

## UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of SEPTEMBER 2011 AT AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

**Present:** Mr Kevin Dunion, *Rector (President)*; Mr Ewan Brown, *Senior Governor*; Professor Louise Richardson, *Principal*; Professor Christopher Hawkesworth, *Deputy Principal and Vice-Principal (Research)*; Mr Patrick O'Hare, *President, Students' Association*; Mr Sam Fowles, *Director of Representation, Students' Association*; Ms Amanda Litherland, *Rector's Assessor*; Miss Kathleen Patrick, *General Council Assessor*; Dr Natalie Adamson, Professor Robert Crawford, Professor Andrew Mackenzie and Dr Susie Whiten, *Senate Assessors*; Dr Alison Sandeman, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Dr Norval Bryson, Councillor Peter Grant, Mr Mervyn Jones, Rev Dr Marjory MacLean and Dr Mary Popple, *Non-Executive Members*.

**In attendance:** Professor Peter Clark, *Principal's Office*; Mr Stephen Magee, *Vice-Principal (External Relations)*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Vice-Principal (Proctor)*; Professor Ronald Piper, *Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning)*; Mr Andy Goor, *Finance Director*; Dr Gillian MacIntosh, *Executive Officer to the University Court*; Mr Niall Scott, *Director of Corporate Communications*; Professor Margaret-Anne Hutton, *Head of the School of Modern Languages* (for Item II b only); Professor Ian Carradice, *Director of Museums & Collections* (for Item II b only).

**Apologies:** Dr David Erdal, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Sir Anthony Bagnall and Mr Peter Cabrelli, *Non-Executive Members*.

### I. REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 1. WELCOME

The Rector welcomed Dr Natalie Adamson to her first meeting of Court in the capacity of Senate Assessor.

#### 2. MEETING MINUTES

##### i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 1 July 2011

The minute (on file) was agreed as a correct record.

#### 3. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal gave a verbal report to members on a number of issues of current relevance to the University.

In reference to the recent Sheriff Court case involving two St Andrews students charged with committing a racially aggravated act, and the ensuing scene in the courthouse, the Principal noted with concern the potential reputational damage to the institution as a whole, especially with regard to international recruitment, the cultural and religious mix of the student body, and relations with funders and donors from various communities. Court members joined with the Principal in strongly stating the University's abhorrence of racial intolerance in any form. It was agreed not to discuss the students' cases in detail, pending the completion of the internal non-academic appeal and complaint process.

The Principal spoke of her regret at the University's withdrawal from the joint project with Fife Council to build a new Madras College on land owned by the University, noting that the resources (both in time and finance) allocated to the protracted negotiations with the Council could be sustained no longer in view of the difficulties faced and the substantially altered vision for the project. Court endorsed the decision of the University to withdraw, noting that the Principal's Office had devoted considerable time and energy to bringing the project towards a conclusion acceptable to all parties. Whilst it was clear that the original vision of shared facilities was no longer possible and not something that the University and Court would explore further, it was recommended that closer academic linkages between the University and the School should continue to be usefully explored, given the potential benefits to the town overall.

Court welcomed the news of St Andrews' improved ranking in the *Sunday Times* University Guide, rising from 7<sup>th</sup> place to 6<sup>th</sup> place in the UK league table, and its retention of the accolade of top-rated Scottish university.

The Principal ended her report by outlining to members the various University events taking place at the start of the session, including the re-opening of the Main Library after its summer redevelopment.

#### **4. ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW**

The Vice-Principal (Proctor) introduced the QAA's final ELIR report (on file, Court 11/01) following their review of the University's academic standards undertaken in the spring of 2011. Court noted the positive examples of good practice detailed in the report and discussed the minor points of actions identified in the review, including the issue of appropriate assessment feedback given to students, the challenge of ensuring a consistency in standards across disciplines and in improved communication between the centre and Schools. It was recognised that these were issues that would be followed up by Senate at Academic Council.

Court discussed the process of ELIR as a whole, noting that, whilst a semi-regular external appraisal of core academic practice is useful in identifying areas for continued improvement, the process does not necessarily justify the considerable staff resource that goes into the overall review. It was also

recognised that the majority of key findings outlined in the review were issues that were already known to the University, some of which were being actively tackled by staff and student groups prior to the review itself.

Members discussed whether a new approach to assessing academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience might be better for the sector as a whole. It was concluded that Court welcomed the review's focus on a number of key action points to further improve academic standards, but expressed doubt at the appropriateness of the review process, given its general bureaucracy and heavy use of staff time.

## **5. REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE**

The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) summarised Universities Scotland's (US) draft response to the Scottish Government's review of governance arrangements within the sector (paper on file Court 11/02). Court discussed the recommendations contained therein. Support was expressed for US's recognition of the importance of institutional autonomy, the diversity of the sector, and the appropriate mix of governors' skills-sets within an effective governing body. Members were however concerned that a number of the US recommendations, if made regulatory, would actually restrict universities in their freedom to interact with local communities and to follow best practice governance principles.

For St Andrews' own contribution to the review, Court encouraged a robust response that highlighted the University's past and current compliance with many of the government's suggestions for improved governance, and which also illustrated Court's continuing efforts to improve its overall effectiveness as a governing body - for instance, its review of the Court Committee structure, thereby reducing bureaucracy, and in improvements into the election process to Court, as in the Rector's and General Council elections.

## **6. TRUSTEES & OFFICERS OF THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION**

Court approved the Trustee appointments as detailed in the tabled paper (on file, Court 11/03).

## **II. a PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (PARC) BUSINESS**

### **1. RUK FEES, 2012-13**

The Senior Governor summarised the Scottish Government's changes to the system of funding Rest of the UK (RUK) students admitted to courses of study from 2012-13, which consequently require the University to set its own level of annual tuition fee for this cohort of students.

The Principal outlined the fee proposal recommended by the Principal's Office (paper on file, Court 11/04), noting that it sought to strike an appropriate balance between ensuring the continued financial stability of

the institution, given the unwelcome change to existing government funding, and offering financial support in the form of bursaries to those undergraduate students most in need of such assistance. The Principal emphasised the fact that the University would not profit from the proposed fee level and that the corresponding scholarship and bursary package was more generous than that currently being offered by competitor institutions. Members asked for and received clarification on a number of points detailed in the proposal, including the forecast number of RUK applications under the new fee regime, the numbers of applicants and entrants potentially eligible for bursary support and the University's continued backing for a four-year degree as the norm for the majority of students.

The President and Director of Representation of the Students' Association were invited to expand on their two papers, one of which was an alternative fee proposal tabled at the meeting (on file). Regretting the short time that they had been given to study the Principal's Office paper, the student representatives spoke of their concern that fees charged to RUK students would have a negative effect on application numbers, on the University's domestic and global reputation, on the diversity of the student body overall, and on efforts to widen access from groups without a strong tradition of participation in higher education. The counter-proposal tabled by the student members suggested a slightly lower fee with a commensurate reduction in funding for bursaries. Members queried a number of points contained within the proposal, including the likelihood of its beneficial effect on applications, the accumulated funding earned therefrom (and any potential shortfall), and the financial support packages to be offered in comparison to the Principal's Office proposal.

Court debated the general points of both proposals. It was recognised that the bursary packages being proposed demonstrated the University's commitment to widening access and to ensuring an equal opportunity for qualified applicants from diverse financial backgrounds to gain a St Andrews degree. The recognition of the importance of support for living costs was also generally welcomed. Some concern was expressed over the Principal's Office's decision to table only one option rather than a range of different scenarios based on several variables, although it was recognised that the general financial and political uncertainty over HE funding made such granularity difficult to predict. It was recommended that if there should be additional funds allocated as a result of the redistribution of the SFC RUK teaching grant, then senior management must report to Court if this is not expended on scholarships or bursaries.

After lengthy discussion, a large majority of Court members agreed to support the Principal's Office proposal to set a fee of £9,000 for all RUK domiciled undergraduate students matriculating in 2012 and in ensuing years, supported by a wide-ranging package of means-tested bursaries and other financial aid. It was further agreed that the topic of widening access initiatives be considered at the forthcoming Away Day.

## **b REVIEWS & PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. School of Modern Languages**

Professor Margaret-Anne Hutton, Head of School, joined the meeting to expand on her presentation summary (on file, Court 11/06). Noting that the School had undergone a restructuring after its mixed result in the last RAE, Professor Hutton gave a synopsis of the resulting improvements, including changes in staffing and new appointments within the various language departments that make up the School. It was now expected that the School's REF submission would be improved, especially in Russian, which had been a poor performer in the last RAE.

Arabic has been a recent addition to the School, moving from its previous affiliation to the School of History. The new department will offer new avenues in both teaching and research, and thus a number of new appointments have been made to bolster this provision.

Challenges for the School lay in tackling the increasing problem of poor secondary school language standards, which impact on the basic skills of new undergraduates choosing to study languages at a higher level. Additionally, the School was seeking to lessen the burden of administration on its academic staff. This was also an issue with the organisation and management of Study Abroad modules, which tend to involve considerable academic staff time.

### **2. Museums Collections**

Professor Ian Carradice, Director of the Unit, gave a short presentation on the recent achievements of the Museums Collections unit (summary on file, Court 11/05).

Outlining the various exhibition and storage spaces across the University, Professor Carradice summarised the diverse visitor facilities available at each. For MUSA itself, visitor figures were on a steady trajectory this year over recent past performance and this was expected to continue for the remainder of the tourist season, partly due to continued interest in St Andrews' links to the recent royal wedding. The Unit also participated in other local tourist activities, such as Doors Open Day, that saw a large number of visitors to some of the University's usually private heritage spaces, such as the Senate Room and Parliament Hall. It was confirmed that MUSA is being promoted as a local attraction by the tourist board, alongside other public museums that exist in St Andrews. A planned temporary project officer post in Audience Development was expected to help with targeting local visitors in particular for repeat visits rather than those that visit from outwith the town. Court warmly congratulated Professor Carradice and his team on MUSA's recent award of a five-star rating by Visit Scotland.

Discussion also focused on the Unit's cultural engagement activities with schools and the local community, seen in successful projects such as the MUSA Young Artist Award that has strong participation from schools across Fife. Future improvements to visitor facilities had the potential to further increase such opportunities, given the breadth and importance of the University's historic collections.

The Senior Governor thanked both presenters for their reports to Court on their respective School and Unit.

### **III. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 14 October 2011 at 10 am, followed by the Court Away Day.

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## UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of OCTOBER 2011 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

**Present:** Mr Kevin Dunion, *Rector (President)*; Mr Ewan Brown, *Senior Governor*; Professor Louise Richardson, *Principal*; Professor Christopher Hawkesworth, *Deputy Principal and Vice-Principal (Research)*; Mr Patrick O'Hare, *President, Students' Association*; Mr Sam Fowles, *Director of Representation, Students' Association*; Ms Amanda Litherland, *Rector's Assessor*; Miss Kathleen Patrick, *General Council Assessor*; Dr Natalie Adamson, Professor Robert Crawford and Dr Susie Whiten, *Senate Assessors*; Dr Alison Sandeman, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Sir Anthony Bagnall, Dr Norval Bryson, Mr Peter Cabrelli, Councillor Peter Grant, Mr Mervyn Jones, Rev Dr Marjory MacLean and Dr Mary Popple, *Non-Executive Members*.

**In attendance:** Mr Stephen Magee, *Vice-Principal (External Relations)*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Vice-Principal (Proctor)*; Professor Ronald Piper, *Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning)*; Mr Andy Goor, *Finance Director*; Dr Gillian MacIntosh, *Executive Officer to the University Court*; Mr John MacColl, *University Librarian & Director of Library Services* (for Item II b only); Mr Roger Smith, *Director of Residential & Business Services* (for Item II b only); Professor John Anderson, *Head of the School of International Relations* (for Item II b only).

**Apologies:** Dr David Erdal, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Professor Andrew Mackenzie, *Senate Assessor*.

### I. REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 1. MEETING MINUTES

##### i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 9 September 2011

The minute (on file) was agreed as a correct record.

##### ii) Matters Arising

In reference to the disbursement of any potential funds released to the University as a result of the forthcoming redistribution of the SFC RUK teaching grant, members agreed that Court had clearly signalled to senior management at its previous meeting the desirability of this being directed towards scholarships and bursaries, provided that the expenditure of any such sum was not restricted by accompanying stipulations for its use. Court also agreed that the bursary scheme should be reviewed in the future in the light of experience of RUK student applications and admissions under the new fee regime.

## **2. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

The Principal expanded on her written report of recent events (on file, Court 11/07). The key dates of the forthcoming Rectorial Election were given, noting that the election itself would conclude on Friday 28 October. The Principal additionally drew members' attention to the ongoing Scottish Government consultation on Post-16 education, 'Putting Learners at the Centre', the proposed recommendations of which would impact across the HE sector.

In reference to anticipated national industrial action scheduled for 30 November and thus coinciding with the University's St Andrew's Day Graduation ceremonies, it was noted that there was the potential for disruption to the day's events. Given the large number of overseas students graduating at these ceremonies, and the likelihood that their families have already made arrangements to travel for this date, it was agreed that it would be impractical to move the date at this late stage. Rather, the Principal's Office confirmed that they would be endeavouring to ensure alternative arrangements are put in place to ensure minimal inconvenience for graduands and their families in the event that the industrial action takes place.

The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) summarised the process that had been followed thus far in identifying a potential candidate for co-opted Court membership, as considered by the Governance & Nominations Committee at its past meetings. Court agreed that, should the next Governance & Nominations Committee approve the nomination currently in train, approval would be sought from Court members by circulation of the nomination via email.

Members congratulated Professor Robert Crawford on his recent election as a Fellow of the British Academy.

## **3. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

### **i) Minute of Meeting held on 6 October 2011**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/08).

### **ii) Proposed changes to the Academic Monitoring Assurance Group**

Members approved the proposed changes to the membership, remit and name of the Academic Monitoring Assurance Group (summary paper on file, Court 11/09). It was noted that the group would henceforth assume the title of Academic Assurance Group.

### **iii) Statement of Internal Subject Review**

Court approved the annual report on internal subject review (on file, Court 11/10).



#### **iv) Financial Statements, 2010-11**

The Convener presented for consideration and final approval the Statements of Financial Performance and the Financial Statements for the 12 months to 31 July 2011 (on file, Court 11/11). The Quaestor & Factor, the Finance Director and the Finance Team were congratulated by members for the timely and thorough conclusion of the year-end process, as had been echoed in the comments of the University's external auditors.

The Finance Director summarised for members the year's results, which were largely in line with budgetary forecasts. The potential issues surrounding cash balances and the knock-on timing in the settlement of research grants and awards were noted, as was the general reduction in research grant income common across the sector. It was confirmed that PARC would be receiving at its future meetings regular reports on the University's cash flows.

Members discussed the remit and membership of the newly established capital investment group. The group would focus on management issues relating to both large capital schemes and to those lesser projects that often do not feature in the capital plan and are initiated in response to an unforeseen operational need (an example being the recent upgrade to the New Hall kitchens). The group would track the financial consequences of capital acquisitions and new-build assets through their future utility spend requirements and ongoing maintenance costs. It was confirmed that the group's recommendations on the projects under its consideration would be reported to PARC, which would remain the decision-making body on scheduling, prioritisation and approval of new schemes. Court agreed that student representation was already encompassed through the group's reporting mechanism to PARC and that the group itself was managerial and operational.

#### **v) Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report, 2010-11**

Members noted the Committee's Annual Report (on file, Court 11/12).

### **4. SUPERANNUATION & LIFE ASSURANCE SCHEME**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/13) held on 20 June 2010. Mr Peter Cabrelli confirmed that, since the meeting had taken place, the University had appointed Aon Hewitt as the Scheme's administrator, actuary and investment adviser in replacement of Towers Watson.

### **5. ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/14) held on 21 September 2011.

## **6. COURT OFFICE BUSINESS**

### **i) Draft Ordinance for the Election of Chancellor and General Council Assessors to the University Court**

Court promulgated in the standard form the Draft Ordinance (Election of the Chancellor and Election of General Council Assessors to the University Court) (on file, Court 11/15).

### **ii) Court Office Items**

Court received the report from the Executive Officer (on file, Court 11/16) detailing recent staff changes reported by Human Resources and other Court-related business, including the results of the recent election to fill three vacancies on the General Council Business Committee. In doing so, Court promulgated Draft Resolution 2011 No.3 (Foundation of Chairs).

## **II. a PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (PARC) BUSINESS**

### **1. Minute of Meeting held on 29 September 2011**

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 11/17).

In reference to the continued scoping of potential uses for the Guardbridge site, it was confirmed that the newly formed Project Board, chaired by the Deputy Principal, will meet twice prior to the December meeting of PARC, which will consider reports from the technical consultants and the financial advisers.

The Principal confirmed that the Trustees from the American Foundation had recently visited the University and had discussed their plans for raising a substantial sum towards the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary campaign.

Although recognising the recently improved performance of the Aviva fund managers entrusted with administering the University's endowment funds, it was confirmed that the Investment & Treasury Assurance Group would be undertaking research into other potential managers and investment options for the fund. Any proposed change to the manager or changes to the investment strategy or to the fund criteria, however, would require subsequent approval by PARC.

### **2. Admissions Numbers**

Members noted an update on entrant numbers for the new academic session (on file, Court 11/18). It was agreed that information on the number of entrants to the Evening Degree programme would be a useful addition to future reports.

### **3. Annual Report & Review of Institutional KPIs**

The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) introduced the annual KPI report for the past year and the proposed revisions to the KPIs for future monitoring (on file, Court 11/19).

For the forthcoming year, it was agreed the suggested revisions to the institutional KPIs and targets, as proposed by senior management, be accepted. For the PGR student cohort, it was agreed that the new KPI would focus on PGR progress and would be the percentage of the PGR cohort who submit their doctoral theses within 5 years of full-time study (with a target of 75% in the short term and 80% three years hence). Members agreed that it would be useful to augment this KPI with information benchmarking the University's performance against the rest of the sector.

Members discussed the measurement of teaching space utilisation. Although recognising that the introduction of a centralised teaching timetable and room booking system in 2013 would likely improve the University's performance in this area, members suggested that the algorithm used for this KPI's calculation may need to be revised to take into account issues of practicality with how teaching space is actually used by staff and students, which provides a rational explanation for the perceived inefficiency that the existing data implies.

Notwithstanding the recognition that the amount of research income as a percentage of total University revenue can be adversely affected by an increase in the amount earned from other sources (such as from overseas tuition fees), members agreed that this existing KPI gives a useful indicator of research activity overall and the University's performance as a research-intensive institution.

Court agreed that the planned review of the University's strategic plan in 2012 should take into account the appropriateness of the current KPIs to the future direction and strategy of the University. The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) welcomed members' suggestions for measurable indices and for areas of focus in a revised future report.

## **b REVIEWS & PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. Library**

Mr John MacColl, University Librarian & Director of Library Services, reported on recent developments (summary on file, Court 11/20). Mr MacColl commended his staff for their efforts in maintaining an operational library service throughout the 16-week summer refurbishment period of Level 1 and Level 2 of the main library building, noting that the disruption had been challenging for both staff and students but ultimately worthwhile given the impressive outcome. The

total capital investment cost was excellent value for money when compared with similar sector developments - for example, when the refurbishment is complete, St Andrews Library would comprise the same number of reader spaces as Aberdeen's new University library, at a cost of some £50m less. Mr MacColl noted that St Andrews lags behind its competitors in the number of professional Library staff employed by the University.

The additional funds made available for the purchase of books and journals has also been welcomed. It was noted that the Library's acquisitions of new journals was largely in digital form but that the purchase of books in this format was less widespread, given that publishers have yet to reach an agreed model on digital book publishing, particularly for the lucrative market of textbooks. The Library was however gaining more experience in storing and preserving digital data, given the likelihood of the increase in material of this format.

Mr MacColl summarised his concerns over the inadequate accommodation of the Special Collections department, given its move to temporary lodgings in the Library Store situated on the North Haugh. Considering the wealth of material (rare books, manuscripts and photographic archive) and the international significance of the collections, he believed that Special Collections deserved a home worthy of its stature and that this was an important 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project.

## **2. Residential & Business Services**

Mr Roger Smith, Director of the Unit, reported on recent developments (summary on file, Court 11/21). Outlining the profile of the University's residential sector, Mr Smith confirmed that the occupancy rate was operating near maximum during term-time and that residential capacity (particularly that situated within the town centre) was finite due to limited opportunities for future capital growth. In catering, the Unit was expanding into servicing the University's new buildings, including the Medical & Biological Sciences building and the Library by offering on-site café facilities.

Mr Smith summarised the main operational challenges facing the Unit. Improving on rates of student satisfaction was a significant driver and a number of new initiatives have recently been introduced, including a more co-ordinated arrivals weekend for the new intake of students into halls of residence. Improvements to catering facilities and menus in halls were also underway in response to student requests for a more flexible service. The background to the recent restructuring of the Unit was given, noting that the impetus behind the changes was to ensure that all parts of the service were customer-focused and responsive to the needs of those using both the accommodation and catering services.

Operationally, the requirement for the University to meet all regulatory guidelines and licensing restrictions was vital to the Unit's everyday operations, these covering issues related to fire risks and other health & safety matters. Overall, the continued upkeep of the University's residential estate to a good standard, thus preventing the accumulation of a backlog of maintenance, required the Unit to produce a healthy annual surplus for reinvestment. The impending changes to the structure of the academic year requires careful consideration, since this may impact on the vacant residential periods that have been necessary for carrying out certain types of maintenance on the residential estate.

### **3. School of International Relations**

Professor John Anderson, Head of School, joined the meeting to expand on his presentation summary (on file, Court 11/22). He noted the steady growth of the subject from its initial form as a series of taught modules within the Economics Department in 1978-9. In recent years, student numbers (especially PGTs) had grown rapidly and the academic staff now number approximately 35.

Much of the School's research and teaching focused on themes which are encompassed in a related research centre. Researchers in the School specialised on issues related to peace and conflict, terrorism and political violence, global institutions, the coalescence of civil societies and international relations and on regional studies, such as those focusing on the Middle East. The School runs a distance-learning programme on terrorism, which has particular challenges given the non-standard student profile and the remote physical location of students.

Professor Anderson identified the main challenges facing the School, these including the number of overseas students on taught courses rather than on research programmes (with a commensurate effect on research income in comparison to teaching income). He also noted the challenges of catering for a large student body within the School and its impact on capacity in the form of teaching space and the potential of over-burdening academic staff. The issue of 'impact' as measurable by the next REF was also of some concern, given that the definition explained thus far in REF guidance may be problematic and hard to provide evidence for. In general, however, the School expected an improved REF result, since the preparation in the lead-up to the assessment has been more thorough and generally improved in relation to that of the last RAE.

The Senior Governor thanked each presenter on behalf of Court for their insightful presentations.

### **III. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

Members noted with sadness of the deaths of Sheriff Principal John McInnes, co-opted member of Court from 1983 to 1991, and of Dr Martin

Lowe, the Chancellor's Piper and long-standing member of the Business Committee of General Council. Dr Lowe had also served as Secretary and Registrar of the University.

Court joined with the Principal in thanking the Rector, Mr Kevin Dunion, and his assessor, Ms Amanda Litherland, for their valuable service on Court during their terms of office. The Rector offered thanks to the members of the Principal's Office, the Deans, the student-facing Units and the student body overall for their welcome support and encouragement during his three-year term of office.

#### **IV. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 27 January 2011 at 10 am.

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## UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

On the 15<sup>th</sup> day of DECEMBER 2011 by a Decision of the EXTRAORDINARY COMMITTEE OF COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

**Members of the Extraordinary Committee of Court:** Mr Alistair Moffat, *Rector*; Mr Ewan Brown, *Senior Governor*; Professor Louise Richardson, *Principal*; Miss Kathleen Patrick, *General Council Assessor*; Professor Robert Crawford, *Senate Assessor*.

**In support:** Professor Ronald Piper, *Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning)*.

### **I. DRAFT ORDINANCE No. 129 (Election of the Chancellor and Election of General Council Assessors to the University Court)**

Members were advised that, following Court's promulgation at its meeting on 14 October 2011 of a new draft Ordinance relating to the election of the Chancellor and General Council Assessors, the statutory eight-week public consultation period, to include both Senate and General Council, had commenced (related paper on file, Court 11/26). The only response received by the end date of the public consultation (9 December 2011) was a comment from members of the General Council Business Committee, citing a redundant clause that appeared twice in the draft text. This was thereby notified to the University's legal adviser and to the Privy Council and the clauses removed in the final version of the draft Ordinance.

In order to expedite transmission of the draft Ordinance to the Privy Council, and in view of the earlier consideration and approval by full Court on 14 October 2011 of the draft text, members of the Extraordinary Committee of Court formally approved on behalf of the University Court Draft Ordinance No. 129 (Election of the Chancellor and Election of General Council Assessors to the University Court).

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## UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of JANUARY 2012 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

**Present:** Mr Alistair Moffat, *Rector (President)*; Mr Ewan Brown, *Senior Governor*; Professor Louise Richardson, *Principal*; Professor Christopher Hawkesworth, *Deputy Principal and Vice-Principal (Research)*; Dr David Erdal, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Mr Patrick O'Hare, *President, Students' Association*; Mr Sam Fowles, *Director of Representation, Students' Association*; Ms Katherine Andrews, *Rector's Assessor*; Miss Kathleen Patrick, *General Council Assessor*; Dr Natalie Adamson, Professor Robert Crawford, Professor Andrew Mackenzie and Dr Susie Whiten, *Senate Assessors*; Dr Alison Sandeman, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Sir Anthony Bagnall, Mr Peter Cabrelli, Sir John Elvidge, Councillor Peter Grant, Mr Mervyn Jones, Rev Dr Marjory MacLean and Dr Mary Popple, *Non-Executive Members*.

**In attendance:** Mr Stephen Magee, *Vice-Principal (External Relations)*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Vice-Principal (Proctor)*; Professor Ronald Piper, *Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning)*; Professor Neville Richardson, *Master of the United College*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Mr Andy Goor, *Finance Director*; Dr Gillian MacIntosh, *Executive Officer to the University Court*; Mr Niall Scott, *Director of Corporate Communications*; Dr Ewan Chirnside, *Director of the Knowledge Transfer Centre (for Item II a(8) and II b only)*; Professor Garry Taylor, *Head of the School of Biology (for Item II a only)*.

**Apologies:** Dr Norval Bryson, *Non-Executive Member*.

### I. REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 1. WELCOME

The Rector welcomed Ms Katherine Andrews, Rector's Assessor, and Sir John Elvidge, Non-Executive member, to their first meeting of Court.

#### 2. MEETING MINUTES

##### i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 14 October 2011

The minute (on file) was agreed as a correct record.

##### ii) Minute of the Extraordinary Committee of Court, 15 December 2011

The minute (on file) was agreed as a correct record.



### **3. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

The Principal extended a welcome to the Rector and the other new members for their first meeting of Court. Miss Kathleen Patrick was warmly congratulated by all members on the significant milestone of the 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her first Court meeting.

Providing a verbal update to her written report (on file, Court 11/27), the Principal informed members of the most up-to-date UCAS applications figures, noting that whilst RUK applicants (as based on domicile rather than fee status) were marginally down and Northern Irish applicants significantly down, Scottish, EU and Overseas applications were up respectively by 11%, 33% and 22%. A significant rise in applicants via the US Common Application was also recorded. The contest for places was expected to be highly competitive, as in past years. On a related issue, the student members thanked the Vice-Principal (External Relations) for working together with them in setting up a widening access working group to take forward institutional initiatives in this area.

In relation to the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary campaign news, the Principal reported that the campaign film, narrated by and featuring honorary graduate Sir Sean Connery, will receive its premiere in New York on 16 May, with UK showings to follow thereafter. It is hoped that the film will reach beyond the traditional core Development audiences of current students and alumni, to tap into other more generalised markets with an interest in Scottish affairs (as will likely be the case with the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary golf tournament in June 2013) .

The Principal reported that the vacant position of Chancellor's Piper, occasioned by the death of Dr Martin Lowe, would henceforth be filled by a member of the student body chosen via a competitive process.

Court was also informed that the name of the School of Psychology had been changed to the 'School of Psychology and Neuroscience', reflecting the consolidation of neuroscience teaching and research within that School.

Court echoed the Principal's thanks to all the staff involved in the November Graduation ceremonies, which went ahead, to the usual high standard, without any disruption caused by the national strike held on the same day.

### **4. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

#### **i) Minute of Meeting held on 24 November 2011**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/28).

#### **ii) Minute of Meeting held on 13 January 2012**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/29). The Finance Director briefly summarised the process by which the University's 2010/11

accounts had been converted to US GAAP standards, as required by the US Department of Education for those institutions in receipt of federal loans above a defined threshold. This would henceforth be a process carried out every three years. Court thanked the Finance Director and his team for their considerable efforts in ensuring that the complex process had been completed within a challenging timeframe, and for their training of Audit Committee members in the principles and key differences of the US GAAP reporting format, thereby enabling their effectual consideration of the revised accounts.

## **5. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 4 November 2011 (on file, Court 11/30).

With regard to the potential reputational risks posed by student campaigns for Rectorial Elections, it was confirmed that Academic Council, for Senate, would be reviewing the campaign rules prior to the next election, to ensure the positive aspects of the last election (the healthy number of candidates, unprecedented voter turnout, improved online voting, etc.) were maintained, whilst ensuring (as far as possible) that the unfortunate number of complaints about rules violations and the difficulty faced by the Senate Committee in enforcing the rules are avoided.

## **6. REMUNERATION & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

### **i) Minute of Meeting held on 4 November 2011**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/31).

### **ii) Equality & Diversity Inclusion Policy**

In consequence to the updated approach to equality as outlined in the Single Equality Act 2010 and in guidance on Scottish Public Sector Equality Duties, members noted the policy (on file, Court 11/32). A number of minor changes to the Policy's wording were recommended, which the Vice-Principal (External Relations) agreed to take forward.

## **7. SUPERANNUATION & LIFE ASSURANCE SCHEME**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 4 October 2011 (on file, Court 11/33).

## **8. ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

### **i) Minute of Meeting held on 7 December 2011**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/34).

**ii) Research Excellence Framework Code of Practice**

Court approved the institutional code of practice (on file, Court 11/35) outlining the process for the selection of staff for REF 2014, prior to its onward transmission to HEFCE.

**9. COURT OFFICE BUSINESS****i) Draft Ordinance No.130: Regulation of Foundations, Mortifications, Gifts, Endowments and Bursaries**

Court gave final approval to Draft Ordinance No.130 (Regulation of Foundations, Mortifications, Gifts, Endowments and Bursaries; Use of Surplus Revenue and Amendment of Endowments) (on file, Court 11/36), thereby enabling its transmission to Privy Council for formal consideration.

**ii) Named Chairs in the University**

Members noted a report on extant named University chairs and the respective post holders (on file, Court 11/37). Recognising that those historical chairs that currently lay vacant afforded the opportunity for future high-quality academic appointments or promotions, Court approved the future process for the approval of appointments with special titles.

**iii) Court Office Business**

Court received the report from the Executive Officer (on file, Court 11/38) detailing recent staff changes reported by Human Resources and other Court-related matters, including the recent business considered by the winter meeting of the General Council Business Committee. In doing so, Court gave final approval to Draft Resolution 2011 No.3 (Foundation of Chairs) and promulgated Draft Resolution 2012 No.1 (Degree of Master of Geology (M.Geol)).

**II. a PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (PARC) BUSINESS****1. Minute of Meeting held on 12 December 2011**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/39).

The Finance Director confirmed that he would be offering to Court members, after their next meeting, a training session on the yearly variations and patterns common to the University's accounts, particularly focused on cash-flow.

**2. Court Away Day Report**

Members noted the report of the strategic issues discussed at last October's Away Day (on file, Court 11/40).

### **3. Sustainable Development Policy & Strategy**

Court approved the revised strategy (on file, Court 11/41), which took account of PARC's comments on the specificity of targets.

### **4. Summary Financial Report to 30 November 2011**

Members noted the summary report (on file, Court 11/42). The Finance Director provided a verbal update on recent financial performance, noting that this was largely on track with budgetary forecasts. It was confirmed that the continuing fluctuating performance of the stock market will have a knock-on effect on the University's endowment funds and on fundraising prospects. Efficiencies were being sought in reducing historical overspend in central units, which was being tackled through the general financial planning process.

### **5. Scottish Funding Council - Indicative Grant for 2012/13**

Noting the contents of the indicative SFC grant letter (on file, Court 11/43), members discussed the areas in which funding levels and distribution are still to be announced (this statement expected to take place in March 2012). These included grants in the areas of capital funding, research pooling and knowledge transfer. Given the relative uncertainty common to the entire sector, the recently established Capital Investment Group was continuing to monitor the University's capital expenditure plans in their totality, with the anticipated funding requirements and planned timescales for each. In research, it was recognised that the focus and higher weighting in various disciplines on the volume of research rather than quality alone was a significant challenge for the University; pooling and other strategic partnerships were thus vital in order to secure research council funds. With the further announcement on the distribution of funds by the SFC in March, it was anticipated that the overall position over the next four years may take the University back towards 2010/11 funding levels.

### **6. Students' Association Redevelopment**

Members discussed a paper (on file, Court 11/44) outlining redevelopment proposals for the Students' Association Union building in St Mary's Place. Members concurred with the various conditions recommended by PARC, these being based around phasing the project in identifiable tranches (should the need to pause during the works become necessary due to funding constraints), clarifying the responsibilities of each party with an interest in the building, and assessing the impact of redevelopment works on the business aspects of the Association.

Court approved the additional spend to move to the stage of detailed design and planning (taking the total approved spend for the project to c. £400,000), with the request that PARC receives at its next meeting an

initial business case outlining the value and importance of the capital scheme to the commercial operations of the Students' Association and to the student experience overall. It was recommended that future updates to Court should include an outline of what had previously been agreed by Court in its earlier consideration of the scheme (given that this was a long-standing project which had received intermittent consideration over the past few years). It was agreed that Court, in addition to PARC, should receive the regular summary report on capital expenditure projects, in order to place such developments within the overall estate investment plan.

#### **7. Scottish Government consultation 'Putting Learners at the Centre: Delivering our Ambitions for Post-16 Education'**

Members discussed Universities Scotland summary document (on file, Court 11/45) in response to the Scottish Government's proposed FE and HE sector reforms. Given the potential changes to the college sector at regional level, and the likely requirement for improved articulation as part of a widening access agenda, it was recommended that the University begin the process of formulating an outcome agreement that is tailored to its own strengths and which takes account of the distinctiveness of St Andrews within the HE sector as a whole.

It was agreed that a short communication outlining the main points of the Government's official response to the consultation would be distributed to Court members after its release, expected at the start of February.

#### **8. Commercialisation Performance Review**

Dr Ewan Chirnside, Director of the Knowledge Transfer Centre, joined the meeting for consideration of the paper (on file, Court 11/46) outlining the main challenges in the area of Knowledge Exchange and commercialisation that are to be faced in an anticipated climate of reduced government and research council funding. Members noted the update, recognising the considerable work achieved in the past year in bringing together the many disparate strands within the institution that fall within the KE sphere.

### **b REVIEWS & PRESENTATIONS**

#### **1. Knowledge Transfer Centre (KTC)**

Dr Chirnside subsequently gave a short presentation outlining the work of his Unit (summary paper and presentation handout on file, Court 11/47).

#### **2. Corporate Communications**

Mr Niall Scott, Director of Corporate Communications, spoke to Court members on the distinct challenges facing the University by the

revolution taking place in traditional broadcasting streams and the media in general (summary paper and related handout on file, Court 11/48).

### **3. School of Biology**

A presentation was given by Professor Garry Taylor, Head of the School of Biology, focused on a number of new developments within the School (summary paper and related handout on file, Court 11/49).

The Senior Governor thanked the presenters for providing members with further helpful insights and information on the work of their Units and School.

### **III. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

The student members spoke of their concern of an apparent need to enhance communication between the student body and Court, as implied by a limited survey which they recently conducted. Members questioned the validity of the survey but discussed the issues raised, agreeing that they strongly supported the student members in representing the work of Court (of which they are part) to their constituency. Noting the students' concerns, Court agreed that the issue would be considered further in the annual Court Effectiveness Review.

### **IV. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 13 April 2012 at 10.00am.

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## UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of APRIL 2012 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

**Present:** Mr Alistair Moffat, *Rector* (President); Mr Ewan Brown, *Senior Governor*; Professor Louise Richardson, *Principal*; Professor Christopher Hawkesworth, *Deputy Principal and Vice-Principal (Research)*; Dr David Erdal, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Mr Patrick O'Hare, *President, Students' Association*; Mr Sam Fowles, *Director of Representation, Students' Association*; Ms Katherine Andrews, *Rector's Assessor*; Miss Kathleen Patrick, *General Council Assessor*; Dr Natalie Adamson, Professor Robert Crawford and Dr Susie Whiten, *Senate Assessors*; Dr Alison Sandeman, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Councillor Peter Grant, *Provost of Fife's Assessor*; Sir Anthony Bagnall, Dr Norval Bryson, Mr Peter Cabrelli, Sir John Elvidge, Mr Mervyn Jones, Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Dr Mary Pople and Dame Anne Pringle, *Non-Executive Members*.

**In attendance:** Sir Menzies Campbell, *Chancellor*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Vice-Principal (Proctor)*; Professor Ronald Piper, *Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning)*; Professor Neville Richardson, *Master of the United College*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Mr Andy Goor, *Finance Director*; Dr Gillian MacIntosh, *Executive Officer to the University Court*; Mr Niall Scott, *Director of Corporate Communications*; Mr Steve Watt, *Chief Information Officer* (for Item II a (7) only); Mrs Carol Morris, *Director of CAPOD* (for Item II b only); Professor Verity Brown, *Head of the School of Psychology* (for Item II b only).

**Apologies:** Professor Andrew Mackenzie, *Senate Assessor*.

### I. REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 1. WELCOME

The Rector welcomed Dame Anne Pringle, Non-Executive Member, to her first meeting of Court. A welcome was also extended to the Chancellor, who was attending this Court meeting in the capacity of an observer.

#### 2. MEETING MINUTES

##### i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 27 January 2012

The minute (on file) was agreed as a correct record.

#### 3. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Members received a verbal report from the Principal expanding on her written summary of events of recent relevance to the University (on file, Court 11/50).

The Principal confirmed that an appointment had been made to fill the recently advertised post of Chief Legal Officer, and that the individual appointed (who has considerable expertise in the field of employment law) is expected to take up the position this summer.

The Principal notified Court that the Students' Representative Council had recently voted to hold a referendum on the Students' Association affiliation to and membership of the National Union of Students, which poll would take place of the matriculated students in early May. Some concern was expressed at the apparent lack of consultation with the University over the referendum, and also at the governance implications of any proposed NUS membership, given that the relationship between the Association and the University as grant holder was currently being examined by Court with a view to improving accountability. The President of the Students' Association confirmed to Court that the potential annual cost of NUS affiliation would be met from the Association's current spend and not through a requested increase in present grant levels.

Court members discussed the UK Government's proposed cap on tax relief for charitable donations above £50,000, noting that, should the proposal be subsequently implemented, it would be extremely detrimental to the University's current fundraising drive for its 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations and a significant disincentive for donors who plan to pledge major gifts of the transformational kind. It was reported that the HE sector is currently lobbying against the proposals through Universities UK and other interest groups, joining many other major charities that will be equally affected by the proposed legislation. It was agreed that the University should continue to lobby against the introduction of the tax relief cap wherever possible. The Chancellor confirmed that he would be shortly speaking to the media on the issue.

Court commended the Principal and those involved in negotiations with the Kate Kennedy Club that have concluded with the admittance of women students as members of the previously all-male club, this being at odds with the inclusivity of the institution overall. Court also commended recent press coverage of the University.

#### **4. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

##### **i) Minute of Meeting held on 23 February 2012**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/51).

In reference to the risks discussed by the Committee as relate to the current accommodation of Special Collections at the North Haugh, in consequence to the ongoing Library redevelopment, Court members encouraged the early formulation of a cohesive future plan for Special Collections, one which is fully informed by the appropriate data on usage of the collection materials and the particular access requirements / reader services that are necessary in any newly redeveloped facility.



**ii) Draft Gift Acceptance Policy**

Court approved the proposed Gift Acceptance Policy (on file, Court 11/52).

**5. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 5 March 2012 (on file, Court 11/53).

**6. REMUNERATION & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 5 March 2012 (on file, Court 11/54).

**7. SUPERANNUATION & LIFE ASSURANCE SCHEME**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 26 January 2012 (on file, Court 11/55).

**8. ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 21 March 2012 (on file, Court 11/56).

**9. COURT OFFICE BUSINESS**

Court received the report from the Executive Officer (on file, Court 11/57) detailing recent staff changes reported by Human Resources and other Court-related matters. In doing so, Court gave final approval to Draft Resolution 2012 No.1 (Degree of Master of Geology (M.Geol)).

**II. a PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (PARC) BUSINESS****1. Minute of Meeting held on 16 March 2012**

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 11/58).

In relation to the continuing engagement with the local community over the University's potential redevelopment plans for the Guardbridge site, the Quaestor & Factor confirmed that there was an ongoing information-exchange with Guardbridge Community Council and a willingness on both sides to work together in scoping potential uses for the large brownfield site.

**2. Summary Financial Report to 29 February 2012**

The Finance Director gave a verbal summary report of the University's recent financial statements (related paper on file, Court 11/59), highlighting to Court the particular issues of research grant income,

which shows no current growth against last year's level. The year-end forecast remains on track for the planned surplus of £2.5m.

### **3. Scottish Funding Council - Main Grant Letter**

Members noted the final grant letter recently received from the Scottish Funding Council (on file, Court 11/60). The Finance Director reported on St Andrews' particular figures within the broad categories of teaching, research, Knowledge Exchange, pooling initiatives and capital funding. It was noted that the Funding Council will be negotiating 'outcome agreements' with individual universities as a condition of grant, this process expected (perhaps ambitiously) to be concluded by July 2012. Members discussed whether the Funding Council's approach to outcomes could constitute a 'service level agreement' and on the potential VAT issues that thereafter may be applicable sector-wide.

It was agreed that because there was to be an explicit negotiation with an individual team from the Funding Council on the proposed outcome agreement to be reached with the University, the Principal's Office should fully engage with the process by providing detailed data on St Andrews' overall performance on the key issues of widening access, Knowledge Exchange and on patterns (and overlap) of provision within the local region. In discussing the potential conditions of any outcome agreement that the Funding Council may decide upon, Court expressed its strong support in general terms for the principal values of academic excellence and on the traditional autonomy of Scottish universities.

### **4. Financial Plan - Comparison against Peers**

Members discussed an external comparison paper (on file, Court 11/61) positioning the University's financial performance in 2010/2011 against other higher education institutions in Scotland. The key issues highlighted in the discussion were on the level of pay costs as a percentage of turnover and on the level of research grant income secured by the University. Members debated the strategic issues consequent to reducing the former and increasing the latter to the levels achieved by the best performers within the sector overall.

It was agreed that the comparative data provided in the paper was relatively simplistic in nature and that a further breakdown of financial performance across other similar institutions elsewhere in the UK may be more relevant. The Principal reported that internal performance data gathered for a recent exercise would likely prove useful to Court members and it was agreed that this would be circulated by email following the meeting.

It was also agreed that it would be useful addition to the draft Financial Plan, to be considered at the next Court meeting, if it were prefaced with a short section highlighting three or four of the major financial risks to the institution, to be complemented by an outline of the mitigating actions taken or to be taken to address these risks.

## **5. Strategic Plan - Structure, Strategic Aims & Priorities**

The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) introduced a discussion paper (on file, Court 11/62) outlining the proposed revisions to the strategic aims and priorities that comprise the University's strategic plan (now intended to be a rolling process to respond to continuing and often substantial change within the sector). A similar discussion prioritising the University's strategic aims was ongoing with the academic community and the service unit directors through their respective forums.

It was noted that, once the high-level priorities had been agreed, a series of Key Performance Indicators (as currently used to evaluate progress as mapped to the existing strategic plan) would be introduced for PARC's monitoring of achievements and measuring of performance on an annual basis. Some of the current KPIs would likely remain relevant to the new plan, whilst others were replaced with new measurements.

Members discussed the suggested aims related to the commitment to an increased operational surplus over current levels and to student population numbers (including therein the composition of the student body as made up by Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research students, along with the respective split by domicile, including within the 'Home' cohort). It was noted that a growth in the University's overall size, in addition to the potential for increased income through fees and annual surplus, also allowed for possibilities for efficiencies of scale, especially in the support functions of the University. The impact of student growth on the town's existing infrastructure and the provision of University residential estate were highlighted as important considerations that should be reflected within the finalised plan.

It was suggested that further data on the variables of the numerical targets specified within the draft plan would be helpful at identifying priorities, as would further information and context on the relationship between the sections detailing commitments and challenges. Some further general comments on the format of the draft paper, including the suggested categorisation of headline commitments by the broader themes highlighted in the mission statement and/or academic strategy, were proposed for consideration.

A progress paper would be presented to Court at its June 2012 meeting for further comment and discussion.

## **6. Capital Prioritisation**

Court welcomed a strategic paper (on file, Court 11/63) putting forward a proposed classification and grouping of the University's priorities for future capital investment projects. Members discussed the issues raised by the paper, including the linkage to the University's overall capital

plan, its stated timescales and on potential funding avenues and future sources of capital funds. It was noted that the priority exercise was also useful in aligning fundraising efforts to prime capital projects.

It was agreed that an update paper on capital priorities should be provided to Court, via PARC, on an annual basis.

## **7. Review of Infrastructure Performance (Estates & IT)**

Mr Steve Watt, Chief Information Officer, joined the meeting to speak to the previously circulated annual report (on file, Court 11/64) on infrastructure performance across the University. After the Quaestor summarised Estate performance in general, Mr Watt outlined the many recent and transformational improvements within IT, including the extension of Wi-Fi coverage campus-wide, the introduction of an improved telephony service and the provision of more robust and secure data storage by the establishment of a dedicated data centre. Many of these performance initiatives also provided considerable energy efficiencies, as older and more numerous hardware was replaced with more economical machines on a substantially reduced physical estate footprint.

It was reported that the steady focus on improving the service delivery of the central IT function has succeeded in garnering positive feedback from its users, who are now more willing to work with the centralised Unit for their main IT needs rather than solely (in the case of Schools) through peripheral computing officers located remotely and operating with relative autonomy (and sometimes divergently from the central Unit). It was noted that the trend towards an improved central IT support function would likely lead to the reduction of separate support roles focused around Schools, given the potential duplication of efforts in this regard. This would be an area of particular focus in future reviews of IT efficiency.

## **b REVIEWS & PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD)**

Mrs Carol Morris, Director of CAPOD, gave a presentation to Court (summary paper and presentation handout on file, Court 11/65) outlining the work of her Unit. The presentation provided a summary of the enhanced efficiencies created through the recent merger of formerly separate staff / student development functions, and a description of the future initiatives being taken forward by the Unit to build on recent areas of strength and innovation.

## **2. School of Psychology**

A presentation was given by Professor Verity Brown, Head of the School of Psychology (summary paper and related handout on file, Court 11/66), outlining the School's overarching strategy, its current research strengths and teaching initiatives. Particular attention was devoted to the ongoing programme of creating 'computer-literate citizen-scientists', this a vehicle for teaching computer programming, coding and scientific research skills to first-year undergraduates through their active involvement in practical experiments. Professor Brown also outlined the benefits that will be achieved by the merger into the School of that part of Biology comprising neuroscience teaching and research.

The Senior Governor thanked the presenters for providing members with further helpful insights and information on the work of their respective areas.

Following the meeting, a workshop for Court members on cash and cash management was led by the Finance Director.

## **III. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 14 June 2012 at 10.00am.

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## UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of JUNE 2012 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

**Present:** Mr Alistair Moffat, *Rector (President)*; Mr Ewan Brown, *Senior Governor*; Professor Louise Richardson, *Principal*; Professor Christopher Hawkesworth, *Deputy Principal and Vice-Principal (Research)*; Dr David Erdal, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Mr Patrick O'Hare, *President, Students' Association*; Mr Sam Fowles, *Director of Representation, Students' Association*; Ms Katherine Andrews, *Rector's Assessor*; Miss Kathleen Patrick, *General Council Assessor*; Dr Natalie Adamson, Professor Robert Crawford, Professor Andrew Mackenzie and Dr Susie Whiten, *Senate Assessors*; Dr Alison Sandeman, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Sir Anthony Bagnall, Dr Norval Bryson, Mr Peter Cabrelli, Sir John Elvidge, Mr Mervyn Jones, Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Dr Mary Popple and Dame Anne Pringle, *Non-Executive Members*.

**In attendance:** Mr Stephen Magee, *Vice-Principal (External Relations)*; Professor Ronald Piper, *Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning)*; Professor Neville Richardson, *Master of the United College*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Mr Andy Goor, *Finance Director*; Dr Gillian MacIntosh, *Executive Officer to the University Court*; Mr Niall Scott, *Director of Corporate Communications*; Mr Freddie fforde, *President-Elect, Students' Association*; Ms Amanda Litherland, *Director of Representation-Elect*; Mr John Maguire, *Director of Estates (for Item II a only)*; Mr Paul Brown, *Director of the Careers Centre (for Item II a only)*; Professor John Hudson, *Head of the School of History (for Item II a only)*.

### I. REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 1. WELCOME

The Rector welcomed Mr Freddie fforde, President-Elect, and Ms Amanda Litherland, Director of Representation-Elect, both of the Students' Association, who were attending this meeting in the capacity of observers.

#### 2. MEETING MINUTES

##### i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 13 April 2012

Subject to a minor amendment to the section reporting the proposed NUS affiliation referendum, the minute (on file) was agreed as a correct record.

##### ii) Matters Arising

The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) reported confidentially on the result of the election of General Council Assessor to the University Court, the formal result of which will be publicly announced at the statutory meeting of the General Council on Saturday 23 June.

### **3. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Members received a verbal report from the Principal expanding on her written summary of events of recent relevance to the University (on file, Court 11/67). The Principal gave an update on the request by the new leader of Fife Council to meet and outlined the documentation request that the University has received following the recent SFC meeting to discuss St Andrews' outcome agreement.

The Principal notified members of the University's standing in the recently published *The Times Good University Guide*, where St Andrews has retained its position as top university in Scotland (6<sup>th</sup> overall in the UK). The School of Physics & Astronomy was the best School performer in the University (2<sup>nd</sup> in UK). An update was also provided on the result of this year's academic promotions process, numbers of admissions applications and the numbers of students expected to graduate at this year's ceremonies.

It was agreed that future research award reports, which are appended to the Principal's written report to Court, would henceforth highlight and provide some background on the major grants received by the University.

Members noted with sorrow the recent tragic deaths of two students of the University - John Shipley and Jonathan Wookey - and that of a recent graduate, Steven Sims.

### **4. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

#### **i) Minute of Meeting held on 17 May 2012**

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 11/68).

#### **ii) Standing Financial Instructions / Scheme of Delegation**

On recommendation from the Audit & Risk Committee, members approved without further amendment the revised Standing Financial Instructions and updated Scheme of Delegation (on file, Court 11/69).

### **5. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Members noted the report of the Committee's business conducted by circulation since the last Court meeting (on file, Court 11/70). Court thereby approved the continuation of the Senior Governor's term for a further two years, to 31 July 2014.

### **6. ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 16 May 2012 (on file, Court 11/71).

## **7. COURT OFFICE BUSINESS**

Court received the report from the Executive Officer (on file, Court 11/72) detailing recent staff changes reported by Human Resources, an update on recent General Council business and other Court-related matters.

### **II. a PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (PARC) BUSINESS**

#### **1. Minute of Meeting held on 1 June 2012**

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 11/73).

Mr Mervyn Jones, Court lead on the Investment & Treasury Assurance Group, provided an update focusing on determining the suitability of the current investment criteria for the University's endowment fund and options for its future management, given that the fund managers are moving from the current investment manager, Aviva, which has taken the decision to withdraw from the SRI arena.

#### **2. Summary Financial Report to 30 April 2012**

The Finance Director gave a verbal report of the University's recent financial performance (summary paper on file, Court 11/74), highlighting that the forecast year-end surplus was expected to exceed the budgeted projection coupled with an improving cash balance following the implementation of improved cash management decision-making processes in the past year. Members discussed the increased pension liabilities of the local scheme and the uncertain liabilities in relation to USS, the University's substantial exposure to the latter not being capable of being disclosed in the financial accounts.

#### **3. Financial Planning 2012/13 to 2014/15**

Members discussed the financial planning documentation for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15 (on file, Court 11/75). The Finance Director summarised the principal goals of the draft Financial Strategy, these being the reduction of the University's level of pay expenditure to that comparable to the best-performing Scottish peer institutions, the identification of further opportunities for financial efficiencies, and the attainment of an improved net liabilities position through continuing improvements in cash management and controls over capital expenditure. The Financial Plan for the same period forecast a modestly improved operating surplus, driven by a forecast increased income from academic fees and research grants, but with continuing cost and inflationary pressures, particularly surrounding utilities and diminishing support (in inflationary terms) via government funding.

Court endorsed the proposed Financial Strategy for the University and approved the Financial Plan for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15. In doing so, management were asked to continue to fully explore alternative



means of income generation, such as further utilisation of University facilities (sports and residential) outwith term time. It was also suggested that there should be a robust attempt to engage with the entire University community in implementing the aims of the financial strategy, building upon the active participation of staff and students in current initiatives surrounding the promotion of energy efficiency at a local level.

#### **4. Capital Projects Update**

Members discussed an update on ongoing capital schemes (on file, Court 11/76), noting the interim recommendations of the Residence Review Working Group (the final version of which will come to Court in October 2012) and the updates on the Guardbridge development and the Botanic Gardens lease.

#### **5. Strategic Plan Update**

The Vice-Principal (Governance & Planning) introduced a further discussion paper (on file, Court 11/77), which highlighted three integral issues to be decided upon in formulating the revised strategic plan (these being the University's overall size, its level of expected annual surplus as a percentage of turnover, and the eventual format of the final strategic plan document). Agreement on these fundamentals would act as a catalyst for detailed decision-making on related issues, such as capital investment priorities, the University's positioning relative to its peers / competitors, improvement of the St Andrews student experience and the future composition of the academic portfolio.

Members endorsed the proposal for the revised strategic plan to reflect a strategy of planned (as distinct from unplanned) growth. Further discussion on the rate of that growth, and the requisite consequences for the funding required to sustain the necessary investment for different scenarios of growth in student numbers, would be topics for consideration by Court at the October Away Day. In agreeing to the proposition for planned growth, members however emphasised the need for the University to remain strategically opportunistic, with the ability to remain focused on long-term objectives whilst staying flexible enough to recognise new opportunities, reactive to unforeseen circumstances and receptive to eventualities not proposed in the strategic plan.

Discussion also focused on the proposed target figure for operational surpluses identified within the plan and the interaction between this target, the planned growth in student numbers and existing financial planning data. It was agreed that this would be pursued further at the Away Day in the context of considering scenarios for growth.

Members endorsed the proposal for the strategic plan to be a concise mission statement of the chief strategic aims and principles, which would be supplemented by related documentation measuring performance against target and identifying and controlling risk.

## **b REVIEWS & PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. Estates**

Mr John Maguire, Director of Estates, gave a presentation to Court (summary paper on file, Court 11/78) that outlined the work of his Unit and provided an overview of the current Estate portfolio. Discussion focused on the two major energy initiatives that are currently at the planning stage - Kenly wind farm and the Guardbridge energy centre - which both aimed to help off-set substantial utility costs that are forecast to continue on an ever-increasing upward trajectory. Members commended the work done thus far on energy reduction and efficiency across the campus, both in the new build and historical estate, particularly in the University's utilisation of the Salix fund for specific improvement projects.

### **2. Careers Centre**

Mr Paul Brown, Director of the Careers Centre, delivered a presentation reviewing the graduate performance and destination data of recent leavers (annual Careers report and presentation summary on file, Court 11/79). Mr Brown summarised a number of initiatives within the Careers Centre that aim to improve the graduateness of leavers by enhancing their employability. These included expanding internship schemes (including those offered by the University in addition to linking with external employers) and making improved use of online networking tools. Members commended the work of the Director and his staff at the Careers Centre, noting the high usage and satisfaction rates by the student users.

### **3. School of History**

Professor John Hudson, Head of the School of History, gave a short briefing to Court on the research and teaching strengths of the School (summary on file, Court 11/80). Future plans for student growth were centred on consolidating current clusters of excellence through the existing departmental structure, with planned expansion into the recruitment of students from the growing Asian market. Small group research-led teaching by senior members of staff would remain an important component of the School's profile. Given the growing importance of research impact as measured in the forthcoming REF, the School was seeking to explore potential cross-faculty links in new disciplines such as archaeology, together with improving the quantification of impact-related data, given the relatively diffuse nature of historical research outcomes.

The Senior Governor thanked each of the presenters for providing members with informative summaries of the work of their respective areas.

**III. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

Members noted with sadness the death of Dr David Finlayson, member of Court from 1971 to 1975 and late of the School of Physics & Astronomy. Court paid tribute to Dr Finlayson's exceptional and distinguished service to the University, in recognition of his continuing active and unpaid involvement with the School as Honorary Senior Lecturer for some 28 years following on from his original retirement in 1984.

**IV. THANKS**

Court joined with the Rector in warmly thanking the departing members for their service on Court: Miss Kathleen Patrick, completing an eight-year term as General Council Assessor to Court, following her earlier eight-year term as a Non-Executive member; Mr Peter Cabrelli, completing an eight-year term as Non-Executive Member; Professor Robert Crawford, standing down after a five-year term as Senate Assessor because of research commitments; Mr Patrick O'Hare, Mr Sam Fowles and Ms Katherine Andrews, retiring student members of Court.

**V. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 19 October 2012 at 10.00am, followed by the Court Away Day.

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