

WEB COPY

Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 11 December 2019 in the Senate Room Main Building

Present:

Mr Aamer Anwar Rector, Mr Graeme Bissett Co-opted Member, Ms Heather Cousins Co-opted Member, Dr Craig Daly Trade Union Nominee, Mr David Finlayson Co-opted Member, Professor Carl Goodyear Elected Academic Staff Member, Professor Nick Hill Elected Academic Staff Member, Mr Christopher Kennedy Elected Professional Services Representative, Dr Simon Kennedy Elected Academic Staff Member, Mr Scott Kirby SRC President, Professor Kirsteen McCue Elected Academic Staff Member, Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson General Council Assessor, Ms Margaret Anne McParland Trade Union Nominee, Mr Ronnie Mercer Co-opted Member, Dr June Milligan Co-opted Member, Mr David Milloy Co-opted Member, Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli Principal, Ms Elspeth Orcharton Co-opted Member, Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Mr Gavin Stewart Co-opted Member, Ms Lesley Sutherland General Council Assessor,

Attending:

Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Mr Robert Fraser (Director of Finance), Professor Neal Juster (Senior Vice-Principal and Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Ms Deborah Maddern (Administrative Officer), Professor Jill Morrison (Vice-Principal & Clerk of Senate), Mrs Christine Barr (Director of HR) (for items 16 and 19.1), Dr Stewart Miller (Sustainable Environment Officer) (for item 16.1), Ms Ann Allen (Director of Estates & Commercial Services) (for item 14), Ms Nicola Cameron (Director of Property Development and Investment) (for item 14), Professor John Finch (Head of the Adam Smith Business School) (for item 14).

Apologies:

Members: Cllr Susan Aitken Glasgow City Council Assessor, Dr Ken Sutherland Co-opted Member, Dr Bethan Wood Elected Academic Staff Member

CRT/2019/11 Announcements

Ms Teresa Baños, SRC Assessor on Court, was welcomed to her first meeting of Court.

There were the following declarations of interest in relation to business to be conducted at the meeting: Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli as a Trustee of USS, as an ongoing declaration, given the updates on the scheme; members of SMG in relation to the Remuneration Committee report; and David Finlayson, who was in receipt of a pension from BP, in reference to discussions about climate change/sustainability and disinvestment.

It was recorded that Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Senior Vice-Principal Professor Neal Juster had briefed Court at the pre-lunch session, covering the capital plan review; and that there had also been a briefing on the Adam Smith Business School, with Ms Ann Allen (Director of Estates & Commercial Services), Ms Nicola Cameron (Director of Property Development and Investment), Professor John Finch (Head of the Adam Smith Business School) and Dr David Duncan (COO and University Secretary) present to brief Court and respond to any questions.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2019/12. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 9 October 2019

The minutes were approved subject to addition of clarification under section *CRT 2019.5.11 Court Business 2019/20*, in relation to staff memberships of other committees being reviewed, in addition to staff membership of OCGG.

CRT/2019/13. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

CRT/2019/14. Capital Plan; and Adam Smith Business School ASBS/PGT Hub Full Business Case

In relation to the Capital Plan, Professor Juster referred to the 3 December webinar and to the pre-Court briefing. A paper outlining progress in the review of the plan had also been included for the present meeting, together with the slides from the 3 December event. The details in the paper included an analysis of risks, and details of next steps. It was expected that a final plan would be presented to Court in February 2020. The paper was noted.

In relation to the Adam Smith Business School (ASBS)/PGT Hub Full Business Case, a pre-Court briefing had been held. The Principal confirmed to Court that the case was the highest investment priority for SMG and was considered a vital project, from a number of key angles, including competitiveness, where the building would provide a unique and distinctive offering both in the UK and further afield. The building had been designed to provide a space for the wider University community as well as providing a focus for the ASBS. The aim of bringing together the PGT community was very important and the University would be a UK leader in this area. The building would also provide flexibility for potential different patterns of student demand in the future, although the University considered that business and management students would continue to come to Glasgow in numbers for the foreseeable future. The building also contributed significantly to Scotland and the UK in terms of the skills and reskilling agendas of the governments and the SFC. It would also improve the student experience, in particular through the 'single hub' configuration which would allow cross-cutting activity. The robust and flexible plan within the business case was commended to Court.

The chair of the Estates Committee, Ronnie Mercer, was invited to comment. He drew Court's attention to the Committee's consideration of the full business case at its October meeting. Approval had been given based on a maximum cost envelope of £86m, with the CapEx application to be revised ahead of the Finance Committee and Court meetings, to include additional information on some areas, including details of and reasons for changes that had occurred to the specification for the building since the earlier iteration, to provide more contextual information about the increases in size and cost; and enhanced references to sustainability.

The chair of the Finance Committee, Graeme Bissett, was invited to comment. He noted that the focus to date within the capital plan, including its ongoing revision, had been on the content and costings, but that side by side with this, there had been a thorough appraisal of the forward cashflow projections, there being a link between new expenditure, revenue projection and operating costs. Underpinning this was the bequest to future Courts, therefore the best possible estimate was needed of how all the various elements fitted together, including debt repayment. These elements were being examined and the viability

of the revised capital plan would need to be assessed; to date there had been positive progress on this financial framework review.

With regard specifically to the ASBS/PGT Hub, the business case had provided background and a very clear rationale; however, the Finance Committee had sought further detail on the links between the proposition, the additional capacity requirements and the financial projections. These details had been provided and had addressed the Committee's concerns, and it was now recommending the full business case to Court.

In discussion, the SRC President emphasised the importance of the proposed building being for everyone, and that the board should be encouraged to stress the inclusive PGT aspect, with the possibility of an update to Court in the future to advise on how the space was being used.

A comment was made that consideration might be given to reversing the name of the building to emphasise the PGT element. A further comment was made about the articulation of the risks relating to the project and indeed to the general articulation of risk across the University. The risk relating to the possibility of markets and course choices changing in the future might be better articulated.

The Principal acknowledged the importance of maximising inclusiveness for the entire PGT community, as well as the impossibility of predicting very long term trends in demand and growth, noting however that the building mitigated the risk, given its significant flexibility.

The Rector noted that in the context of attracting students and widening access, he had discussed a concern from a potential student who was a wheelchair user, and concerns from her family, that the University did not seem to have embedded disability access into new buildings. The Rector added that the advertised Changing Places toilets on campus appeared to be at Kelvin Hall; and that Library access was an issue for disabled students. Court noted from the Director of Estates & Commercial Services that the age of the estate and the existing buildings presented challenges for disability access, and that this problem was acknowledged, but that estates policy was to address these as and when building works were undertaken; an example was the work on access to the Gilchrist PG Club. It was requested that Estates Committee review all buildings for disability access. Designs for new buildings had a dedicated section on Accessibility; and the development of the Western Infirmary site in general – as well as that of specific buildings – was being undertaken so that it could be used by everyone. With regard to Changing Places toilets, a number of areas across the campus had been identified. If additional measures were required, Estates were very happy to discuss this.

The Rector noted that in light of advice given by University staff to the family to whom he had referred, he believed communications needed to be improved. It was agreed that the Estates Committee would be requested to take the matter forward.

Court approved the full business case for the ASBS/PGT Hub based on a maximum cost envelope of £86m including VAT.

Court was reminded about the confidentiality of proceedings, in the context of commercial aspects of the project.

CRT/2019/15. Finance Committee

CRT/2019/15.1 Financial Statements 2018/19

The Director of Finance, Robert Fraser, gave a presentation on the University's financial statements for the year to 31 July 2019, Court having received the statements.

There had been an underlying operating surplus (after tax, and before other gains and excluding exceptional items) of £40.8m. However, the outturn reported a deficit of £68.2m due to a charge of £109m for the impact of the USS pension provision movement within the year: this was required to be reported since there was a contractual statement to fund the deficit. The arrangements were based on a schedule of contributions over 17 years and would be discounted back. There would be a significant credit coming back in the following year, arising from the timing of the 2018 pension revaluation being such that it had not impacted on the 2018/19 financial statements. This issue affected all relevant Universities; it did not impact on the operation of the University nor affect its long-term sustainability.

Court noted details of operating surplus movements vs. budget, where there had been an £18.1m increase on budget with, in particular, tuition fees and staff costs being ahead of budget, but consumables costs being lower. Court also noted movements year-to-year in relation to: net assets; total reserves (where in both areas the pension liability had affected the position); endowments; and cash and deposits. The cashflow position was likely to decrease in the coming year as the capital plan progressed.

Graeme Bissett confirmed that the Finance Committee had reviewed the statements at its meeting in November and had requested that the pension matter be highlighted to Court in more detail, which had now taken place. Finance Committee has been content to recommend the financial statements to Court.

In discussion, the Rector mentioned a recent newspaper article that had referred to financial irregularities at the University, including money being put into unauthorised accounts, and a charge to a wrong account, with claims of poor financial management in some departments and a lack of disciplinary action. Court noted from management that of the two matters referred to, the first had been investigated thoroughly and a disciplinary process followed. The accounts in question had been closed off. The Audit & Risk Committee had received a report on the matter and while the financial regulations had not been followed, there had not been evidence of malfeasance. Where the University became aware of historical bank accounts in departments, the accounts were closed. The second matter had been an incorrect coding that had since been corrected, with the funders advised and now content; there had been no misappropriation or mis-governance. The Audit & Risk Committee would be provided with the details. The Rector recorded a concern that Court had not been aware of this matter and that they should have been. It was noted that the matter would return to Court via the Audit & Risk Committee in due course.

Court approved the University Financial Statements for the year to 31 July 2019. Robert Fraser and his team, and the Finance Committee, were thanked for their work.

CRT/2019/15.2 Universities Subsidiaries and Trust Financial Statements as at 31 July 2019

Court approved the financial statements of the subsidiaries and the Trust, which had also been approved where applicable by the respective boards and trustees.

CRT/2019/15.3 Capital Plan and Capital Projects

The Finance Committee has received an update on anticipated revisions to the capital plan, which included: increases in expenditure allocated to 'out of the ground projects'; a change in strategy for Arts & Engineering, with buildings not proceeding as originally proposed; proposals for a modular teaching block with PC labs, which would cater for anticipated growth across the University; and steps to address the considerable pressure on the annual

maintenance budget.

Following a request by the Committee at its September meeting, a property and construction consultancy was currently reviewing the revised capital plan to provide an independent view of the basis on which costs had been established. As had been advised earlier in the Court meeting, the intention was to bring a revised plan to the Committees and Court in early 2020. This would be accompanied by an updated long-term cash flow analysis, including an assessment of affordability and funding requirements, together with the consultant's report.

The Committee had agreed that the business case for the ASBS/PGT Hub was provisionally approved but that further information regarding the users and assumptions was needed before this would be recommended to Court. In prospectively approving the ASBS/PGT Hub business case, it had been noted that the aggregate commitments of capital spend remained within the currently approved capital plan. Future significant commitments would be possible only once a revised plan had been approved. The further information requested by the Committee had since been received, with members concluding that the questions had been adequately addressed. Accordingly, the Committee had recommended approval of the full business case; this had been covered earlier in the meeting.

Court noted that the Finance Committee had approved three CapEx applications at its last meeting: Gilmorehill/James McCune Smith Learning Hub (catering) £1.71m; Labs/Neuroscience/Sir James Black Building 0.65m; 5G Testbed and Partner in Scotland (fully externally funded).

CRT/2019/15.4 Financial reports

Court noted an overview of performance as at 30 September 2019.

CRT/2019/16. Report from the Principal

CRT/2019/16.1 Higher Education Developments

Brexit

The HE sector's attention had moved to the post-Brexit immigration regime which would occur in the event of an EU exit, and to the success of negotiations on the future trade relationship which could influence the likelihood of a deal on research, innovation and student mobility.

While little detail was known about the future immigration system, the sector would continue to lobby (with UUK and the Russell Group) for a system which would allow the University to attract talent from around the world. The sector would also continue to press for the implementation of the promise on post-study work visas for students.

The revised Brexit deal had retained a pledge on future science cooperation. The ability of researchers in the UK to take part in EU funding schemes had become the main concern for the sector. If the UK left the EU with a deal at the end of January, there would be no changes for existing projects or new applications until at least December 2020. If the UK left without a deal, the UK would lose eligibility for EU funding, but applicants would still be able to apply to most parts of EU research programmes as a 'third country'. The UK government had committed to providing funding (via UK Research & Innovation) for all successful eligible UK bids to Horizon 2020 that were submitted before the end of 2020. This funding would apply for the lifetime of projects.

Smith-Reid Report on Research

On 5 November, the report *Changes and Choices: Advice on future frameworks for international collaboration on Research and Innovation* had been published. The authors had suggested the future focus should be on the Government's pledges to raise R&D spending, reducing regional disparities, and moving to a new global positioning for the UK. In the context of there being an imminent General Election, the future budgetary position in this area remained unclear.

Post-18 Funding Review in England

At the last Court meeting, the UK Government had not yet formally responded to the Augar review of English HE funding. Since then, but before the announcement of the General Election, the Minister had indicated that the UK Government would examine the potential impacts on overall university funding.

The Conservative manifesto had promised careful consideration of the recommendations on fees contained in the review; however, no specific proposals had been made on fee reductions. The Labour manifesto had proposed the abolition of fees in England. There would be an impact on Scotland in the event of fees reduction.

Muscatelli Report

The Report that the Principal had been asked to produce for the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work had been launched on 27 November. The Scottish Government would consider the recommendations in detail and respond in due course. The central message of the report was that innovation in Scotland should be a shared national mission, not just of government but of agencies, universities and industry, in order to leverage the many existing strengths of the HE sector to help ensure Scotland could meet its full economic potential. The Report contains 22 detailed recommendations, with key themes around: more effective collaboration; clear focus in terms of developing a set of national innovation priorities for investment; and actively recognising and responding to the constraints faced in terms of the external political, funding and policy environment. The University would be responding to the report, with Court's input welcomed.

CRT/2019/16.2 USS

UCU's position of 'no detriment' remained, this being a member contribution rate of 8% of salary and an employer rate of 22.7% of salary until October 2021, when higher rates were scheduled, subject to the 2020 valuation. UUK continued to engage UCU on the matter of the 2020 valuation.

It was expected that the JEP2 report would be published before the end of December. Court would be kept updated at future meetings.

CRT/2019/16.3 Clyde Waterfront Innovation Campus (CWIC)

At the October meeting, Court had heard that two significant funding bids, in the areas of Precision Medicine and Nano and Quantum Technologies, had been submitted to the Strength in Places Fund (SPF) administered by UKRI, both centred on CWIC. If the funding were awarded, the projects would be subject to normal University governance processes and approvals. Work with Scottish and UK Government and with the City Council and City Region Cabinet was continuing to identify potential streams of funding.

In response to a question about timescales and the wider campus development, it was noted that the SPF outcomes might be available in April but that this might be affected by new ministerial appointments; and that designs were being worked on so that if funding were obtained, early progress could be made.

CRT 2019/16.4 Key Activities

Court noted a summary of the main activities in which the Principal had been involved since the last meeting of Court, covering internal and external activities beyond daily operational management and strategy meetings. The activities were under the broad headings of: Academic Development and Strategy; Internationalisation activities; Lobbying/Policy Influencing and Promoting the University; and Internal activities and Communications and Alumni events.

In discussion, a question was raised by the SRC President about the University's actions in respect of fire safety, following the recent fire at student accommodation in Bolton. The SRC had written to providers. Court heard that the Accommodation Services would be seeking reassurances from providers in relation to fire safety matters. The Rector advised he had discussed the matter with Dr Duncan and SRC President and had spoken to the local fire service. He noted concerns about providers, which were now numerous over Glasgow, indicating to students overseas that they (the providers) had links to the University; about local students being priced out; and about safety matters. The Rector considered that if the providers did not reply to requests, then the University should indicate this in some way. Court heard that while the University could use best endeavours to request information, it was not possible to enforce this as the University had no regulatory authority in respect of providers. The University did not currently nominate any accommodation providers, but if it made the decision to do so in the future, then due care would of course be taken. Court would be kept updated on the matter.

An Elected Academic Staff Member asked about the process of reappointment of Heads of College/VPs in connection with the Principal's Report on SMG appointments/reappointments. With regard to previous discussions at Court about local consultation in relation to the reappointments of Heads of College/VPs at the end of their 5 year term of office, the Principal confirmed that detailed consultation was an integral part of the reappointment process, and reappointment would depend on there being strong support from College Management Groups and SMG. This process had been employed for recent HoC/VP reappointments. The Principal also noted in response to a question from the Elected Academic Staff Member that as part of the current consultation regarding the potential reappointment of the HoC/VP of MVLS, Directors of RIs and Heads of Schools had been requested to undertake to consult internally within their RIs/Schools before providing feedback to the Principal and Executive Director of HR. This was ahead of any formal processes including appointment panel, or a decision not to reappoint.

CRT/2019/17. Report from the University Secretary

CRT 2019.17.1 Sustainability/Climate Change

Dr Stewart Miller, the University's Sustainable Environment Officer, attended the meeting for this item.

At the last meeting, Court had been advised that Senate would be receiving a presentation setting out a proposed strategy on climate change and sustainability, and that this would form the basis of a more detailed strategy being provided to Court. The paper, "*A Dear, Green Place*": *Towards a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the University of Glasgow*, was now received. Dr Duncan highlighted key aspects, which were for the University to be carbon neutral by 2035, that there would be engagement of staff, students and other stakeholders in the process, and an emphasis on how the University was contributing to the global challenges in this area. Dr Duncan noted that the document was not the final strategy and that Court's support for the direction of travel – including the focus and priorities – was being sought, as well as members' general input, ahead of significant consultation with the University community.

Dr Miller added that the document presented a good starting point, with sensible areas for focus improvement, including efficiency and decarbonisation of heating and a proposal for more heat pumps and solar energy facilitation.

In discussion, it was noted that the document was the first major paper following the University's declaration of a climate emergency, although there had already been several related policies around energy and sustainability. It was confirmed that there had been some discussion about the potential costs of the actions proposed in the report, as part of the University budget round.

The following points were made for consideration or noting as the strategy developed:

- Given the University's international activity, including overseas recruitment and its likely increase in the context of the ASBS PGT Hub, and the World Changing Glasgow profile which involved ambassadors going both into and out of the University, it was inevitable that there would be a carbon footprint and that, as such, offsetting should be considered up front; Court noted that this had been considered in the various scopings;
- While 2035 was a good starting point, consideration should be given to the University being a world leader, with an earlier target date, even if this was ambitious; in this context the City Council had set a target of 2030 and the University should consider aligning with this;
- While leaving the current target date as 2035, over the next few years the University should look to bring the date forward if it could see a viable way to do so;
- Targets were dependent on the technology to decarbonise being available, but that the University should attempt to bring forward its target date;
- Other measures aside from carbon impact could be looked at;
- The importance of consultation with students and staff and of a joined-up approach to suggestions that came in;
- Sustainability and climate change were the top concern of the student body in terms of their values and students would be making their wishes known with regard to future action by the University;
- There were reputational risks associated with the University not taking a sufficient stand, and indeed a huge opportunity for the institution to take a lead, including involvement in COP26 and arising from the Green Gown awards having been held in Scotland;
- Transnational education offered ways of reducing carbon emissions, for example if small numbers of staff could travel to larger groups of students abroad;
- If some sustainability actions would not be possible because of the cost, then this should be made clear;
- Engineering and other academic expertise at the University should be drawn on in a well co-ordinated effort to address the challenges;
- As proactive language as possible should be adopted in the strategy;
- The curriculum and teaching experience in general should have sustainability incorporated as a fundamental, as indeed should all University activity, including research;
- Extinction Rebellion had demanded a more ambitious target date (2025) and asked for transparency in all communications to students and staff as the University moved forward with the climate change actions;
- Every Court agenda should include a sustainability item/discussion;
- The timing of the strategy coincided with the new institutional strategic plan and revised capital plan, therefore there was an opportunity for excellent integration;
- Every individual also had a personal responsibility to alter behaviours, for example with regard to vehicle use;

- Disclosures in the University's annual report should be reviewed in light of its sustainability activity;
- Conversations around proposed demolition of any buildings should always include consideration of the sustainability agenda;
- Kitemarking and Chapter Zero (a Directors' climate forum) should be considered.

Court would be kept updated and involved as development of the strategy progressed.

CRT 2019.17.2 Socially Responsible Investment Policy - Fossil Fuels

In 2015 Court had agreed to implement a first stage of disinvestment in fossil fuel holdings over the following 4 years. At the end of 2017 Court had received a progress report which had indicated that the University was on target to achieve the interim target of under 6.4% of funds invested directly in fossil fuel companies. The update in 2017 had advised that there had been a negative impact on investment returns, within a best-estimate range. Based on more recent analysis, the impact up to mid 2019 had continued to be negative and had increased in quantum. The Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) had considered it reasonable to assume there would continue to be a negative impact on investment returns and that if the disinvestment were increased towards zero then the impact would be greater.

As part of the decision in 2015, Court now needed to undertake a further financial evaluation of the impact of the disinvestment policy, before deciding whether to proceed with a further stage of disinvestment.

An update from the IAC was received, with Gavin Stewart summarising the main points and conclusions. The fund managers' views on impact had been sought: this was that the impact had exceeded the IAC estimate and, while some judgment was inevitably involved, the actual negative effect on investment outturns to date was significant. The future impact would be lower if the level of the interim target were maintained, but Mr Stewart noted that there was also the ethical angle to consider. Since 2014/15, the markets had become more diverse with regard to how they addressed climate change considerations. Court members' attention was drawn to the IAC's proposal that the current investment restriction be maintained, to allow options to be investigated ahead of a further report in mid-2020. Court was also invited to suggest any other stakeholders it might wish the IAC to consult as part of the exercise.

In discussion, it was suggested that the student group GPS should be consulted. A comment was noted that Court's fiduciary duties needed to be considered as part of the review, in the context of disinvestment potentially affecting University funds detrimentally, although it was noted also that the duty to maximise investments was not an absolute one and that the institution's aims, values and reputation could be included in the consideration of the latter – but a balance was required. A suggestion was made that some income from investments might be used to help carbon offsets. A comment was made that the University was seen as a leader in the field following its decision to disinvest and that care was required so as not to 'move backwards', particularly in the context of the commitments around sustainability; and that as a proportion of University funds overall, the amounts associated with further disinvestment would be relatively small. A further comment was noted that many of these factors had been considered at the time of the original decision to disinvest, but that in the context of the world having moved on in its understanding of, and approach to, climate change, the University should look at companies in which it invested, to see if they had made improvements in this area. It was suggested that a 'step back' be taken, so that the question of whether there was a better way for the University to promote its values could be addressed.

Court agreed to the IAC proposal that the current investment restriction be maintained, to

allow options to be investigated, ahead of a further report in mid-2020. The IAC should also involve the Sustainability Working Group and the student voice. If Court members had other suggestions for stakeholders for the IAC to consult, they should contact Dr Duncan.

CRT 2019.17.3 Disinvestment petition

The University had been approached by a coalition of student groups who were calling on the University to disinvest in companies that the coalition stated were involved in the arms trade; details of the companies in question had been included in the paper for Court. The coalition had also made a number of other demands, with the details provided to Court. Dr Duncan had met with the representatives in November and the matter had been discussed briefly at Finance Committee. Court was now invited to support a proposal to establish a short-life working group to consider the issue in the round and report back to Court via the Finance Committee. Court agreed to this course of action.

CRT 2019.17.4 Occupational Change Governance Group (OCGG) – Small Animal Hospital

At the October meeting, Court had heard that the OCGG had met to discuss proposals relating to the Small Animal Hospital, arising from changes in the market for veterinary referrals. The group had asked College management to provide a further paper about the proposals. Court now received the details, which included a preferred option of setting up a wholly-owned subsidiary company, noting that there would be discussions held with the staff and unions.

Replying to a question about whether the proposed arrangement might become a model for other parts of the University in the future, Dr Duncan guaranteed that this would not occur.

Court approved the OCGG's recommendation that further work be undertaken to develop the preferred option of setting up a wholly-owned subsidiary company to manage the Small Animal Hospital.

CRT 2019.17.5 Brexit and University Preparation

The situation continued to be reviewed, with support provided to the community of EU staff and students, and a dedicated University website.

CRT 2019.17.6 Industrial Action

The University & College Union (UCU) had called industrial action in relation to: the 2019 pay settlement for staff and concerns over casualisation, equality and workloads; and a recent increase in the contribution employees make towards pensions.

Strike action had taken place from Monday 25 November to Friday 29 November and from Monday 2 December to Wednesday 4 December. This was being followed by a period of 'Action Short of a Strike' from 25 November 2019 to 29 April 2020.

The campus had remained open throughout the strike. Students and staff had not been prevented from freely entering and leaving, where picket lines had been in place. Students had been encouraged to attend classes as normal unless specifically instructed not to do so by their School. Guidance for staff and students had been issued. On 22 November the University and UCU Glasgow had agreed a joint statement. This had included a reference to the University and UCU Glasgow regretting the disruption that might be caused to students and being committed to doing whatever they could to minimise it.

CRT 2019.17.7 Recent cases of Sexual Assault

Court members had been advised about the recent arrest of a man for a series of sexual assaults in Glasgow and provided with a copy of a letter sent from the Rector and SRC President to Police Scotland. Dr Duncan recorded thanks to the Rector for his interventions. The case had raised wider concerns within the University community about personal safety, especially of women. The University had worked with the student bodies, Police Scotland and others to address these concerns in a balanced way. The University had issued information to the student and staff community, including details and contact points for campus safety matters and sources of support and advice.

CRT 2019.17.8 Student Experience Committee awayday

The SEC awayday would be held on 17 December, with a focus on the SEC Action Plan. Outcomes would be reported to the February 2020 meeting of Court.

CRT 2019.17.9 Students in Hong Kong

Recent events in Hong Kong had included universities becoming the targets of violent protests. The University had been in close contact with its students in Hong Kong, providing guidance on how they could stay safe.

CRT 2019.17.10 Media Report

Court noted a digest of recent media coverage and summary details of social media interaction with the University. It was agreed that a summary of themes of particular interest to Court would be helpful, as part of the report.

CRT 2019.17.11 New Court member

Teresa Baños, Mental Health Equality Officer, Students Representative Council, had been elected as SRC Assessor on Court, for one year.

CRT/2019/12. Summary of Convener's Business

Court noted a summary of activities undertaken by the Convener since the last meeting.

CRT 2019.17.13 Director of Research Institute/Head of School Appointments

College of MVLS

Institute of Molecular, Cell and Systems Biology

Professor Neil Bulleid had been re-appointed as Director of the Institute of Molecular, Cell and Systems Biology for five years from 1 January 2020.

College of Science & Engineering

School of Engineering

Professor David Cumming had been re-appointed as Head of the School of Engineering for two years from 1 August 2020.

School of Chemistry

Professor Graeme Cooke had been re-appointed as Head of the School of Chemistry from 1 August 2020 until 31 December 2020.

CRT/2019/18. Report from the Rector

The Rector tabled a report, advising Court that the sections covered: 1. Sexual assaults; 2. Disinvestment in the arms trade; 3. Fair and equal pay; 4. Extinction Rebellion; 5. Disability access.

With regard to 1. Sexual assaults, the Rector and SRC President had written to Police Scotland (PS) about the University not having been made aware of a series of assaults in the West End. The Rector had concerns about the PS communications and did not accept their view about 'balance' being required in this case. The Rector noted that many students had become aware of the situation through social media and that there had been a sense of rising panic; the Rector quoted from a number of students who had written about their strong fear and concerns, including not feeling safe on campus. The Rector felt that Court should agree that students and staff should not be left feeling this way. He would be meeting with PS representatives. He had welcomed the fact that PS were considering setting up a dedicated liaison officer for the University. He considered that there should be an information sharing protocol between PS and the University and that there should be a direct line of contact between PS and the student bodies. The Rector and SRC President had raised the matter of lighting on campus, and safety around this; an environmental audit was being undertaken. The Rector asked for this to be shared with students and staff. The Rector noted that PS had met with University Security staff, noting also that the staff needed training in how to report such issues.

Dr Duncan welcomed the Rector's work in this area. Dr Duncan also welcomed the fact that a full-time PS liaison officer for the University and student bodies was being proposed, noting that PS did currently liaise with the University via Security.

The SRC President referred to the significant impact that the assaults had had on the student community, noting that many had known about them before the University or the SRC. There was a lack of confidence in the University and PS, especially around GBV, with many students feeling unsafe despite an arrest having been made.

The Clerk of Senate welcomed the PS suggestions, and gave her support to information sharing, noting that there were four universities in the city that might benefit from this. The Principal supported awareness raising across the campus, in particular around GBV; and suggested more monitoring of social media by the University, via links between the SRC and Communications team.

With regard to 2. Disinvestment in the arms trade, the Rector noted that the University did not invest in the tobacco industry because of the harmful nature of tobacco. A body of students – 300 in protest and 500 in a petition – was now behind a campaign to disinvest in the arms trade, which the University of Strathclyde was considering; the Rector considered that University of Glasgow should also take action. The Rector had heard counterarguments presented around Engineering activity at Glasgow, but he did not consider this was logical since what the companies were doing was morally wrong. The student group was asking for transparency on the matter.

A comment was noted that some of the companies might fund research at the University.

The petition for disinvestment had been provided to Court as part of the COO/University Secretary's report and, as has been agreed, a short-life working group would be set up to consider this issue.

With regard to 3. Fair and equal pay, the Rector referred to having spoken to UCU and to Cleaning staff. The latter had advised him they were unhappy with casualisation, and, as he had previously mentioned at Court, were also unhappy with the staff survey process where they considered that management had been 'looking over shoulders' during completion of the survey.

The Rector referred to having met janitors with regard to a grading dispute that was ongoing,

noting that the University was spending large sums of money elsewhere when relatively small amounts would address these staff concerns.

In relation to the pay matter, Margaret Anne McParland noted that with regard to the ongoing UCU industrial action, a significant proportion of local UNISON members who had voted – 81.1% – had also been in favour of strike, but the 50% threshold had not been achieved.

The Rector confirmed that items 4. Extinction Rebellion and 5. Disability access has been covered earlier in the meeting, adding that it was sad that the individual with whom he had spoken wished to come to the University but indicated she had been given incorrect information with regard to disability access.

Dr Duncan confirmed that he and the Rector had been in communication about the Cleaning staff concerns. The University had met with UNITE about this matter and was also in discussion in relation to the janitorial concerns about grading, with positive local discussions ongoing. With regard to the disability access matter, the Director of Student & Academic Services would be happy to meet with the individual concerned.

CRT/2019/19. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2019/19.1 Student Experience Committee

The Committee's recent discussions had included several items for Court to note, in particular relating to: recommendations from the International Student Experience Working Group; sector reports relating to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students; student wellbeing; room booking costs for student clubs and societies; the draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan; and student numbers.

The SRC President referred in particular to the discussion that the SEC had had around climate change/sustainability and the related strategy, and around the University needing better to address the student experience of BAME students, including looking at the attainment gap. With regard to student numbers, the increase in recruitment had led to a SEC request for more information on where fees were applied, in terms of enhancing the student experience, for example through support services.

CRT/2019/19.2 Audit & Risk Committee

CRT/2019/19.2.1 Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report

Heather Cousins, chair of the Committee, presented the annual report, which included the Committee's assessment of the adequacy of the University's systems of internal control. Particular points of note were: refinements to KPIs provided in relation to both internal and external audit work; a series of briefings having been provided to the Committee on particular areas of interest, including IT; the annual report from the internal auditors, which had concluded that for 2018/19, governance, risk management and control and value for money arrangements in relation to business-critical areas were generally satisfactory; and the Committee's review of the 2018/19 financial statements.

On the basis of the internal audit work undertaken in the course of the year, and of the comments of the external auditors on the University's financial statements, the Audit & Risk Committee believed that the University generally had an adequate framework of internal control. As indicated in the report, the Committee had noted that there was some evidence of larger scale projects at the University, with associated higher levels of materiality, resulting in less positive audit reviews than those for more established or 'business as usual' areas of activity. The Committee was reassured by management's addressing of the issues identified

in these former types of reviews, and indeed in all reviews, but would keep a close watch on this area and would continue to be guided also by the auditors' overall assessment of direction of travel.

It was noted that the capital plan review should look at relevant audits as part of its process.

Court noted the Committee's annual report.

CRT/2019/19.2.2 Other Audit Committee business

At its recent meeting, the Committee had received the University's financial statements for the year ending 31 July 2019. The Committee had heard that on the basis of the work performed, the external auditors anticipated issuing unqualified audit opinions on the Group and University's financial statements, and on the University's subsidiary financial statements. The Committee had noted the accounts for subsidiary companies and the University Trust, noting also that the auditors were content with these. The Committee had received the USGAAP Restated Financial Statements.

The Committee had received internal audit reports on reviews of: Capital Spend follow-up review; Transformation Programme; and Procurement Data Analytics: Value for Money.

The Committee had received the updated Risk Register. Final refinements to the format would be implemented for the Committee's March meeting, with Court to receive the register in April 2020.

The report was noted.

RT/2019/19.3 Remuneration Committee

This item was taken immediately after item 16. SMG members (with the exception of Mrs Barr) left the meeting for this item.

Dr June Milligan, chair of the Committee, summarised the report. The Committee had met in May to review policy and benchmarking ahead of the November meeting, at which senior staff remuneration had been discussed. Business at the latter meeting had covered the Committee's annual report, which had included: a summary of the current strategic context and institutional performance; the Principal's report on SMG performance and reward; the Principal's performance, which had been undertaken by the Convener of Court, who had consulted with Court members; Grade 10 Professorial and Professional Staff performance and reward; and Voluntary Severance and salary augmentation approvals since the last meeting. Dr Milligan reminded Court that the Committee's membership now included a staff representative and a student representative; they had not been able to attend the November meeting but Dr Milligan had been in touch with both.

The Principal's salary uplift had been in line with the contractual arrangements agreed by Court and had been subject to satisfactory performance, which had been confirmed.

Court noted the report.

CRT/2019/19.4 Estates Committee

CRT/2019/19.4.1 Capital Plan review and ASBS PGT Hub

An in-depth presentation and discussion had taken place regarding the Capital Plan review and the full business case for ASBS/PGT Hub.

The Committee had approved the CapEx application associated with the full business case for the ASBS/PGT Hub, based on a maximum cost envelope of £86m, agreeing also that the CapEx application should be revised ahead of the Finance Committee and Court meetings, to include some additional information. This had been referred to earlier in the Court meeting.

CRT/2019/19.4.2 CapEx applications

The Committee had approved other CapEx applications relating to: Sprinkler Tank and 11kv Switchroom £6.996m; Gilmorehill / Sir James Black Building / Spinal Cord Group lab refurbishment £645k; James McCune Smith Learning Hub – Catering £1.71m; 5G Testbed and Partner in Scotland £1.210million (to be fully funded from external sources).

CRT/2019/20. Communications from Meeting of Senate 10 October 2019

At the October meeting, members of Senate had been reminded that the ‘new’ Senate had been officially established on 1 August 2019, following the approval of an Ordinance by the Privy Council. Members had also been reminded that the Council of Senate had been established by Senate in 2014 and empowered to carry out the normal day-to-day business of Senate. Given that the Council was a committee of Senate, it had been proposed that the Council should be dissolved, and that the ‘new’ Senate should assume its full responsibilities going forward. Senate had agreed to formally dissolve the Council of Senate. Senate had also agreed formally to reappoint all Council of Senate committees as Committees of Senate.

Senate had received an update on recent work being carried out by the University’s Sustainability Working Group, with members of Senate raising a number of questions regarding the University’s targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and suggesting that the targets could be more ambitious, particularly in relation to recycling, improving the range of meat-free catering options, improving infrastructure for cycling, and reducing the number of flights to partnership institutions overseas. It had also been suggested that the University could increase its investment in teleconference and IT facilities to reduce staff travel to international conferences, and that the University should consider generating its own renewable energy on under-utilised parts of the estate.

Senate had also received a briefing on progress against the capital plan and a report on acceptances received to date from nominees for receipt of Honorary Degrees in 2020.

The communications from Senate were noted.

CRT/2019/21. Annual Report on the University’s Complaints Procedure 2018/19

Court noted the annual report on complaints activity during the academic session 2018/19, noting also from Dr Duncan that the procedure’s emphasis was on resolution and a ‘lessons learned’ approach. The report included some details of the latter; it was agreed that these might be brought out further in future reports.

CRT/2019/22. Any Other Business

No other business had been advised. The Convener recorded thanks to members of Court for their work in 2019 and wished everyone a happy festive season.

CRT/2019/23. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 12 February 2020 at 2pm in the Senate Room.