

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY**

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22 June 2015  
at 3.45 pm in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus**

**Present:** Dr G Forbes (Chair); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); Ms M Ali; Mr N Ballantyne; Ms J Boyle; Lord Brodie (Chancellor's Assessor); Mr M Connarty; Dr V Ellis; Mr R Hare; Mr W Gallagher; Dr S Jiwa; Mr S Logie; Mr B Rigby; Professor A Scullion; Professor A Sambell (Vice Principal, Deputy Vice Chancellor); Dr P Stollard; Mrs P Woodburn.

**Apologies:** Mr R Kemmer; Mr R Maclennan; Mr D Smith; Mr R Strachan; Mr R Sweetman; Mr N Woodcock.

**In attendance:** Mr S Belfer (Finance Director); Dr S Cairncross (Dean, FECCI); Mr D Cloy (Clerk to Court); Mr I McIntosh (Dean, FHLSS); Mr K Ross (interim Director of Human Resources and Development); Professor G Stonehouse (Dean, Business School); Dr G Webber (University Secretary).

**1. OPENING REMARKS, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

- 1.1. Court welcomed the Pre-Court Strategy Presentation on enterprise & innovation, citizenship and the student experience which had taken place prior to the meeting, in which members had discussed and noted the range of activity underway to take forward these important elements of Strategy 2020.
- 1.2. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.
- 1.3. The apologies were **noted**.

**Part A For discussion and decision**

**2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2015 UC(14/15)55**

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2015 were **approved**.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

- 3.1. There were no matters arising.

**4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT UC(14/15)56**

- 4.1. The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the University's improved performance in recent league table results. The recent successful graduation ceremonies in Hong Kong and Singapore were noted and the

positive outcome of the University's recent Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) was welcomed for which thanks were extended to all involved. It was also noted that the University had won the Outstanding Estates Team award at the Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards 2015.

- 4.2. The Principal also reported that the University would be hosting a "50/50 by 2020" gender equality on Boards event later in the week which would involve the First Minister. It was noted that Court was currently committed to achieving a balance of 40% of either gender in its lay membership by 2018.
- 4.3. The University Secretary presented a summary of the main provisions of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill which had been introduced to the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 17 June and highlighted a number of issues and their potential implications for Court. Of particular note were the proposals regarding the election of the Chair and the proposals regarding membership which would require further consideration in relation to the issue of retaining a lay majority.
- 4.4. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

**5. REVIEW OF CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION\* UC(14/15)57**

- 5.1. The Finance Director introduced the paper which provided Court with the Quarter 3 forecast for 2014/15 and financial results for April 2015 year to date.
- 5.2. Court **noted** the report.

**6. VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME UPDATE\* UC(14/15)58**

- 6.1. The Director of Human Resources and Development introduced the paper which presented Court with a report on the outcome of the Voluntary Severance (VS) Scheme.
- 6.2. Discussion followed during which it was noted that the current focus of activity was to make the right appointments to replacement posts to ensure that the opportunities presented by the scheme were fully realised. It was noted that once the process of making new appointments had progressed further it would be possible to judge whether the anticipated outcomes had been achieved. The need to ensure that suitable interim arrangements were in place to enable continuity of activity in areas affected was emphasised, and it was noted that Deans of School had been tasked with putting plans in place. It was further noted that the VS Scheme would be reviewed as part of the 2015/16 internal audit programme.
- 6.3. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

**7. 2014/15 CORPORATE PLAN - UPDATE UC(14/15)59**

- 7.1. Court received the paper which provided Court with an update on progress against the delivery of the 2014/15 Corporate Plan.

7.2. Members welcomed the good progress detailed and commended the structure and presentation of the report.

7.3. Thereafter, Court **noted** the update.

**8. THREE YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST, BUDGET AND CORPORATE PLAN FOR 2015/16\* UC(14/15)60**

8.1. The Finance Director introduced the paper which provided Court with the financial forecasts for the period to 2017/18 and the budget for 2015/16, as recommended by the Finance & Property Committee. The Corporate Plan 2015/16 was also presented as context to the budget.

8.2. Discussion followed during which the issue of staff costs as a percentage of income was considered and it was noted that this figure was expected to reduce in future years as the investments currently underway began to make returns.

8.3. Thereafter Court **approved** the:

a) Budget for 2015/16.

b) Submission of the three-year financial forecasts to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

**9. REPORT FROM THE TNE SUB-GROUP**

9.1. Court received an update on the work of the TNE Sub-Group and noted that the Group would seek to submit its report to the Chair by the end of July.

**10. REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE ON COURT AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP UC(14/15)62**

10.1. Court received the report of the proceedings of the Nominations Committee held on 30 April 2015 which contained a number of proposals for Court's consideration and decision.

10.2. Court:

a) **Noted** the report of the meeting of Nominations Committee on 30 April 2015.

b) **Approved** the proposed membership and convenorship of Court Committees for 2015/16 as contained in Annex B.

**11. REVIEW OF ACADEMIC BOARD STRUCTURE AND REVISED CONSTITUTION UC(14/15)63**

11.1. Court received the paper which reported on the outcome of the Academic Board effectiveness review which had taken place over the 2014/15 session and presented the Board's revised Constitution for approval, subject to a minor amendment to the section on student representation to read "one student from each campus elected by the NSA". This was to provide a clearer description of the situation regarding these positions which were elected by and from the

student body by the NSA. Thanks were extended to the Assistant Secretary for his work in managing the review process and consultation.

11.2. Thereafter, Court:

- a) **noted** the outcome of the Academic Board effectiveness review and revised sub-committee structure.
- b) **approved** the revised Academic Board Constitution presented at appendix 1, subject to the minor amendment outlined above.

**12. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL ON INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW UC(14/15)64**

12.1. The Vice Principal (Deputy Vice Chancellor) introduced the paper which presented Court with a draft of the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on institution-led review and enhancement activities which would be finalised and sent to the SFC by the 30 September deadline. It was noted that Court would receive the final version of the report submitted to the SFC at a future meeting for information.

12.2. Thereafter Court:

- a) **approved** in principle the format and outline content of the draft report
- b) **authorised** the Vice Principal (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) to sign-off the final version of the report prior to this being submitted by 30 September 2015
- c) **authorised** the Chair of Court to sign and date the attached statement of assurance to be submitted with the final report.

**13. RISK MANAGEMENT**

**a)Key Risks Monitoring Schedule 2014/15\* UC(14/15)65**

13.1. Court received the paper which provided the third assessment of confidence in the management of the University's top risks for academic year 2014/15.

13.2. Court **noted** the report.

**b)University Top Risks for 2015/16\* UC(14/15)66**

13.3. Court received the paper which presented the Corporate Risk Register for 2015/16 as recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee and noted the process by which the register had been produced.

13.4. Thereafter Court **approved** the Corporate Risk Register for 2015/16.

**14. SIGNIFICANT EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS UC(14/15)67**

14.1. Court received the paper which provided a report on number of significant external developments which required to be considered by Court.

14.2. The European Union Referendum Bill was highlighted and it was noted that the University Leadership Team had proposed to support the Universities UK

(UUK) position on this issue which was to promote a positive position with regards to continued EU membership. Court endorsed this position.

14.3. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 was outlined and it was noted that work was underway to agree and adopt a common sectoral approach to meeting the duty which it imposed on Universities.

14.4. The Immigration Bill was highlighted and its potential impact on perceptions of the UK as an attractive student destination was noted.

14.5. Thereafter Court **noted** the report.

**15. APPOINTMENT OF CHANCELLOR\* UC(14/15)68**

15.1. Court received the report and **noted** the appointment of David Eustace as Chancellor of the University for a period of five years from 1 August 2015 until 31 July 2020.

**16. NOMINATIONS FOR HONORARY AWARDS\* UC(14/15)69**

16.1. Court **approved** the proposals for Honorary Awards, as recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee and approved by Academic Board.

**Part B For information**

**17. ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 12 JUNE 2015 UC(14/15)70**

17.1. Court **noted** the minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board of 12 June 2015.

**18. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT UC(14/15)71**

18.1. Court received and **noted** the Annual Report of activity in Health & Safety management, on the recommendation of the Health and Safety Committee, as confirmation that there are arrangements in place to secure and promote health and safety. Thanks were extended to all those involved for the effective management of this area.

18.2. Members commended the quality of the report and the achievement by the University of the ROSPA President's Award. The positive shift in the reduction of average days lost due to sickness absence was also welcomed.

**19. ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UC(14/15)72**

19.1. Court **noted** the annual report on Equality and Diversity which provided an assessment of progress against the eight Equality Outcomes designed to assist

institutions in their efforts to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. It was also noted that the University had now achieved the Athena Swan Bronze award.

19.2. Members noted the length of the report which they agreed made identification of trends and significant issues difficult. It was agreed that the format of the report would be reviewed and a summary version would be produced for future reports.

19.3. In response to a member's query about the apparently disproportionate number of Minority Ethnic students involved in appeals and complaints, it was agreed to look into this matter and bring further information back to Court.

19.4. In response to a member's comment about the data presented on gender pay, it was noted that this area would continue to be monitored.

**20. MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY REPORT 2015 UC(14/15)73**

20.1. Court **noted** the Mainstreaming Equality Report 2015.

**21. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN UC(14/15)74**

21.1. Court **noted** the high-level Stakeholder Engagement Plan which had now been adopted by the University Leadership Team (ULT).

**22. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE COURT EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW UC(14/15)75**

22.1. Court **noted** the report which provided assurance that the recommendations it approved in June 2014 following the 2013/14 Court Effectiveness Review had all been implemented over the past academic session.

**Part C Not intended for discussion**

**23. REPORTS FROM COURT COMMITTEES**

**23.a Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 27 May 2015\* UC(14/15)76**

23.1. The report was **noted**.

**23.b Finance & Property Committee meeting on 4 June 2015\* UC(14/15)77**

23.2 The report was **noted**.

**24. VALEDICTIONS**

24.1. The Chair paid tribute to demitting members of Court; Richard Sweetman, Bruce Rigby, Steven Logie, Dan Smith & Ryan Strachan. All were thanked for their significant contributions to the work of Court and the University.

## **25. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS / ADDITIONAL UPDATES**

25.1. The dates of future Court meetings were **noted**.

## **Part D Appointment of Chair of Court**

### **26. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF COURT**

[The Chair of Court left the meeting during discussion of this item which was presented by the Vice-Chair of Court]

26.1. The Vice-Chair of Court reported the outcome of the review which she had undertaken with members regarding the Chair's performance and suitability for re-appointment for a second term. It was noted that members were all content that he be invited to serve a second term.

26.2. Thereafter Court **approved** the re-appointment of Dr Graham Forbes as lay member and Chair of Court for a second four-year term of office running from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2020.

\*Denotes a paper to which an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.