

General Council Half Yearly Meeting 19 June 2018

Minute of General Council Half Yearly Meeting held 19 June 2018, Senate Room, Gilbert Scott Building, University of Glasgow

Item	
1	Introduction and Welcome
	<p>The Chancellor welcomed everyone and thanked those present for attending the meeting. He introduced the panel – Principal Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli, Elizabeth Passey, Convener of Court, Professor Neal Juster, Senior Vice Principal, Amber Higgins, Clerk to the General Council (GC), and John Marsh, Convener of the General Council Business Committee (GCBC). It was reported to the meeting that in addition to normal meetings of the governing body, the Institution is expected to hold an annual stakeholder meeting in public, at which representatives of the governing body, including the Principal, are expected to give an account of the institution's performance and should be available to answer questions. It was therefore noted that this meeting would be a joint meeting with Court.</p>
2	Principal's Address and Questions
	<p>The Principal thanked the Chancellor for his introduction and welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Principal reported that progress was being made on a number of the Primary KPIs but that limited progress had been made on Undergraduate satisfaction and research output quality, with Assessment and feedback still a concern. Gender equality has also dipped slightly over the last year but recent appointments were likely to improve this and the University will be in a good position by 2020. It was also reported that the University financial position continued to strengthen with compound of annual growth of 5% since 2014 along with a continued operating surplus.</p> <p>The GC noted the University continued to improve in the overall rankings and that the University was 80th in World rankings up 8 places on 2016. The Campus development would help to accommodate the increasing student numbers and existing estates would be enhanced.</p> <p>The Principal also reported that the University had been involved with a number of key scientific discoveries such as Gravitational Waves, which had been widely recognised as one of the most important discoveries of our time. In health, the University had played a leading role in combatting the threat from the Zika virus.</p> <p>Recent breakthroughs include Project MOBIUS, building a higher education virtual reality platform for students. Students in topics including physics, chemistry, geology, anatomy, philosophy or history will soon receive schooling through an enhanced VR teaching and learning experience. A grant of £7.1m from Global Challenges Research Fund Success to establish the Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning, Cities and Neighbourhoods, which will conduct comparative studies of urbanisation and urban neighbourhoods, and will investigate the internal socio-economic structure of 14 cities located in 7 Africa and Asian communities. A further highlight is the recent award of £1.5m from the Global Challenges Research Fund to a project led by UoG, which will develop new tests for parasitic diseases common in the developing world.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Principal for his informative update and invited any questions. A query was raised about Brexit in relation to students numbers and the impact on the university. The Principal noted that UG numbers would have the biggest challenge and that discussions with the Scottish Government were ongoing to ensure any significant changes were planned in advance but it was felt that there would not be a significant impact. A further query was raised about Student assessment and Feedback and how the university planned to make progress on this. The Principal reported that SMG had recently received reports and that each College was</p>

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	<p>putting a plan in place. It was important that time limits were set and adhered to and that feedback was effective and that students realised when they were given feedback.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Principal for his address.</p>
3	Convenor of Court
	<p>The Chancellor welcomed Elizabeth Passey, Convener of Court to the meeting and invited her to address the meeting. The Convener of Court reported that the role and remit of the University Court was set out in legislation with the most recent being the Scottish Higher Education Governance Act 2016 and that the first legislation that had introduced the concept of Court was in 1858. Court is responsible for the deployment of resources and the strategic direction for the University. It also has a monitoring role in relation to the overall performance of the University, looking at KPI's and it holds the University Principal accountable for the effective and efficient management of the University. Court is also responsible for the allocation of resources for the building projects that are currently ongoing as part of the Campus development.</p> <p>The University Court has representatives from both staff, student and lay members and has a number of sub committees which look at all areas of governance. It was noted that previously the Convener of Court was appointed by the university but in future it would be a recruitment process with candidates put forward for election, with staff and students being the electoral body. The University Court follows the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Convener of Court for her address.</p>
4	Presentation by Professor Neal Juster, Senior Vice Principal
	<p>Professor Juster thanked the Chancellor for welcoming him to the meeting. Professor Juster outlined the campus development plans and it was noted that this was the biggest ongoing investment in Scotland with around £1bn being invested in 10yrs on campus. The campus plan outlined a new public square which would allow a more porous campus to try to engage more closely with the local community. The ground floor of the buildings on the new site would include areas of activity that would draw people onto the campus and allow for greater access to work being undertaken at the University.</p> <p>It was noted that the Learning and teaching Hub would be the first building to be completed which was scheduled for September 2019, with the first lectures taking place in January 2020. The Research Hub would be the next project completed in 2020/21 which would then be followed by a number of other buildings. It was reported that the lead developers had been appointed and it would be their responsibility for liaising with all the contractors on site. It was also noted that a large amount of discussion was on going with the City Council about developments within Glasgow and the West End to ensure that there was mutual benefit from both aspects, this included new bridges across the Clyde and Kelvin, a new innovative quarter and with links to cultural sites such as Kelvin Hall and the River Transport museum. Professor Juster reported that the 4 mains themes would be smart campus, cultural creative, precision medicine and nano quantum.</p> <p>Members asked a number of questions about the campus development which focused on the infrastructure that would be put in place to future proof any changes in transport methods and the sustainability of the buildings. It was noted that all the buildings would be built to the highest standards and safety of staff and students would be paramount when looking at the layout and space between the buildings. It was also noted that the design of the buildings and ensuring that they were functioning, efficient and effective spaces would take priority over the architectural design of the buildings and that a design guide had been produced to ensure that the buildings stood the test of time.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked Professor Juster for his remarkable presentation on the campus development and it was noted that it was an exciting time for the university.</p>

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5	Minutes of meeting of 22nd January 2018
	The minutes of the meeting held on 22 nd January 2018 were approved.
6	Report of Convenor of the General Council Business Committee
	<p>Convenor, John Marsh, thanked the Chancellor for his introduction and welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Convenor reported that there had been 2 meeting of the GCBC since the last Half Yearly Meeting. The GCBC had unanimously agreed to recommend reappointing the two General Council Assessors and the General Council's agreement would be sought later in the meeting. It was also noted that the GCBC had consulted on the proposed Ordinance which will modernise the process for nominations and elections for both General Council Assessors on Court but also for the Chancellor, with no objections raised.</p> <p>The GC noted that the GCBC was well attended by Senior managers from the University who gave detailed updates on the University business. A specific concern had been raised by a GCBC member in relation to staff student ratios which had led to a detailed presentation by Dr David Duncan which the committee had found to be very informative.</p> <p>It was reported that the meeting of the General Councils Clerks and Convenor's from Ancient Scottish Universities had recently taken place at Glasgow. The main topics for discussion had been General Council Assessor on Court as a number of universities were making changes to the appointment process; REF and the costs involved; engagement with members.</p> <p>The GC was pleased to note that Queens University Belfast Alumni Council was due to visit the University as they had heard how well the GC at the University was working. The Convenor also reported that an initiative with the Careers service was currently being worked on and it was hoped that they would give a formal presentation at the next meeting on how GC members can assists and support recent graduates and students.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Convenor for his report and thanked all the GCBC members for all their hard work on behalf of the General Council. It was noted that no questions were raised.</p>
7	Re-Election of General Council Assessors to serve on the University Court
	<p>The Clerk to the General Council reported that the current two General Council Assessors on the University Court who's first term of office was due to expire August 2018, had intimated that they wished to stand again for another four year term of office until January 2022. The General Council raised no objections and it was agreed to extend their term of office for 4 years. Elected as General Council Assessors until January 2022 –</p> <p>Dr Morag MacDonald-Simpson Lesley Sutherland</p>
8	Draft Ordinances – Election of Chancellor and General Council Assessors on Court
	<p>The Clerk to the General Council reported that the Draft Ordinance had now been out for public consultation with very few comments received. The GC were remained that the key changes were as follows:-</p> <p>Key changes -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The primary aim would be to allow e-elections (rather than paper) as the main method of election and to have the detailed processes in local regulations, rather than in an Ordinance that would require Privy Council approval for any changes in the future. 2. The main sections that were removed from the current Ordinances and put into regulations would be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices of about nominations process • Rules about nominations • Rules about withdrawals • Timescales and instructions relating to voting

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for voting papers permitted • Voting system to be used (STV) • Provision for personal statements from candidates • Publication of results by University <p>3. Sections to be removed from both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very detailed required formats for paperwork such as nominations form, consent form, voting paper. • Detailed requirements about timescales and processes relating to postal voting • Detailed requirements about exact location of results publication <p>The Clerk reported that the Draft Ordinance was due to be approved by Court shortly and then it would be submitted to the Privy Council for formal approval. The GC raised no concerns over the new draft Ordinances in relation to the elections of the Chancellor or GC Assessors on Court.</p>
7	AOCB
	<p>The Principal thanked all those present and informed the meeting that the next meeting would take place in January 2019 with further details available on the General Council Webpages.</p> <p>The Principal closed the meeting by thanking all present for their attendance.</p>