

University Court

Minutes of the meeting of the University Court held on 15th March 2018

(Minutes 17.65 – 17.92)

Present: Rob Woodward (Chair)
Kevin Campbell, Dr Douglas Chalmers, Dr Morag Ferguson, Daniel Gallacher, Professor Pamela Gillies, Tom Halpin, Asif Haseeb, Gordon Jack, Ian Kerr, Austin Lafferty, Neena Mahal, Dr Neil Partlett, Professor Ann Priest, Davena Rankin, Paul Reynolds, Caroline Stuart, Alistair Webster, Professor Stephanie Young (Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Laura Gordon, Dr Bill Gunnyeon, Lesley Thomson, Chris Daisley, Dr Jeanine Gregersen-Hermans

In attendance: Professor Cam Donaldson, Pro Vice Chancellor Research
Jan Hulme, University Secretary & Vice Principal Governance
Claire Hulsén, Director of Strategy & Planning
Alex Killick, Director of People
Seonag MacKinnon, Director of Communications and Public Affairs
Professor James Miller, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Strategy)
Professor Valerie Webster, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Riley Power, Head of Governance (Secretary)

Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, his first as Chair. He spoke of having found a strong commitment to the common good mission, its animating spirit and the core aims of the University. He sought to promote the visibility and transparency of Court, and emblematic of that was the new meeting location of the Court in the Lantern within the heart of the University. It was important that the Court should be connected with the wider university community, that it should conduct its business visibly and that its presence and role should be apparent and understood widely.

Declarations of Interest

Neena Mahal had declared an interest in item 17 on the agenda, being an update on the partnership between the University and NHS Lanarkshire.

Caroline Stuart declared an interest as a member of the Scottish Funding Council Board in relation to item 9 on the agenda.

Gordon Jack, Ian Kerr, Ann Priest, the Principal and the DVC Strategy all declared their interest as directors of GCU-NYC, Inc. and trustees of GCNYC, in relation to items 12 and 13 on the agenda.

In future a table of interests would be circulated routinely with the papers for each meeting of the Court.

Minutes of the meeting of the University Court held on 23rd November 2017

17.65 Agreed Members approved the minutes of the previous meeting (Document 17/46) subject to a clarification at minute 17.38. The Court also agreed that minutes in

future would be circulated following the meeting and that any proposed changes would be communicated by email, following which the minutes would be taken as approved prior to the next meeting and their approval would not normally be a substantive item on the agenda. The Chair advised that a brief summary of Court meeting would go out to all staff the day following the meeting in the interests of communicating key discussion points widely with staff

Matters Arising Briefing Note

17.66 Noted Document UC17/47, being a report on the matters arising from the Court meeting on 23rd November 2017 and the actions taken since that meeting to address these matters. It was confirmed that as GCUL had proved unable to participate in the staff open meeting as planned, the intention was to find an alternative means of engagement, and the matter was to be considered with the new Chair.

Items Brought by Chair of Court

- 17.67 Noted i. The Chair provided feedback on his series of one to one discussions with Court members. He acknowledged the fact that Court members had demonstrated strong commitment to a common purpose, were well motivated and gave generously of their time. Lay members were keen to have a closer understanding of the University's work and its students as well as of the operation of the Schools. Members had highlighted the importance of proposals submitted to Court having a robust evidence base.
- ii. The Chair reminded Court of the planned change in the format and timing of Court meetings originally scheduled for introduction in September 2018. One objective of this was to promote the sense of Court as a strong community by sociably complementing and reinforcing its formal work. He encouraged lay members to ensure that they were well networked with each other and mutual contact details had been circulated with this in mind. It was agreed, that the new arrangements would be brought forward to the June 2018 meeting, subject to the impact of this change being assessed. The Court agreed that these changes would be kept under review and that arrangements would be made to facilitate the time commitment of lay governors which was implied.
- iii. The Chair advised Court members that a proposal would be developed with the University Secretary, for consideration by Court, whereby each appointed governor would be paired with a different School, professional services department or other significant focus of activity across the University as a method of promoting understanding and interaction between Court members and the wider University.
- iv. The Chair noted that it had been agreed with the Student President that the President would provide an update on key student issues as a standing item at every meeting of Court.
- v. The Chair advised Court members that the 2018-19 Court and Executive Board Away Day would be held on campus on 9th and 10th October 2018.
- vi. The Chair advised that he expected Court members to attend Senate meetings in accordance with a roster of attendance to be agreed with members. The Chair

noted that proposals would be forthcoming for further forums which brought together staff, students and Court members.

- vii. The Chair expressed the Court's appreciation of the excellent presentation on the Advanced Higher Hub earlier in the day by Eleanor Wilson, Head of GCU Outreach, accompanied by current and previous Hub participants, Francis Ahanonu and Pauline Mushaka.
- viii. The Chair concluded by extending the warm thanks of Court to the previous Chair of Court, Hazel Brooke, for her dedicated service to the Court and the wider university community throughout her tenure, first as a lay governor and then as Vice-Chair and Chair of Court.

Principal & Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 17.68 Noted
- i. Document UC17/48, the Principal's and Executive Board Report to Court.
 - ii. The Principal intimated that her greatest focus was currently the University's student recruitment performance in all categories. The recent HESA performance indicators had reflected the University's considerable strengths and achievements in widening participation and student progression. However, in important recruitment categories it was not enough simply to meet the student recruitment numbers reflected in a prudently set budget. Driving forward this complex, highly competitive and strategically important agenda required strong coordination and matrix working across the University at many different levels. Accordingly, she had established a taskforce led by the DVC Strategy to shape and oversee progress.
 - iii. The Principal also noted that further work was being undertaken to understand the possible impacts on the University of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) established south of the Border, the proposal to expand the scope of the TEF to subject groups and the more recent moves to quantify and publish the value in cash terms (i.e. graduate earnings) of different degrees. A briefing paper for Court was in preparation, and the Chair proposed that the topic might be examined more fully at a pre-Court dinner.
 - iv. The Principal referred to the industrial dispute within the sector over further proposed USS pension changes. While the impact on the University was quite low with relatively few members of staff in the relevant scheme (the University had not been designated by the trade unions for strike action as the number of members in the USS did not meet the threshold required), the matter was nevertheless of importance and she had welcomed the revisiting of the proposal and review of the revaluation of the scheme. She had been supportive of the proposal that employers would pay higher contributions, while noting that the revised proposal had now been rejected by the unions across the sector.
 - v. The Principal advised Court that she was proposing in principle the appointment of a Chief Operating Officer responsible for a broad span of University services, including finance. The Chair observed that this would help address feedback from Court members on the presentation of business plans. The Principal referred to the many variations of this type of role in the sector and would come back to Court with a proposal tailored to the University's needs. The Chair of the Audit Committee advocated an appointment that that brought strong financial

experience and skills.

- vi. In relation to the comments in the Principal's report about the Advanced Higher Hub, the Court encouraged the University to be ambitious and it expressed warm support for the idea which had arisen in discussion with the Deputy First Minister that the Hub might develop a growth trajectory with wider national impact to support the transition of young people from school to higher education.
- vii. On behalf of the Court the Chair congratulated the Principal on her appointments to the First Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Girls and the Glasgow Partnership for Economic Growth and noted that these appointments would provide a useful opportunity to contribute and to promote and build the profile of the work of the University.

Student Presidents' Report and Student Association Trimester 1 Report

- 17.69 Noted
- i. An oral update from the Student President on the work of the Students' Association along with Document UC17/61, being a report on the Students' Association's activities in Trimester 1.
 - ii. The Student President noted the following matters in particular:
 - (a) Sport club membership had increased by 112 members from the same time in the previous year and the clubs had worked hard at building a stronger GCU identity and community across all clubs. The Student President noted that the proportion of students who were members of a club or society was slightly above the sector average;
 - (b) The Students' Association now had a record number of trained class reps with a total of 365 trained class reps in place.
 - (c) The Students' Association had hosted the NUS Scotland The Gathering event on campus and the NUS Scotland Zone Conference.
 - (d) The recent student elections had seen voter turnout increase from 2.6k to 3.2k from the last election and had resulted in four sabbatical appointments which reflected good diversity (3 female/2 BME/the Association's first college articulation sabbatical officer. It was noted that the incoming Student President would attend the next meeting of Court as an observer as part of her induction into the role.
 - (e) The Students' Association was working with the University on a mental health partnership agreement. An update on progress would be given to the May Court meeting.

University Secretary's Report

- 17.70 Noted
- i. Document UC17/49, the University Secretary's Report.
 - ii. Court noted there had been a recent communication from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) reminding charities of their responsibilities for safeguarding and about notifiable events. The Court further noted the measures the University had in place to address these issues and that there had been no notifiable events.
 - iii. Court considered a briefing paper on the General Data Protection Regulation, the

pervasive impact of the new regulation, and its relevance to governors' own role. The Audit Committee had earlier commissioned an internal audit on the University's GDPR readiness which had concluded that the project plan was comprehensive and had highlighted particular aspects of the Regulation that were challenging but critical to address to ensure compliance. The Committee would receive a follow-up report on progress against the agreed management actions in line with normal internal audit practice.

- iv. Court noted the nature of the changes to the Court Standing Orders that were required to ensure consistency with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance 2017. The University Secretary & VP Governance advised that these changes, along with the changes noted in Document UC17/65, would be given to the University's lawyers to draft amended Standing Orders for consideration and approval at the June Court meeting.
- v. Court noted the Chair of Court's membership of the 30% club to promote gender parity on boards, the schedule of key dates and events and details of the attendance of Court members for the 2017-18 session. The record would be amended to reflect Danny Gallacher's attendance on 28th September 2017.
- vi. The University Secretary and VP Governance advised Court about a matter concerning the Students' Association. There had been a move by a student to call an extraordinary meeting of the Student Voice with a view to bringing a motion for a vote of no confidence in a student sabbatical officer. Various aspects of this caused concern but particularly the proximity to the Association's elections for the 2018-19 sabbatical posts and the fact that the motion was being brought by one candidate against another. In her constitutional role as observer of the student elections she had made the Students' Association aware that holding the extraordinary meeting would be prejudicial to the good and fair conduct of the elections, a view which was shared by the Association's own Board of Trustees. As issues remained, she was working with the Student President to find a constructive resolution.

17.71 Agreed Court approved the calendar of Court and Committee meeting dates for 2018-19, subject to confirming availability around the GCU-NYC, Inc. Board meeting scheduled for 15th November 2018.

Draft Outcome Agreement 2018-2019

17.72 Considered i. Document UC17/50, being the draft SFC Outcome Agreement 2018-19 which was provided to the Court for comment and approval prior to submission to the SFC by 30th April 2018. The DVC Strategy reminded Court that the draft agreement was an interim update on the three-year outcome agreement submitted to the SFC in March 2017. Not least against the background of the ministerial letter and its emphasis on 'intensification', it provided more detail than the earlier draft seen by Court which had already received positive feedback from the SFC. Court noted that the indicative funding letter had signalled a 1.4% increase in the block grant to the University, with funding for some elements within the agreement, notably Nursing and Disability provision, yet to be finally confirmed. The DVC Strategy advised that

key issues which could affect future funding from the SFC included the Widening Access and Retention funding along with changes in subject price groups. The DVC Strategy noted that in developing the Outcome Agreement the University had consulted with the trade unions and would be consulting further with the Students' Association. The Chair of the SFC had indicated to the sector that he would be instituting a review of the Outcome Agreement process.

ii. Court considered the Draft Outcome Agreement and noted the following in particular:

- (a) The increase in the block grant was slightly higher than anticipated.
- (b) A Court member queried whether expected increases in widening access targets had eventuated. The DVC Strategy advised that the SFC was still to confirm this point with the University but expected that the SFC would be seeking an increase in proportions and numbers for widening access. While the University could increase its number of widening access students, this would drive additional costs and could be achieved only with increased funding.
- (c) Court was advised that, while the number of students declaring a disability had increased in the latest figures were still lower than some other HEIs, the University promoted a learning environment which sought to mainstream accessibility and minimise the impact of disability on the student experience, which means students do not need to declare their disability to access a range of support. A better gauge of the University's commitment to students with disability was the number engaging with the disability service and School based support, both during application process and throughout their studies.

17.73 Agreed Court endorsed the draft Outcome Agreement for submission to the Scottish Funding Council by 30th April 2018 while recognising that work to refine the document would continue before final submission.

2018 HESA Performance Indicators

17.74 Noted Document UC17/51, being an overview of the HESA 2018 Performance Indicators. The DVC Strategy advised Court that the University's showing in the 2018 Performance Indicators demonstrated that the University had performed very well in the context of the sector in Scotland and against the University's Strategy 2020 KPIs. The Court acknowledged with appreciation the work of students and staff to achieve the results.

2017-18 International Student Recruitment Report

17.75 Considered i. Document UC17/52, which provided a summary of 2017-18 international student headcount registrations to full-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and research postgraduate students as at 21 February 2018, following the close of Trimester B registration. The DVC Strategy advised that Trimester B recruitment delivered lower than expected student numbers although this was somewhat offset by improved Trimester A recruitment. This removed the scope to outperform the budgeted operating surplus as hoped. Moreover, there would be an impact on 2018-19 numbers and income as the continuing cohort would be smaller. The DVC Strategy advised Court that, following the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting at which the recruitment figures had been

considered, a root cause analysis was undertaken to determine the reasons for the disappointing Tri B numbers, and immediate, medium and longer term actions were identified. These actions were being taken forward by a task group established for this purpose with key colleagues and led by the DVC Strategy.

- ii. Court considered that more should be done to improve international student recruitment. The Principal reported that enhanced recruitment across all categories was to be the immediate focus for her and the University. Responding to a query about what intelligence had been captured from those areas within the University that were performing better than others, the DVC Strategy noted that the need for better market intelligence had been identified and a large amount of data had been collated for analysis. It was essential to maintain that work and apply the resulting intelligence to keeping the portfolio of provision refreshed if the University was to be responsive to and able to capitalise on market demand for programmes and preferred delivery options. The Chair underlined the importance of strong, strategic student recruitment and proposed that the topic should be revisited in the near future.

GCNYC Report

- 17.76 Considered
- i. Document UC17/53 being an update on the overall position of GCNYC which included details of the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE) accreditation process, delivery against budget items, student recruitment and progression and of profile raising events for GCNYC.
 - ii. The Principal noted that, while the student numbers for accredited programmes were rising and consistent with the currently modest projections, the budget for GCNYC would remain challenging for 2017-18 in part because it required research grants to be secured which was a slow process. In addition there was still work to be done to develop and market short courses for CPD. The VP GCNYC highlighted the following:
 - (a) GCNYC was on track with the MSCHE accreditation process, which, if successful, would allow GCNYC increased recruitment opportunities.
 - (b) The active recruitment centre work to bring North American students to Glasgow and London was showing encouraging results.
 - (c) Content for new online MSc courses was in the final stages of completion.
 - (d) CEO Scholarships and Research Donations were outstanding and the VP GCNYC was engaging directly with CEOs on these commitments.
 - iii. The Chair observed that there was evidently much activity taking place and some successes. Once he had acquired a more holistic picture of GCNYC and a fuller understanding of the budget setting and how it was being implemented, there would be further discussion. Meanwhile, the Chair of the GCNYC Board noted that there would be a meeting of the Board of Trustees in April prior to which the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee would meet with the VP GCNYC and the DVC Strategy to consider performance against budget in depth. The student numbers were encouraging but success could be properly evaluated only once GCNYC was able to recruit on the basis of MSCHE accreditation. He also wished to probe the monetisation of all the excellent positioning work that was underway and examine the nature and speed of associated income delivery. It was suggested by another governor that GCNYC reporting should include a 'weighted pipeline' which showed all income generating

activity and opportunities with the probability of their realisation. The Chair of Court noted that following this meeting, there would be a meeting between the Chair of Court, the Chair of GCNYC and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to discuss how best in future to report GCNYC activity to the Court, as Sole Member.

- iv. The VP GCNYC agreed to speak separately with Caroline Stuart on the pricing structure of a particular strategic consulting project being progressed by GCNYC.

GCU-NYC, Inc. Amendment to GCU Loan Agreement

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| 17.77 | Considered | Document UC17/54, being a request for an amendment to the Loan Agreement between GCU and GCU-NYC, Inc. The DVC Strategy reminded Court that the University made an annual commitment to the GCU-NYC, Inc. and to KPMG, as part of the audit process, that financial support would be provided to the organisation sufficient for it to satisfy its obligations as they fell due, at least until 1 st December 2018. In order to ensure that there would be sufficient headroom in the loan agreement, the Committee had been asked to recommend to Court that the loan agreement be increased. It was not envisaged that the full additional facility would require to be invoked by 1 st December 2018. The DVC Strategy also advised that, following discussion at FGPC about when GCNYC would operate with financial independence, an analysis of the expected future loan requirements for GCNYC would be undertaken and provided to the Committee for consideration. Court members noted that, to meet immediate exigencies, a resolution approving an advance from the current recommended amendment had been supported by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and had been circulated and approved by Court on 23 rd February 2018. The Chair of Court indicated that he expected every effort to be made in future to bring proposals to Court and its Committees within the framework of the scheduled meetings. Court noted that the external auditors had included the loan among the issues requiring specific audit discussion as part of the 2017-18 year-end audit. Court noted that the Finance and General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 5 th February 2018 had agreed to recommend to Court that the amendment to the Loan Agreement be approved. |
| 17.78 | Agreed | The Court agreed to approve the request to amend the Loan Agreement between GCU and GCU-NYC, Inc. |

GCU London Update

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| 17.79 | Considered | <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Document UC17/55 being a report from the DVC Academic on further progress against the strategic changes implemented in relation to GCU London that were outlined to Court in June 2017. <p>The Principal reminded Court of the enormous potential for the University given the popularity of London as a destination for international students. At the same time the impact of high educational usage rental costs in suitable locations was significant. This had led to a property review which had concluded that GCUL should consolidate on two floors and sub-let the third (there was already possible interest) with plans in development to accommodate strong growth in student numbers as required. The work of GCU London was being refocused on those programmes and delivery methods which were in high demand by students and would drive growth. This would include development of the digital programme</p> |
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portfolio and exploitation of the University's three-city campuses for delivery.

The DVC Academic advised that Trimester B recruitment at GCU London had fallen, despite strong Trimester A performance against target, which had caused a negative budget variance. The DVC Academic advised that conversion rates had also declined in Trimester B. The DVC Academic advised that a review of these issues was being undertaken by the taskforce referenced in Minute 17.75 and a further report on the actions taken to address these issues would be provided to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in April and to Court in May.

- ii. Court noted the activity being undertaken by GCU London and requested that the next report include an analysis of competitors and the actions GCU London was undertaking that would drive its success in a strong but crowded market place and when some key markets such as China could contract. The Chair observed that much work was required of the Executive to reset the direction of GCUL and build wide commitment to making the most of the opportunity it afforded.

Mutual Severance Scheme Report

- 17.80 Considered Document UC17/56 being an overview of the number of MSS applications received and approved by the Executive Board. The DVC Strategy advised, in response to queries from Court members, that testing the impact on student/staff ratios was part of the impact assessment when each application was reviewed by the relevant Dean of School. The Director of People confirmed that support was provided to those staff members whose applications had not been approved and this was being kept under review. In response to concerns about the impact on service delivery and the quality of the student and staff experience, the DVC Strategy advised that the impact assessments had addressed these issues and appropriate mitigations before any application was approved. He confirmed that the University's growth objectives meant there was an intention to use some of the annualised savings for reinvestment but that posts would not be replaced on a like-for-like basis. Reinvestment would be a decision taken on the basis of clear and compelling business cases that supported the growth agenda.

Schools Refresh

- 17.81 Considered i. Document UC17/57 which updated Court on the current stage of the Schools Refresh led by the DVC Academic and initiated in Trimester A 2017-18. The DVC Academic advised that following discussions and consideration of the outputs from stage 1, along with a range of university and sector data, the refresh was moving to stage 2, this being a full consultation with staff. The Principal advised that the refresh was about refocussing the Schools on those activities that would drive growth and would be valued by students. The Court agreed that there should be clear criteria to guide this process. Court asked that the next update report should clearly set out what success would look like at the end of the process and that there should also be clear criteria against which the success of the Schools was assessed following the refresh.

Research Excellence Framework (REF) Report

- 17.82 Considered i. Document UC17/58 which updated Court on sector developments related to the REF since the publication of the Stern review. The report also set out the structures

and activities put in place at the University to ensure it met the requirements of the REF with excellent submissions across the University's units of assessment. The PVC Research advised Court that earlier concern around what would be the determinant of whether a member of staff was classed as research active was allayed by the fact that institutions would be invited to adopt a Code of Practice to be agreed with UK funding bodies which would be used for this purpose.

- ii. A Court member queried whether Research Impact Officers would be assigned to other Schools beyond the School of Health and Life Sciences. The PVC Research advised that research Excellence Grant funding had been allocated to Schools and the decisions on its application had been undertaken at a School level. However, the success of the approach adopted by SHLS had prompted consideration of its wider application.
- iii. The Chair of Court wished to see a fuller discussion of the University's REF readiness and in a wider sectoral context including competitor activity. It would be a topic for the away day or a court working dinner.

NHS Lanarkshire Hospitals: Report on University Hospital Status Arrangements

17.83 Noted Document UC17/59 being an update report from the DVC Academic on the GCU/NHS Lanarkshire Strategic Partnership which updated Court on the actions taken since Court approved the partnership in March 2017, along with areas for future development.

Complaints Handling Procedure Overview: Session 2016-17

17.84 Noted Document UC17/60 being the overview of the complaints received by the University in the period 1st August 2016 to 31st July 2017. Court noted that in line with SPSO requirements, data from the report would be published on the Complaints Handling Procedure pages of the University website. Court also noted that awareness training and development work with Schools and professional services departments would continue.

Report from Senate Meeting of 15th December 2017

17.85 Noted Document UC17/62 being a summary of the business discussed by Senate at its meeting on 15th February 2017.

Senate Disciplinary Committee Annual Report

17.86 Noted Document UC17/63 being an overview of the disciplinary offences considered under the terms of the Code of Student Conduct during session 2016-17.

Report from Finance and General Purposes Committee: 5th February 2018

17.87 Noted Document UC17/64 being a report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee from its meeting held on 5th February 2018.

Report from Court Membership Committee: 12th February 2018

17.88 Considered Document UC17/65, a report on substantive items which the Court Membership

Committee had considered at its meeting on 12th February 2018. The Court noted in particular the provisions of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 and the key implications for the University.

- 17.89 Agreed
- i. Court agreed unanimously to the recommendation from the Committee to reappoint the following lay governors for a further term of 3 years from 1 August 2018, while noting that there would be merit in progressively staggering the appointment and retirement of governors to ensure there was continuity of knowledge and experience of Court business:
 - (a) Ian Kerr
 - (b) Gordon Jack
 - (c) Neena Mahal
 - (d) Professor Ann Priest
 - (e) Paul Reynolds
 - (f) Alistair Webster
 - ii. Court agreed unanimously to reappoint Professor Stephanie Young for a further term of 18 months from 1st August 2018.
 - iii. The Court noted that the Committee would also consider the reappointment of Caroline Stuart but that this decision was deferred until such time as the Chair of Court had an opportunity to discuss the matter with the member.
 - iv. Court approved the recommendation that an application and criterion based selection process be adopted by the Committee in determining recommendations to Court on the staff member of the Remuneration Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It was noted by Court that once trade union nominated staff governors were appointed to Court, these staff governors would be equally eligible for these committee appointments.
 - v. Court agreed that before approving a recommendation to appoint the Student President as an ex officio member of the Remuneration Committee, the views of the Students' Association on this matter should be confirmed.
 - vi. Court approved the proposed amendments to the Court Membership Committee terms of reference, including a change to the name of the Committee to the Court Governance and Nominations Committee.
 - vii. Court approved the recommendation that the Equality and Diversity Committee, the Health and Safety Committee and the Staff Policy Committee be combined into a single committee named the Equality, People and Health Committee and approved the proposed terms of reference and membership for that Committee. The elected academic staff governor advised Court that he had opposed this proposal at the Health and Safety Committee meeting at which it was discussed but accepted that the majority of the Committee had supported the decision. In approving the proposal, the Court noted in particular that the combination of the three Committees in no way represented a diminution in the importance of the matters within the respective committee remits but rather enabled a more holistic and strategic approach to be taken to these matters by the new Committee.
 - viii. Court considered the nature of the proposed changes to the Court Standing Orders relating to Court membership resulting from the Higher Education Governance

(Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance 2017. Court queried whether further changes were required to reflect the need for:

- (a) Staff consultation within the process for the appointment of the principal;
- (b) An annual event involving Court and University stakeholders, as provided for in the Code;
- (c) The position of a senior independent governor

The University Secretary agreed to consider these issues when instructing the University lawyers to consider the draft amended standing orders. The University Secretary noted that the specific changes would be presented to Court for consideration and approval at its meeting in June 2018.

- ix. Court agreed the proposed regulations for the appointment of trade union nominated staff governors for the purposes of consultation with the relevant stakeholders affected by the proposed rules. Two staff elected governors suggested there were issues in relation to the administration of elections under the proposed process, although elections were required only if the unions did not agree among themselves who the TU nominated staff governors should be. These issues would be considered further as part of the prescribed consultation process with the trade unions.

Report from Audit Committee: 15th February 2018

17.90 Noted Document UC17/66 being a report from the Audit Committee from its meeting held on 15th February 2018.

Criminal Finances Act 2017 and Corporate Criminal Offences

17.91 Agreed Court approved the proposed top-level commitment and the Criminal Facilitation of Tax Evasion Statement (Document UC17/67) for publication on the University website as one of a series of measure to support legislative compliance.

Date of next meeting

17.92 Noted The next meeting of Court would be held on Thursday 10th May 2018 at 2.00pm.