

**UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE****UNIVERSITY COURT**

A meeting of the University Court was held on 13 June in the Ustinov Room of the Bonar Hall, City Campus, University of Dundee.

Present: Amanda Millar (in the Chair) (items 62 to 78);  
Tricia Bey (in the Chair for item 79);  
Richard Bint;  
Gregory Colgan;  
Claire Cunningham;  
Professor Sir Mike Ferguson;  
Professor Iain Gillespie (Principal & Vice-Chancellor);  
Jane Marshall;  
Dr David Martin;  
Dr Anna Notaro;  
Professor Mairi Scott;  
Karthik Subramanya;  
Jay Surti;  
Sharon Sweeney;  
Karen Thomson;  
Susan Walker; and  
Keith Winter.

In Attendance: Professor Wendy Alexander (Vice-Principal (International));  
Janice Aitken (incoming Senate member on Court)  
Glenn Allison (incoming lay member on Court):  
Peter Fotheringham (Director of Finance);  
Dr Neale Laker (Deputy University Secretary);  
Linda Martindale (incoming Senate member on Court)  
Dr Jim McGeorge (University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer);  
Dr Christine Milburn (Head of Principal's Office) (online);  
Anne Poulson (Director of Strategic Change & Delivery)  
Professor Shane O'Neill (Senior Vice-Principal);  
Dr Liz Rogers (Risk & Business Continuity Manager);  
Amina Shah (incoming lay member on Court); and  
Rebecca Trengove (Director of External Relations)

Apologies: Alan Bainbridge, Professor Blair Grubb, Alex Killick, Andrew Lothian, Ron Mobed, Nyasha Mutembwa, Dr Alison Ramsay, Carla Rossini, Professor Garry Taylor.

**62. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR OF COURT**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting of the Court and requested that the confidentiality of the matters for discussion be respected. The Chair welcomed Janice Aitken, Glenn Allison, Linda Martindale and Amina Shah to their first meeting of Court in an observer capacity. The Chair also welcomed Anne Poulson, Director of Strategic Change and Delivery, to her first meeting of Court. Noting it would be the last meeting in which Richard Bint, Jane

Marshall, Dr David Martin and Professor Mairi Scott would be present, the Chair thanked them for their valuable contributions to the Court and its committees.

63. **MINUTES**

**The Court decided:** to approve the minutes of the meeting on 25 April 2023.

64. **MATTERS ARISING**

Action Log

The Court received the action log of Court business and noted that all actions were either complete or already on the agenda.

**The Court decided:** to note the update.

65. **CHAIR'S REPORT TO COURT**

The Court received an oral report from the Chair on activities undertaken on behalf of the Court and the University at a University and sectoral level. Members were advised that the Chair had been involved in the recruitment for a new Vice-Principal (Research) and that the Chair had attended the Advance HE Scottish Governance Symposium, and the DUSA Presidents' Dinner. The Chair had also visited the School of Art & Design's undergraduate degree show and had represented the University of Dundee in a visit to the Glasgow School of Art's directors' preview of their Degree Show.

The Chair was delighted to inform the Court that the University had won the title of Higher Educational Institution of the Year in the Herald HE Awards 2023. Separately, the Chair congratulated the Principal & Vice-Chancellor on his election as Convener of Universities Scotland for two years from 1 August 2023.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

66. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COURT**

The Chair provided members with an update on discussions she had had with colleagues on how to enhance communications from and engagement with the University Court. The Chair recommended that a communication be issued outlining highlights of Court discussions to help the University community better understand the role of the University Court and how it operated. The Chair suggested that it might be advisable to invite the Head of Corporate Communications to attend some Court meetings in order to be able to take this work forwards. Members agreed that the Chair's recommendations would improve transparency and the visibility of the Court.

**The Court decided:** (i) to support the proposal; and  
(ii) to note the update.

67. **UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP REPORT TO COURT**

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor introduced the University Executive Group report to Court,

which provided an update on emerging sectoral issues, strategic matters, and recent events. The Principal drew attention to the Sir Paul Nurse review, highlighting challenges with UK funded research and emerging risks from the recommendations outlined within the publication. Members noted that the Principal had engaged with a number of politicians and other principals to coordinate an effective response to the publication. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of Court.

The Principal had recently visited Iraq to explore the potential for new Higher Education partnerships, noting he was the first Vice-Chancellor to visit in ten years. The Principal informed the Court that there were huge opportunities for collaboration and partnership in Iraq. He had also recently visited two Chinese universities, Central South University and Northeastern University, where he had sought to re-energise and strengthen partnerships, and was the first Vice-Chancellor to visit China since the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the Principal provided members with an update on the University's financial performance and outlook, informing the Court that strategic funding of £20m proposed by the SFC had now been withdrawn. Whilst this was disappointing news, it would not mean that the University would receive a lower allocation than originally reported.

Finally, the Principal expressed his congratulations to Professor Pamela Ferguson who had been named as this year's winner of the Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Teaching, and to Professor Andrew Hopkins who had been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He then drew members' attention to the awards and prizes achieved by staff at the University of Dundee and advised the Court of progress in the appointment of individuals to senior roles.

Discussions focused on research and sustainability and the University's financial performance.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

## 68. **RESERVED BUSINESS: BUDGET AND 5-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN**

The Director of Finance introduced the budget and 5-year financial plan. The Court were pleased to note that the University was operating at a surplus for the first time in a decade, and that risk to financial sustainability was now deemed to be within risk appetite. The University's cash position was stronger than previously forecast, and as such the University would be looking to borrow a smaller amount than previously suggested to support its capital ambitions. Members noted that the capital plan had increased to allow for the School of Business project, with other elements of the capital plan in line with that approved in the prior year. A contingency of £30m was held in the Estates capital budget to potentially provide for increased costs and/or projects not yet identified.

Discussions focused on growth, including staffing and accommodation. Members noted that there would be a net increase of 51 FTE to the core staff establishment into 2023/24, which the Director confirmed would include both academic and professional services staff. The Court also noted that the Vice-Principal (Education) and University Secretary had met regularly with Dundee City Council to discuss student numbers, and that a 3–5-year plan was in place in terms of accommodation requirements for students. Members noted that changes in immigration rules, under which taught postgraduate students would be unable to bring dependents from 1

January 2024, would likely reduce the requirement for family accommodation.

Members then discussed whether it was possible to better predict the income from commercialisation opportunities such as spin-out companies. The Court noted the unpredictable nature of returns from such activity, but were reassured to note that an internal audit had been scheduled on research and innovation activity, and this issue could be raised as part of the scoping for the audit.

Members approved the budget and 5-year financial plan, noting: the level of investment into academic development and student support; the potential for a new build for the School of Business; the ongoing partnership work relating to student accommodation; and the cost and benefits of investing in research.

**The Court decided:** (i) to approve the budget; and  
(ii) to approve the 5-year financial plan.

#### 69. **UNIVERSITY STRATEGY 2022-27: SUB-STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLANS UPDATE**

The Senior Vice-Principal introduced the end-of-year summary of achievements in delivering the University Strategy 2022-27. Members noted that some aspects of the sub-strategies had been delayed due to vacancies on the UEG, particularly in relation to research with impact and engagement & enterprise, yet there had still been several achievements in these areas to date.

The Director of Strategic Change & Delivery informed members that she would be developing the next phase of the implementation plans to maximise opportunities for delivery. Members noted that the addition of the Director to the University Executive Group was a positive step. The Principal re-iterated that the purpose of the Directorate of Strategic Change & Delivery would be to drive and enable change, as opposed to merely being a project management office.

Discussions focused on the University Strategy and Vision, with members asking that future reporting provided a high-level view on the strategy and the University vision. The Director confirmed that work would also be undertaken to provide the Court with clear update reports on the delivery of the strategy to ensure that the Court was sighted on progress and any areas where actions might not be progressing at pace.

**The Court decided:** to note the update.

#### 70. **MEMBERSHIP OF COURT COMMITTEES**

Members reviewed a paper from the Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance) outlining proposed committee memberships for 2023/24.

**The Court decided:** to approve the proposed committee memberships.

#### 71. **REPORT FROM THE MEETING OF THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS**

Members reviewed the report from the meeting of the Senatus Academicus on 24 May 2023. One member sought clarification on the impact of the UCU marking and assessment boycott on students due to graduate in June 2023. The Principal informed the Court that a very small number of students had not had their dissertations marked, but that as these students were intercalated medical students it would not impact their progression to their target MBChB

award. The Principal confirmed that no students would be graduating with unclassified degrees as a result of the boycott.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

## 72. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### (1) Audit & Risk Committee Report

The Convener of the Audit & Risk Committee introduced the report from the most recent meeting, in doing so drawing members attention to the internal audit progress report, HESA estates return, external audit planning report and institutional risk register. The Convener informed members that he was pleased with progress on internal audit actions and that as a result it was likely that the University would receive a more positive risk rating for the year 2022/23. Members noted the external auditors would provide the Audit & Risk Committee with an updated external audit planning report in order to highlight the impact of the new external audit standard on the fees associated with the work as well as the timeline.

#### (i) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 11 May 2023

The Court received the minutes of the meeting.

**The Court decided:** (i) to approve the Committee's endorsement of the institutional risk register (**appendix**);  
(ii) to approve the minutes.

### (2) Finance & Policy Committee

The Convener of Finance & Policy Committee introduced the minutes from the most recent meeting, highlighting Committee discussions on student growth and accommodation, net zero and associated KPIs and overall estate space utilisation. He also drew members' attention to financial benchmarking with the Wesley Group and other Scottish universities and the TRAC 2021 results.

#### (ii) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 23 May 2023

The Court received the minutes of the meeting.

**The Court decided:** (i) to approve the Committee's endorsement of the budget and financial plan (**appendix**);  
(ii) to approve the minutes.

### (3) Governance & Nominations Committee

The Chair introduced the minutes from the most recent meeting of the Governance & Nominations Committee.

(i) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 23 May 2023

The Court received the minutes of the meeting.

**The Court decided:** (i) to approve the Committee's endorsement of committee memberships (**appendix**);

(ii) to approve the minutes.

(4) Pensions Sub-Committee

The Court received the minutes from the meeting on 12 May 2023 of the Pension Sub-Committee of the Finance & Policy Committee.

**The Court decided:** (i) to note the minutes.

(5) People & Organisational Development Committee

The Convener introduced the minutes from the most recent meeting of the People & Organisational Development Committee. The Convener highlighted Committee discussions on the staff survey.

(i) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 17 May 2023

The Court received the minutes of the meeting.

**The Court decided:** to approve the minutes.

(6) RESERVED BUSINESS: Remuneration Committee Minutes

The Convener introduced the minutes from the most recent meeting of the Remuneration Committee.

(i) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 22 May 2023: Senior Staff Performance Framework

The Court received the minutes of the meeting.

**The Court decided:** to approve the minutes.

(ii) Severance Arrangements

The Court received the minutes of the meeting.

**The Court decided:** to approve the minutes.

The Chair of court thanked all conveners and committee members for their work for the year 2022/23.

73. **STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Court received the minutes from the Staff Council meeting on 24 May 2023.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

74. **NARRATIVE FOR THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS**

The Chair of Court recommended, and the Court agreed, to highlight to Senate the award to the University of the title Higher Educational Institution of the Year in the Herald Awards 2023, alongside the Court's thanks to Dr David Martin and Professor Mairi Scott as outgoing Senate members on Court.

**The Court decided:** to note the areas for inclusion in the report to the Senate.

75. **DUSA ANNUAL REPORT**

The Court received and considered the above annual report from DUSA.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

76. **SPORTS UNION ANNUAL REPORT**

The Court received and considered the above annual report from the Sports Union. The Chair and Court commended the report and asked that their congratulations be passed on to all those involved in the success of the Sports Union, noting the limited budget and success stories in terms of charitable giving.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

77. **SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL: OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2022/23**

The Court received the Outcome Agreement 2022/23 as finally agreed with the SFC.

**The Court decided:** to note the report.

78. **SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS**(1) Appointments

The Court noted the appointment of the following members of staff:

| Name            | Title  | New appointment | Internal promotion |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|--------------------|
| Shona Johnston  | Deputy Director of Student Services  | Yes             | Yes                |
| Claudette Jones | Director of Digital Technology Services                                    | Yes             | Yes                |
| Elise Gallagher | Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development                   | Yes             | No                 |
| Michael Bodkin  | Head of Computational Chemistry/Personal Chair of Biomedical Data Services | Yes             | No                 |

(2) Appointments

The Court approved the appointment of Robert Holmes as an Honorary Chaplain for the period of 1 year in the first instance, with immediate effect.

- The Court decided:**
- (i) to approve the appointment of Robert Holmes as an Honorary Chaplain; and
  - (ii) to note the other appointments.

79. **REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS CHAIR OF COURT**

The Chair of Court and officers, aside from the University Secretary, Deputy University Secretary and Risk & Business Continuity Manager (*qua* Clerk to Court for this meeting), left the meeting to allow discussions on the Review of Effectiveness for the Chair of Court. The Deputy Chair of Court facilitated a session which sought feedback on the Chair's effectiveness, which the Deputy Chair would relay privately following the meeting.

**The Court decided:** the Deputy Chair would provide feedback to the Chair.

Amanda Millar  
Chair of Court  
University of Dundee



**Appendix 1****UEG Report to Court****A. PRINCIPAL'S INTRODUCTION**

1. I am writing my final introduction of the 2022/23 academic year from Iraq, where I have been delighted with the reception that the University has received as we explore further opportunities along our globalisation journey. Together with my recent visit to China, I am excited to strengthen our partnerships and share our strategy at a global level.
2. Looking back over the year, we have a positive story to tell – we launched our new Strategy to 2027, developed a new integrated planning and budget-setting process, recruited 4 new members of UEG, significantly scaled up our engagement on a political level and made progress towards establishment of a Sustainability Institute – to name but a few milestones. I have confidence that together, this provides us with a refreshed platform to begin the 2023/24 academic year.
3. I am thrilled to announce that we were recently named Higher Educational Institution of the Year at The Herald Higher Education Awards. The main award was accompanied by a host of individual and team awards, emphasising not only the quality but the breadth of our impact, including a Lifetime Achievement Award for Professor Sir Philip Cohen, Enhancing Student Learning Award for the School of Business, Innovative Use of Technology Award for the Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science and finally, an Award for Outstanding Contribution from a Student for Cameron Irons. This is an outstanding result and huge testament to the efforts of our staff and students.
4. Finally, we are soon approaching my favourite time of the year, as we see our graduands cross the stage and become alumni of our University. I hope as many of you as possible can join us for these celebrations from 20 - 23 June.

**B. SECTORAL AND POLICY MATTERS****Universities Scotland**

5. We are pleased to announce, in embargoed news, that the Principal has been elected as Convener of Universities Scotland, and will officially assume his position on 1 August 2023. We believe this appointment presents an opportunity for the University to benefit from the access and influence the Principal will gain from this prestigious sector-wide role. Together with the news reported in the previous report; that Sally Mapstone has been appointed Convener of UUK, this provides a strong opportunity to influence, lobby and advocate for the Scottish HE interests via US and UUK on the most pertinent issues affecting the sector. The Principal will look to use his position to address core challenges such as strategy and policy relevant to the funding system, student mobility and recruitment and innovation to support economic transformation. The Chair of Court has indicated support and has been assured that given recent appointments to key leadership positions, the level of commitment required from the Principal can be managed effectively.

**Nurse Review**

6. The government commissioned independent review of the UK's research landscape was published in March 2023, as part of its plans to ensure research institutions "serve the needs of businesses and

places across the UK". The findings and subsequent recommendations of the report generally echo the views of the sector around the future of research – namely, the way that university research is funded in the UK is fundamentally unsustainable. Whilst the report offers several sensible recommendations, the implications of others are less clear, and potentially pose a major risk to Scottish biomedical sciences research and in turn, to the University and the city of Dundee.

7. Following its publication, the Principal has engaged with a number of politicians and other Principals in Scotland, and internally, we have set up a small working group to coordinate an effective response. The Principal will update the Court on the work of this group at the meeting.

## C. PEOPLE MATTERS

### Pay, Pensions and Industrial Relations

8. As reported to Court in April, there continues to be industrial action in the form of Action Short of a Strike (ASOS) by UCU which has, to date, had limited impact on our students. In addition, there was a further single day of strike action by UCU 31 May.

### Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

9. We continue to move ahead with our refreshed approach to EDI. The draft EDI Strategy, that PODCo has supported, is out for consultation and we have approved a strategic investment bid to increase our capacity and capability to ensure we advance, embed and mainstream equality across the institution as set out in the University Strategy.

### Staff engagement survey

10. Our new staff engagement survey ran during May with a response rate of 66%, up from 62% in 2019. Our survey partners Hive will be presenting results to UEG and UMG later this month and we will be using the insight to develop actions that inform the People & Talent strategy priorities as well as local actions within each School and Directorate. PODCo and Court will be apprised periodically.

## D. STRATEGIC MATTERS

### Strategy Implementation

11. As we near the end of the current academic year, it is an opportune time to reflect with members on the implementation of our new University Strategy. Members will find a comprehensive update in Paper F, which sets out progress against our five sub-strategies as well as key achievements. We have come a long way on our journey, and the development of a more robust and integrated planning and budgeting process has allowed us to create a platform for effective strategy delivery. We must continue to build on this to create a culture at the University that enables confidence and agility in the implementation of our strategy.
12. Members will have noted from the Principal's email dated 23 May the appointment of Professor Lianne Gibson of the University of Loughborough as Vice-Principal (Research) and Dr David McBeth, as Vice-Principal (Enterprise & Economic Transformation). Together with other previously reported appointments we now have a complete and strong leadership team in place to drive delivery of our Strategy. We look forward to welcoming them on to the Executive team from 28 August 2023.

## Financial Performance and Outlook

13. The SFC announced the final allocation of funding for HEI's on 25 May, with the outcome for the University being consistent with our expectations of a broadly flat cash allocation in total, as discussed by the Finance & Policy Committee on 23 May. Additional strategic funding of £20m to "support the transition to a financially sustainable system" initially provided to the SFC by Scottish Government for the universities sector was subsequently withdrawn. Whilst this is disappointing for the sector, it does however have no adverse impact on our allocation.
14. Members will find elsewhere on the agenda a paper detailing the proposed budget over the course of the next five years. The plan reflects the continuing improved financial health of the University in the context of the 2022-2027 financial strategy. The overall outcomes demonstrate our growth ambition combined with the work achieved to date to deliver financial sustainability.

## Student Recruitment and Partnerships

15. As expected, the UK Government has announced that from January 2024 international students on TPG courses will no longer be permitted to bring dependents. The impact is yet to be seen, but we continue to monitor the situation closely whilst taking measures to mitigate risks including those relating to accommodation and demand. We continue to take steps to diversify our intakes which should strengthen our position in this regard. Fortunately, the more controversial suggestion of linking visa award to a tiering system for universities has not been taken forward.
16. Earlier last month, the Principal visited China to meet with our partners at Central South University and Northeastern University. During his visit he also met with the British Council, UK Embassy officials, the China-British Business Council and British Chamber of Commerce to discuss the latest developments and opportunities for higher education in China as well as opportunities in research. We were the first UK university to have our Vice Chancellor visit China since the easing of the pandemic, which was strongly welcomed by our partners who saw this as a strong sign of our commitment. We will be reflecting on the trip as an Executive in the coming weeks, particularly opportunities to re-energise our current partnerships, aligned with our mission and Strategy.

## Quality Enhancement and Standards Review

17. The University recently received the draft report of the recent QAA Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) which looks at how we deliver a high-quality education for our students and maintain our academic standards. The report was very positive about the quality assurance processes and academic standards at the University. It talked positively about our developmental work and highlighted areas of good practice such as implementation of our institutional strategy, use of student journey data, curriculum design principles and future plans for the Education Academy.
18. One recommendation of the report was related to the need to review professional services support for learning, teaching and the student experience in a more systematic way. This is something we already had in mind, particularly given our ambitions for student growth, and the Vice-Principal (Education) and University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer will take this work forward. Overall, this was a very good outcome which demonstrates that the QAA have a high level of confidence in the University.

## Community Achievements

19. We are delighted to announce that Professor Andrew Hopkins, Founder, and Chief Executive of Exscientia and Honorary Professor at the University of Dundee, has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. The award recognises Professor Hopkins ability to harness interdisciplinary ideas and unique talent across entrepreneurship and innovation.
20. We would also like to congratulate Professor Pamela Ferguson (School of Humanities, Social Sciences & Law) in being named this year's winner of the Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Teaching. This is the most prestigious teaching award made by the University and recognises practice which is not only excellent but deemed to be outstanding.

## Appendix 1. Research Related Grants

1. The selection of grants and awards detailed below is intended to showcase the diverse range of research undertaken across the University which is enabled by funding sources that include research councils, charities and industrial sponsors. Please note that any joint awards listed below state the University of Dundee value only.
2. Members can find a full list of research grants and awards since the last reporting period in the 'Supplementary Information' folder.

### A. Research Award Highlights

#### (i) **Professor J K Dale (Life Sciences)**

**Post Transcriptional Regulation of Oscillatory Clock Gene Expression During Somitogenesis £949,519 (including £319,000 overheads) from the Medical Research Council**

The project will investigate a specific process in the developing embryo called segmentation. This is where distinct groups of cells periodically separated off from a rod of tissue at the tail of the embryo. The resulting segments (called somites) later form the bones and muscles of the skeleton.

#### (ii) **Dr D Neill (Life Sciences)**

**The Impact of Thermally-Regulated Cell Wall Modifications on Streptococcus Pneumoniae Pathogenesis (Joint with University of Liverpool and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay) £380,289 (including £226,284 overheads) from the Medical Research Council**

Bacteria that inhabit the human airways must adapt to the differing conditions of the upper and lower respiratory tract. *Streptococcus pneumoniae* colonises the upper airways of humans without causing disease but when it descends into the lungs it can cause severe pneumonia that can progress to invasive disease. This project will investigate how this bacterium senses and responds to the differing temperatures in the upper and lower airways, and how this influences its ability to cause disease.

#### (iii) **Dr C Li (Science & Engineering)**

**Explainable Artificial Intelligence for Precision Neuro-Oncology – Joint with University of Cambridge - Fellowship £58,399 (including £58,399 overheads) from the Guarantors of Brain**

This project aims to develop innovative AI methods to predict tumour invasion using brain MRI scans. By addressing the limitations of current AI approaches, we strive to establish a trustworthy and interpretable AI solution for real-world healthcare settings. The AI model will be seamlessly integrated into clinical systems, allowing for practical implementation in clinics and validation using patient data collected from clinical trials.

This AI tool has the potential to enhance the identification of invisible tumour regions by clinicians, leading to more accurate surgical interventions and radiotherapy treatments. Furthermore, a validated AI solution could be scaled and deployed across multiple healthcare centres, offering a cost-effective approach to improve patient outcomes and benefit our broader society.

- (iv) **Dr J R Boehnke (Health Sciences)**  
**Long-Term Modelling Tools for Adolescent Mental Health and Wellbeing Research (Joint with Universities of York, Sheffield, Essex College London, Bradford Teaching Hospital and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)**  
**£36,934 (including £35,296 overheads) from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)**

Adolescent mental health and wellbeing (AMHW) difficulties cause suffering to adolescents, their families, and increase the risk of negative outcomes throughout adult life. Since it is difficult to tell whether AMHW problems will persist, planning and evaluating the effects of interventions for their prevention and mitigation is difficult at scale. The project combines expertise from a range of research disciplines, high-quality cohort data of adolescents born across the four nations, with lived experience as well as input from policy and decision makers to develop an interactive tool to explore potential long-term effects of interventions.

**Appendix 1, Annex A**  
**Research Grants and Awards Since Last Reporting Period**

**A. Research Awards >£500,000**

| <b>Name</b>           | <b>School</b> | <b>Project Title</b>   | <b>Total Value</b>                             | <b>Funder</b>                     |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Professor I H Gilbert | Life Sciences | Discovery of NSP-14 Inhibitors to Treat COVID and Other Viral Diseases   | £3,625,091 (including £324,925 overheads)      | Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation |
| Professor I H Gilbert | Life Sciences | Developing Inhibitors of Plasmodium Acetyl CoA Synthetase as New Multistage Antimalarials (Joint with Columbia University) DPFS Full Application | £2,898,314 (including £1,195,450.66 overheads) | Medical Research Council          |
| Professor J K Dale    | Life Sciences | Post Transcriptional Regulation of Oscillatory Clock Gene Expression During Somitogenesis  | £949,519 (including £319,000 overheads)        | Medical Research Council          |
| Dr W Farnaby          | Life Sciences | Unlocking Mitophagy Activation with Small Molecule Targeted Protein Stabilisers – Fellowship (Joint with UCL/Francis Crick Institute)            | £859,090                                       | Wellcome Trust                    |

**B. Research Awards >£100,000 - <£500,000**

| <b>Name</b>             | <b>School</b>    | <b>Project Title</b>  | <b>Total Value</b>                      | <b>Funder</b>                                      |
|-------------------------|------------------|---|---|--|
| Professor I S Mackenzie | Medicine         | Enabling more and better trials through effective use of health data  | £495,336.59                             | HDR UK (Health Data Research UK)                   |
| Dr A Lloyd              | Life Sciences    | Functional and Proteomic Characterisation of Microglia Cell States in Neurodegeneration (Joint with The Francis Crick Institute) – Fellowship                                     | £464,693                                | Alzheimers Research UK                             |
| Professor D R Alessi    | Life Sciences    | Louis-Jeantet Prize 2023 – Personal Award   | £398,279.13                             | Louis-Jeantet Foundation                           |
| Dr D Neill              | Life Sciences    | The Impact of Thermally-Regulated Cell Wall Modifications on Streptococcus Pneumonia Pathogenesis (Joint with University of Liverpool and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay) | £380,289 (including £226,289 overheads) | Medical Research Council                           |
| Dr C Cole               | Medicine         | HDR UK QQR2 Phenomics (joint with HDR UK and UCL and 30 others)   | £313,985                                | HDR UK (Health Data Research UK)                   |
| Dr V Singh              | Life Sciences    | Mechanistic Bases for Gain of Olfaction Capacity in Caenorhabditis Elegans – (Wolfson Fellowship)   | £298,177                                | Royal Society                                      |
| Mrs H Whaley            | Library Services | Open Access Bloack Award 2023 – University of Dundee  | £232,906.90                             | Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council |

|                      |               |                              |                                       |  |
|----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Dr M M A A De Rycker | Life Sciences | Extension of DNDi Grant 2023 | £106,437 (including £9,676 overheads) | Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi) |
|----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|

C. Research Awards <£100,000

| Name                 | School                              | Project Title   | Total Value                                 | Funder   |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Dr C Maniaci         | Life Sciences                       | Regulation of Protein Stability by Lysine Hydroxylation (DP Fellowship) (Transfer)  | £82,029 (including £42,425 overheads)       | Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council |
| Dr E Hall            | Science and Engineering             | STFC PhD Scientific Machine Learning for Solar Physics  | £81,631                                     | Science and Technology Facilities Council              |
| Dr J Ross            | Humanities, Social Sciences and Law | Art At the Start: A Community Hub Supporting Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (with Crossreach Perinatal Infant Mental Health)  | £76,665                                     | Charles Gordon Foundation                              |
| Dr M M A A De Rycker | Life Sciences                       | Extension of DNDi Grant (2022)  | £75,582 (including £6,871 overheads)        | Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi)         |
| Dr J Joseph          | Science and Engineering             | Multimodal Imaging for Therapeutic Guidance and Treatment Monitoring  | £69,891                                     | Royal Society  |
| Dr C Li              | Science and Engineering             | Explainable Artificial Intelligence for Precision Neuro-Oncology – Joint with University of Cambridge – Fellowship  | £58,399 (including £58,399 overheads)       | Guarantors of Brain                                    |
| Dr J A Knappett      | Science and Engineering             | Martian Rammed Earth  | £48,782.96 (including £21,947.32 overheads) | UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)                      |
| Dr J R Boehnke       | Health Sciences                     | Long-Term Modelling Tools for Adolescent Mental Health and Wellbeing Research (Joint with Universities of York, Sheffield, Essex College London, Bradford Teaching Hospital and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) | £36,935 (including £35,934 overheads)       | UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)                      |
| Dr AJS Cuthbertson   | Science and Engineering             | ExPand In2 the Future. Realising the Full Capacity of the Scottish Salmon Industry (Funded Extension for WP1/WP2) – Joint University of Highlands and Islands (SAMS)  | £35,002 (including £20,268 overheads)       | Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre                 |
| Dr AJS Cuthbertson   | Science and Engineering             | ExPand In2 the Future. Realising the Full Capacity of the Scottish Salmon Industry (Funded Extension for WP1/WP2) – Joint with University of Highlands and Islands (SAMS)   | £28,000 (including £16,735 overheads)       | Salmon Scotland  |
| Dr J R Boehnke       | Health Sciences                     | The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on People with Severe   | £9,549 (including £9,549 overheads)         | Medical Research Council                               |



|                        |                 |  |                                     |  |
|------------------------|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
|                        |                 | Mental Illness and on Mental Health Service Provision in South Asia (IMPASS) (Joint with Rawalpindi Medical College)               |                                     |  |
| Professor C MacKintosh | Life Sciences   | DTP Bid Led by University of Dundee; Training Grant, Doctoral Training Partnerships (Additional Funding)                           | £9,353                              | Medical Research Council                           |
| Dr A Mohan             | Health Sciences | DEAPP Dental Engagement in Addressing Alcohol Problems Among Patients – Joint with Universities of Glasgow Caledonian and Stirling | £3,582                              | Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems – SHAAP |
| Dr J R Boehnke         | Health Sciences | Children and Young People’s Mental Health Research and Evaluation Programme (Joint with EBPJ and the Anna Freud Centre)            | £1,953 (including £1,953 overheads) | Department for Education                           |

**Appendix 2****Audit & Risk Committee Minutes**

A meeting of the Committee was held on 11 May 2023.

Present: Keith Winter (Convener);  
Tricia Bey (via TEAMS);  
Andy Lothian; and  
Irene Wilson.

In Attendance: Professor Wendy Alexander Vice-Principal (International)  
Peter Fotheringham Director of Finance;  
Rob Jones EY;  
Dr Neale Laker Deputy University Secretary;  
James Lucas KPMG (via TEAMS) (items 1-4);  
Dr Liz Rogers Risk & Business Continuity Manager;  
Syed Shah KMPG (via TEAMS) (items 1-4).

Apologies: Richard Bint, Dr Jim McGeorge, Olga Potapova, Alison Ramsay, Kenny Stewart, Susan Walker.

The Convener thanked Stephen Reid (EY) for his contributions to the Committee and welcomed Rob Jones (EY) to the meeting.

1. **MINUTES**

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes from the meeting of 28 February 2023.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

(i) Action Log

The Committee considered a log of ongoing actions. The Committee noted that the University Executive Group would carry out a deep dive into staff-related risk in June 2023. Members also noted that a management action tracker and update on recommendations from the cyber internal audit had been included in the internal audit progress report.

**Resolved:** to approve the Audit & Risk Committee action log as presented.

3. **CONVENER'S REPORT**

The Convener informed the Committee that he had attended the usual pre-meeting with officers and that he had met with the internal and external auditors. The Convener had also met with the Convener of the People & Organisational Development Committee to discuss the proposed deep dive into people-related risk; it had been agreed that the committees would instead await the outputs from the planned UEG deep dive on 7 June 2023.

At the meeting of University Court on 25 April 2023, a suite of policies that the Committee had endorsed on Anti-Bribery, Whistleblowing and Conflicts of Interest had been approved.

The Convener had shared the minutes from the recent meeting of Scottish Audit & Risk

Committee Chairs with members of the Committee.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

#### 4. INTERNAL AUDIT

##### (i) Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee reviewed the internal audit progress report. The Committee noted that five of the eight planned audits for 2022/23 had now been completed with fieldwork for two audits also underway. Members noted that no 'high' rated findings had been raised since the last progress report (28 February 2023).

Discussions focused on outstanding actions from previous reviews, with members noting that the internal audit team continued to challenge audit sponsors to ensure deadlines provided remained reasonable and realistic. The Committee also discussed the OSaR process and the way in which staff who had not had an OSaR could report this. The Deputy University Secretary agreed that, if it was deemed necessary following review, guidance could be updated to ensure the process for this was clear.

The Convener asked the internal auditors if, on the basis of the progress recorded on audit actions as reported, the University would be on track for an audit assurance rating of 'significant assurance with minor improvement'. The internal auditors advised, without commitment, that the position was moving in the right direction for this rating.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

##### (ii) Data Quality – HESA Estates Return

The internal auditors introduced their review of the HESA Return, which had focused on the University's processes for the completion of the HESA Estates Return. The auditors had provided an assurance rating of 'significant assurance with minor improvement required'. In terms of recommendations, 2 'medium priority' and 7 'low priority' recommendations had been made pertaining to control design and 1 'medium priority' recommendation for operating effectiveness.

Opportunities for improvement focused on the overall governance of the end-to-end process of collecting HESA data, including documenting approvals and defining roles and responsibilities. The Committee noted that the review into the HESA Student Return had identified similar opportunities for improvement. Management had accepted all of the findings and recommendations in the report.

The HESA return for Estates was not mandatory for Scottish higher education institutions, but it was 'highly recommended' by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Members noted that it was good practice in the sector to complete the return, but that the University would carry out a full cost-benefit analysis to determine the future direction of travel.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

(iii) Severance Arrangements: Phase Two

Following the phase one review of the severance procedures in place at the University of Dundee, which had focused on compliance in relation to the SFC's Financial Memorandum, the internal auditors had completed phase two of the review where a sample of severance payments had been tested to ensure compliance with the updated Severance Policy. The audit had tested 6 approved Voluntary Severance (VS) and 5 rejected VS applications. The internal auditors provided an assurance rating of 'significant assurance with minor improvement opportunities' which was in line with management's expectations. The internal auditors advised 2 'low priority' control recommendations and 1 'medium priority' operating effectiveness recommendations.

**Resolved:** subject to a minor amendment, to note the report.

(iv) Internal Audit Plan 2023/24

The internal auditors introduced the draft internal audit plan for 2023/24. The draft plan had been developed with input from University officers. The internal auditors proposed six reviews: core financial controls – research finance management (post award); academics appraisal process; school administration and support; research and innovation services; digital strategy – implementation phase; and disaster recovery. Members approved the plan and informed the internal auditors that the risk universe and alignment to previous and planned audits was especially helpful.

The Committee also reviewed the Internal Audit Charter, which outlined the responsibilities of internal audit in line with the Public Sector Audit Standards. Members noted that there had been no changes to the Internal Audit Charter since the Committee last reviewed this in 2022/23.

**Resolved:** (i) to approve the internal audit plan 2023/24.  
(ii) to approve the Internal Audit Charter.

5. **EXTERNAL AUDIT: AUDIT PLANNING REPORT 2022/23**

The external auditor outlined their approach to be taken in carrying out the external audit for the year ending July 2023, setting out the scope, fee and materiality thresholds for the audit. The external auditor formally confirmed their independence and adherence to external audit standards, with members noting that the external audit for 2022/23 would meet the new external audit standard ISA 315.

The Committee noted general and expected areas for focus, for example on misstatements due to fraud or error, fraud in revenue recognition and accounting for valuation of intangible assets. As a result of the implementation of ISA 315, there would be an increased focus on identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement. The materiality thresholds would remain the same as in the year ending 31 July 2021.

Discussions focused on the potential impact of the new ISA 315 standard, and particularly on the external audit timeline and fees. It was agreed that the plan would be updated to reflect these discussions.

**Resolved:** (i) to update the report to include a breakdown and scope of fees for 2023/24.  
(ii) to note the update.

## 6. INSTITUTIONAL RISK REGISTER

The Risk & Business Continuity Manager provided members with an update on the strategic institutional risk register (**appendix**). Members were pleased to note that risk 7 'finance' was now deemed to be within the University's risk appetite and passed their congratulations on to all who were involved in the achievement of a more sustainable financial position. The Committee also noted the introduction of a new risk on 'working overseas', a reduction in the likelihood for 'programme offering' and the removal of 'power outages' due to a very low likelihood of rota disconnects in spring/summer 2023. The Risk & Business Continuity Manager had also worked with the University Executive Group to enhance how staff-related risks were reported to ensure there was no overlap across the risk register and enhance risk management processes in this area. The Group were pleased to note that risk owners were engaged in managing risks and ensuring the risk register remained updated.

Discussions focused on cybersecurity and ransomware attacks and on new challenges with artificial intelligence. Members also commented that the accompanying summary was helpful.

**Resolved:** for its part, to endorse the institutional risk register to the Court for approval.

## 7. ANNUAL RISK & BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Risk & Business Continuity Manager introduced the annual risk & business continuity management report, which included an overview of risk management, business continuity planning and incident management activity at the University.

Members noted that the University had been in a stronger position to respond to incidents due to work that had taken place to implement and embed the University's business continuity management framework. Lessons learned from incidents had been used to inform planning, and horizon scanning was used as a tool to identify areas of focus for business continuity planning, such as cybersecurity and IT resilience.

The Risk & Business Continuity Manager also provided members with an update on the ongoing incident pertaining to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), a material commonly used in public sector buildings during the 1950s-80s, that had been identified in parts of the Crawford Building, DUSA and the Fulton Building. Business continuity plans were being developed and longer-term plans were under review by the Estates team in terms of potential roof replacement projects.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would receive quarterly reports as opposed to an annual report.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

## 8. RESERVED BUSINESS: LEGAL RISK REPORT

The Committee reviewed the quarterly legal risk report from the Director of Legal.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

**9. EXTERNAL AUDIT – AUDIT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Committee reviewed the Audit Committee Update report from EY. The report provided EY's perspective on which areas audit committees should focus on, including cybersecurity. Members noted that the University had a robust governance structure for maintaining oversight of cybersecurity, including the Digital Committee, Risk Management Oversight Group, University Executive Group and Audit & Risk Committee.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved:** Tuesday 15 August 2023.

Keith Winter  
Convener

**Appendix 3****Finance & Policy Committee Minutes**

A meeting of the Committee was held on 23 May 2022 in the Executive Meeting Room of the Tower Building.

Present: Richard Bint (Convener);  
 Alan Bainbridge (online);  
 Professor Sir Mike Ferguson;  
 Professor Iain Gillespie (Principal & Vice-Chancellor);  
 Amanda Millar (Chair of Court);  
 Ron Mobed (online);  
 Nyasha Mutembwa (DUSA President);  
 Carla Rossini; and  
 Professor Garry Taylor

In Attendance:

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Tricia Bey              | (Deputy Chair of Court);                             |
| Katy Scott              | (Director of Future Students) (Item 10, online);     |
| Peter Fotheringham      | (Director of Finance);                               |
| Rose Jenkins            | (Director of Estates & Campus Services);             |
| Dr Shona Johnston       | (Deputy Director, Student Services) (Item 5, online) |
| Dr Jim McGeorge         | (University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer);    |
| Professor Shane O'Neill | (Senior Vice-Principal);                             |
| Anne Poulson            | (Director of Strategic Change & Delivery);           |
| Dr Alison Ramsay        | (Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance));      |
| Keith Winter            | (Convener of Audit & Risk Committee) (online); and   |
| Susan Young             | (Head of Financial Accounting)                       |

Apologies: Professor Blair Grubb, Dr Neale Laker, Professor Mairi Scott

**1. MINUTES**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee on 17 January 2023.

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the above meeting.

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2023.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**Action Log

Members received the action log for the Committee and noted that there were no items on the action log not already on the agenda.

**Resolved:** to note the action log.

### 3. BUDGET 2023/24 TO 2027/28

The Director of Finance introduced the above paper, intended to apprise the Committee of the proposed budget for 2023/2024, together with a further four-year Financial Plan to 2027/2028 (the Plan). The Committee was advised that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) normally required a three-year financial plan to be submitted by 30 June but that this had yet to be confirmed.

The Committee noted that the University's financial position continued to improve and that the institution remained on track to deliver the financial strategy approved by the Court in 2019, intended to achieve financial sustainability targets by 2026/27. The period since 2019 had been a challenging one for the sector generally, dominated by the adverse impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and heightened global inflation but the University had proven financially resilient, with tuition fee income having grown significantly in 2021/22 and 2022/23. In addition, cost savings had been achieved in all areas during the same period. This had had the effect of rebalancing the University's income to cost profile and in 2022/23, the University would report an operating surplus for the first time in 10 years. Cash reserves were noted as having grown due to improved financial performance and lower-than-planned capital spend.

Members were advised that the Plan reflected the improved financial health of the University in the context of the University Strategy to 2027 and that the budget presented for consideration was the first to have been completed as part of the new integrated strategic planning and budgeting process. The key overall outcomes demonstrated the University's ambitions for growth and built upon the work achieved to date to deliver financial sustainability.

The Director Finance noted that, whilst the 2023/24 budget and five-year Plan aimed to deliver targets which were broadly consistent with the previous year's plan, three changes had been made to the assumptions upon which they were based. Mr Fotheringham advised the Committee that tuition fee income was higher than estimated while underlying costs were similarly higher than previously assumed. Finally, increased investment had been required to support higher student numbers, to enhance student and staff experience and to provide discretionary investment capacity.

Total income was budgeted to grow across the life of the five-year Plan, mainly driven by growth in international tuition fees, while staff cost to income ratio was projected to improve, notwithstanding an increase in total staff costs over the same period. Research income was budgeted to grow by 21% over the length of the Plan and, excluding the Tay Cities Deal, the Plan included capital expenditure of £227.1m, £26.0m of which would be funded by grants and other external awards.

In the course of a lengthy discussion, members considered *inter alia* the resource allocated to the capital expenditure plan and, in particular, proposals in relation to the Business School were noted with a new-build, multi-use building now envisaged as a significant part of the estates solution. The Committee noted that the significant increase in capital expenditure came after a prolonged period of relative austerity. This meant that investment in backlog maintenance was essential, while the improved financial position of the institution had made securing long-term finance possible in order to realise institutional ambitions.

The likely effect on increased student recruitment on staff:student ratios (SSR) was discussed and the Committee was advised that the University intended to achieve and maintain an average SSR of around 20. Members considered the implications for overseas recruitment arising from the UK Government's announcement prohibiting the majority of international



students from bringing dependents to the UK and were advised that, whilst disappointing on many levels, the University had resilience built into its assumptions and had been planning for this scenario for some time.

Thereafter, the Committee commended officers for a robust and prudent set of assumptions.

**Resolved:** to recommend approval of the Budget 2023/24 and the Financial Plan to 2027/28 to Court.

#### 4. **SFC FUNDING: INDICATIVE FUNDING ALLOCATION 2023/24**

The Committee received and considered the above report on the SFC Indicative Funding Announcement, which had been published on 13 April. Members were advised that, whilst some components of the funding remained to be finalised, the headline changes for Academic Year (AY) 2023/24 indicated the continued deterioration of SFC funding in real terms. Teaching funding remained constant at £743.7m, Research and Innovation funding had increased by 1.8% and capital funding had decreased by 33.8%. The Committee noted that, whilst these real-terms cuts exacerbated the loss incurred in teaching Scottish-domiciled students, the reduction was small relative to the large increase in unregulated international tuition fee income the University expected to be able to generate in 2023/24.

Graduate Apprenticeships remained a Scottish Government priority, although these had now been rolled into the University's overall allocation of places. A small decrease in the Research Excellence Grant was noted, although the institution had seen a £0.4m increase in its grant from the University Innovation Fund. Overall capital funding had decreased, predominantly the result of a further significant reduction to the sector's capital maintenance budget.

Compared with the assumptions made in the University's draft budget the indicative allocation was broadly in line with expectations, at £0.5m better than budgeted. This was therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the University's financial position beyond a continued relative decline in the balance of SFC funding compared with other income sources, in particular unregulated international student fee income.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

#### 5. **STUDENT ACCOMMODATION**

*[Secretary's note: the Deputy Director of Student Services joined the meeting via MS Teams at this point]*

The Committee received and considered the above report on current and future Student Accommodation, introduced by the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer. The Committee was advised that significant increases in intake student numbers in 2022 and 2023 had raised questions around whether there were adequate provision for student accommodation within the area to meet the University's short, medium and long-term growth ambitions. Given the ongoing impact of the Covid pandemic on the private rental market, cost of living increases and the changing nature of the student intake, predicting demand for different types of accommodation was not always an exact science, as the recent UK Government policy change on dependants had shown. An analysis of the previous three

student intakes, however, had suggested that there was sufficient capacity in single student accommodation with the unmet need being in relation to more affordable accommodation, especially for couples and families.

A recent review by UEG had concluded that, in view of its agreement with DSV, the institution should not seek to create its own residential estate but to seek to ensure that third-party providers entered the market to meet demand. Despite permission having been granted for 1528 new beds in the city, no significant developments had begun on site. In addition, almost all providers were focussed on single occupancy PBSA and the traditional student markets. The University's capital programme did not include student accommodation and there was no appetite within the institution to consider investing in family accommodation. Rather, the University intended to work closely and in partnership with local markets, developers and the City Council to make clear the challenges faced and the location of student demand. It was proposed that the accommodation position be reviewed regularly and reported to the Finance & Policy Committee annually in January.

In discussion, the Committee considered issues of affordability and noted that the University was working closely with DUSA and was in regular communication with prospective students to provide up-to-date information on the costs likely to be incurred in different types of accommodation. Members again discussed the UK Government's announcement prohibiting the majority of international students from bringing dependents to the UK and noted the likely impact of this change.

Members welcomed the level of reflection and detail in the report. Thereafter, the Committee commended the leadership shown by the University in working towards a city-wide student housing strategy with relevant partners to shape planners' development discussions.

**Resolved:** to endorse the approach proposed.

*[Secretary's note: the Deputy Director of Student Services left the meeting at this point]*

## 6. **ESTATES & CAMPUS SERVICES KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Director of Estates & Campus Services introduced the above report, intended to apprise the Committee of proposed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the impact of the Estates Strategy. Members were advised that the University did not currently have formal KPIs in place in relation to the overall Estates Strategy, although KPIs were set on major individual projects set by the relevant Project Board at the start of each large development which measured delivery against approved objectives. These were monitored regularly and reviewed as part of a post-project process intended to identify successes and failures as well as key learning points and benefits realised.

The Committee considered the KPIs proposed in relation to Net Zero, energy consumption, utilisation of learning & teaching space, overall space utilisation and the condition of the estate as measured against RICS Building Condition standards. In discussion, members were apprised that Scope 3 accounted for 80% of all on-campus emissions and that energy consumption was directly affected by the condition of the estate, which was noted as difficult to assess. The Committee was advised that the last full condition survey of the estate had been carried out in 2014 but that Estates staff were fully conversant with the University's buildings and key areas of worsening condition were known with intervention already planned. An externally-provided assessment of the estate would be both costly and time-consuming but the Director would return with a suggested methodology for determining the condition of the estate. As well as building condition, members considered how best to capture staff and students' views on the

estate and whether such an exercise might be useful.

**Resolved:** to approve the proposed Key Performance Indicators

#### 7. **FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING DATA**

The Director of Finance introduced the above report on financial benchmarking data across a sector peer group, with an analysis which focussed on financial sustainability measures. Members were advised that, whilst the University had lagged behind its peer group for several years, performance was now improving across all areas. EBITDA as a percentage of income had exceeded the target endorsed by the Committee in 2022 and the cost recovery on research had risen. In terms of HESA data, the University had demonstrated noticeable improvement relative to the UK sector between 2017/18 and 2020/2021 across all provided measures.

The Committee commended the significant progress made by the University, noting that officers would continue to remain vigilant to its position in relation to competitors.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

#### 8. **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the above regular update from the Director of Finance. Members were apprised that the most recent information provided by the USS Trustee had estimated that the funding position on the monitoring basis at the end of December 2022 continued to highlight a positive, improving picture of the scheme's valuation which could result in a technical surplus at the 2023 valuation. USS had reaffirmed its intention to accelerate the timetable for the 2023 valuation, with the intention to implement any changes by 1 April 2024. The Committee and the Pensions Sub-Group would be apprised of developments in due course.

The Committee noted that the tender for the position of Investment Manager for the University's endowments had progressed to the final review and scoring stage. Members would be advised of the outcome following the next meeting of the Endowments Sub-Committee.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

#### 9. **COMMITTEE OF SCOTTISH CHAIRS OF CONVENERNS OF FINANCE COMMITTEES**

The Committee noted the report of the first meeting of the Conveners of Scottish Finance Committees.

#### 10. **DIRECTOR OF ESTATES & CAMPUS SERVICES REPORT**

The Director of Estates & Campus Services introduced the above update on activities within the Estates & Campus Services Directorate. The Committee noted that substantial issues had emerged on campus regarding the use of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in buildings from the 1950s and 1960s and that RAAC had been confirmed in the rooves of the Fulton Building, a small annexe of the Crawford building and in extensive areas of the roof of

DUSA. These areas had been closed to staff and student access and an emergency project had begun to replace these areas with new roof structures. Members were advised that these projects would be costly and that ECS was working with Finance colleagues to identify appropriate budgets for immediate short-term evacuation support, medium-term support for critical activities and for long-term roof replacement projects.

The Committee was apprised of significant progress on the Estates Strategic Projects. Of significant note were discussions on the retention or otherwise of the existing façade as part of the Crawford Building Project which had been held with a variety of external stakeholders including Historic Scotland and the DCC Planners.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

11. **RESERVED BUSINESS: 2023/2024 STUDENT INTAKE UPDATE**

*[Secretary's note: the Director of Future Students joined the meeting via MS Teams at this point]*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Resolved:** to note the report.

*[Secretary's note: the Director of Future Students left the meeting at this point]*

12. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Head of Financial Accounting introduced the above draft management accounts for Quarter 2 to 31 January 2023 and for Period 8 to 30 April 2023. Members noted that at the end of Quarter 2 a full year operating budget surplus (excluding the impact of accounting for Tay Cities) had been forecasted at £5.9m, which was £5.0 ahead of budget and an improvement of £1.4m from Quarter 1.

At the end of the period to 30 April 2023, the management accounts were noted as forecasting a full year operating surplus of £5.3m, excluding the impact of accounting for Tay Cities. This was £4.5m ahead of budget but a reduction of £0.6m on the Quarter 2 forecast.

Members were advised that further improvement to this outcome was possible and that a full review would be undertaken for Quarter 3 reporting. From a cash perspective, the improvement to budget was £27.5m and the year-end projected cash balance £53.8m, excluding ringfenced funds of £40.3m. Whilst this was a very strong position, the Committee was reminded that this reflected slippage on planned capital spend which would be rephased into future years as part of the budget process.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

### 13. **RESERVED BUSINESS: PENSION SUB-GROUP MINUTES**

*[Secretary's note: The Committee considered the item as reserved business. The University asserts that the paper is exempt from public disclosure and claims exemptions in S.30(b), 30(c) and 33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.]*

**Resolved:** to note the minutes.

### 14. **RESEARCH GRANT ACTIVITY**

The Committee received the above regular report of research grant activity since the last meeting. Members noted that, at the end of Period 9, the number of research grant applications submitted was 386, which was higher than the same period last year (369). 84% of these had been submitted by the Schools of Medicine (117), Life Sciences (82), Humanities, Social Sciences & Law (62) and Science & Engineering (61). In terms of value, applications from the Schools of Medicine (33%) and Life Sciences (52%) made up 85% of the £175.2m research grant applications submitted to date.

85% of research grant submissions to date had been to UK Charities (127), UKRI Research Councils (130) and Government (69). In terms of value, these applications made up 82% of the £175.2m research grant applications submitted to date. 40% of research grants submitted to P9 had an application value of up to £50k and 58% had an application value of between £50k and £3m.

In comparison to the same period last year, the total value of research grant applications submitted aligned with 2021/22 (£55.4m), with the number of research awards recorded at P4 being 41, lower than at the same period last year (66). In comparison to the same period last year, the total value of research grant awards, at £52m, was higher than 2021/22 (£48.3m).

76% of the number of awards recorded to this period were to the Schools of Life Sciences (36), Medicine (51) and Science & Engineering (29). In terms of award value, 88% of the total £52m sat with School of Life Sciences (60%) and Medicine (28%).

82% of the number of awards recorded to this period were from UKRI Research Councils (37), UK Charity (43) and Government (46). In terms of value, awards from Overseas Charities (18%), UK Charities (23%), Government (17%) and UKRI Research Councils (33%) made up 91% of the £52m awarded to date. 39% of research grants awarded to P9 had an award value of up to £50k and 61% had an award value of between £50k and £3m.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair of Court advised members that this would be the last meeting of the Committee to be attended by its convener, Richard Bint. On behalf of the Committee and the University Executive Group, Ms Millar thanked Mr Bint for his long service to the University and, in particular, his agreement to stay on the Court for an additional year in order that the institution could benefit from his knowledge and experience at a time of transition in Court membership. Under his stewardship, the Finance & Policy Committee guided the University to an improved financial position. The Committee joined the Chair in thanking Mr Bint for his outstanding contribution.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved:** to note that the next meeting would take place at 2pm on Tuesday 17 October 2023.

Richard Bint  
(Convener)

**Appendix 4****Governance & Nominations Committee Minutes**

A meeting of the Committee was held at 10am on 23 May 2023 in the Executive Meeting Room, Level 5, Tower Building, and via MS Teams.

Present: Amanda Millar (Convener);  
Tricia Bey;  
Professor Iain Gillespie;  
Jane Marshall (online); and  
Sharon Sweeney

In Attendance Professor Blair Grubb (Vice-Principal (Education));  
Dr Jim McGeorge (University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer); and  
Dr Alison Ramsay (Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance)).

Apologies: Dr Neale Laker and Dr Anna Notaro.

**1. MINUTES**

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting of 23 March 2023.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**Action Log

The Committee received an action log summarising progress in relation to outstanding actions from previous meetings.

**Resolved:** to note the Action Log.

**3. CONVENER'S UPDATE**

The Convener updated the Committee on activities and interactions undertaken at a sectoral level since its last meeting of relevance to the Committee, including an AdvanceHE governance event. Ms Millar invited the Committee to comment on a proposal that she commence production of regular Court Communications, similar to the UEG in 3 videos, after each meeting. Members were extremely supportive and it was noted that this would be an agenda item for discussion at the June meeting of the Court.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

**4. SECTORAL UPDATE**

The University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer advised the Committee that the University Secretaries' Group had held a discussion on the approaches being taken by each institution to review their compliance with the newly revised Scottish Code of Good Higher Education

Governance. Dr McGeorge also noted that the Community of University Chairs had undertaken to produce a guidance note on the role of the Secretary to the governing body.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

## 5. OUTCOME OF ELECTIONS TO THE COURT

The Committee was advised that Nyasha Mutembwa had been re-elected as President of the Dundee University Students' Association and that Ian Buerger had been elected as the Independent Student Member of Court. Members noted that they would be apprised of the results of the forthcoming Senate elections to Court when these became known.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

## 6. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COURT AND ITS COMMITTEES

The Committee received and considered the above report on matters relating to the membership of Court and its committees. Members were advised that, of the two members of Senate elected to the Court whose period of office would end on 31 July 2023, one was eligible to stand for re-election. The Committee was advised that the Senate election process would take place between 27 and 31 May 2023, thus enabling the newly-elected members to attend the meeting of Court on 13 June 2022.

Whilst the Committee noted that some positions remained unfilled at the time of writing, these would be subject to review by the Chair of Court. In considering membership for the 2023/2024 academic session, committee compositions had largely remained as they were for the previous year, with minor adjustments arising from new members and the changes in convenership caused by the departures of Richard Bint and Jane Marshall. Members were supportive of the proposals submitted and confirmed that they were content that the Chair of Court contact new members Amina Shah and Glenn Allison to ascertain their willingness to serve. The Committee further noted that the results of the Senate election to Court would afford further opportunity to refresh memberships through the rotation of members between committees.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

## 7. SKILLS MATRIX

The Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance) presented the above revised skills matrix, as requested by the Committee at its previous meeting. Members were reminded that, under paragraph 17 of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (2022 Edition) (hereafter The Code), the governing body 'is expected to draw up and make public a register of the balance of skills, attributes and experience required in the membership of the governing body, to inform the recruitment of appointed lay members of the governing body, as well as regular assessment of the balance of skills across the membership of the governing body'.

The Committee welcomed the revised criteria and its commitment to inclusion and equality, as well as requesting minor amendments to terminology. The Committee further considered a proposal that members of the Court be asked to refresh their skills matrix every two years, noting that Paragraph 56 of The Code stated that 'Members' individual contributions are expected to be reviewed regularly, at a minimum every two years'.



- Resolved:** (i) to recommend the revised skills matrix to the Court for approval; and  
(ii) to recommend to the Court that the skills matrix be completed every two years from 1 August 2023.

*[Secretary's note: the revised Skills Matrix is appended to the minute for Court's consideration and, if so minded, approval]*

#### 8. **SCOTTISH CODE OF GOOD HE GOVERNANCE 2022**

The Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance) introduced the gap analysis of changes arising from the 2022 review of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, as requested by the Committee at its previous meeting. Members were advised that this had been undertaken to establish whether any substantive amendments had been made which could potentially require changes in practice.

Dr Ramsay advised the Committee that, of the 105 points in The Code, in only two could the University potentially be considered non-compliant and noted that actions in relation to these recommendations were already in train. New areas of compliance required included an increased emphasis on the induction process for new members and their role as charity trustees, and the responsibility of HEIs to achieve equality of opportunity and to eliminate unlawful discrimination. Members were advised that a review of the induction process and of all recommendations which required consideration would be conducted in advance of the next academic session.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

#### 9. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SCHEDULE OF DELEGATION**

The Committee received and considered proposed amendments to the Schedule of Delegation & Decision-Making Powers. This had been last approved by the Court on 17 November 2020 with no amendments having been identified since that time. Members were advised that, given the forthcoming changes to the composition of the University Executive Group and changes to the designations of senior staff, the Schedule had been subject to an initial review and would be further re-evaluated as part of the forthcoming Secretariat review of governance arrangements and instruments and would be presented to the Court at its first meeting of session 2023/24. The proposed amendments were noted as purely stylistic and to reflect changes to senior staff titles.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

#### 10. **REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

The Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance) provided the Committee with a verbal update on the completion and submission of register of interest forms by officers and advised members that no issues had been identified which would require to be brought to the attention of the external auditors.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

**11. EARLY-STAGE COURT BUSINESS**

The Committee received a report on Early-Stage Court business for the meeting on 13 June 2023 for discussion and comment. Members were advised that this had already been reviewed by a Court agenda-setting meeting.

**Resolved:** to note the proposed Early-Stage Court business paper.

**12. ANNUAL REVIEW: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHAIR OF COURT**

The Committee received a verbal report from the Deputy Chair of Court on the proposed arrangements for the forthcoming review of the effectiveness of the Chair of Court.

**Resolved:** to approve the approach proposed.

**13. ANNUAL REVIEW: REMUNERATION OF THE CHAIR OF COURT**

The Committee considered a paper which set out the recommended payment to be made in respect of the time commitment associated with the duties of the Chairperson of Court. Members noted that the Chair of Court had been remunerated £3,729.28 for the period 1 May 2022 to 31 July 2022. This was for 87.75 hours spent on induction, visits and training prior to formally taking up the role. For the period 1 August 2022 to 30 April 2023, the Chair had so far been remunerated £17,869.13. The Committee delegated authority to the Deputy University Secretary to reconcile the final payment as of 31 July 2023.

Finally, the Committee agreed that the rate for remuneration of the Chair of Court for the next financial year should continue to match the Public Sector Pay Policy Technical Guide. Members noted that the Tier 1 Minimum for 2023/24 had yet to be issued.

**Resolved:**

- (i) to delegate authority to the Deputy University Secretary for the final reconciliation and payment based on a report from the Chair of Court confirming the time required to carry out her duties; and
- (ii) to note that the per diem rate which would apply for 2023/2024 would be advised in due course.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

**14. REPORT OF THE COURT RETREAT**

The Committee received and considered the above report on the Court Retreat held in February 2023 at the Murrayshall House Hotel, Scone.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

**15. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The Committee received and considered the preliminary annual report from the Director of Quality & Academic Standards on the business of the Quality & Academic Standards Committee (QASC). Members noted the breadth of activity undertaken, which included such key activities

and outcomes as the development and launch of an External Examiners' Portal and a new report management process for External Examiners. New processes to support the Periodic Review of Postgraduate Research Degrees provision had been approved in line with QAA and SFC requirements in order to ensure robust quality assurance. The Committee noted that work was underway to prepare for the introduction of the new Tertiary Quality Framework and was further advised that the QAA was in the process of revising the UK Quality Code.

**Resolved:** to note the report and recommend to the Court that it consider the quality assurance process to be robust when reviewing the annual report to the SFC on quality.

**16. UPDATE ON TRAINING MODULE COMPLETION**

The Committee received a verbal report from the Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance) on completion of the new mandatory Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training module. Dr Ramsay noted that some members had continued to report issues in accessing the module and that staff in Digital & Technology Services had been asked to investigate.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

**17. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY: RETURNS FROM MEMBERS OF COURT**

The Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance) advised the Committee that no declarations of gifts or hospitality had been received from Court members in the past 12 months.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

**18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was declared.

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved:** to note that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 17 October 2023.

Amanda Millar  
(Convener)

## Appendix 4, Annex A

**Court Members Skills Matrix  
Self-Evaluation Questionnaire**

Name:

Date:

Please rate your level of experience and level of interest in the Skills, Experience, Knowledge table below, using the following scale:

- *Level of experience on a scale of 0-3:*
  - 0: no experience or skills.
  - 1: limited experience or skills in the area.
  - 2: skills acquired through other roles outside of your main employment and education.
  - 3: professional qualification or extensive business experience where you would be recognised internally and externally as having significant expertise.
- *Level of interest on a scale of 0-1:*
  - 0: no interest.
  - 1: significant interest.

e.g.

| Skill, Experience, Knowledge | Level of experience 0-3 | Level of interest 0-1 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| IT                           | 2                       | 1                     |

| Skill, Experience, Knowledge             | Level of experience 0-3 | Level of interest 0-1 |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| HR                                       |                         |                       |
| Marketing                                |                         |                       |
| Finance                                  |                         |                       |
| Pensions/Investments                     |                         |                       |
| Legal                                    |                         |                       |
| Estates/Property                         |                         |                       |
| Audit/Risk Management                    |                         |                       |
| IT                                       |                         |                       |
| Education                                |                         |                       |
| Local Government/Civil Service/Community |                         |                       |
| Third Sector/Not for Profit              |                         |                       |
| Working with young people                |                         |                       |
| Healthcare                               |                         |                       |
| Young persons' mental health             |                         |                       |
| Mental health and wellbeing              |                         |                       |
| Arts/Creative Industries                 |                         |                       |
| Leadership/Executive Roles               |                         |                       |
| Business/Private Sector                  |                         |                       |
| Multinational Organisation               |                         |                       |
| International collaboration              |                         |                       |
| Public understanding of research         |                         |                       |
| Heritage (e.g., museums, NTS, SNH, etc.) |                         |                       |

Using the same scale as above, please rate your level of confidence in the attributes listed in the table below and your level of interest to improve.

| Attributes   | Level of confidence 0-3 | Level of interest 0-1 |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| To be able to act as an ambassador                               |                         |                       |
| To demonstrate integrity   |                         |                       |
| To challenge constructively                                      |                         |                       |
| To demonstrate commitment to and care about the University       |                         |                       |
| To demonstrate independence of thought                           |                         |                       |
| To demonstrate commitment in matters of EDI                      |                         |                       |
| To show an ability to compromise                                 |                         |                       |
| To be able to influence effectively                              |                         |                       |
| To demonstrate good analytical thinking                          |                         |                       |
| To show strategic vision   |                         |                       |
| Successful entrepreneurship                                      |                         |                       |
| Knowledge of the operation of national government or lobbying    |                         |                       |
| Knowledge of the employability agenda and the needs of employers |                         |                       |
| Engagement with the local community                              |                         |                       |
| Working internationally  |                         |                       |
| Intercultural competence   |                         |                       |

## Appendix 5

### People & Organisational Development Committee Minutes

A meeting of the People & Organisational Development Committee was held on 17 May 2023, via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Jane Marshall (Convener);  
Claire Cunningham;  
Dr David Martin;  
Karthik Subramanya;  
Jay Surti; and  
Karen Thomson.

|                       |  |   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| <u>In Attendance:</u> | Alex Killick<br><br>Dr Neale Laker<br>Dr Jim McGeorge<br><br>Professor Shane O'Neill<br>Anne Poulson<br>Dr Alison Ramsay<br>Julie Strachan | Interim Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development;<br>Deputy University Secretary;<br>University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer;<br>Senior Vice-Principal;<br>Director of Strategic Change & Delivery;<br>Senior Policy Officer (Corporate Governance);<br>Deputy Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development; |
|-----------------------|--|---|

|                   |                          |            |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <u>Apologies:</u> | Professor Iain Gillespie | Principal. |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------|

#### 1. MINUTES

Minutes from the meeting on 13 March 2023.

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes from the meeting.

#### 2. MATTERS ARISING

##### Action Log

The Committee reviewed the action log. One member sought clarification as to when the Committee would receive the change management report on the establishment of the School of Humanities, Social Sciences & Law and was advised that this would be presented to the next meeting.

**Resolved:** to approve the action log as presented.

#### 3. CONVENER'S UPDATE

The Committee received an update from the Convener which summarised activities undertaken on behalf of the Committee and the University since its last meeting. The Chair apprised the Committee that she had held a number of meetings with other Committee members and with the UEG with the aim of ensuring the continuity of the mission and trajectory achieved over the previous year.

**Resolved:** to note the update.

#### 4. **PEOPLE AND TALENT STRATEGY**

The Senior Vice-Principal provided the Committee with a verbal update on progress made in relation to the People and Talent Strategy. Professor O'Neill apprised members that the two Year 1 projects involving the development of the EDI Strategy and improving staff engagement were very much on-track. The Committee was thanked for its engagement with these foundation projects.

In relation to the development of the talent element of the Strategy, members were advised that the revised reward and recognition processes would be taken forward during 2023. The work on induction and integration was ongoing but not yet complete and the Academic Excellence and Sustainability project working group had produced comprehensive guidance.

The academic promotions process had been reviewed earlier than scheduled and was currently part of a comprehensive ongoing consultation process. A substantive update would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee was further apprised that the two closely-related projects on workload and well-being would be a priority for the incoming Director of People with a programme of engagement planned for the summer months.

In discussion, members requested an update on progress made in relation to the review of the appeals process and were advised that this would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee. The campus unions had been involved in discussions and proposals would shortly be submitted to the Senate for consideration. It was agreed that the Senior Vice-Principal would discuss with the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer the opportunity to gather feedback from lay members of Court who had been involved in previous appeals. The importance of thorough testing of the new process was emphasised.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

#### 5. **DRAFT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY**

The Committee received and considered the above draft outline of the new EDI Strategy, building upon discussion of the EDI Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the previous meeting of the Committee and at the University Court. Members were advised that Professor Hundal, the Institutional Academic Lead for EDI, would attend their next meeting and would spend the intervening months engaged in dialogue with colleagues before bringing a further report forward.

The Committee welcomed the proposals as having tangible outcomes while one member requested that careful consideration be given to the attribution of values and the baseline from which to calculate targets for achievement. In discussion, members noted the importance of training for staff and commended the introduction of the new mandatory training module. The Committee was advised that the UEG had allocated significant resources through the planning and budgeting process to the development and implementation of the Strategy, including additional staffing and revenue budgets.

Thereafter, the Committee welcomed the draft Strategy and looked forward to welcoming Professor Hundal to its next meeting.

**Resolved:** to note the report and associated plans for consultation and strategy implementation.

## 6. **STAFF SURVEY 2023**

The Committee received the above staff engagement baseline survey questionnaire, communication plan and timetable for the 2023 survey implementation. Members were advised that the survey had launched on 21 April and would close on 19 May. After excluding tutors, the completion rate presently stood at 61%, with a communications plan intended to increase the response rate to achieve or exceed a target of 70%. The survey administrator would provide a report on responses in mid-June, at which time a meeting of the Steering Group would be convened to consider the report.

The University intended to communicate the results of the survey as quickly as possible to staff, Court and key stakeholders, as well as holding an interactive information session with management. Response information would then be disaggregated and shared with individual Schools and Directorates. Members were assured that all staff members had been able to access the Survey and were apprised of arrangements made for non-desk-based staff.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

## 7. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT/SECTORAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a report from the Interim Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR&OD) which provided an update on strategic activity since the previous meeting. Members noted updates in respect of the People & Talent Strategy project implementation and the publication of the University's Public Sector Equality Duty reports, as well as the staff engagement survey, which had already been discussed.

The Interim Director of HR&OD advised the Committee that several key appointments had been made since its previous meeting, including the Director of People and the Director of Digital. Members were further advised that the recruitment process for the two Vice-Principal positions had concluded since the report had been produced and the outcomes would be announced in due course.

Members noted that a 'lessons learned' exercise in relation to the issues encountered during the project to establish the School of Humanities, Social Sciences & Law had been agreed with the Campus Unions. The workshop had been well-attended and delivered with assistance from three members of the University's Early Dispute Resolution Team. The report from the event had been discussed at the Local Joint Committee on 21 April and this, along with the Human Applications Report, would be considered by UEG ahead of being submitted to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Committee was advised that a number of issues remained within the Payroll and Core HR OneUniversity system and that work was continuing to resolve these. Members were also apprised of developments in the national pay negotiations and of the mandates for members of Unite and UCU to take industrial action.

**Resolved:** to note the update.



**8. ABSENCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the annual Absence Management Report for 2021/22, which provided a summary and analysis of sickness absence for the academic year 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022. This included comparisons with previous years and benchmarking information on rates and patterns of sickness against other HEIs.

Members noted that the report indicated a return to broadly pre-Covid levels of absences with the average number of working days lost per employee having increased from 5 days in 2020/21 to 7.3 days in 2021/22. This compared to 6.1 days in 2019/20 and 7 days in 2018/19.

The Committee was advised that the report was significant in that it represented the first complete year, post-Covid, where staff had returned to work on campus and where for some roles in Professional Services hybrid working arrangements had been adopted. This would provide a baseline for the University to continue to monitor both short and long-term sickness absences, identify any trends or issues, and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms were in place to manage such absences and to support staff. It was intended that the OneUniversity system would give managers access to improved information in real time.

**Resolved:** to note the report.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members noted that this would be the last meeting of the Committee to be attended by the Interim Director of People & Organisational Development and thanked Mr Killick for his contributions. Committee members further noted that this would be last meeting for the Convener and warmly commended her for the strategic direction she had provided for the work of the Committee and her extensive contributions to the Court. Further tribute would be made at the meeting of the Court in June.

**10. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION REPORTING**

The Committee noted that the final Mainstreaming Equalities Report for 2023 and the Public Sector Equality Report on the Pay Gap had been published.

**11. LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a verbal report of the meeting of the Local Joint Committee on 21 April 2023.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved:** Thursday 26 October 2023.

Jane Marshall  
Convener

## Appendix 6

### Staff Council Minutes

A meeting of the Council was held on 24 April 2023 in Dalhousie LT3 and online via MS Teams.

**Present:** 200 (online) and 30 (in person) Members of University Staff

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Professor Iain Gillespie  | Principal  |
| Professor Shane O'Neill   | Senior Vice-Principal                            |
| Professor Wendy Alexander | Vice-Principal International                     |
| Professor Blair Grubb     | Vice-Principal Education                         |
| Dr Jim McGeorge           | University Secretary                             |
| Peter Fotheringham        | Director of Finance                              |
| Alex Killick              | Interim Director of Human Resources              |
| Claire Martin             | Convener Staff Council Standing Committee        |
| Dr Martine Van Ittersum   | Deputy Convener Staff Council Standing Committee |

**In Attendance:** Dr Martin Glover                      Secretary to the Council

1. Principal's Questions  
(for this item the Convener of the Standing Committee took the Chair)

**Parts of the University suffer from serious staff shortages, having a negative impact on workload and morale. There are also concerns that the student experience will deteriorate, especially in the context of unprecedented (and seemingly unplanned) growth in student numbers. Will the Principal report on what is being done to address these problems?**

The Principal reported that there were currently 75 staff vacancies which was within the normal expected range. He noted that some areas such as IT/Digital support were finding it more difficult to fill vacancies due to global market conditions. He explained that the gaps were not huge and that investing in growth would be an important part of the University's strategy.

The Senior Vice-Principal explained that Deans were responsible for staffing and planning within their own Schools. He noted that the Deans were required to be well informed about staffing levels and any requirement to apply for additional resources through the existing Planning & Resources processes.

The Senior Vice-Principal noted that greater efficiency in the delivery of teaching had been an important goal for Schools and would contribute to improvement in workload allocations. He noted that 75 vacancies overall did not indicate any particular issue but acknowledged that there had been challenges in some specific areas such as IT.

The Interim Director of Human Resources reported that a Staff Survey had been launched and encouraged all staff to provide feedback by responding to the survey. He noted that the Survey would be open until 19 May and provided a good opportunity for staff to participate and raise issues important to them as employees.

The Principal emphasised that where there were gaps due to vacant posts, existing staff were often going above and beyond to ensure vital functions were being carried out and services delivered. He agreed that the University needed to maintain a reputation as a good employer to help attract new staff at all levels. He noted that the vacant Vice-Principal posts had attracted a

very high-quality group of applicants and that shortlisting was now taking place.

The Principal noted that the interim Director of Digital Technology services had been working with colleagues across the University to ensure that future provision is prioritised to support the University's strategic objectives. The Principal explained that 75 vacancies overall did not represent a particular problem for the University that employed over 3,500 staff.

In response to a question on why so many IT staff had left the University, the Principal explained that there was a global shortage of IT skills and a very buoyant recruitment market with many more options for remote and flexible working. He noted that the University would need to consider way to become more flexible and recruit more of its own graduates in this area of expertise.

**The new Planning Process has allowed several Schools to put forward very ambitious bids for investment. Will the Principal report on how these bids will be evaluated, how their success will be measured and how staff will be consulted as part of the process?**

The Senior-Vice Principal explained that potential investment bids were initiated by asking all Schools and Directorates to prepare plans throughout the year, leading into budget building activities as part of the planning cycle. The Senior-Vice Principal noted that Planning meetings enabled close scrutiny of proposals, demonstrations of significant opportunities and the specification of particular local needs. He noted that Planning meeting tended to look at elaboration of exiting proposals rather than a set of new proposals.

The Senior Vice-Principal explained that some School and Directorates have put forward requests for funding that could not be met in the short term but could be subject to ongoing data collection and possible future reconsideration.

The Senior Vice-Principal noted that the evaluation of investment bids would involve the use of a range of data, including staff-student ratios where appropriate. He explained that evaluation took place within a wider planning framework and range of projects.

The Principal noted that School and Directorate budgets would be finalised and discussed at the meeting of University Court in June 2023. He explained that while prioritisation of proposals would always be necessary it was very beneficial for ambitious ideas, such as the Sustainability Institute, to be encouraged.

The Principal noted that there might have been reluctance in some areas to submit bids and reported that improvements to the communications about the planning process would be seen in future years. He also noted that some of the bids that were not approved in the current round would be re-evaluated next year.

**Staff report that parts of the City Campus are becoming untidy. There seems to have been an increase in the amount of litter, for example. Have any reasons for this deterioration of the campus environment been identified? Are there any plans to address the problem?**

The Director of Estates reported on efforts to address problems with litter, especially in relation to the edges of the main campus including issues with commercial refuse bins located at Park Place and Hawkhill. The Director noted that the City Council had were also acting through the introduction of new zoning regulations that were aimed at reducing the amount of commercial litter.

The Director noted that the Estates Team were called upon to remove fly posters on a regular basis. The Director explained that cease and desist warning had been issued by Legal to the most prominent offenders.

The Director reminded staff that reporting of litter, fly posting and related issues could be made through the Estates Helpdesk online. Members noted that the Main Library had been targeted with posters from DUSA and ISE that contributed to the problem.

The Director noted that ongoing building renovations also contributed to litter and untidiness on campus. The Director noted that as works were being completed there would be an effort to tidy up, e.g., at the rear of the Fulton Building on City Campus. The Director also noted that investments in new signage/branding were planned both in Dundee and in Kirkcaldy in due course. Members were asked to report any issues, including repair request via the Estates helpdesk.

**Staff are still concerned about the increased presence of babies, toddlers and primary school-aged children on campus. Are staff required to intervene or report issues? What is the policy on students bringing children into teaching environments? How does the University intend to reconcile its family friendly policies, equality duties and safeguarding responsibilities, while ensuring that staff and students have appropriate facilities/environments for work and study?**

The University Secretary noted that the recent intake of new students had resulted in changes to the demographics of the student population, including an increase in the number of students who had young children. He explained that these changes would need the University to adapt and respond to new challenges. He agreed that some staff had reported concerns over the need for adequate facilities and guidance on responsibilities.

The University Secretary reported that the University Executive Group had agreed to issue new guidance to staff to help minimise risk. He explained that the University's Security Team would be available to respond to staff reporting incidents of unaccompanied children on campus. He noted that the new guidance would be circulated to staff and students soon.

The Director of Student Services reported that a Working Group had been established to help develop policy and establish improved facilities, including the introduction of a short-term creche facility in addition to the services of the University Nursery. The Director noted that the possibility of creating creche facilities at Ninewells was also being looked at by a separate group.

### **Staff Reward & Recognition**

The Interim Director of Human Resources noted that the HERA (Higher Education Role Analysis) had continued to be used across the University for grading new and vacant posts. He reported that its use in the re-evaluation of existing posts would be resumed in the next academic year.

The Interim Director explained that the mechanisms for re-evaluation were in development.

The University Secretary explained that there were two staff reward and recognition schemes already in place a one-off recognition scheme and a staff long service award. He noted that a staff recognition celebration event had been scheduled for autumn 2023.

### **Prayer Rooms/Quiet Spaces**

In response to a question the University Secretary confirm the availability of prayer rooms and

quiet spaces on the City Campus, including in Airlie Place and the Chaplaincy. He noted that Estates were working to provide additional rooms in the north of the campus.

### **Disability Services**

In response to a question on the provision of disability support services, the University Secretary explained that there had been increased waiting times for some students in the pre-examination period. He noted that a bid for additional staff resources was under consideration.

The Director of Student Services reported that priority had been given to arranging the necessary adjustments for exams, such as providing separate rooms and invigilation for students who required them.

### **Car Parking**

In response to a question on Car Parking facilities The Director of Estates confirmed that regulations requiring permits were in force and that ticketing of unauthorised vehicles would continue in line with the regulations.

### **Africa Initiative**

In response to a question the Principal confirmed that Malawi, Ghana, and Nigeria were the current focal points of the University's Africa Initiative. He noted the launch of a new

PGR scholarship program, which planned to award scholarships to five African students every two years, with plans to increase the number in the future.

The Principal noted that the program was currently seeking projects to support and was working with existing partners to upskill their staff and supervisors. He noted that Malawi's public universities were specifically seeking support for research in sustainability, health sciences, and medicine (infectious diseases).

The Principal also noted that the development of short courses aimed at upskilling students had generated a lot of interest, particularly in Ghana where there was a developing relationship with the new Drug Discovery Hub. He also noted that a joint Master's degree program in Law in partnership with the University of Lagos in Nigeria was in development. The Principal reported that there was a wide range of activity including student engagement in Malawi and Uganda that focused on local health initiatives. Members also noted the successful Africa Lecture series, that had been developed on an interdisciplinary basis.

### **Strike Pay Donations**

In response to a question on the possible donation of pay withheld due to industrial action the University Secretary explained that no decision had been taken by the University Executive Group.

The Principal noted concerns over the current marking and assessment boycott (action short of a strike) given the potential impact on students during the main exam diet. He confirmed that the University would continue to mitigate against any negative impact on students. He also noted that while partial performance had never been accepted by the University there had never been a need to deduct pay during previous assessment boycotts.

## Challenges

In response to a question on the challenges faced by the University, the Principal highlighted the need to (i) instil confidence post-pandemic (ii) invest in growth while maintaining academic excellence and (iii) shift the mindset to prioritise both the bottom line and academic excellence.

The Principal explained that a clear focus on excellence would help to deliver positive outcomes for the University. He noted the importance of continued success in international recruitment and commercialisation.

The Principal also noted the need to rigorously assess the cost base to ensure a healthy position and create growth opportunities. He explained that the University was in a much better position and would be able to take actions in line with strategic intentions.

## Workload Allocation Models

In response to a question on delays to the processing of workload allocations it was noted that Strategic Intelligence were working with the School to resolve some specific data issues. The Senior Vice-Principal explained that there were plans to move away from the current workload allocation model in order to introduce a more flexible approach.

## Student accommodation

In response to a question on the planning of student accommodation availability in the next academic year, it was noted that the University would continue to offer a guarantee of accommodation for all single student applicants if received by the published deadline.

The Principal noted that the University was working with the City Council and other local institutions to do what it could to help ease supply problems in the rental market. He thanked members of the University's Working Group for their efforts to ensure that student accommodation needs had been met over the previous academic year.

The Standing Committee Convener concluded the meeting by reminding staff that questions can be raised in advance of each Staff Council meeting by contacting their Standing Committee representative as listed on the Council Webpage or by email: [questiontime@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:questiontime@dundee.ac.uk)

## 2. Next Meeting

21 November 2023

**Professor Iain Gillespie Principal**  
**May 2023**