

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY COURT

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 31 October 2016
at 3.45 pm in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus**

Present: Dr G Forbes (Chair); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); Mr R Adams; Ms M Ali; Mr N Ballantyne; Ms J Boyle; Lord Brodie (Chancellor's Assessor); Ms J Brown; Mr C Guest; Professor A McCleery; Ms E Partyka; Professor A Scullion; Dr P Stollard; Mr R Subramani; Ms B Wallace; Mr S Walls; Mrs P Woodburn; Mr N Woodcock.

Apologies: Mr M Connarty; Dr V Ellis; Mr R Hare; Dr S Jiwa; Professor A Sambell (Vice Principal, Deputy Vice Chancellor).

In attendance: Dr S Cairncross (Assistant Principal); Mr D Cloy (Clerk to Court); Ms K Dewar (Director of Human Resources & Development); Dr G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Mr I McIntosh (Assistant Principal); Mr A McGoff (Finance Director); Dr G Webber (University Secretary).

Observing: Gail Thomson (Executive Support Officer); Fiona Forrest-Anderson (HR Client Partner).

1. OPENING REMARKS, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1. The meeting was preceded by a Pre-Court Strategy Presentation on the University's Marketing, Communication & Engagement Strategy, which members had welcomed.
- 1.2. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and welcomed new lay members Ralph Adams, Charles Guest and Elizabeth Partyka; new staff members Alison McCleery and Stewart Walls; new student members Rojan Subramani and Beth Wallace; the new Director of Finance Andy McGoff; staff observers Gail Thomson and Fiona-Forrest-Anderson and Gary Hutchison (Dean of School of Applied Sciences) who was in attendance to present later in the meeting.
- 1.3. The apologies were **noted**.

Part A For discussion and decision

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2016 UC(15/16)67

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2016 were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Financial Memorandum with ENSA (9.2)

- 3.1. It was noted that agreement had been reached on a final form or words which was acceptable both to the University and ENSA.

4. COURT AND COURT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP UC(16/17)01

- 4.1. Court received the paper which reported on the outcome of the lay member recruitment exercise and sought confirmation of sub-committee membership allocations.
- 4.2. Court **noted** the report and **approved** the final membership and convenorship of its standing committees for 2016/17.

5. HE GOVERNANCE UPDATE UC(16/17)02

- 5.1. Court received the paper which provided an update with regard to recent developments around the implementation of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and which indicated that the matter of Staff and Student representation on Remuneration Committee would receive earlier consideration by Remuneration Committee at its November meeting.
- 5.2. Court **noted** the update.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT UC(16/17)03

- 6.1. The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the UK Government plans for further curbs on immigration including further restrictions on student migration which were a matter of concern for the sector.
- 6.2. The Scottish Spending Review and the outlook of continuing severe pressure on public finances was highlighted. It was noted that Universities Scotland was continuing to lobby hard for sustainable resourcing of the sector.
- 6.3. The University's appearance for the first time in the Times Higher Education world rankings was welcomed and thanks were extended to the Head of Planning, Director of International Operations and colleagues for their efforts to ensure the University met the criteria for inclusion in this publication.
- 6.4. The recent successful autumn graduation ceremonies were also highlighted.
- 6.5. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT: PROVISIONAL OUTTURN UC(16/17)04 FOR 2015/16*

- 7.1. Court received the paper which reported on the status of the Statutory Accounts for the University and its subsidiary Napier University Ventures Limited (NUVL) for the year ended 31 July 2016. It was noted that this was the

first year the accounts had been prepared in accordance with FRS102 and the 2015 Statement of Recommended practice (SORP) and as a result the way pensions are recognised in the accounts had changed

7.2. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

8. REPORT ON LEAGUE TABLE PERFORMANCE UC(16/17)05

8.1. Court receive the paper which provided a summary of league table rankings for the University across the three main league tables in the UK and in one world university league table. It was noted that the University's position was broadly similar to last year but that it was hoped more progress would be made as a result of continuing efforts to deliver across the University's Academic Strategy. The range of activities and areas of focus which would be expected to improve the position were outlined.

8.2. Discussion followed during which the positive actions and targeted investments taken over the past two years were acknowledged and it was recognised that these changes would take time to feed through into league table results. Efforts underway to review employment contracts to maximise the number of staff who could be counted and therefore improve the University's staff/student ratio for league table purposes was also noted.

8.3. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR STAFF UC(16/17)06

9.1. Court received the paper which outlined a suggested approach to foster inclusivity amongst staff. It was noted that the Strategy had been re-named as "inclusion" from "equality and diversity" to signal a change in focus away from data reporting to positive, pro-active action.

9.2. Discussion followed during which the strategy and its revised focus was welcomed. Progress within the University and support for the Aurora and Athena Swan initiatives was noted.

9.3. Thereafter, Court **approved** the Staff Inclusion Strategy

10. BREXIT UPDATE UC(16/17)07

10.1. Court received the paper which advised on the potential impact on the University of the vote in favour of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union and the measures the University Leadership Team are taking in response.

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

11. REVISED CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2016/17* UC(16/17)08

11.1. Court received the paper which presented proposed amendments to the University's corporate risk register in light of the UK's decision to leave the European Union, as recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee.

11.2. Thereafter Court **approved** the revised Top Risks Register.

Part B For information

12. ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 21 OCTOBER 2016 UC(16/17)09

12.1. Court **noted** the minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board of 21 October 2016.

12.2. The approval of the Student Innovation and Enterprise Strategy was highlighted. It was noted that this would be presented at a future Court meeting.

13. REPORT ON STUDENT SURVEYS UC(16/17)10

13.1. Court received the paper which identified themes across the various student satisfaction surveys undertaken and outlined the actions being taken by the University in response to the student feedback received.

13.2. Thereafter Court **noted** the update.

14. SCHOOL UPDATE: SCHOOL OF APPLIED SCIENCES

14.1. Court received the Presentation from the Dean of the School of Applied Sciences on the strategic development of the School in the context of Strategy 2020. The current position, opportunities and challenges, future direction and plans for delivery were outlined.

14.2. Court welcomed the presentation and discussion followed during which opportunities for future development and cross School/Programme collaboration were noted.

14.3. Thereafter Court **noted** the presentation.

15. UPDATE FROM EDINBURGH NAPIER STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

15.1. Court noted the update from the ENSA President on current activities underway within the Association.

Part C Not intended for discussion

16. REPORTS FROM COURT COMMITTEES

16.a Nominations Committee Meeting on 30 September 2016* **UC(16/17)11**

16.1. The report was **noted**.

16.b Finance & Property Committee meeting on 20 October 2016* **UC(16/17)12**

16.2 The report was **noted**.

16.c Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 20 October 2016* **UC(16/17)13**

16.3 The report was **noted**.

17. CORPORATE PLAN 2015/16: FINAL UPDATE **UC(16/17)14**

17.1. Court **noted** the final update on progress against the delivery of the 2015/16 Corporate Plan.

18. ULT REPORTING LINES **UC(16/17)15**

18.1. Court **noted** the changes to University Leadership Team reporting lines following the review of Professional Services.

19. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF COURT BUSINESS 2016/17 **UC(16/17)16**

19.1. Court **noted** the indicative forward schedule of business.

20. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS

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

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