

Draft Subject to Approval by the University Court at the meeting of 14 April 2023**UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS**

AT St Andrews on the 20th DAY OF JANUARY 2023 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Present: Professor Stuart Monro, *Acting Senior Lay Member* (presiding); Professor Dame Sally Mapstone, *Principal*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Master of the United College and Deputy Principal*; Adrian Greer, *Deputy Chair of Court and Chancellor's Assessor*; Stella Maris, *Rector's Assessor*; Iain Anderson, Jonathan Hewitt, *General Council Assessors*; Cllr Robin Lawson, *Provost of Fife's Assessor*, Professor Sharon Ashbrook, Dr Stephen Tyre; and Dr Morven Shearer, *Senate Assessors*; Dr Lorna Dargan, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Alex Duncan, Dr Malcolm Petrie, *Trade Union Nominees*; Juan Rodriguez, *President of the Students' Association*; AK Schott, *Director of Education Students' Association*; Alison Johns, Frank MacInnis, Professor Anu Ojha, Jenny Stewart, *Non-executive Members*.

In regular attendance: Professor Brad MacKay, *Senior Vice-Principal International Strategy and External Relations*; Derek Watson, *Quaestor and Factor*; Alastair Merrill, *Vice-Principal Governance*; Professor Tom Brown, *Vice-Principal (Research, Collections and Innovation)*; Professor Monique MacKenzie, *Vice-Principal (Digital Education, Research and Environment)*; Dr Rebekah Widdowfield, *Vice-Principal (People and Diversity)*; Ester Ruskuc, *Vice-Principal (Strategy, Policy and Planning)*; Niall Scott, *Vice-Principal (Communications)*.

In attendance (observer): Professor Ineke De Moortel, *Master Elect*.

Apologies: Dr Leyla Hussein, *Rector*; Professor Catherine O'Leary, *Senate Assessor*; Tim Allan, Ros King, Eve McCurrich, *Non-executive Members*; Professor Clare Peddie, *Vice-Principal Education (Proctor)*.

PRELIMINARIES

The Acting Senior Lay Member formally opened the meeting.

WELCOME

The Acting Senior Lay Member welcomed all attendees and observers and noted apologies.

It was noted that this was the last meeting for Professor Lorna Milne, Deputy Principal and Master, who steps down at the end of January to return to Academia. Professor Ineke De Moortel takes over from Professor Milne as Master from 1 February and will be in regular attendance at Court, PARC and ARC. Professor Brad MacKay takes up the position of Deputy Principal from 1 February and becomes an *ex-officio* member of Court in this capacity. The Acting Senior Lay Member indicated that there would be a vote of thanks to Professor Milne at the close of the meeting.

STARRING OF ITEMS

Members noted those items currently starred on the Agenda. No additional items were starred.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of Interest were intimated.

I MINUTES OF MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

i). Meeting Minutes and Matters Arising

ii) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 21 October 2022

The minute of the Court meeting held on 21 October 2022 (on file, Minutes 2022-2023 No.1, pp1-17) was agreed as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

i) Industrial Action update

The Vice-Principal (Governance) provided a verbal update on developments since the October meeting of Court.

- UCU has secured a mandate for further industrial action which runs until late April 2023. There are no ballot figures for St Andrews available as it was a national ballot.
- At St Andrews 285 individuals participated in at least one of the three days of strikes at the end of November 2022, but disruption was minimal and picket lines were well behaved.
- There is a further day of action planned on 1 February to coincide with the “national right to strike” along with 17 additional days in February and March. UCU have also indicated their intention for a fresh ballot to extend the mandate into the new academic year.
- At the start of 2023 UCU announced a marking and assessment boycott to take place from the end of January but subsequently withdrew this. They indicated an intention to call for a boycott near the end of April as part of their campaign for a fresh mandate.
- The 2023 round of pay discussions between UCEA and the five Trade Unions has been brought forward. UCEA tabled an initial offer of between 4 and 7%, with an interim payment in February. The Unions rejected this offer, and are seeking the higher of RPI+2% or £4,000. A slightly enhanced offer from UCEA is expected at the New JNCHES meeting next week.
- The University continues to call for all sides to negotiate a fair and sustainable settlement to this national dispute.
- On pensions, work is continuing to accelerate the 2023 USS revaluation, with both UCU and UUK looking to lock in the current more favourable funding proposition. A timeline has been developed with the Trustee, and it is hoped that the valuation may allow for consideration to be given to benefit enhancement, contribution reduction or a combination of both.

In discussion, questions were raised about the impact of industrial action on the student body and in particular examinations, communications and the University's support for the staff through the cost of living crisis.

The Vice-Principal (Governance) outlined contingency plans in place and being developed to mitigate the impact of any action on students; much will depend on the pattern of action that will occur, which has yet to be announced by UCU. A further update would be provided to the April Court meeting.

The important role of the Students' Association in communication was also recognised, noting that the Proctor was meeting regularly with Sabbatical Officers and UCU to provide reassurance and clarifications.

In relation to cost of living pressures, the Vice-Principal (Governance) explained that the national pay framework limited the University's ability to take independent action. The University continued however to explore ways of supporting staff and students during the cost of living crisis in discussion with the campus Trade Unions, and initiatives such as the £500 non-consolidated payment, subsidised food and subsidised bus travel had been well received.

II PRINCIPAL'S BUSINESS

3. Report from the Principal

i) Written

Court received the Principal's written report (on file, COURT/22/01) which provided an update to Court on recent events, activities and general University news.

ii) Verbal report and update

The Principal provided a verbal report to Court on a number of matters as detailed below.

- **New College:** - The University has appointed the architects WilkinsonEyre to produce designs for the flagship New College Project. WilkinsonEyre are one of the world's leading architectural practices with an international portfolio and an impressive track record of restoring and working with historic buildings.
- **Scottish Government Budget:** - Uncertainties remain around the additional £20m badged for HE, which had been presumed to support teaching, but was now being badged by SFC as a transformation or transition fund. The Principal had met with Mr Jamie Hepburn, *Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training*, and requested clarification on the purpose of the fund. Mr Hepburn had been receptive to the proposal that at least part of the fund be used to support innovative high-quality teaching, but further developments are awaited.
- **Philanthropy:** - The Principal briefed Court on her recent visits to the US and the Bahamas and some developments in fundraising.

Members' questions included the fiscal cycle; political engagement; Horizon Europe; uptake on cost of living measures; research awards; admissions; and gateway programmes.

4. Strategy Refresh

The Vice-Principal (Strategy, Policy and Planning) presented the paper (on file, COURT/22/25) updating Court on the development of action plans associated with the University strategy, and annexed the five draft action plans; one for each of the strategic themes.

Court noted progress and next steps, and commended the Vice-Principal (Strategy, Policy and Planning) on the rigor of the work involved, especially on performance indicators.

III PARC BUSINESS

5. Minute of the Meeting held on 16 December 2022

Members received the minute of the meeting (on file, COURT/22/26).

6. Projects for Approval

Court received the paper (on file, COURT/22/27) which provided an overview of the following projects seeking approval from PARC at the December meeting: Grange Road; Strathbran and Corroul; Student Residences – Albany Park; and Student Residences – Abbey Walk and Dundee.

The Quaestor was invited to provide an update on each.

- **Grange Road:** The decision had been made to commence the building of 61 affordable houses. The University was currently funding the project to allow progress on site to be maintained until alternative funding models are assessed. PARC had agreed to recommend to Court approval of the change in interim funding for the Grange Road project to allow time to explore alternative options. A further report on funding options, with recommendation, would be made to PARC in March 2023.

Members explored the rationale which necessitated this course of action, including questions on sequence and timing. Following discussion, Court endorsed the recommendation made by PARC and approved the interim funding approach.

- **Strathbran and Corroul:** The paper detailed the case for the University's investment in its proposed first carbon offsetting projects. Court noted the robust conversation and the full exchange of views that had taken place at PARC as reflected in the minutes of the PARC meeting. Court would be updated on any further progress following the update to PARC in March.

- **Albany Park:** The Quaestor updated Court on ongoing negotiations with CLV and noted the approach being taken by the University and endorsed by PARC. Court would be updated on further developments at its April meeting.

Councillor Lawson indicated that HMO consultation was ongoing but there was no current update.

- **Abbey Walk:** Court noted the project to develop the land at Abbey Park behind the Old Burgh School to provide additional student accommodation. A full business case will be presented to PARC in March.

7. Projects for Information

Court received the Projects for Information paper (on file, COURT/22/28) which provided a summary of in-train and planned capital projects. The Appendices to the summary included updates on the following projects:

Post Completion

Eden Campus PSR - Walter Bower House; Bat Colony; BMS; Younger Hall; Learning and Teaching Commons-Butts Wynd/OLD Refurbishment.

Under Construction

Eden Campus; Purdie Labs 322-324; St Andrews West; Grange Road; Main Library.

Working to FBC

Student Residences – Gap Site 3; North Haugh Hub; Albany Park.

Working to OBC

Kenly Wind Farm; New North Haugh Building; New College; Additional Student Accommodation; and North Haugh Campus Development.

8. Accommodation Fees Update

The Quaestor introduced the paper on file (COURT/22/29) which outlined the proposal for student rents in the academic year 2023/24 along with changes to provide additional support for students during the cost of living crisis through an increase in the accommodation award. The paper was presented for information.

Questions from Members focused on the use of RPI compared to CPI; the composition of costs (including procurement, administration, supply chains); and comparison with other universities. Caution was advised in making comparisons with other universities; whilst it could be argued that the University's rents were still comparatively high, this did not take into account factors such as the age, condition and scale of accommodation provided. The Quaestor confirmed that the overall aim remained to drive costs down where possible, in order to reduce the on cost to students.

9. [Entrepreneurial St Andrews Update](#)

Court noted the paper (on file, COURT/22/30) that provided an overview of progress toward the implementation of Entrepreneurial St Andrews. The Quaestor reported that it had been a good year, with progress being made.

It was noted that the University has a portfolio of 725 live patents (pending/granted) and that, cognisant of the forthcoming move to include citations in rankings (THE world ranking), the University has been revising processes and database to ensure all relevant metrics are included. Members also suggested that consideration might be given to linking actions on patents to KPIs.

10. [Sustainability Update](#)

Court received the paper (on file, COURT/22/31) which shared the University's Annual sustainability Report for 2021-2022.

11. [Summary Financial Report to 31 October 2022](#)

Court noted the summary of the universities financial position as at 31 October 2022 (on file, COURT/22/33).

12. [Institutional Indicators Update](#)

Court noted the paper (on file, COURT/22/32) which provide the routine summary of institutional performance against agreed KPIs.

13. [SFC Outcome Agreement](#)

The Draft SFC Outcome Agreement 2022-2023 (on file, COURT/22/34) presented for information was noted.

14. [Report on University Collections](#)

Court received the [Report on University Collection \(on file, COURT/22/35\)](#) covering the period December 2021 to November 2022.

IV DISCUSSION ITEM

15. [New St Andrews Business School](#)

The Master and the Senior Vice-Principal International Strategy and External Relations provided Court with an update on the new Business School, and an overview of the rationale, and opportunities it presented.

The new Business School would combine two very good Schools and allow for a refreshed focus on Social Sciences in the University and for the development of the portfolio of offerings in this field.

Combining the Schools would generate opportunities to support research; act as an engine to bring in grant and support publications; provide the capacity to forge interdisciplinary connections; and create opportunities to facilitate new partnerships and to make existing ones more strategic.

The Business School would also impact positively on PGR and PGT recruitment and provide an opportunity to develop this offering including the potential to diversify and innovate and to provide a wider range of courses.

It was envisaged that the new Business School would have a focus on both research and teaching; capitalise on St Andrews' size and location and scope for interdisciplinary expertise; be outward facing; engaging with local and international partnerships in all sectors; build on outstanding teaching and student experience at all levels; and access new audiences with improved dissemination of research, and the increased scope offered by opportunities for digital education.

It was emphasised that this was an exercise in scaling up and a demonstration of ambition, not an attempt at rationalisation. There was recognition that the development of the new Business School would require significant investment both in terms of time and resources.

The announcement of decision in principle for the new project had been made by the email from the Principal on 13 December 2022, following meetings with the schools concerned; this had subsequently been discussed at Senate on 14 December 2022.

Senate had reacted positively (on file, COURT/22/45) to the concept of the Business School, despite some initial concerns about a perceived lack of consultation about the decision, and the way in which the decision had been communicated to staff. These concerns are set out in the minutes of Senate (see reference above) which also record that the discussion at Senate had been measured and constructive.

Court received assurance that, although the decision had been taken in principle by senior management, the engagement with staff over the shaping of the Business School which would now take place would be detailed, thorough, open, extensive and clear. Students would be involved in the process and external facilitators involved.

It was acknowledged that the Business School was entering a crowded space but would be a distinct offering to be differentiated from others; would build on and translate to a wider world the University's key strategic and ethical priorities; and had the potential to develop a unique approach to issues facing the post-pandemic world.

Questions raised in discussion related to differentiation; numbers; consultation; engagement with schools; utilisation of resources; the market and competition.

Court was updated on the consultation process currently underway; the timescale for the development of the project; and the next steps to be taken.

Members congratulated the University on this strategic and innovative development which was hugely exciting.

V REPORTS

16. Student Members' Report

Court received the report from the Student Members of Court (on file, COURT/22/36). The President of the Students' Association indicated that work on the development of the Students' Association strategy was progressing and that once all in order this would be shared with Court.

Court noted the positive tone of the report and the examples provided therein of good engagement and partnership across a broad range of issues. It was important that collaboration continued, and that work continued to be done to deal with the cost of living crisis.

Court noted that the Rector's Assessor had been invited to speak at an Advance HE Breakfast seminar following their attendance at a recent Advance HE student governance conference.

17. Governance and Nominations Committee

The Acting Senior Lay Member as Convenor of G and N presented the following updates on G and N business.

i) Minute of the meeting of 25 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 25 November 2022 (on file, COURT/22/46) were homologated by Court.

ii) Appointment of Senior Lay Member of Court

The Convenor of G and N presented the paper (on file, COURT/22/37) which related to the appointment of the Senior Lay Member of Court following the election in November 2022.

Court ratified the appointment of Ray Perman as Senior Lay Member for a period of 4 years from August 2023; agreed that the Vice-Principal (Governance) with the assistance of the Court Office will take all necessary steps to formalise the appointment and to confirm and implement the agreed induction process; agreed that following discussions with Mr Perman, G and N will confirm at its March meeting his membership and chairing of relevant committees; and agreed the Senior Lay Member (Elect) be invited to attend the April and June Meetings of Court and chairing of the relevant Court Committees as an observer.

There was discussion of the election process with concerns expressed as to the low turnout and to the organisation of the process particularly the short voting window and the holding of the open meetings on teaching days which made attendance difficult. The short timescale for the process had made it difficult to generate any interest amongst the student body or for the student representatives on Court to engage with or advertise the process.

In response it was noted that low turnout is experienced by all institutions and the turnout at St Andrews had actually been higher than in most other recent Senior Lay Member elections. The prescriptive nature of the statute provided relatively little latitude in organising the elections. The Vice-Principal (Communications) described the extensive efforts that had been made, using every communication tool at the University's disposal, social media, web content and emails.

iii) [Appointment by Correspondence](#)

Court received the paper (on file, COURT/22/38) and endorsed the appointment of Professor Ewan McKendrick as a Non-executive Member of Court from 1 April 2023 until 31 July 2027.

iv) [Court Effectiveness Review – Update](#)

Court noted the update on the Court Effectiveness Review (on file, COURT/22/39).

18. [Audit and Risk Committee](#)

The Convenor of ARC presented the main items of business forwarded to Court by ARC.

i) [Minute of the meeting held on 24 November 2022](#)

Court noted the report of the meeting on 24 November 2022 (on file, COURT/22/40)

ii) [Annual Report of the Health and Safety Assurance Group](#)

Court noted the report of the Health and Safety Assurance Group (on file, COURT/22/41) which had been presented to ARC at its November meeting.

iii) [Risk Management Update](#)

The risk management update (on file, COURT/22/43) was presented for information. The Convenor of ARC highlighted the discussions during the ARC meeting around admissions; staff morale; contingency planning for power cuts; and cyber security.

19. [Remuneration Committee](#)

The Convenor of the Remuneration presented the annual report of the committee to Court (on file, COURT/22/43). The Convenor commended the report to Court highlighting the recent effectiveness review undertaken by the Committee; the occasional need for urgent action over recruitment and retention (as detailed in the report); and the revised timetable for reviewing the performance of the Principal introduced by the Acting Senior Lay Member.

20. [People and Diversity Assurance Group](#)

Court noted the minute of the meeting of the People and Diversity Assurance Group on 21 September 2022 (on file, COURT/22/44).

VI COURT AND SENATE OFFICE BUSINESS

21. Court and Senate Office Business

i) [Minute of the meeting of Senate held on 14 December 2022](#)

Court noted the minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 14 December 2022 (on file, COURT/22/45).

VII ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Acting Senior Lay Member gave a vote of thanks to Professor Milne, highlighting her many contributions to the University's success, including raising the profile of learning and teaching in St Andrews whilst as Proctor, as well as her involvement and engagement in significant strategic issues such as the capital plan to transform the university estate and most recently the introduction of the business school. Court owed a great debt of gratitude to Professor Milne as she stepped down as Master and Deputy Principal.

Court joined with the Acting Senior Lay member in warmly thanking Professor Milne and wishing her well in her future endeavours.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Court will take place on Friday 14 April 2023 at 10am in Upper College Hall.

Draft 07 February 2023