Court that Chris Kennedy, Elected Professional Support staff member of Court be reappointed for a further term to June 2027.

Court approved the reappointment of Chris Kennedy.

The report was noted.

**CRT/2022/49. Senate Matters**

Court noted the report from the Senate meetings held on the 6 April 2023. The Clerk of Senate reported that Senate had received an update on the transformation project, Trusted Research, Student Experience Strategy, and Honorary Degrees.

The Clerk of Senate also noted the recent innovations in AI technology, in particular the launch of ChatGPT. It was noted that in response to this software, the University had already taken some actions and decisions, and had also begun to develop longer-term plans and policies and further updates would be provided to Court.

The Clerk of Senate noted that the list of graduations would be amended to include the graduation at Dumfries Campus.

The Convener thanked the Clerk of Senate for the report.

**CRT/2022/50 Other Business**

*CRT/2022/50.1 Governance Matters*

Court noted that in future a list of individuals with political exposure would be taken to P&OD Committee on an annual basis. It was also reported that should a lay member of Court or sub-committees become a paid member of University staff, this would be reported to Court.

It was also noted that Court would be presented, on an annual basis, a list of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the sub-committees of Court, this report to be given each year at the September meeting.

**CRT/2022/51. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Court will be held on Tuesday 20 June 2023 at 2pm in the Senate Room. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm. The Court meeting will be followed by the Annual Court Dinner.