

**MINUTE OF THE STATUTORY HALF-YEARLY MEETING OF THE
GENERAL COUNCIL HELD ON SATURDAY 30 JUNE 2018 AT 10.30am
IN PARLIAMENT HALL, SOUTH STREET, ST ANDREWS**

The Chancellor, The Rt Hon Lord Campbell of Pittenweem, was in the chair. Welcoming 63 members to the meeting, he extended a special welcome to Rev Marion Paton of Holy Trinity Church St Andrews and commented on the very high quality of the graduation ceremonies and celebrations that had taken place during the last week.

1. Minute of the last ordinary half-yearly meeting of the General Council held on 25 November 2017.

There were no matters arising and the minute was approved.

2. Announcement of the result of the election of a General Council Assessor to serve on the University Court – Registrar and Clerk to the General Council

Mr Merrill reported that the election held between 16 April and 11 May had resulted in 1,212 valid votes being cast, the details of which could be found on pages 11-12 of the billet. He was pleased to announce that Mr Kenneth Cochran had been duly elected to serve a second term as General Council Assessor to the University Court.

The Chancellor congratulated Mr Cochran on his election to the University Court. Mr Graham Wynd, Convener of the Business of Committee, would be standing down from the Committee in September. Inviting him to report on the Committee's activities since the last meeting, the Chancellor extended thanks to Mr Wynd, on behalf of the University, for his long service to the Committee, both as a member and for the past four years as its Convener.

3. Report by the Convener of the Business Committee

For details of the Committee's activities over the past seven months, Mr Wynd referred members to minutes in the billet of the Business Committee's last two meetings in January and April (pages 13-19). Congratulating Ken Cochran on behalf of the General Council and its Business Committee on his re-election as General Council Assessor to the University Court, Mr Wynd paid tribute to the high level of his commitment as an *ex officio* member of the Business Committee and looked forward to his continued contribution over the next four years. He also thanked the other six candidates, three of whom were from elected members of the Business Committee. Voter turnout was up 19% on the last Assessor election and, at just over 1,200, it was the second highest poll of recent times. However, it was clear that there is more to do in terms both of increasing voter turnout and improving the gender balance, with only two women among the seven candidates.

Reporting on the continuing work of the Committee's action groups, Mr Wynd confirmed that the register of members' interests being set up to ensure good governance practice had been completed. Another action group had been looking to fill a gap in the Committee's standing orders in relation to sub-committees and a motion proposing this was included as item 6 of the current agenda. A third group continues to try to improve engagement with General Council members by, for example, increasing turnout in elections. In April, the Business Committee had run a drop-in centre during the Alumni Festival Weekend and had taken a table at the Alumni Festival Dinner. A conversation had been started with the

Students' Association and further action agreed to increase awareness of the General Council amongst the student population before they graduate. In an effort to reach out to more graduates, the Business Committee is seriously considering the possibility of holding the November 2019 General Council meeting in London. The Committee would be grateful for the views of those attending the St Andrews meeting. The action group headed by Alistair Galloway aimed at helping the University to find alternative sources of income has benefited greatly from the additional expertise of new Committee members, Andreas Klasen and Brittany Collins. Teleconference meetings have looked at the potential from summer schools and conferences, the use of various types of innovation and start-up funding, and the practicalities of commercial collaboration. These ideas are to be explored with the key University staff involved. The fifth action group tasked with carrying out a strategic review of the Business Committee's effectiveness had carried out some preliminary work to define the mission of the Business Committee, to be followed in the coming months by an analysis of how effective the Committee is in meeting these expectations and to advise on how it should move forward.

There was little to report from the Ordinances & Resolutions Sub-Committee, apart from two new draft resolutions to do with the creation of new chairs that were both welcome and uncontentious.

St Andrews continues to enjoy very good relations with its peers at the three other ancient universities, and in Dundee. The Business Committee's Vice-Convener had attended the annual meeting of Conveners and Clerks in May and had been pleased to discover that the St Andrews Business Committee appears to be more diverse than the others in terms of the age, gender and location of its members.

Mr Wynd's term as a Business Committee member, and therefore as its Convener, is due to end at the end of June next year. However, having been a Committee member for 12 years and Convener for the last four, Mr Wynd has decided to stand down a little early at the next Business Committee meeting on 22 September, when elected members will choose his successor. In reflecting on his time as Convener, which began during a difficult time, Mr Wynd was grateful to the Clerk to the General Council and to the Principal for helping to make it possible to contemplate a new beginning. The campaign in which over 300 General Council members wrote to the Government about its Higher Education Governance Bill played a significant part in rebuilding relationships. Having struggled to find candidates to stand for election to the Business Committee in 2013, last year saw 22 candidates stand. While there is no room for complacency and there is much still to be done, the Committee is in a better place than it was four years ago. It is therefore a good time to be considering the future through the aforementioned review of the Committee's effectiveness. Mr Wynd said it had been a great privilege to serve as Convener and expressed his gratitude to Business Committee colleagues for their support. In closing, he thanked all those involved in the meeting, including those attending.

The Chancellor thanked Mr Wynd and invited questions from the floor.

Mr Ken Cochran wished to add to the Chancellor's earlier thanks to Mr Wynd by expressing his own appreciation for Mr Wynd's many years of service to the General Council, for

guiding and navigating the General Council through a time of existential crisis, coordinating the response to the Higher Education Governance Bill, guiding the Business Committee with wisdom and tact and for his wise and temperate counsel to him as General Council Assessor. He said Mr Wynd had been a real credit to the General Council.

In calling upon the Principal to deliver the University Address, the Chancellor paid tribute to the extraordinary commitment and loyalty of all staff involved during graduation week and, in particular, the Principal, whom he wished to congratulate on her leadership, which had produced an extraordinarily successful graduation week.

4. University Address – Professor Sally Mapstone, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

The Principal began by announcing that the University would be holding a memorial service at the start of the new semester for first-year Chemistry student Duncan Sim, whose loss had deeply saddened the University community. The Principal would be attending the funeral on 5 July.

Since the last meeting in November, a series of changes had been announced in the Principal's Office and new appointments made. Professor Lorna Milne will take over from Professor Garry Taylor as Master and Deputy Principal when he demits office at the end of January 2019. From 1 June 2018, the title of the Proctor role changed to Vice-Principal Education (Proctor), a title more comprehensible outwith St Andrews. The initial appointment to this post has been an interim one for Professor Paul Hibbert, formerly Dean of Arts and Divinity and, from June 2019, Professor Clare Peddie (currently Head of the School of Biology) will take over. From 1 July 2018, Professor Frank Müller (School of History) will become the Dean of Arts and Divinity and Professor Tom Brown (School of Physics & Astronomy) will take on the role of Dean of Science. Dr Monique MacKenzie (School of Mathematics & Statistics, and Deputy Director of the Graduate School) will take office as Assistant Vice-Principal (Provost) and Director of the Graduate School from 1 August 2018. The Principal looks forward to working with this part-new, part-familiar team, particularly in relation to finalising and implementing the University's new strategy.

Strong progress has been made on the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 since the last meeting. The Principal has been leading on the development of the plan, working closely with Professor Brad MacKay, Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations), and Director of Strategy and Policy Ester Ruskuc. Professor MacKay would be providing an overview later. An early version of the strategy has already been presented to the University Court and received much positive feedback. A final draft will be presented to the Court in September. The Principal stressed that the strategy is quite deliberately a high-level document, with an emphasis on goals and strategic priorities.

The Principal was delighted to share the excellent news that the St Andrews 600th Anniversary fundraising campaign has now reached its £100m goal. Over 14,000 St Andrews graduates, current students, staff and supporters contributed to the campaign, which was launched by HRH Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, in February 2011. Over £27m has been raised for scholarships and student support and over 300 new scholarships for students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been established. New student facilities, including a redeveloped Sports Centre, refurbished Students' Union and a Postgraduate Research

Library, have all been made possible by the funds raised. Funding has also been provided for the new Music Centre. Campaign support has ensured that the new £14m Scottish Oceans Institute building on the East Sands will place Scotland at the forefront of international marine research, while projects in Medicine, English, Philosophy and Computer Science have each drawn support from donors in gifts and pledges. As the University's thoughts turn to how we can make use of this momentum to set in place foundations for the next campaign, the Principal was pleased to report that a major donation has been received from a pair of donors based both in the US and in Scotland, the largest in our recent fundraising history. Part of this donation has been used to reach the 600th Anniversary total, and a further part will be used to launch our next campaign. New College, the place-holder name for the town centre Madras College site that will be repurposed for University use, will be at the heart of this new campaign, which will be announced publicly once more initial pledges are in place. The Principal thanked the fantastic 20% of contactable alumni who had given to the 600th Campaign.

The University continues to perform strongly in both national and international university rankings. In the *Guardian University Guide 2019*, St Andrews consolidated its position as third overall and top in Scotland and has closed the gap with Oxford to just 0.2%. In the *Complete University Guide 2019*, St Andrews ranked fifth overall and top in Scotland. Three St Andrews subjects were ranked top in the UK and 24 of 25 subjects were ranked in the top ten. Internationally, in the QS World Rankings, the University continues to rank in the Top 100 in the world at 97 overall. It is difficult to maintain this position with a lot of universities coming into those rankings, particularly international universities and those in the far east which get far more resource than we do. However, this is our twelfth year amongst the top 100 which illustrates the calibre of both our staff and our students. The University is also very pleased to remain within the top 50 institutions for the top 1% most frequently cited publications in the CWTS Leiden Ranking.

Turning to diversity and inclusion, the Principal was very pleased to confirm that the University's Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze Award has been renewed for a further three years, and that the School of Biology and the School of Psychology & Neuroscience have achieved Athena SWAN Silver Awards, bringing the total of Silver Awards at departmental level to four Schools. The Principal wished to record her thanks to Paul Hibbert, former Dean of Arts and Divinity and now Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) for the coming year, who led the renewal application process, and also to Sukhi Bains, Head of Equality and Diversity, as well as the many members of the University who contributed to their work.

On the issue of gender pay equality, although Scottish universities are not required to report gender pay gap data until 2019, St Andrews has collected and is currently analysing its data to provide figures comparable to those published by the UK Government. Our institutional pay gap, based on salaried staff, shows a median gap of 22% and a mean gap of 24.6%. While high, these figures are broadly similar to institutions in the Russell Group. Once this analysis is complete, both the analysis and the data will be published.

The Principal was pleased to report that the Elizabeth Garrett Mentoring Programme for mid-career to senior academic women continues to progress well. Also, in the recent round

of academic promotions, of the 41 applications received from women, 29 were awarded promotions – just over 70%. Men and women now have the same success rate in academic promotions, although the University would like to see more women apply and is encouraging this.

Turning to the University's estate, MUSA will close now until late 2019 for an extension that will enable it to host a greater variety of exhibitions. The MUSA team will remain active during this time, developing exhibitions and activities in St Andrews and elsewhere with partner institutions. The final phase, phase 3, of the Sports Centre redevelopment, which created an indoor tennis hall, is complete. Two new student residences, Powell Hall and Whitethorn Hall, adjacent to Agnes Blackadder and University Halls respectively, are nearing completion. In addition, Andrew Melville Hall will re-open in the next academic session following its major renovation. Visible progress is being made on the Gatty/Scottish Oceans Institute redevelopment and the Victorian building has been demolished. The new building is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2019.

Work has now started on the new Music Centre on the site previously occupied by the terrapin huts close to the Bute Building. The terrapin huts have now been removed and an archaeological survey is under way. Building work is planned to commence in July and is due to be completed in the autumn of 2019. Once complete, the Music Centre will provide a dedicated practice facility which can also be used for performances. This will enable the Younger Hall to be refurbished. Renovations are scheduled to begin in July 2019 and to be completed by June 2020.

Plans for the relocation of professional staff to the Eden Campus, now approved by Fife Council, continue to progress with attention being paid to how the new spaces available can enable agile working practices. A consultant has been engaged to formalise a travel plan for staff to and from the campus. The move of professional staff to the Eden Campus will start in December 2019.

Steady progress continues to be made on planning permission for the St Andrews West development. Planning permission for the new access road from the A91 serving the new Madras School site was granted conditional approval in March. The construction of the road is scheduled to commence in September and the construction of the new school in spring 2019.

A response is still awaited from the Scottish and UK Governments on the Tay Cities City Deal, a local partnership that aims to facilitate wider investment in, for us, the Eden Campus so that it can, in particular, provide a base for innovative local companies.

On another financial matter, the Principal said that the temporary resolution of the USS pensions dispute that affected St Andrews and 61 other UK universities in February and March, while very welcome, did not remove a requirement for serious action. Although a joint expert panel has been established to review the valuation processes of the USS pension scheme, the scheme's rules are likely to require increased contributions after April 2019. This could have serious implications for the higher education sector, the University and scheme members. The University's financial planning for the next three years has been updated to

prepare for different scenarios. The next three years will be a period of consolidation and judicious investment.

Against this backdrop, the Principal was glad to be able to report positive student numbers for the next year. Following the close of UCAS applications to prospective undergraduate students from the UK and the EU in January, undergraduate applications from Scotland, the EU, the rest of the UK and overseas were up by 10%, 5%, 11% and 9% respectively, compared with last year. This is against the trend in much of the rest of the Higher Education sector and the Principal is confident that the University will meet its undergraduate targets. Postgraduate applications are still coming in. However, while a point in time overview shows a 4% increase in postgraduate research applications to over 1,100, there is an overall drop in application numbers of around 8% for postgraduate taught programmes to just over 5,200. Nevertheless, this still provides a healthy pool for offer making.

In terms of research applications and funding, nine months through the financial year, research applications stood at £177.2m, compared with £184m at the last year end and, even more encouragingly, awards stood at £41.7m, compared with £36m for the full 12 months last year. This is really strong progress for our research funding in a challenging funding climate.

Preparations for the national Research Excellence Framework (REF) evaluation in 2021 continue according to plan, with all Schools having had meetings to assess their research outputs. The next stage of preparations will focus on research impact and the environment. Whilst burdensome, these preparations are extremely important as the REF results affect our funding substantially, both directly and indirectly.

Well timed to address an increasingly complex but also increasingly dynamic international context, a new International Committee, chaired by Professor Brad MacKay, has been established and met in February and again in June. Professor MacKay would be outlining the work of this Committee later in his presentation.

The Principal was delighted to welcome His Excellency Liu Xiaoming, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the UK, to the University in May as part of a tour of Scotland. Ambassador Liu expressed sincere interest in deepening the relationship with St Andrews, which is very much in line with the University's strategic priorities. The Principal wished to thank alumnus and Court member Tim Allan, who masterminded much of the visit in his Scottish Chamber of Commerce capacity and was greatly supportive of the University throughout. Shortly after that visit, four MPs from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons visited St Andrews, including our local MP, Stephen Gethins. The Principal reassured members that the University continues to lobby for a positive outcome to Brexit and is equally preparing for a variety of outcomes by strengthening other international bonds.

The Principal concluded by saying that it had been a terrific graduation week and one which had really done the University and the town proud. Earlier in the year, the installation ceremony for new Rector Srdja Popovic had taken place and the Principal was pleased that

so many alumni had attended the Alumni Festival Weekend that followed the installation. Whilst challenging times lie ahead, with the support of alumni, the Principal considers the University to be in sufficiently robust health not just to survive but to flourish. It will be essential for the University to be focused, strategic and disciplined in the utilisation of its precious resources in the next few years.

The Chancellor invited questions from the floor.

The first question from the floor was in relation to the University's impressive research awards despite the anticipated dearth of research funding as a result of Brexit. In her reply, the Principal referred to particular success in the Faculties of Science and Medicine and highlighted the School of Physics & Astronomy. The Principal also identified The Leverhulme Trust as a funding body of particular importance to the University, not just in science but also in the arts.

A second question related to staff pay awards. The Principal explained that the University spends some 55-57% of total expenditure on pay, recognising the importance and priority the University attaches to its staff. The Principal pointed out that staff pay, in agreement with the Trade Unions, is organised on a national basis. The University is aware of the deterioration in national pay awards and is doing much to support staff, for example through regular promotion rounds and in the provision of training and support and other facilities. The University is concerned about the probable forthcoming increases in USS pension contributions and is also very conscious of the relationship between pay and pensions.

A final question from the floor related to whether New College would be a separate college with its own head and governing body. Reassurance was also sought in relation to respecting the architectural integrity of the existing building. The Chancellor pointed out that the building is a listed building. The Principal agreed that it is a fabulous building but pointed out that a dilapidation survey had revealed that there will be a lot of work to be done. The integrity of the building would not only be preserved but hopefully also restored. Although the building will be referred to as a college, it would not be a separate, constitutionally functioning entity. Calling it a college would give it a specific identity and this might sit well with the proposal to group three social sciences there. Asked if the name would change in time, the Principal expected there to be a lot of discussion about the potential for the name being changed in the future.

The Chancellor thanked the Principal for her update and called upon Professor Brad MacKay, Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations) to talk about University strategy.

5. "Positioning St Andrews in a time of national and international change – development of the University's strategy" – presentation by Professor Brad MacKay, Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations)

Professor MacKay was delighted to have been invited to give a presentation on University strategy, both in his role as Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations) and as a fellow alumnus of the University. The presentation would look at how the University is positioning itself in what has been a period of tremendous change, both

nationally and internationally and, within that broad context, discuss how the University strategy is being developed and what the draft plan looks like.

Professor MacKay began by addressing the question of why we have a strategy. The University has gone through a period of tremendous success – we have been the University of the Year for Teaching Quality and have been fairly consistently ranked first for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey. From a global perspective, we have more than 140 countries and territories reflected in our community in terms of staff and students, with just under half coming from outside the United Kingdom. We have a 97% continuation rate. In terms of league table success, recently we were first in Scotland and third in the UK and are 97th in the QS World Rankings. We also received a gold award in The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

However, there is increasing global competition for students, for top talent and for research funds. More locally, a lot of the government resources for universities for research and teaching is diminishing at the very time when the demands being placed on universities are increasing. There are financial headwinds, whether in terms of navigating pension challenges or pay awards or diminishing financial resources in other ways. Brexit also poses a tremendous challenge for universities, with 20% of our research money coming from European sources and one third of staff and 13% of our students being recruited from Europe. Within that context, we need to deliver a strategy that will provide a sense of purpose, a direction of travel and a broad decision-making framework over the next five years, but with enough flexibility to adapt to the challenges and surprises that will present themselves over the next few years. Fundamentally, the purpose of the strategy is to enhance St Andrews' position as a world-leading university in the context of being a relatively small institution in a world that is being increasingly characterised by size and skills. The question is, how do we position ourselves not only to remain a world-leading university but also to take ourselves to the next level?

In terms of the process itself, strategic conversations within the Principal's Office have looked at areas of excellence and areas of challenge within the various portfolios. Strategic planning meetings have taken place within professional services and within Schools and Units. There has also been a staff survey, in addition to focus groups with students and, both formally and informally, with alumni.

Underpinning the strategy are assumptions or values that are really important to the wider St Andrews community. We are a university with a very collegial feel. We also know from external friends and scholars that St Andrews continues to be regarded as a very scholarly place. Our student experience is excellent. We are unapologetically a Scottish university with a global outlook, engaging with the wider world. We value equality, diversity, inclusion and sustainability. We are positioned as a world-leading university and we want to not only stay that way, but to get even better. Finally, we cannot do everything – we have to make choices. As Professor Michael Porter at Harvard University has said, "The essence of strategy is in choosing what you are not going to do".

So the challenge for the University and the fundamental question is, how does this relatively small university, that is riding very high with a wonderful history, an excellent reputation

for teaching and research, and a unique student experience, compete in this world of giants? We have to be smarter, creative and imaginative. We have to be focused and think about what our niche is as an institution.

Professor MacKay went on to highlight the fundamental importance of corporate social responsibility to the strategy. Although a separate statement within the plan, it needs to be seen as something that is integral to and integrated throughout the strategy. In terms of staff and students, this means having an environment that is respectful in which people can vigorously debate ideas in a way that is evidence-based and analytical. It concerns how we engage with our local, national and international communities. Locally, in terms of our town and gown relations, as the University develops we need to ensure that the town is included in that process – we need to consult and take the feedback that comes to us seriously. In terms of how we are engaging nationally and internationally, we need to ensure that we are a values-led university and that when we are engaging with different partners, we are doing so responsibly and based on principles. With our suppliers, we need to ensure that, where we can, we are not only supporting local businesses and suppliers but that they share and reflect our principles and values. In relation to the environment, we are driving towards carbon neutrality. We need to keep our environmental footprint as small as it can be and think about opportunities to be contributing to this, whether it be in our research, or in our teaching, we need to make sure that it is central to our own operations and to our strategy. There are four broad themes underlying the University strategy with which our corporate social responsibility and our values are entwined: World-leading St Andrews, Diverse St Andrews, Entrepreneurial St Andrews, and Global St Andrews.

The first theme to emerge for the consultation phase – World-leading St Andrews – involves identifying those areas in which we are world-leading – those which we could with investment augment and enhance. Despite being a small institution, there are areas of depth and of breadth that are world-leading across the University, including materials research in the Sciences; conflict, peace, security, terrorism and political violence; and also data security and privacy. Interdisciplinarity is also becoming fundamental for pushing the bounds of knowledge. There is a lot going on in relation to environmental sustainability in the sciences and in the arts and humanities, e.g. the cutting-edge Earth Sciences research into climate change and the Scottish Oceans Institute's research into how climate change is affecting our oceans. There are also clusters of world-leading research in, for example, the social sciences, in health and wellbeing, not just in the Medical School but in the sciences more broadly, and in Management.

Another theme, Entrepreneurial St Andrews, concerns how we use our research to impact on the wider world through commercialisation where it makes sense. The Eden Campus is part of that ambition to have an area where we can have industry meeting with some of our world-leading research that has commercialisation possibilities. Going beyond that, it is also about thinking about how we teach entrepreneurship in our curriculum, about how we produce graduates with those enterprising skills so that when they go out into the world they can look at businesses and can change them for the better or become entrepreneurs, creating organisations, businesses and charities.

Global St Andrews requires us to think about how to position St Andrews in the wider world in terms of recruitment, the careers we are linking our students into, where our alumni are and how we are enhancing development. We must also think about the curriculum – how we are teaching and talking about things that are happening in the world. The International Committee is concerned with how we link together all our international activities to provide a gateway for the wider world to be able to engage with the University so that it is coherent and people understand what we stand for. It is values-driven but also offers a platform for the University to be able to go out and engage with the world. Who are going to be our key partners going forward? What institutional partnerships do we have to have with other universities around the world, with governments and industry, and how do those partnerships reflect the sort of university that we want to be? What are the networks that we need to be embedded in, not only for our own sustainability but to be able to thrive in the future? Global St Andrews is also about bringing it back to having very strong intellectual foundations. It is not just about branding or marketing and having to position ourselves in that sense, it is also about the sort of research that we are doing, the teaching we are doing, about how we are bringing friends to the University and about how we are going out into the wider world.

Professor MacKay then went on to describe how the strategy interacts with the University's capital plan. A number of ongoing projects are going to be very transformative and will benefit the wider community, including the MUSA extension and the new Music Centre. The move of professional services staff to the Eden Campus would help to relieve pressure on space in the centre of the town. It will be important to create a sense of community at the Eden Campus as well as commercialisation opportunities. In terms of accommodation, 1,000 extra beds will relieve some of the pressure on houses in St Andrews, while using the Madras site creatively could bring Schools together to create dynamic communities and opportunities for interdisciplinarity and also open up the possibility for other Schools currently split over two or three different locations to be brought together. Following the success of the 600th Anniversary campaign, the University is already thinking about how to align the next phase of development and philanthropy with the strategy and encourage friends and benefactors to be interested in and to invest in what is going to be an exciting period going forward.

Professor MacKay finished by acknowledging that the University will face challenges over the next few years but that it is well placed to navigate the surprises and uncertainties that lie ahead. While we do have to be thinking in a focused way and about our strategic priorities, we have a draft of a strategic plan that is going to be really exciting and about which feedback has so far been very encouraging. He emphasised that the draft plan is a living document; in a university setting you have to be able to provide the space underneath those high-level ideas for staff, students, alumni and other stakeholders to be able to engage with it in an organic way – so it is top down but also bottom up. In the draft plan he is confident that we have something that is going to not only sustain but also enhance the University's performance over the next five years and beyond.

The Chancellor thanked Professor MacKay and invited questions from the floor.

The first question concerned how the University can ensure a spiritual education? In his reply, Professor MacKay explained that part of the reason why the strategy is values-led is that the University feels very strongly that it needs to produce students who are not just using knowledge in a very instrumental way, but who are going to really make a difference in the world. It is important for us to embed the values we stand for as an institution in the curriculum, in the way we behave and in the way we treat each other. Our alumni carry these values with them when going out into the wider world. This is already reflected in the warmth that alumni demonstrate for the University. Sharing with members what he teaches as an academic, Professor MacKay said strategy is 10% the strategy itself and 90% the implementation and so it is partly about thinking how we embed spirituality into the wider University community.

Another question from the floor concerned carbon neutrality, the extent to which the University has achieved its aspirations and what its plans are over the next five to ten years in this regard. In his reply, Professor MacKay highlighted the tremendous success of the biomass plant at the Eden Campus which is now heating the North Haugh and mentioned that the University is also looking into installing solar panels on the buildings which can withstand them. With the move of professional staff to the Eden Campus, consideration is also being given to having a fleet of electric vehicles that can transport staff back and forth, in addition to looking at deals with Stagecoach. The Principal added that the University is, in fact, aiming for carbon negativity. Certain things have stood in the way, including the Ministry of Defence's position in relation to the Kenly Wind Farm plans, but considerable progress has been seen as a result of the biomass plant. The University also takes very seriously the need to offset the amount of aviation fuel needed to reach St Andrews and that is why a corporate social responsibility statement is included in the draft plan.

The Chancellor thanked Professor MacKay. Moving to the final item on the agenda, he invited Mr Wynd to put forward a motion, previously intimated by the Business Committee to the Registrar and Clerk to the General Council.

6. Any Other Competent Business

Motion proposing the amendment of General Council Standing Orders to cover sub-committees of the Business Committee – Convener of the Business Committee

Mr Wynd began by outlining the background to the motion. Following last summer's Business Committee elections, there was uncertainty regarding the Convenership of the Ordinances and Resolutions Sub-Committee and the terms of office of its members. A search of minutes and standing orders for guidance revealed a lack of clarity on the matter. Although the Ordinances and Resolutions Sub-Committee was currently the only sub-committee, there could well be others, if the Business Committee was to progress. Therefore, the proposed motion aimed to add some clauses to the existing standing orders that would cover sub-committees, and the Ordinance and Resolutions Sub-Committee in particular.

Motion: General Council is asked to approve amendments to General Council standing orders to define the constitution of a sub-committee of the Business Committee, as set out on pages 20-21 of the billet, such amendments to supersede any previous order or understanding, written or otherwise, defining in whole or in part, the constitution of a sub-committee of the Business Committee.

The Chancellor asked if it was clear if the sub-committee could exercise powers without reference back to the Business Committee, i.e. who has the final power to make decisions? Mr Wynd confirmed that sub-committees will have terms of reference assigned to them by the Business Committee that should include what the sub-committee is and is not empowered to do. There were no further questions and the motion was adopted.

The Chancellor thanked Mr Wynd. Confirming that no further motions had been intimated to the Registrar and Clerk, and there being no further items of business from the floor, the Chancellor thanked members for their attendance and drew the meeting to a close by inviting Rev Marion Paton to give the benediction.

Alastair Merrill
Registrar and Clerk to the General Council