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**Court**

**Minute of Meeting held on Tuesday 20 June 2023**

**Present:**

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), 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), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), 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), Mr Ronnie Mercer (Co-opted Member), Dr Christine Middlemiss (General Council Assessor) Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (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), Hailie Pentleton-Owens (SRC President-Elect) and Professor Chris Pearce (Vice Principal – Research and Knowledge Exchange) for item CRT/2022/55 only.

**Apologies:**

Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Lady Rita Rae (Rector), Shan Saba (Co-opted Member), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member).

**CRT/2022/52. Announcements**

The Convener welcomed Hailie Pentleton-Owens (SRC President-Elect) and Professor Chris Pearce (Vice Principal – Research and Knowledge Exchange) to the meeting.

There was the following declaration of interest in relation to the business being 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; and Dr David Duncan as a member of the UCEA - National Negotiating Team.

It was noted that Court had received a presentation on the Keystone building and size and shape of the University by Ian Campbell (Executive Director of Estates), Peter Haggerty (Director of Construction and Capital Programme), Professor Frank Coton (Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)), Gregor Caldow (Executive Director of Finance) and David Duncan (University Secretary and COO) and Court’s thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

**CRT/2022/53. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 19 April 2023**

The minutes were approved.

**CRT/2022/54. Matters Arising**

No matters were raised.

**CRT/2022/55. Annual report on Research**

Court received an update from Professor Chris Pearce, Vice Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange) on the University’s Research Strategy which was published in 2020. The Research Strategy had a simple message: by working in teams, building on each others ideas and making Glasgow the best place to develop a career, research transforms lives and changes the world.

Court noted that the research income per academic FTE had dropped from 5th (2017/18) to 9th (2021/22) in the Russell Group. Despite this drop in the rank position, UofG recorded a jump in research income compared to 2020/21, from £173.3m to £196.1m (13.2% increase and back to pre-pandemic levels). In contrast to this KPI, Research Awards provided a leadingindicator and in calendar year 2022, the total Research Awards were the highest they have ever been at £230M, 44% higher than 2021.

During the discussion it was noted that the most significant response to this changing landscape was a major new initiative called Glasgow Changing Futures that was currently under development. This programme of activity would be an institutional commitment to tackling major societal challenges, and a proactive approach to our contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It was also note that a new University-wide Centre for Data Science & AI had been approved and would be the epicentre of research into fundamental data science, artificial intelligence, and their applications.

Court thanked Professor Chris Pearce for the update on Research.

**CRT/2022/56. University Strategy – KPI Update**

Court received a presentation from Professor Frank Coton, Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) on the KPIs. It was reported that: 9 KPIs were below target (RED); 6 KPIs had not been met but were moving in the right direction (AMBER); and 4 KPIs were currently meeting the targets set (GREEN).

During discussion it was noted that the KPI target delivery date was 2025 but that 7 KPIs were unlikely to be met: Doctoral Degrees Awarded; Research Income; Large grant capture; Colleague Diversity; UG Mobility; Student Undergraduate Progression; and Graduate Employability.

Professor Coton outlined a proposal to change two KPIs - Student satisfaction and Student engagement ­ to new assessment methodologies. Court approved the changes to the Student satisfaction and Student engagement KPIs.

Court thanked Professor Frank Coton for the update on KPIs.

**CRT/2022/57. 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 23/24 and the financial forecasts. Professor Frank Coton outlined the main themes in the budget submission.

During the discussion it was reported that the following priorities had been agreed:

* People First
* Research Power and Funding
* Enabling Growth
* Student Experience
* Service Excellence

It was also noted that significant growth in MVLS had been included in the budget, although concerns about space were raised at the Committee. It was noted that this had been discussed with the Head of College who had reassured the team that there was capacity for growth.

It was noted that geopolitical risks continued to dominate risk management. While international demand remained strong, economic and political uncertainty might weaken or threaten this during the budget period and beyond. In the long‐term diversification remained a priority. International tuition fees had been increased to offset the impact of inflation but whilst demand from China was expected to be relatively price inelastic other markets were more price sensitive. £4m had been set aside for investment in the international strategy and t a further £2m was available to support diversification through discounts and scholarships. The University retained significant levers to manage short term downturns in demand, although a prolonged reduction would require significant restructuring. Economic pressures also continued to impact government funding,  but  a  prudent  approach  had  been  assumed to the budget forecast.

Over the budget period significant opportunities were noted in relation to the transformation project and improved timetabling and efficiency around the teaching estate.

Court concluded that the University continued to perform well, both academically and financially and this provided a strong base on which to build.

Court approved the budget for 2023/24 and the financial forecasts.

**CRT/2022/58. Report from the Principal**

*CRT/2022/58.1 Higher Education Developments & Scottish Government Budget*

Court received the report from the Principal – Paper 7 and the following areas were noted:

* Review of the Skills Delivery landscape – The report of James Withers’ Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape in Scotland was published on 7 June, with the aim of outlining recommendations to ensure the public sector could meet the level of economic transformation expected in the years ahead.
* International Students Visa policy changes – Court noted that the Home Secretary Suella Braverman MP had announced a restriction in the use of dependant visas for international students.
* SFC Grants 2023/24 – The SFC has now published its final funding announcement for Academic Year 2023/24. There had been a minor adjustment to the Main Teaching Grant allocation between the indicative and final funding announcements - a decrease of 0.2%. This was due to a slight reduction in the number of SFC-controlled funded places across the sector, which had not been finalised at the time of the indicative announcements publication.

The Convener thanked the Principal for the update.

**CRT/2022/59. Report from the University Secretary**

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

*CRT 2022.59.1 Ross Report*

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

*CRT 2022.59.2 Convener appraisal*

The Convener left the meeting for this item, with the Vice-Convener Elspeth Orcharton chairing instead. As part of the good practice set out in the Code of Good HE Governance, Ronnie Mercer had undertaken an appraisal of the Convener's performance. Court members had been provided with a report, which Mr Mercer now summarised. The report on the Convener’s performance was very positive with some helpful suggestions in relation to the operational running of Court meetings. It was noted that the appraisal would continue to be undertaken annually.

*CRT 2022.59.3 Pay and Pension*

Court received an update on the UCU’s industrial action in the form of a Marketing and Assessment Boycott; to date, 153 members of staff had indicated they were taking part. It was noted that the University was doing everything it could to protect students from the impact of the UCU action, including ensuring that all students could graduate on time; supporting students so that they could progress to employment or further study without disruption; protecting academic standards; and guaranteeing that all work submitted would be assessed and marks returned in due course.

Locally the University was keeping the lines of communication with UCU reps open and maintaining a constructive relationship with them. Nationally, the University continued to argue for further negotiations with a view to ending the dispute and allowing talks on non-pay issues to proceed. It was noted that it did not seem as if a further national pay uplift was likely, so the dispute might continue for some time. The University would continue to deduct pay at 30% for as long as the action continues.

*CRT 2022.59.4 Organisational Change Governance Committee*

Court noted the update in relation Careers and Global Opportunities within the Student and Academic Services Directorate. While no redundancies were expected, a small number of positions were potentially at risk, and redundancy costs could be incurred if existing staff did not fit into the new structure and were unable to be redeployed. Based on their discussions, OCGC had formally approved the proposal, contingent upon receiving copies of the new job descriptions and conducting formal consultations with the trade union.

Court also noted and approved the remit for Organisational Change Governance Committee.

*CRT 2022.59.5 Named Chair - Pontecorvo Chair of Pharmacogenomics*

Court noted a draft resolution for a new named chair.

Court approved the draft resolution to move to public consultation.

*CRT 2022.59.6 Head of School Appointments*

College of Arts

*School of Humanities*

Professor Ian Forrest had been appointed as Head of the School for four years from 1 September 2023 until 31 July 2027.

College of Social Science

*School of Education*

Professor Kristinn Hermannsson had been appointed as Head of the School for four years from 1 August 2023 until 31 July 2027.

*School of Social and Political Sciences*

Professor Anne Kerr had been extended for 2 years until 31 July 2025 as the Head of School of Social and Political Sciences.

*CRT 2022.59.7 Court Strategy Day 2023*

It was reported that the Strategy Day would be rescheduled for early September. Court noted the agenda and members were invited to put themselves forward if they wished to chair a session.

The Convener thanked the University Secretary for the update.

**CRT/2022/60. Student Matters, including: Rector’s Report; SEC Report; SRC President update**

*CRT 2022.60.1 SEC Report*

Court noted the SEC report which included updates on cost of living action group, impact of industrial action, student experience strategy, SRC strategic Plan, value of sport to the student experience, and a report on the experience of mature students.

*CRT 2022.60.2 SRC President’s Report and SRC Annual Report*

The SRC President provided a presentation to Court on the SRC Annual Report. During the discussion it was noted that a large amount of time and effort had been put in over the last 12 months to ensuring that students felt part of a community and were supported.

Court noted that the start of the year had been challenging with many of our students struggling to find a place to stay due to the lack of accommodation. Whilst the SRC focused on ensuring there was support available for any students affected and sufficient planning taking place to avoid a similar situation in the future, the SRC launched a Cap Student Numbers campaign, in relation to the University’s managed growth strategy. In addition, the SRC have continued to engage with the local and national government to press the importance of addressing student experience issues in policymaking. Throughout the year, the SRC have advocated for additional support for students facing the adverse impact of inflation and this would continue to be a priority for the SRC organisation.

The SRC has also been working together with the University on reviewing the Good Cause process and making sure that students have access to the support they need throughout their university career. Through the newly established Student Voice Working Group the SRC have investigated how to more effectively capture and report on student feedback.

Court also noted the SRC Strategic Review 2022-27. The plan outlined the SRC’s key aims for the next five years which remain: representation; support and wellbeing; and student opportunities and community engagement, and their core values which were to be supportive, collaborative, inclusive and sustainable. The SRC recognised the changing needs of student cohorts and had developed their objectives accordingly. There was focus on both academic and non-academic wellbeing and on creating opportunities for students. The SRC would continue to work closely with the other student organisations.

The Convener thanked the SRC President for her report.

**CRT/2022/61. Reports of Court Committees**

*CRT/2022/61.1 Finance 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 2023/24 with the final budgets which had been discussed early in the Court meeting.

Court also noted the discussion in relation to the proposed University infrastructure investment plan to support the 2023/24 planning and budgeting round and noted that the Keystone Building was a key component. Considering the significant cost of the building, support from the Estates Committee and Finance Committee during the design phase.The current request was within the delegated authorities of Finance Committee but it was noted that the next request for investment, which was expected in Autumn, would be at a level that required full Court approval. The final go/ no go decision on Keystone was expected to be made by Court around February/April 2024.

Court also noted that the Committee had approved in principle an RCF of between £120m and £200m and delegated authority to the Chair, Vice‐Chair and Executive Director of Finance to sign documentation as long as covenants are no more restrictive than present conditions.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/61.2 Estates Committee*

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report, which included review of the investment plan, the property maintenance contract and the risks associated with teaching space.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/61.3 IPSC*

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee, outlined the report which included cyber security, a review of the IT Code of Conduct, an updated presentation on the proposed approach for Technology Strategy and Governance and a review of the Data Centre Co‐location Business case. He also reported that new students and staff would be automatically enrolled in Multi‐Factor Authentication upon joining the University. MFA would soon be active on MyCampus and the University’s Virtual Private Network and Agresso was due to follow later in the summer.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/61.4 Audit and Risk Committee*

Elspeth Orcharton, chair of the Committee, outlined the report which included updates on the hack on personal information held by USS, the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 and the proposed External Audit approach for 31 July 2023.

The report was noted

*CRT/2022/61.5 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee*

A query was raised about the Gas Inspection Protocol which had been discussed at the Committee after an issue with manifold pipework had been found. It was agreed that this would be raised at the Audit and Risk Committee.

Court noted the report.

*CRT/2022/61.6 Nominations Committee*

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee. Following an interview with Kerry Christie, the Nomination Committee recommended to Court that Kerry Christie should be appointed as a Co-opted Lay Member of Court.

Court approved the appointment of Kerry Christie as a Co-opted Lay Member of Cour from October 2023 for four years initially.

Court noted that following the advertising of the Convener of Court position 3 candidates ‐ Nicola Dandridge, Stuart Hoggan and Gavin Stewart were put forward for the election. An open meeting took place on 9 June 2023 and the recording was made available on the website. Following the election Gavin Stewart was elected as Convener of Court.

Court approved the appointment of Gavin Stewart as Convener of Court from 1 August 2024 for four years initially.

The Nomination Committee recommended to Court the appointment of Stuart Hoggan as Chair of the Estates Committee.

Court approved the appointment of Stuart Hoggan as the Chair of Estates Committee.

During discussion it was agreed that the Nominations Committee would review the process for recruiting new co-opted lay members of Court to ensure that the University was reaching a diverse population.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2022/61.7 Remuneration Committee*

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which discussion focused on the Principal's report relating to SMG performance and reward; Grade 10 professorial and professional staff performance and reward; Voluntary Severance since the last meeting; Contractual/appointment changes (SMG); expenses report.

The report was noted.

**CRT/2022/62. Senate Matters**

Court noted the report from the Senate meetings held on the 8 June 2023. The Clerk of Senate reported that Senate had received an update on the budget, Mental Health Group, and the Innovation Strategy 2022-2025.

The Clerk of Senate outlined a proposal to change the name of the College of Arts, from the start of the 2023-24 academic session. The proposed new name for the College was the ‘College of Arts & Humanities’. The proposed name change had already been considered and supported by the Arts College Management Group on 25 January 2023, and by the University’s Senior Management Group on 24 April 2023.

Court approved the College name change from College of Arts to College of Arts and Humanities effective from 1 August 2023.

The Clerk of Senate also reported that Senate had received a proposal to change the name of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies from the start of the 2023-24 academic session. Following an internal consultation with School staff, a recommendation had been made to rename the School to the ‘School of Social & Environmental Sustainability’. The proposed name change had already been considered and supported by the University’s Senior Management Group on 16 May 2023.

Court approved the School name change from School of Interdisciplinary Studies to School of Social & Environmental Sustainability effective from 1 August 2023.

The Convener thanked the Clerk of Senate for the report.

**CRT/2022/63 Other Business**

*CRT/2022/63.1 Members of Court*

Court noted thanks to the following:-

Ronnie Mercer – Ronnie Mercer’s last meeting as he would be stepping down in June. Ronnie had been a member of Court for 8 years, and in that time had chaired and been involved with several Committees. Over that time, he had made a huge contribution to the University and was leaving the University in a significantly stronger position.

Rinna Väre – SRC President was attending her last meeting and had been the President since July 2022.

Nick Hill – Elected Academic Member – had been on Court since Jan 2016 and had been senior Academic member for the last year.

Craig Daly – Trade Union member – had been on Court since August 2019 and a member of the Remuneration Committee.

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/2022/64. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 27 September 2023 at 2pm. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm.