

UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 25th day of October 2019 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Present: Dame Anne Pringle, *Senior Governor (presiding)*; Professor Sally Mapstone, *Principal*; Professor Stuart Monro, *Deputy Chair of Court*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Master of the United College & Deputy Principal*; Mr Adrian Greer, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Cllr Altany Craik, *Provost of Fife's Assessor*; Mr Jamie Rodney, *President, Students' Association*; Ms Amy Bretherton, *Director of Education, Students' Association*; Mr Nigel Christie, *General Council Assessor*; Professor Sharon Ashbrook, Professor Mark Harris, Dr Derek Ball and Dr Morven Shearer, *Senate Assessors*; Ms Donna Pierz-Fennell, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Mr Timothy Allan, Mr Ken Dalton, Mr Frank MacInnis, Ms Eve McCurrich, Mr Nigel Morecroft, and Professor Sir David Wallace, *Non-Executive Members*.

In regular attendance: Professor Tom Brown, *Vice-Principal (Research & Innovation)*, Professor Brad MacKay, *Vice-Principal (International Strategy & External Relations)*; Mr Alastair Merrill, *Vice-Principal (Governance)*; Dr Katie Stevenson, *Vice-Principal (Collections, Music and Digital Content)*; Professor Clare Peddie, *Vice-Principal Education (Proctor)*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Mr Andy Goor, *Chief Financial Officer*; Ms Margaret Sinclair, *Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate*.

Apologies: Mr Srdja Popovic, *Rector (President)*; Ms Camilla Duke, *Rector's Assessor*.

PRELIMINARIES

WELCOME

The Senior Governor presided.

The Senior Governor noted apologies and welcomed Mr Frank MacInnis, Professor Mark Harris, the new student Students' Association Sabbatical officers, and Professor Tom Brown, all of whom were attending their first formal Court meeting in their respective capacities. Dr Katie Stevenson, Vice-Principal (Collections, Music and Digital content) would now also be in regular attendance.

STARRING OF ITEMS

Members noted those items currently starred on the Agenda. The following items were additionally starred:

- 9 - Capital Projects Update (BMS fire)
- 14 - Enabling Strategies Development Update

- 16 iv) - Statement to SFC of Internal Subject Review
- 16 xi) - Enhancement Led Institutional Review
- 18 - Minutes of Academic Council meeting, 25 September 2019.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None intimated.

I. OPENING BUSINESS

1. MEETING MINUTES

i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 14 June 2019

The minute of the Court meeting held on 14 June 2019 (on file Minutes 2018-2019 No.4, pp 32-34) was agreed as a correct record.

ii) Report of the Court Away Day held on 16/17 September 2019

Members approved the extensive report of the recent Court Away Day (on file, Court 19/01).

2. Court Membership 2019-20

The membership of Court for the Academic Year 2019/20 (on file,19/02) was noted.

3. REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

Court noted the Rector's report (on file,19/03). As both the Rector and the Rector's Assessor had sent apologies for the meeting, it was agreed that any questions or comments on the report would be directed by email to the Rector's Assessor. Commending the report, Members requested clarification as to the delivery of *Got Consent* workshops to Postgraduate students who were not accommodated in University residences; and more information on the measures being taken to raise awareness among staff of the issue of Sexual and Gender - Based Violence (SGBV) and to encourage staff to offer support to students. In relation to this, the Principal informed Court that the working group involving students, student representatives, the Vice-Principal Education and Student Services, formed to consider this issue, would welcome more involvement by staff to raise consciousness of the issue of SGBV.

4. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal provided a verbal update to Court on recent events, activities and general University news, highlighted in her advance written report (on file, Court 19/04).

Appointments:- Court noted the appointments detailed in paragraphs 2-4 of the report: Professor Tom Brown had been appointed as Vice-Principal, Research & Innovation, Dr Katie Stevenson, had been appointed to the new role of Vice-Principal (Collections, Music and Digital content). A new Dean of Science would be appointed at the end of Semester 1. In the interim, Dr Graham Kirby and Dr Jon Issberner were sharing the Acting Dean of Science role. Recruitment was underway for the new senior post of Executive Director for People. This post would ensure an integrated and skills-based approach to recruiting and developing staff across the organisation.

Sustainability:- Referring to the declaration of a climate emergency by the Scottish Government, the Principal highlighted the ongoing involvement of Professor Sir Ian Boyd, formerly Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government On Food and Environment based within the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and now appointed Chair of the UK Research Integrity Office. Professor Sir Ian Boyd continued to work in an advisory capacity to the Principal's Office and had agreed to chair the working group formed to develop the University's environmental sustainability agenda. As an established and high profile leader of both social and environmental sustainability, the University has a transformative role to play in this area.

Madras:- Plans for St Andrews West were approved by Fife Council at the end of May, subject to legal agreement. This site would add to both the town and University, providing space for the new Madras school building, a care home and hotel, as well as increasing the stock of affordable housing. Fife Council had also given its final approval to conclude the contract which would dispose of University land at Langlands for the new Madras College in return for the Madras South Street site. The turf cutting ceremony had taken place on the new Madras site and the contractors had started building the school over the summer, with the build planned to take two years. Court members had had an opportunity to see the site during their tour of Capital projects on the afternoon of 24 October.

Development:-The Principal had visited New York with Development on 12-18 October as a fundamental part of the feasibility study for the University's next philanthropic campaign. The trip had been highly informative and would facilitate progress in campaign planning. It was noted that the investment in a development team in the USA, was making a difference to the quality and scope of potential donor contact.

Andrew Carnegie Lecture:- The sixth Andrew Carnegie lecture in St Andrews, generously supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, took place on 8 October. The lecture was delivered by the celebrated war-surgeon, alumnus and honorary graduate of the University, David Nott, and was entitled *Leaving a Legacy in War Zones*. This had proved to be an inspiring and deeply moving lecture, documenting and graphically illustrating David Nott's work in war zones. It had been marked by a standing ovation from an appreciative audience.

Following her summary the Principal answered Members' questions on:

- sustainability, confirming that the implications of the carbon footprint generated by International students was an issue being addressed, and that the involvement of Professor Sir Ian Boyd would assist the University to look holistically across the piece, to identify meaningful measures to ensure effective offsets and promote the sustainability agenda;
- the Global Office, which had been established to pull together strands of activity relating to the Global theme of the Strategy. It was agreed that the VPISER would prepare a briefing paper for Court on the role and scope of the Global Office for the January Court meeting;
- plans for further engagement with Sports in Action, and additional placements in Zambia;
- timescales and scope of the relaunched SFC's Research Pooling Initiative¹. The Vice-Principal Research & Innovation additionally confirmed that the University's current thinking on interdisciplinary themes should align well with this initiative, and that further information was awaited from the SFC.

II. PARC BUSINESS

5. Minute of the Meeting held on 18 September 2019

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 19/05).

6. Indicative Entrant Numbers

Court received the paper (on file, Court 1906) (updating the paper presented at PARC (on file PARC 19/02a), which provided the annual admissions update for Court on entrant numbers for the academic session 2019-20, following completion of the matriculation and failure to register process.

7. USS Pension Update

Court received the written paper (on file, Court 19/07) updating the paper presented at PARC (on file PARC 19/02b). The paper briefed Court on the triennial revaluation of the S&LAS scheme and progress since Court had last met towards the conclusion of the 2018 USS revaluation.

The University, represented by the Vice-Principal (Governance) and the Chief Financial Officer, had agreed to participate in the joint working group set up by UUK and the Trustee to work out the details and practicalities of the conditions that the Trustee had attached to the preferred option (Option 3) for finalising the 2018 scheme valuation, in particular on debt monitoring and the proposal to prioritise USS as a creditor where institutions are taking out further secured loans (known as *pari passu*). The interrelationship with existing borrowing

¹ To ensure that disciplinary depth is complemented by a more interdisciplinary perspective that responds to challenges, and is synchronised with the post-UKRI research funding landscape.

arrangements would need to be properly clarified to avoid any unintended consequences. Court would be apprised of further progress.

Court noted the update on S&LAS and the current state of play regarding USS, the University's position in relation to the various consultations from UUK and the University's continued engagement with St Andrews USS members through direct communications, the pensions website and the USS Pension Communications Group. It was also noted that the second JEP report was not now expected to be published before the end of October at the earliest. This would inform preparations for the 2020 valuation.

The paper also provided an update on the ballot for industrial action over pensions being run by UCU at 69 individual institutions, including St Andrews, from 9 September. The ballot would run until 30 October, and was being conducted in parallel with separate ballots for industrial action over the 2019 pay award by UCU, Unison and Unite.

The Vice-Principal (Governance) provided assurance that contingency planning was in hand to minimise the potential effects on students of any industrial action: such planning would be informed by lessons learned during the last dispute.

As the next Ordinary meeting of Court will not take place until January, it was confirmed that Court members would be updated on pension and industrial action issues as developments arose, and that a report would be given to PARC in December. Court received confirmation that steps were being taken to develop an appropriate and transparent communications strategy and to keep lines of communications open, and the Director of Education for the Students' Association indicated the willingness of the Students' Association to act as a neutral conduit for information to students.

In response to a specific question, it was confirmed that the temporary moratorium on employers leaving the USS had been introduced as a result of Trinity College, Cambridge's announcement of its intention to withdraw from the scheme. A change of Scheme rules was required to make the moratorium legally binding, but as Trinity was an exceptional case (very few members of staff were members of USS), it was highly unlikely that any other employers would be in a financial position to consider withdrawing from the Scheme.

8. Capital Projects Update (including BMS)

Court received the Projects for Information paper (on file, Court 19/09²) which provided a summary of in-train and planned capital projects. The Appendices to the summary included updates on the following: Gatty/Scottish Oceans Institute; Laidlaw Music Centre; Eden Campus Professional Services Relocation; MUSA; St Andrews West; Eden Campus and NDEEF³ Project; the Grange; Main library refurbishment; North Haugh Hub; Albany Park; Town Centre & Madras South Street; Solar; and Younger Hall refurbishment.

² *Secretary's Note*: Paper 19/08 was incorporated into paper 19/09

³ Non-Domestic Energy Efficient Framework Project

The paper also contained an update on the impact and actions arising from the serious fire in the Biomolecular Science Building (BMS). Members noted the contents of the report and the progress made, including the provision of Biology research labs for 40 bench spaces and multiple ancillary areas, teaching labs for 96 bench spaces and write up and office spaces contained within new modular buildings, now onsite. Questions were raised about staff morale and specifically the emotional impact for some staff of how the restructuring, required in the aftermath of the fire, was being described in communications.

The Master provided insight into the measures being taken to inform, support, and provide counselling and advice to those impacted by the fire, observing that there was a spectrum of reactions and needs to be accommodated and considered. It was agreed that the Master would convene a meeting with the relevant Heads of School and the Quaestor to achieve a degree of clarity on the messages to be communicated to affected staff, including the language to be used and the explanations to be given as to the rationale behind space allocation decisions. The option of additional open fora would also be considered. The issue of staff morale post BMS would be reflected in the project's risk register.

9. Annual Report of the Investment & Treasury Assurance Group

Court received and noted the annual report (on file, Court 19/10) of the Investment & Treasury Assurance Group. The report provided an overview of the work of the Investment & Treasury Assurance Group (ITAG) over the last twelve months.

10. Annual development Update

Court received and noted the summary report (on file, Court 19/11), presented for information, outlining the University's philanthropic fundraising to 31 July 2019, including all recorded philanthropy to the University consistent with Ross/CASE guidelines and appended comparator tables for top UK Universities.

11. Institutional Indicators Update

Members noted the quarterly report (on file, Court 19/12) containing the regular update of the University's institutional performance measured against defined targets (indicators) related to research, learning and teaching, student experience, financial stability, staff, infrastructure and reputation. The Convenor of PARC indicated that this would be the last occasion when Court would receive KPIs presented in this format (which related to the previous University strategy). Work was underway to develop a streamlined set of indicators to allow assessment of progress against the new strategy. Refreshed KPIs would be presented to PARC in December and forwarded to Court in January.

12. Summary Financial report to 2019 including Capital Plan

Members received the report (on file, Court 19/12) which outlined the University's consolidated financial performance for the period ending 31 July 2019.

Presenting the summary, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed that performance in the past financial year had been positive. Cash balances of £58.2m were £3.5m higher than at the end of the previous financial year. Discretionary cash, at £17.6m, was £8.9m lower than at this time last year. This was a direct result of increased spend on capital projects in the year. Discretionary cash balances were expected to reduce even further over the 2019/20 financial year in line with planned capital investment.

The operating surplus was £9.8m, ahead of the plan for the year. This was principally due to the receipt of non-recurring income including £4.5m of gifts towards the construction of the new music centre, two non-recurring VAT reclaims agreed with HMRC totalling £2.0m, as well as higher than expected donations and endowment income of £1.4m.

Both the overall 'bottom-line' surplus and the University's net assets had been significantly affected by the inclusion of a £56.4m increase in pension provisions. The adjustment was split between USS (£39.7m) and the S&LAS local scheme (£16.7m). This projected pension liability did not impact on the cash situation but, due to existing loan covenants, the fall in net assets would affect the amount of borrowing that could be undertaken. Debt capacity had therefore dropped by over £17.5m in the year to date as a consequence of the increase in forecast pension provisions.

The recent fire at the BMS building had resulted in significant damage. To date, the University had incurred costs of around £5.3m and received £3.0m in cash from Insurers. £2.3m had therefore been accrued into this year's accounts in order to match the spend. University management were content that all planned spend was sufficiently covered by existing insurance policies and should be reimbursed in line with those policies.

13. Enabling Strategies-Development Update

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/14) which updated Court on the development of the five enabling strategies. Court commended the presentation of the strategies which was systematic, consistent, thorough and readable. Court was asked to approve the Digital, Accommodation, Estates and Finance enabling strategies as presented, and to note the progress with the development of underlying action plans for those strategies.

It was noted that the People strategy was not yet ready to be presented to Court for final approval. The People strategy would come to PARC in December in its full form, and thence to Court in January. It was essential to take time to review

and assimilate the extensive feedback received as a result of the community consultation exercise, which had necessarily included capturing the view of staff and students on their return to University this Semester.

Points covered in discussion included: the formulation of and timescale for completion of the People strategy; the need for KPIs; the importance of obtaining staff feedback at the end of projects; the distinction between the Library strategy and the Digital strategy, including the need to address any misapprehensions amongst staff as to the importance of the retention of the use of a print culture for research. In relation to this it was emphasised that the Digital strategy was not intended to replace current and past practice, but rather to recognise and capture the possibilities and opportunities to transform research methods, afforded by a 21 century environment in order to create a mixed “cultural economy”.

In relation to the Estates strategy, Members highlighted the importance of communication with the Community Council. In this regard it was hoped that the work of the Community Engagement Officer would be of value in enhancing and facilitating engagement and information sharing. This was a new post and it was agreed that the Community Engagement Officer should be invited to give a presentation on the role at the meeting of Court in April.

It was also noted that an Education strategy was in development, under the auspices of the Vice-Principal Education. This too would be developed on a consultative basis and aligned with the University strategic plan.

Following discussion, Court approved the four enabling strategies presented, noted the progress to date, and confirmed that it was satisfied with the current direction of travel.

14. Prospective Future Strategic Engagement

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/28). Following extensive discussion, Court noted the University’s intentions to explore the possibilities for future strategic engagement, outlined in the paper and agreed with some caution, to further work being done to develop the proposals contained therein.

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

15. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Professor Sir David Wallace, Convenor of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC), presented ARC business.

i) Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 September 2019

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 19/15)

ii) Report of the Health and Safety Assurance Group (Fire Risk Assessments)

Court received and noted the paper (on file Court 19/16) which set out the University's plans to address backlog in Fire Risk Assessments discussed at the last meeting of the HSAG, and highlighted as a Critical Risk in the recent KPMG audit of health and safety management in the University.

The Convener of HSAG provided a brief introduction to the report emphasising the priority that has been given to the issues of fire risk assessments and fire management generally. The Convener felt there had been a sea change over the past year in the quality of how health and safety, including fire safety, was being addressed, and he had confidence that EHSS were on the case. But this was an area where there had to be really low tolerance of risk. Whilst there was no doubt that the University was legally compliant with regard to Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs), the experience of the Purdie and BMS fires, as well as the findings of the internal audit report, had necessitated a thorough and rigorous review of arrangements to ensure that there were systematic and effective processes in place which reflected best practice.

The paper detailed the University's plans to address the backlog of Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs), with a systematic risk-based programme to eliminate the backlog by the end of 2021; and a subsequent rolling programme of audit and follow up to maintain high standards of fire safety across the more than 150 buildings on University estate. It was noted that all buildings in use had a fire risk assessment – however these had not been consistently updated in line with best practice, and HMO licensing arrangements now required residencies to have an annual update. The primary purpose of a FRA was to save lives (rather than prevent fires) and Head of EHSS had classified buildings as high, medium and low risk. All residencies were considered to be in the high risk category, and these would all have up to date FRAs by the end of 2019.

FRAs would be followed up by systematic monitoring and reporting with 6-monthly self-assessment audits, to ensure that recommendations had been actioned. This would be supported by making on-line training available for safety coordinators in individual buildings as part of the work to take forward KPMG's recommendations to introduce a programme of compulsory and departmental courses.

The approach set out in the report had been endorsed by ARC, following review by the HSAG.

Commenting on the paper, the Vice-Principal (Governance) emphasised the following points:

- the University was not in breach of the law in relation to FRAs – all buildings in use had an FRA. But the University was not conforming to Health & Safety best practice in terms of the periodic review and update of FRAs, and a tougher regulatory environment for HMO licences now required an increase in the frequency of FRAs on residences from a three-yearly to an annual cycle;

- the quality of past FRAs had not been as good as the University believed it should be (having been regarded as something of a tick box exercise), and there had been a lack of systematic follow-up to ensure recommendations have been acted on;
- the FRA initiative was being used to drive culture change around how Health & Safety is treated across the estate, consistent with the broader Health & Safety policy; and
- the systematic approach to address the issue over a 2-year period was consistent with good practice and with the recommendations of the KPMG audit.

Questions from Members included how buildings had been categorised; whether outsourcing the conduct of FRAs would achieve a faster pace of change; and whether further delay in recruitment of a second additional Fire Safety Officer would cause slippage to the timetable. In response, the Vice-Principal Governance confirmed that the categorisation of buildings as high, medium and low risk had been determined by the professional judgement of the Head of EHSS, based on the primary purpose of FRAs (to save lives rather than prevent fires) and as set out in the paper. Outsourcing FRAs was not recommended – it would be costly, would not reflect the complexities of the University estate, and most importantly would not engender the culture change that was sought in how fire and health and safety more generally was managed across the estate. Outsourcing FRAs had been tried previously but the quality had not been good. The Vice-Principal (Governance) had a good degree of confidence that ongoing recruitment to the vacant second Fire Safety Officer post would be successful⁴, but even if this were not the case, EHSS now had sufficient capacity to maintain up to date FRAs on all high-risk buildings.

In conclusion, Court welcomed the plan to address the backlog in FRAs, and requested that a further progress report be presented to the January Court meeting on whether the target for FRAs on all residencies had been met.

A broader discussion ensued on fire safety management more generally, and the processes and procedures in place to manage the risk of fire within buildings. Members requested information in particular on the frequency of fire evacuation drills; the obligations placed on schools; and the reviews, controls and checks in place to ensure these obligations were being fulfilled. As outlined in the EHSS Annual Report noted by Court in June, each Head of School and Unit was requested to provide an annual Health and Safety return which included details of fire inspections and evacuation drills. Anecdotal evidence was given by several staff members, which suggested some inconsistencies in knowledge and practice between different schools, and in the activities of local fire safety co-ordinators. Court Members emphasised their expectation that proper standards and practice should be applied and monitored across the University, and that compliance should be reported.

⁴ Secretary's note: subsequent to the Court meeting, a new Fire Safety Officer has been recruited and will take up the post by the beginning of February.

To that end, the Vice-Principal (Governance) was requested to prepare a paper for the next meeting of Court setting out the current and planned arrangements for managing and owning fire safety at school, unit and building level, with a particular focus on fire evacuation drills.

iii) Academic Assurance Group Annual Report

Court noted the annual report of the Academic Assurance (AAG) (on file, Court 19/17). The AAG had reviewed activities relating to maintaining educational standards and ensuring and enhancing the quality of academic provision, over the Academic year 2018/19.

iv) Statement to SFC of internal Subject Review

Court approved the annual institutional statement of teaching quality and internal subject review (on file, Court 19/18) required by the Scottish Funding Council. The Senior Governor signed the accompanying quality statement which evidenced Court endorsement of the statement.

v) Annual Report on Risk Management

Court noted the Annual Report on Risk Management presented to ARC (on file 19/19).

vi) Update on Risk register

Court noted the quarterly risk report for Q3, 2019, given to the Audit & Risk Committee (on file, Court 19/20). The report presented the quarterly risk dashboard, associated commentaries and escalating institutional risks narratives, and detailed the actions being undertaken to mitigate their effects.

vii) Minute of Meeting held on 10 October 2019

Members received the report of the meeting (on file, Court 19/21)

viii) Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report, 2018-19

Members received the Annual report of the Audit & Risk Committee summarising the work of the committee and the University's internal and external auditors for 2018/19, (on file, Court 19/22). The report would be submitted to the Scottish Funding Council along with the University's Financial Statements.

ix) Annual Internal Audit Report

Members received the report of the Internal Auditors dated 10 October 2019 (on file Court 19/22)

x) Financial Statements 2018-2019

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the annual financial accounts (on file, Court 19/24), thanking the Finance team and the University's external auditors for their prompt and thorough work in completing the year-end financial process to a tight timescale. Court noted the change of format which followed a strategic decision to produce an Annual Report for stakeholders as part of a Scottish Funding Council requirement. In consequence, the "front end" of the accounts had been reduced to include only the statutory minimum.

The Convenor of the Audit & Risk Committee confirmed that the Financial Statements had been thoroughly scrutinised by ARC during detailed meetings with the Finance team, and all questions and queries had been satisfactorily resolved. In committee, some suggestions had been made as to future presentation of the accounts and accompanying notes, to ease traceability of numbers quoted in the narratives into the figures. Whilst it was acknowledged that the Finance team were restricted by the demands of IFRS, Committee members had agreed with the Chief Financial Officer that, in order to assist Court in future years, it would be helpful for the Management accounts also to be made available to Court members. These were considered to be more accessible when reviewing performance.

The Committee, having reviewed the accounts and received the report of the external auditor, which included the Management Representation Letter and Letters of Support, and having noted i) that the external Auditors had concluded satisfactorily on each of the material and audit matters identified; ii) the auditor's agreement with management's assessment as to the aggregated impact of the two identified unadjusted audit differences; and iii) the intention of the auditors to issue an unqualified opinion on the consolidated, parent and subsidiary entity financial statements for the year ending July 2019, now recommended the Financial Statements to Court for approval.

The Convenor of ARC commended the Finance team for their efforts, skill and level of engagement with the end of year process. The Convenor of ARC drew the attention of Court to page 387 of the meeting pack and the statement regarding internal controls which provided the basis of the committee's assurance to Court and requested that the value of the various assurance groups operating within the University's control structure be noted.

Court thereafter added its thanks to the Finance team for achieving a tight year-end timetable and a clean external audit report before approving and adopting the 2018-19 Financial Statements as presented.

xi) Enhancement-led Institutional Review

Court received and approved the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR), (on file, Court 19/25) noting that this would now be submitted to the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland, in preparation for its next review of St Andrews in Spring 2020. Court noted the comments of the Convenor of ARC as to the hugely positive approach taken to this reflective exercise by the Proctor's office and in particular by Ms Nicola Milton, who had presented the review to ARC.

16. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

i) Update on Vacancies

Members reviewed and noted the papers (on file Court 19/26, 26a and 26b) and the recommendations of the Governance & Nominations committee contained therein. Court:

- endorsed the appointment of Mr Jonathan Hewitt as General Council Assessor for an initial period until July 2022;
- endorsed the appointments of Ms Nicola Catterall and Ms Jane Pearce as co-opted members of the Audit & Risk Committee for an initial period of two years (in line with standard periods of appointment for co-opted committee members);
- noted the appointment of Mr Frank MacInnis as a Court member of ARC for a period of three years; and
- noted the next steps detailed in paragraph 6 of the respective papers.

ii) Senior Lay Member

Court received a verbal update as to process and progress from Professor Stuart Monro, Convenor of G&N. The Convenor confirmed that the University anticipated being in the position of having sufficient candidates to allow an election to take place. A communications strategy was being prepared to inform and engage staff and students with the election process. Those candidates eligible to stand for election would be announced on 20 November. The campaign period would commence on 22 November with Open meetings with candidates scheduled for 25 November. Voting would take place on 28-29 November with results formally announced on 2 December. More details would be provided on the Court pages of the University website.

17. ACADEMIC COUNCIL

i) Minute of the meeting held on 25 September 2019

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 25 September 2019 (on file, Court 19/27).

Members commented on the mention in the minutes of the NUS-UUK Review on BAME student attainment and on the importance of treating this issue, and the issue of inclusivity, seriously. The Principal assured Court that work was underway, under the direction of the PO and led by the AVP Diversity, to consider the interventions that could be made to bridge and reduce the identified attainment gap. This would involve engagement with the curricula and consideration of issues relating to staff and student recruitment. This work also included finding ways of improving data collection to obtain more nuanced data. The report only referred to students who were UK domiciled before they come to University: this impacted on the development of accurate BAME attainment gap data in St Andrews, given the international nature of its cohort.

Members also highlighted the update provided to Academic Council on REF 2021 and it was agreed that the Vice-Principal Research & Innovation would provide a briefing to the next meeting of Court on this important topic (which although under the auspices of Academic Council had direct relevance to, and impact on, many areas of the University).

VI. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 17 January 2020 at 10 am in the Gateway Boardroom, North Haugh

Dame Anne Pringle , Senior Governor (Presiding)

Margaret Sinclair,

Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate

Clerk to Court

UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

AT ST ANDREWS on the 17th day of January 2020 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Present: Mr Srdja Popovic, *Rector (President)*; Dame Anne Pringle, *Senior Governor (presiding)*; Professor Sally Mapstone, *Principal*; Professor Stuart Monro, *Deputy Chair of Court*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Master of the United College & Deputy Principal*; Mr Adrian Greer, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Ms Camilla Duke, *Rector's Assessor*; Cllr Altany Craik, *Provost of Fife's Assessor*; Mr Jamie Rodney, *President, Students' Association*; Ms Amy Bretherton, *Director of Education, Students' Association*; Mr Jonathan Hewitt, *General Council Assessor*; Professor Sharon Ashbrook, Dr Derek Ball and Dr Morven Shearer, *Senate Assessors*; Ms Donna Pierz-Fennell, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Mr Timothy Allan, Mr Ken Dalton, Mr Frank MacInnis, Ms Eve McCurrich, Mr Nigel Morecroft, and Professor Sir David Wallace, *Non-Executive Members*.

In regular attendance: Professor Tom Brown, *Vice-Principal (Research & Innovation)*, Professor Brad MacKay, *Vice-Principal (International Strategy & External Relations)*; Mr Alastair Merrill, *Vice-Principal (Governance)*; Dr Katie Stevenson, *Vice-Principal (Collections, Music and Digital Content)*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*, Mr Andy Goor, *Chief Financial Officer*, Ms Margaret Sinclair, *Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate*.

Apologies: Mr Nigel Christie, *General Council Assessor*; Professor Mark Harris, *Senate Assessor*; Professor Clare Peddie, *Vice-Principal Education (Proctor)*.

PRELIMINARIES

The Rector presided.

WELCOME

The Rector welcomed Mr Jonathan Hewitt who was attending his first meeting of Court in his capacity as General Council Assessor.

STARRING OF ITEMS

Members noted those items currently starred on the Agenda. The following items were additionally starred:

- **Item 5 USS Pension Update (Court 19/34)**
- **Item 11 Entrepreneurial Update (Court 19/40)**
- **Item 19(i) Academic Council Minutes (Court 19/49)**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No new Declarations of Interest were intimated.

I. OPENING BUSINESS

1. MEETING MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 25 October 2019

The minute of the Court meeting held on 25 October 2019 (on file Minutes 2019-2020 No.1, pp1-14) was agreed as a correct record, subject to the addition of wording in the last paragraph of section 7 on page 5 to make the key point that Trinity College had exited the USS Scheme because it could afford to do so. No other HEI was likely to be in that position.

Matters Arising

ii) Global Office – Role and Scope

Court received the paper (on file Court 19/28) and noted the establishment and development of the Global Office.

iii) Update on Management of Fire Safety

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/29), requested by Court at its meeting of 25 October. The paper provided an update to Court on the management of fire safety across schools, units and other buildings. Court noted the current situation, and the actions in hand to improve compliance and reporting arrangements.

iv) REF – Overview

Court noted the paper (on file Court 19/30), which provided a general update to Court on the University's preparations for REF 2021, including details on the submission timetable. The VPRIS had given a presentation on REF at the Pre-Court dinner.

2. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal provided a verbal update to Court on recent events, activities and general University news, highlighted in her advance written report (on file, Court 19/31).

Scottish Budget:- The timing of the Scottish budget had changed. As a result there was a lack of alignment with the (post General Election) UK budget. The Scottish budget had been brought forward from March to February and would take place before the UK Budget scheduled for 11 March. It was unusual for

there to be a Scottish budget before the UK Budget, but this was necessary to provide a degree of certainty to local councils and other public bodies. The Scottish budget would therefore be provisional in the first instance, and subject to the UK budget. The final funding allocations for the HE sector would be confirmed in May, but were not expected to be radically different from this year.

Brexit:- Concern remained for the future of the Erasmus scheme in the wake of Brexit. The University continued to lobby the UK Government on this issue via contact with Chris Skidmore's Office (Minister of State for Universities, Science and Innovation) and engagement with Liz Smith, MSP.

Members noted that the admissions cycle had made a strong start. Clarity on funding for EU students had supported in-market communications and secured another year of high quality applications from the EU. Although specific figures were not available, the sense was that Brexit had not resulted in a diminution of applications from potential staff based in the EU, but that a demographic effect on turnover might be anticipated with a slight reduction in early and mid-career applications. This contrasted with the (anecdotal) evidence of other institutions within the sector.

3. REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

Court noted the Rector's report (on file, 19/32). The Rector's Assessor presented the report and highlighted the considerable work which had been undertaken by the Students' Association in conjunction with the Rector's Assessor and various student societies to boost student engagement with both the General Election and the Senior Lay Member election. These efforts had contributed to increased turnout in both. The General Election turnout for North East Fife at 75.3% was one of the highest figures in the UK, and student voter registration had been confirmed by Fife Council to be the highest since the system of record keeping began. The Rector commended the work being done by the student team; the President of the Students' Association had been interviewed on the work done to improve voter registration by CNN. This had been a prime example of students participating in and influencing an issue of global interest.

II. PARC BUSINESS

4. Minute of the Meeting held on 13 December 2019

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 19/33).

5. USS Pension Update

Court received the written paper (on file, Court 19/34) which updated the paper presented at PARC (on file PARC 19/02b). The paper briefed Court on the progress since Court had last met towards the conclusion of the 2018 USS revaluation and in particular the publication of the second JEP report.

Both UUK and UCU had issued statements welcoming the JEP report and it had been announced that senior representatives of UUK, UCU and USS would hold talks early in 2020, facilitated by the JEP chair Joanne Segars, to agree an approach for progressing the JEP recommendations. Dates for five initial meetings had been announced. This was seen as a positive and constructive step.

In response to a question from the DoEd of the Students' Association it was confirmed that there would be an update to all students at the start of term concerning potential strike action in the coming Semester. The strategy to ensure the dissemination of information to students which had involved cooperation with the Students' Association and the Proctor's office had proved effective during the last Industrial Action and this communication would continue. There was not yet any clarity however as to whether there would be any further strike action. The UCU's Higher Education Committee was scheduled to meet on 31 January to consider whether to call for further strike action in February and March.

6. Brexit Update

Court received the update (on file Court 19/35).

7. Enabling Strategy – People, Action Plans

Enabling Strategy - People

Court noted the paper (on file, Court 19/36) which provided an update on the development of the five enabling strategies People, Digital, Estate, Accommodation and Finance, and presented the People Strategy, approved by PARC at its last meeting, to Court for endorsement.

The Assistant Vice-Principal (Diversity) and the Director of Human Resources were in attendance for this item. Introducing the strategy they highlighted that:

- the University had fully engaged with both staff and students to pull together the People Enabling Strategy which was modernising and professionalising. Over 40 focus groups had been held, and over 800 staff and students had participated in the on-line survey;
- the strategy was ambitious, but this was the first time that both staff and students had had the opportunity to engage with the development of a people strategy and it was quite clear that it had generated, not only a large amount of interest, but a lot of enthusiasm and ambition amongst the participants. There was a clear appetite for change;
- the strategy focused on building on what the University did well – e.g. the strong sense of community and collegiality, the cohesive organisation, consensus as to values, as represented in the Strategy etc. - and attempted to address areas where there were issues including the standardisation of policy, procedure and practice across the University;
- the strategy would ensure that policy and best practice were available, accessible to everyone and consistently applied across Schools/Units

and with students. This in turn would give people a greater understanding of what they could expect when working and studying in St Andrews;

- the strategy aimed to level the playing field as far as is possible, in order to ensure that staff and students had equal opportunities to contribute, flourish and excel, thus linking to the Diverse St Andrews strategy pillar;
- to be successful and maintain interest there needed to be quick wins to maintain momentum. Such actions would include: the creation of St Andrews Pulse, a group of 100 staff chosen randomly, structured by grade and role; changes to the Recruitment Webpage; the development of a Wellbeing Strategy; information sharing; and an 'You said we will' annual event building on the success of last autumn's pilot. Work continued on these and other initiatives linked to implementing the strategy.

Court warmly endorsed the strategy. Commenting on the effectiveness of the small focus groups, members expressed the hope that these type of fora would continue as they had been well received by staff. The reinstatement of a non-academic professional staff forum was also noted as a positive step. Other questions raised by Members related to affordability; culture, specifically any measures which would be put in place to monitor and map the impact of the strategy on culture and to identify any unintended consequences should they arise; how success would be measured generally; and how to develop and expand the HR service, including how to change perceptions of the HR function and role.

Action Plans

Court noted the action plans for each of the enabling strategies and the process of reporting on the action plans to PARC.

The Accommodation action plan sparked discussion. The affordability of accommodation and the proportion of affordable accommodation available to students was an issue of great and continuing concern to the student body, evidenced by the work of CASH and the concerns expressed to candidates during the Senior Lay Member election. The Quaestor confirmed that relations between students and the Residential and Business services remained good, with regular meetings with the Director of RBS. There were also effective committees at hall level which could raise and deal with minor accommodation issues. There was also ongoing dialogue with student representatives regarding the bigger issues of accommodation provision. This included affordability and the type and spread of accommodation offered; financial assistance for students; and access. It was agreed that the action plan would be revised to mark the box "Consultation with the student body in relation to affordable rents" as "in progress" rather than "complete", to avoid giving the wrong impression. Court recognised that this was an ongoing and continuous process as the University continued to engage with the challenges accommodation issues posed, and to liaise and consult with Students on these matters. It was suggested that the assistance of the Director of Communications be sought to find a means of disseminating this message to

the student body. The Rector noted that affordable accommodation had been a keystone of his campaign, and saw this as an important contributor to diversity.

8. Byre Theatre Update

Court received the update (on file Court 19/37) which provided an update on the Byre theatre including recent developments; operations and programme; and finance. It was noted that PARC had requested that the VP (Collections), in conjunction with the Joint Directors, prepare a 3 year Business Plan. The Business Plan would be submitted to PARC for consideration at its meeting in March. (PARC minute meeting of 13 December 2019, Court 19/33, paragraph 5 refers).

9. Projects for Approval – Albany Park

The paper (on file Court 19/38) provided an update on the current project status of the Albany Park Student Residences redevelopment and the demolition of existing buildings. Court noted the update, and noted that PARC had given approval to proceed with the demolition works. (PARC minute meeting of 13 December 2019, Court 19/33, paragraph 7 refers).

10. Projects for Information

Court received the Projects for Information paper (on file, Court 19/39¹) which provided a summary of in-train and planned capital projects. The Appendices to the summary included updates on the following: Gatty/Scottish Oceans Institute; Laidlaw Music Centre; Eden Campus Professional Services Relocation; MUSA; St Andrews West; Eden Campus and NDEEF¹ Project; the Grange; Main Library refurbishment; North Haugh Hub; Albany Park; Town Centre & Madras South Street; Solar; and Younger Hall refurbishment.

Court's attention was specifically drawn to :

- The decision taken by PARC in relation to the reinstatement of the BMS building to proceed with the project based on a cost which will entail a capital funding contribution from the University, in addition to monies recovered from insurers. This would ensure the provision of a modern, future-proofed, fit-for-purpose facility with a 20 year lifespan. The level of contribution from the University would be dependent on the outcome of negotiations with insurers and the tender for works over the next 6 months. An outline Business Case would be considered by PARC at its March meeting.
- The decision taken by PARC in relation to Kenly Windfarm to extend the duration of planning permission through the submission of a Further Application under Regulation 11 of the Town and Country Planning (development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013].

1. Non-Domestic Energy Efficient Framework Project

Court noted that Professor Sir Ian Boyd in his role as Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Board had endorsed this approach.

11. Annual Update: Entrepreneurial St Andrews

Court received the update (on file Court 19/40) presented for information. The update briefed members on progress with the implementation of Entrepreneurial St Andrews and invited suggestions and comments. In discussion, and whilst observing that this strand of the Strategy was probably one of the hardest to deliver, Members sought some further detail as to the current measures being taken and the preparatory steps and measures in place to progress the entrepreneurial agenda. Members acknowledged that crucial to its ultimate development and success was the creation of culture and entrepreneurship with at its forefront the Eden Campus, but sought reassurance that this strand was not on hold pending the Eden Campus coming on line. Specific questions were asked as to: the rationale behind the decision not to create an investment fund but to engage through Development to fund raise for small grant funding; how performance to date and ongoing can be measured; the Scottish environment as a whole including any potential to engage with Innovation Centres; the importance of the creation of a culture of entrepreneurship and commercialisation; and the intention to provide a hub as a shared space where ideas could flourish and where investors could ultimately engage directly with innovators and researchers.

12. Institutional Indicators Update

Members noted the update on the new performance indicator framework (on file Court 19/41), commending Planning for the production of a KPI's reporting framework which was clear, simple and provided an appropriate degree of strategic oversight. In discussion, Members noted the rationale for specific indicators, in particular the measurement of staff costs as a proportion of turnover (5.2:-Financial sustainability).

13. Summary Financial report to 30 November 2019 including Capital Plan

Members received the report (on file, Court 19/42) which outlined the University's consolidated financial performance for the period ending 31 July 2019.

The University's managed operating surplus at the end of November 2019 was £0.8m, against the expected planned deficit of £1.3m. Excluding BMS fire income of £2.1m, total earned (operating) income was £0.4m higher than expected with over-recoveries in capital donations, other income, and endowment income offset by lower than expected research income. Excluding BMS fire spend of £2.1m, operational expenditure was £0.9m under-budget due to underspends in staff costs, depreciation and research. Capital grants and donations were

positive to budget by £0.9m with the majority of this relating to capital donations of £0.4m for the new music centre and a £0.3m bequest from Linda M P Dunn towards cancer research.

Non-operating gains of £31.4m, related to a reduction in the USS pension scheme deficit provision (following the finalisation of the 2018 valuation) of £26.2m and a reduction in liabilities in relation to the local S&LAS pension scheme of £4.3m. Together with new endowments and endowment appreciation of £0.9m. the overall comprehensive income surplus for the four months to 30 November 2019 was £32.2m.

Both the overall 'bottom-line' surplus and the University's net assets had considerably increased as a consequence of the reduction in pension provision liabilities to 30 November 2019. As a direct result, the University's debt capacity, in line with existing loan covenants had increased by £16.4m to £55.6m compared to the position at the year end.

The fire at the BMS building on the North Haugh, had resulted in significant damage. To date, the University had incurred costs of around £14.3m and received £14.0m in cash from the Insurance company. £0.3m had therefore been accrued into this year's accounts in order to match the spend. University management were content that all planned operational spend was sufficiently covered by existing insurance policies and should be reimbursed in line with those policies.

14. Sustainability Development Summary Report

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/43) which reported to PARC on the University's environment and sustainable development activities and the operation of the sustainability Development Working Group 2018-2019.

DISCUSSION ITEM

III 15. Mental Health Strategy

The Assistant Vice-Principal (Diversity) and Dr Catherine O' Leary, Chair of the Mental Health Strategy Working Group were in attendance for this item. The Strategy (on file, Court 19/44) had been approved by Academic Council on 11 December 2019 and was now presented to Court for information and discussion.

A Mental Health Strategy working group had been formed in April 2019 to draft a Mental Health Strategy to support the broader University Strategy and satisfy requirements of the Scottish Funding Council.

There had been a significant increase in the numbers reporting mental health issues across the university sector. This had led to an increase in demand for mental health services and a recognition on the part of the University of the importance of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing; early intervention

and enhanced counselling; and training services where mental health issues arise. The aim of the strategy was to raise awareness and reduce stigma about mental health issues, to foster a collegial, responsible and supportive workplace, to enhance the support available to students and staff and to increase awareness of and participation in wellbeing activities. This strategy was the framework within which the University would address these aims and it set out what was current practice and, based on evidence, what needed to be done next in order to improve mental health promotion and provision, including the involvement of all colleagues in Schools and Units.

The Principal commended the Strategy to Court. There had been a significant shift in the treatment of mental health issues in society as a whole and the Higher Education sector reflected this. The development of the strategy demonstrated a positive approach to these issues, and the development of an open and consistent approach to the treatment of them spoke to the culture of the University. The strategy also formed part of the Diversity agenda.

Court welcomed the strategy. The issue of mental health was one of the most serious issues facing the Higher Education sector. During discussion, and in response to specific questions, further information was provided on the provision of counselling services; training; liaison with local health care providers; the role of wellbeing officers, Heads of School and EDI officers, including their role to signpost rather than intervene; interaction with the People strategy; and the specific detail of the 'Are you ok' flowchart.

IV REGULAR BUSINESS

16. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Professor Sir David Wallace, Convenor of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC), presented ARC business.

i) Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 November 2019

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 19/45). The Convenor drew the attention of Court to positive contributions made by the two new co-optees and the Protocol which had been drafted to reflect the process required for the approval of Financial Statements.

ii) Ethics & Research Integrity Assurance Group Annual report

Court received and noted the report (on file Court 19/46). The Convenor of ARC took the opportunity to reiterate the importance of the role of Assurance Groups in providing Court oversight of University business.

16. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Professor Stuart Monro, Convenor of the Governance & Nominations Committee presented a summary of recent G&N business.

Over the past two years a major focus of the committee had been to implement the changes required by the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (2017). Thanks were expressed to the Vice-Principal (Governance) and the Court Office for the considerable work done in this regard, which had culminated with the changes to Ordinance and the election of the Senior Lay Member. The University was compliant with the Code² and the legislation.

Attention continued to be given by the Committee to forward planning and ensuring the appropriate skills mix on Court and Court committees. The use of co-option for committees continued to be a useful tool to introduce individuals to the workings of the University, to encourage engagement and to build experience.

The issue of Diversity, in its broadest form, was at the forefront of the committee's thinking. There had been much discussion of the topic at the G&N meeting and the committee would continue to consider what steps could be taken to progress the Diversity agenda. The Convenor highlighted the reference in the minutes of the meeting of 28 November to this issue (paragraph 7.1, Court 19/47 below refers).

i) Minute of the Meeting held on 28 November 2019

Members noted the minute (on file Court19/47).

Members welcomed the information regarding addressing the Diversity issue. Responding to a question from a Member, the Principal recognised the need for a holistic and nuanced approach to the issue of Diversity: this would be given particular focus over the coming year. A dedicated Working Group had been established to work on the Race Equality Charter and to consider the tactics required to reach out across the range of protected characteristics; this might include inviting individuals with particular expertise and experience to visit the University and share their knowledge and an increased visibility of BAME role models.

Members also suggested that the forthcoming elections for directly elected members of academic staff to the reconstituted Senate would provide an opportunity to consider what could be done to address concerns expressed by staff that involvement in the administration of the University created problems in relation to e.g. working outwith core hours and childcare. It was confirmed that the Senate Assessors and current directly elected members of Academic Council were working with the Court & Senate office on ways to encourage engagement with these roles and to publicise the election process scheduled for the Spring.

Referencing paragraph 8.1 of the minutes, the Convenor of ARC confirmed that there was a Non-executive vacancy on ARC but that the committee was content

² The comply and explain provision having been utilised to explain a single departure from the Code (para 5.1, Court 19/47 refers).

with G&N's decision to leave this post vacant at this time. The appointment of Mr Frank MacInnis and two co-optees to ARC had brought the committee up to numerical strength and membership was evenly balanced.

18. REMUNERATION

i) Remuneration Committee – Annual report to Court

The Convenor of the committee, Mr Nigel Morecroft presented the report (on file, Court 19/48) and gave confirmation that the operation of the Remuneration Committee complied with the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (2017).

It was noted that Members had raised some detailed questions on the report directly with the Convenor, and the Convenor confirmed that these would be responded to outwith the meeting. Topics discussed during the meeting included: the recognition of the need for transparency on matters of pay particularly in the current climate; the constraints of confidentiality; how the report was compiled; the process by which the Remuneration Committee reached decisions on matters referred to it, including the use of benchmarking and sector comparison; and the case-by-case approach to authorising, through the Committee or its Convenor, the small number of recognition and retention payments granted in the course of the year.

ii) Extension of the Principal's Contract

The Senior Governor requested that all those attending the meeting who were not Members of Court leave the room for the discussion of this item.

Following discussion Court unanimously and wholeheartedly endorsed the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee that the Principal's Contract be extended for a period of 5 years from September 2021-2026. The decision reflected the Principal's outstanding performance at St Andrews and her particular strengths in leadership, strategic development and engagement with stakeholders.

19. ACADEMIC COUNCIL

i) Minute of the meeting held on 11 December 2019

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 11 December 2019 (on file, Court 19/49). The Principal and Master responded to a specific question raised by a Member in relation to the consultation process undertaken for the proposals to change the structure of the Academic Year, see also Court 19/50 below, providing a detailed explanation of the context and background to the issue and the extensive consultation process followed to address an issue of perennial concern to staff. The proposal had been drafted by a short-life Task Force Group set up to review the academic year following consultation and feedback from the Academic Year Consultative Group, Learning & Teaching

Committee Postgraduate Research Committee, Student Experience Committee, and Service Directors Group. The views of different constituents of the University community were invited via a consultative group and gathered through the online surveys which were circulated to staff and students. The School Presidents were also consulted through the Director of Education. The proposals had been presented to Academic Council at its meeting of 11 December 2019 where many different views had been aired in the course of a lively debate. It had been considered necessary to have a formal vote on the matter, and Members of Academic Council voted by 25 to 7 (with 5 abstentions) to approve the proposals set out in the paper (AC 19/17 refers, now presented to Court for information)³.

ii) Academic Year Structure

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/50) which detailed the proposals for changes to the structure of the academic year. See also above.

20. Court Office Business.

i) Election of Senior Lay Member

The Vice-Principal (Governance) gave formal notification of the result of the recent election. Ms Catherine Stihler, OBE had been elected to the post of Senior Lay Member with effect from 1 August 2020. The Court Office would undertake a lessons learned exercise, the results of which would be presented to G&N in March.

VI. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 03 April 2020 at 10 am in Upper College Hall.

Srdja Popovic, Rector (Presiding)

Margaret Sinclair,

³ Secretary's note: the minutes of Academic Council , Court 19/49 , section 3(ii) provide further detail.

Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate

Clerk to Court

As approved at Court meeting of 12 June 2020**UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS**

AT ST ANDREWS on the 3rd day of April 2020 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Present: Mr Srdja Popovic, *Rector (President)*; Dame Anne Pringle, *Senior Governor (presiding)*; Professor Sally Mapstone, *Principal*; Professor Stuart Monro, *Deputy Chair of Court*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Master of the United College & Deputy Principal*; Mr Adrian Greer, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Ms Camilla Duke, *Rector's Assessor*; Cllr Altany Craik, *Provost of Fife's Assessor*; Mr Nigel Christie, Mr Jonathan Hewitt, *General Council Assessors*; Professor Sharon Ashbrook, Professor Mark Harris, Dr Derek Ball, and Dr Morven Shearer, *Senate Assessors*; Ms Donna Pierz-Fennell, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Mr Jamie Rodney, *President, Students' Association*; Ms Amy Bretherton, *Director of Education, Students' Association*; Mr Timothy Allan, Mr Frank MacInnis, Ms Eve McCurrich, Mr Nigel Morecroft, and Professor Sir David Wallace, *Non-Executive Members*.

In regular attendance: Professor Brad MacKay, *Vice-Principal International Strategy & External Relations and Senior Vice-Principal*; Professor Tom Brown, *Vice-Principal Research & Innovation*; Mr Alastair Merrill, *Vice-Principal Governance*; Professor Clare Peddie, *Vice-Principal Education and Proctor*; Dr Katie Stevenson, *Vice-Principal Collections, Music and Digital Content*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Mr Andy Goor, *Chief Financial Officer*; Ms Margaret Sinclair, *Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate*.

In attendance (advisory capacity): Mr Niall Scott, *Director of Corporate Communications*.

PRELIMINARIES

Due to the emergency situation created by the Coronavirus Pandemic, the meeting had been convened remotely via Microsoft Teams.

With the agreement of the Rector, the Senior Governor presided.

STARRING OF ITEMS

Members noted those items currently starred on the Agenda.

It was agreed that the main focus for discussion at the meeting would be the Coronavirus pandemic and the University's response to it. This would be dealt with in detail under the Principal's report, Agenda Item 3.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No new Declarations of Interest were intimated.

I. OPENING BUSINESS

1. MEETING MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 17 January 2020

The minute of the Court meeting held on 17 January 2020 (on file, Minutes 2019-2020 No.2, pp15-27) was agreed as a correct record.

2. REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

Court noted the Rector's report (on file, 19/51). The Rector's Assessor confirmed that an interim Rector's Assessor would shortly be appointed. The Court Office would be notified accordingly.

3. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

(i) Principal's Report

Court received the Principal's written Report (on file, Court 19/52) which provided an update to Court on recent events, activities and general University news.

(ii) Coronavirus

Court received and noted the paper (on file, Court 19/53) which provided an outline of the University's contingency planning for, and response to the Coronavirus emergency.

The Principal provided a detailed verbal update on the University's response, highlighting the following:

- The situation faced was grave and without precedent. The first priority, in responding to the crisis, had been the safety and welfare of the University's people - its academic staff, professional staff, and students.
- The impact of the pandemic was great. It had struck at economies and at institutions with unprecedented speed. Advance planning for a move to remote learning and assessment and for the practicalities of lockdown, had stood the University in good stead. But the swiftness with which the pandemic had caused intense disruption to lives and the immediate financial impact of that disruption had been breathtaking.
- It was indicative of the magnitude of the crisis confronted, that the financial challenges faced by the University were replicated many times over across the country and across the world. Planning at University level was strongly informed by daily discussions across the higher education sector in Scotland and in the wider UK. The Principal was engaged with Universities UK, and Universities Scotland and represented the interests of the Scottish sector in a high-level group focused on the ask to

Government in terms of short-term stability interventions. Discussions had also taken place with the Chief Executive of the Scottish Funding Council, and the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education, and Science in the Scottish Government.

- The Principal was one of three Principals of Scottish universities invited to be part of the Ministerial leadership group on Covid-19. Other members of the University were participating in discussions at national level, including with UKRI and the major research councils.
- Court could be reassured that the situation of the University of St Andrews was understood by many chief funders in its own terms as well as in sector terms. This was of fundamental importance as the crisis had made clear the limitations of the business model which had sustained Scottish universities (and many UK ones too) for at least the past decade. Progress had been made with both the UK and the Scottish Governments to gain comprehension of the potential scale of the impact of the crisis on funding, and engagement with all key funders; Governments, the SFC and major research bodies continued.
- A group from the Senior Management Team, led by the VPISER, was working on modelling a series of scenarios in relation to the next academic year (and beyond) within the parameters allowed by the current uncertainty. A series of interlocking key variables had been identified and were being taken into account in the modelling. This modelling would be shared in due course with Court. At the request of Members, the VPISER provided Court with an explanation of the modelling process and the assumptions underpinning it.
- Planning work had focused on operational running and on finance, concentrating on completing this academic year, but within the context of preparing and modelling as effectively as possible for the uncertainties of the next. It was essential to conclude this academic year and to deliver teaching and assessment both remotely and on time.
- The impact of the crisis and its shockwaves would affect all aspects of future endeavours. The University Strategy remained robust and provided a clear direction of travel for the University through the pandemic and post-pandemic period, but would have to be reviewed in the light of it, with potential consequential decisions on priorities and resources. The strategic aim would be to enable the University to recover from this crisis in good shape, strengthened, and highly adaptable to any new landscape.

ii(a) Coronavirus update to Court 19/53

Court noted the paper (on file, Court 19/53(a)) which provided a further update to paper Court 19/53 (above) on the University's activities to manage the Coronavirus pandemic, with particular focus on: Estates; Students; Staff; remote learning and teaching; Research; Events and Graduation; and NHS and Community Support.

(ii)(b) Recruitment of Lay Members and Extraordinary Court Committee

Court considered the proposals set out in the paper (on file, Court 19/53(b)) and agreed to the temporary suspension of the recruitment and nomination

process for the General Council Assessor and Non-executive Lay Member positions due to fall vacant this summer, and to the granting of an extension of term of office to the current incumbents until the end of the calendar year ¹It was noted that the extension of terms of office would require a 'comply or explain' letter to the SFC.

Court also approved the establishment of a Reinforced Extraordinary Committee of Court (RECC) to operate between Court meetings and over the summer period. The membership of such committee to be as set out in the Annex to the paper with the further addition of the Non-academic Staff Assessor and the Chancellor's Assessor. The Reinforced Extraordinary Committee will have the same decision-making authority as the Extraordinary Committee of Court and will meet probably fortnightly. Decisions taken by the RECC would be communicated to the broader Court after each meeting.

(ii)(c) Coronavirus-Immediate Financial Impacts

The Quaestor presented the report (on file, Court 19/53(c)) which provided an outline of the immediate financial impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on Income and Expenditure and Cash flow and set out the actions being taken forward and future actions being considered.

Court discussed at length, and in detail, the implications of the ongoing situation. Members asked a range of questions which were grouped under the headings of:

- **Staff and student wellbeing and communication**

Members commented on the necessity for messaging to staff to be positive and supportive, and to acknowledge the difficulties and pressures faced by staff in moving to remote teaching and working from home. It was important to ensure the maintenance of staff wellbeing and health. In this regard the Principal's recent message requesting that staff 'please just do what they can²', was seen as particularly helpful.

The need to signpost the wellbeing resources available to support the University community was also emphasised. It was noted that the University website now specifically carried a banner on its front page linking to Coronavirus information and guidance, and that these resources were being expanded and extended. The helpdesk in the Student Advice Centre and the FAQs (updated daily) continued to be invaluable sources of support and information. In addition, individual questions and queries received by members of the PO and SMT continued to be responded to directly.

Questions asked also covered the assistance being given to staff to make the transition to remote teaching and the need to communicate effectively and sympathetically with members of staff on fixed term and casual contracts and

¹ Dame Anne Pringle, Mr Nigel Morecroft, Mr Nigel Christie.

² Principal's weekly Covid -19 email, 2/04/20

to take in to account the workload place by remote teaching on PhD tutors. The Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) provided a brief summary of the work undertaken and ongoing in relation to the delivery of remote teaching. The Proctor expressed thanks to academic staff for the efforts to deliver remote teaching at such short notice and confirmed that the Proctor's office was working closely with Heads of Schools to ensure they felt supported in this task. The comments made by Members in relation to communications, and messaging were noted.

Responding to the comments on fixed term and casual contracts, the Master agreed to look at rephrasing the information provided in the FAQs and confirmed that Postgraduate Students were eligible to apply for assistance from the Hardship fund, and that access to such resources was not limited to Undergraduates.

Members also encouraged the continuation of the steps³ to increase active involvement in community engagement

- **Financial risks, modelling and Capital Plan impact and Debt**

Members requested that Court receive information on modelling work that would allow Court to assist in the development of scenarios and to challenge and scrutinise assumptions. Court wished to be informed of the range of scenarios being considered in planning, from best to worst case, with a focus on financial consideration and impacts.

The Quaestor reported that a two-month lockdown on current projects was assumed. This would affect the large projects, including the music centre, the museum, Walter Bower House and the first phase of the Younger Hall. If the lockdown was longer the cash position would ease. Projects at the design phase would complete that design stage then pause. The Butts Wynd project would be deferred for 12 months. BMS works would continue to be progressed alongside negotiations with the Insurer. An outline request for £25million would be needed to accommodate the likely reduction in cash over the next few months to restore working capital in advance of the next academic session.

In response to questions in relation to the applicability of the Government's furloughing scheme, the Vice-Principal Governance indicated that furloughing was primarily intended for private sector organisations, and its applicability was not a straightforward issue for organisations which received public funding. HMRC guidance continued to be updated and earlier that week, UCEA had published legal advice that indicated that furloughing was unlikely to be available to most academic and research staff but might be applied to some other categories. Work was proceeding to ensure the University benefited as much as possible, without falling foul of HMRC rules. Initial discussions had been held with the Trade Unions, who were not opposed to furloughing as a means of preserving jobs.

³ Referenced in the Principal's weekly Covid -19 email, 2/04/20

On the topic of debt covenants, the Chief Financial Officer provided reassurance that initial conversations with the University's current banking partners indicated that they would take a considered view around any issues relating to covenants, and that covenants were not generally an issue in relation to short term borrowing. Court requested to be kept informed of these ongoing discussions.

It was noted that in addition to the questions posed during the meeting, Members had posed a number of questions via the Convenor of ARC. These had all been responded to and/ or covered by the papers and updates given.

Court expressed its thanks to the admirable skill, wisdom, leadership and stamina of the Principal, the PO and the Senior Management Team in dealing with the unprecedented circumstances and the enormous challenges posed. The incredible response of all staff to the crisis was acknowledged and particular thanks were extended to the IT Services for their support to move to remote working and teaching. It was to be congratulated on a phenomenal job.

II. PARC BUSINESS

4. Minute of the Meeting held on 13 March 2020

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 19/54).

5. USS Pension Update

Court received the written paper (on file, Court 19/55) which updated the paper presented at PARC (on file, PARC 19/26). The paper briefed Court on the developments relating to the USS Pension Scheme since Court's meeting in January, as well as the associated industrial action. Court noted the situation and approved the proposed response, detailed at Annex, to the latest consultation from the USS Trustee on the valuation methodology for the March 2020 revaluation of the Scheme. This response reflected discussion at the Pensions Communications Group and ongoing consultation with scheme members and will be submitted by the due date of 17 April.

6. Projects for Approval

The paper (on file, Court 19/56) provided an update on capital projects where a decision had recently been sought from PARC.

(i) Court noted that PARC had approved the Outline Business Case for works in Butts Wynd (but see above), and a proposal for Accommodating Student Growth (on file PARC 19/54 refers).

(ii) The Quaestor confirmed that Court should not approve the Full Business Case for the Younger Hall Refurbishment at present, with some works accelerated from phase 2 to ensure the building was useable between phases.

7. Projects for Information

Court received the Projects for Information paper (on file, Court 19/57) which provided a summary of in-train and planned capital projects. The Appendices to the summary included updates on the following capital investment schemes: Laidlaw Music Centre; Eden Campus Professional Services Relocation; Wardlaw Museum extension; BMS; St Andrews West; Eden Campus and NDEEF Project; Albany Park demolitions; Main Library refurbishment; Solar; Town Centre; Grange; Butts Wynd/OD Refurbishment; North Haugh Hub; Madras South Street; Kenly, and Accommodating Growth.

8. Summary Financial report to 31 January 2020 including Capital Plan

Members received the report (on file, Court 19/58) which outlined the University's consolidated financial performance for the period ending 31 January 2020.

Court noted that the report reflected the University's position reported to PARC, before the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic was known and that the information contained therein had been superseded by the information contained in Court 19/53(c) above.

9. Institutional Indicators Update

Members received the report (on file, Court 19/58). The report noted by PARC had contained the annotated update on institutional performance indicators and accompanying commentary with indicator status and associated escalated risks.

10. Enabling Strategies Update

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/60) which reported to PARC on the progress of the University's five enabling strategies: People, Digital, Estate, Accommodation and Finance.

III DISCUSSION ITEM

11. Role of the Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Officer

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/61) which provided an overview of the work of the Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Office; the role, its activities, achievements to date and aspirations for the future. The Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Office will attend a future meeting of Court to give a short presentation.

IV REGULAR BUSINESS

12. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Professor Sir David Wallace, Convenor of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC), presented ARC business.

(i) Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 February 2020

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 19/62).

ii) Risk Management Update

The Convenor commended the Risk Management Update (on file Court 19/63) to Court. The Senior Governor expressed appreciation for the format and content of the Risk report, which provided an excellent balance of information and clarity.

13. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Professor Stuart Monro, Convenor of the Governance & Nominations Committee presented G&N business.

i) Minute of the Meeting held on 12 March 2020

Members noted the minute (on file Court19/64).

The Convenor drew the attention of Court to the Senior Lay Member Process Review, forwarded to Court for its information (on file Court 19/65) and to the references in the minutes to the action taken by the Committee in relation to the SFC Report of Review of Payments to the Principal of the University of Aberdeen (on file, Court 19/64 para 5.1 refers), which had in particular noted the robust severance policy in place at the University of St Andrews.

Court approved the re-appointment of Mr Adrian Greer as Chancellor's Assessor for a further four years and endorsed the appointment of Mr Jonathan Hewitt to the membership of the S&LAS Trustee Board.

14. ACADEMIC COUNCIL

i) Minute of the meeting held on 4 March 2020

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 (on file, Court 19/66).

15. COURT OFFICE BUSINESS.

i) Notification of Graduation Dates

Court noted the cancellation of the Summer Graduation ceremonies, and the dates for the Winter Graduation ceremonies (on file, Court 19/67).

ii) Recruitment of Non-Executive Member and Appointment of General Council Assessor

Court noted the update (on file, Court 19/68) and the appointment of WittKeiffer to assist in the recruitment exercise. Court agreed that the recruitment exercise be temporarily paused, see above, Item 3(ii)(b), (on file Court 19/53(b) refers).

iii) Notice of Cancellation of Annual Stakeholder Event

Court noted the cancellation of the Annual Stakeholder Event, scheduled for 4 April 2020. The cancellation of the event will be treated as a comply or explain item under the Scottish Code of Good Governance (on file, Court 19/69)

iv) Notice of Intention to Amend Standing Orders of Court

Court received notice (on file, Court 19/70) of the intention to seek approval to amend/update the Standing Orders of Court at the June meeting of Court.

v) Notification of Senate Assessor Election

Court noted that an election for the Senate Assessor Professorial Science and Medicine Constituency will take place in April 2020 (on file, Court 19/71).

vi) Notification of Intention to Appoint Interim Rector's Assessor

Court noted the paper (on file, Court 19/72). See also Report from the Rector Item 2 above.

vii) Amendment to Athletic Union Constitution

Court noted the paper (on file, Court 19/73) and approved the revised constitution.

V ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

(i) SFC Outcome Agreement 2020

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/74), noted the change in process detailed therein⁴ and agreed that the current draft version of the Outcome Agreement (Sharepoint, Court 19/74-supporting documents refers) be submitted to the SFC.

VI. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 12 June 2020 at **12 Noon**. The meeting may be scheduled to be held remotely by Teams.

⁴ The SFC Chief Executive wrote to all Principals on 19 March, noting that in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the SFC would accept the near-final Outcome Agreement from each University.

Dame Anne Pringle, Senior Governor (Presiding)

Margaret Sinclair,

Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate

Clerk to Court

8 April 2020

UNIVERSITY COURT OF ST ANDREWS

VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THE 12TH DAY OF JUNE 2020 AT A MEETING OF THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Present: Mr Srdja Popovic, *Rector (President)*; Dame Anne Pringle, *Senior Governor (presiding)*; Professor Sally Mapstone, *Principal*; Professor Stuart Monro, *Deputy Chair of Court*; Professor Lorna Milne, *Master of the United College & Deputy Principal*; Mr Adrian Greer, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Mr Papa Obeng, *Interim Rector's Assessor*; Cllr Altany Craik, *Provost of Fife's Assessor*; Mr Nigel Christie, Mr Jonathan Hewitt, *General Council Assessors*; Professor Sharon Ashbrook, Professor Mark Harris, Dr Derek Ball, and Dr Morven Shearer, *Senate Assessors*; Ms Donna Pierz-Fennell, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Mr Jamie Rodney, *President, Students' Association*; Ms Amy Bretherton, *Director of Education, Students' Association*; Mr Timothy Allan, Mr Ken Dalton, Mr Frank MacInnis, Ms Eve McCurrich, Mr Nigel Morecroft, and Professor Sir David Wallace, *Non-Executive Members*.

In regular attendance: Professor Brad MacKay, *Vice-Principal International Strategy & External Relations and Senior Vice-Principal*; Professor Tom Brown, *Vice-Principal Research & Innovation*; Mr Alastair Merrill, *Vice-Principal Governance*; Professor Clare Peddie, *Vice-Principal Education and Proctor*; Dr Katie Stevenson, *Vice-Principal, Collections, Music and Digital Content*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Mr Andy Goor, *Chief Financial Officer*; Ms Margaret Sinclair, *Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate*.

In attendance (advisory capacity): Mr Niall Scott, *Director of Corporate Communications*.

In attendance as Observers: Ms Catherine Stihler, *Senior Lay Member (Elect)*; Mr Alex Duncan, Dr Malcolm Petrie, *TU Nominees (incoming) Court Members*; Mr D Marshall, *President Students' Association (Elect)*; Ms Amy Gallacher, *Director of Education, Students' Association (Elect)*; Ms Camilla Duke, *Outgoing Rector's Assessor (Item 2 only)*

PRELIMINARIES

Due to the emergency situation created by the Coronavirus Pandemic, the meeting was convened remotely via Microsoft Teams.

With the agreement of the Rector, the Senior Governor presided.

STARRING OF ITEMS

Members noted those items currently starred on the Agenda.

Item 16 i) Revised Initiations Policy - Athletic Union was additionally starred.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were intimated.

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

This was the final meeting for Mr Jamie Rodney and Ms Amy Bretherton in their posts as sabbatical officers of the Students' Association. Court thanked them for the exemplary service to Court and their powerful articulation of the student case. Camilla Duke had demitted office as Rector's Assessor on 31 May 2020, but attended the meeting to present her last Rector's Report. Court thanked Camilla for her indispensable aid to the Rector since 2018 and her contribution as an outstanding student representative. Court further commended all the student representatives on their sterling work at a most difficult time.

Court welcomed the incoming sabbatical officers, Mr Dan Marshall and Ms Amy Gallacher, who were in attendance as observers prior to taking up their appointments, and the Interim Rector's Assessor, Mr Papa Obeng who attended his first Court meeting having taken up post on 1 June 2020.

Ms Catherine Stihler, Senior Lay Member (Elect), and Mr Alex Duncan and Dr Malcolm Petrie, TU Nominees were also noted as being in attendance prior to taking up their respective Court appointments on 1 August 2020.

I. OPENING BUSINESS

1. MEETING MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

i) Minute of the Court Meeting held on 3 April 2020

The minute of the Court meeting held on 3 April 2020 (on file, Minutes 2019-2020 No.3, pp28-37) was agreed as a correct record.

ii) RECC

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/74) which updated Court on the activities of the Reinforced Extraordinary Committee of Court (RECC) established by Court at its last meeting of 3 April 2020.

Court noted the update.

Court additionally ratified the statement of authority contained in paragraph 4.7 of the paper which expressly acknowledged the authority of RECC to make decisions on behalf of Court in relation to financial matters.

Statement of acknowledgement of authority

'The Court acknowledges that RECC is involved in negotiating and approving entry into certain financing arrangements, including but not limited to, the entry into a £25,000,000 revolving credit facility and the issuance of commercial paper pursuant to the Covid Corporate Financing Facility up to an amount of £25,000,000. The Court will receive ongoing updates as to the status of these negotiations but notes that the communications are for information purposes only and will not limit RECC's authority to negotiate and approve (in its sole discretion) entry into these financings in any way and no further authority or approval from the Court is required.'

2. REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

Court noted the Rector's report (on file,19/75) and the attached report on the Accommodation Survey. The President of the Students' Association emphasised that the report on the Accommodation Survey was an ongoing piece of work. The report was an interim report presented for information, to give an idea of how the evidence gathering process was progressing; the issues that had been identified thus far; and some preliminary conclusions reached as a result of the survey exercise, including those relating to a perceived lack of affordable housing in St Andrews which has had a significant impact on students' experience. Strategically addressing this problem had been identified as a key priority, as was the identification of an agreed definition of affordable through the bench marking process which was underway following the survey.

In relation to affordability, the Vice-Principal Education confirmed that the working group, which had initially been established to review accommodation bursaries, had widened its scope to look at the issue of affordability more generally. The Affordability Working Group was currently engaged in an information gathering exercise which included consideration of the accommodation survey process and any benchmarking exercise. This information once available would provide a better understanding of the issues surrounding accommodation including those of expectation, aspiration and affordability which would be used to inform planning. No further work would be undertaken on residential development until this information was available. The report would be discussed by the Widening Participation Working Group at the end of June and would inform discussion between the President of the Students' Association and the Director of Residential and Business Services relating to the principles which should underpin the provision of accommodation.

Racism

The outgoing Rector's Assessor made a statement to Court in relation to the death of George Floyd in America, the Black Lives Matter protests and the importance of addressing the challenges faced by the issue of global racism.

Responding to racism had become the single issue of importance to students. The projects and developments outlined in the Rector's report were important, but they had been displaced by the far greater importance of addressing and

challenging racism globally and at home. The University and the University Court had to understand the importance of addressing racism and challenging it. The experience at St Andrews was not the same for everyone. Although efforts had been made to address inequalities and to ensure that every student was able to participate in the University Community, where race was concerned the University had not done nearly enough, and must do better to fulfil its responsibilities to students of colour. There had to be real change at institutional level which went beyond an aspiration to do better and the offer of words of solidarity. The University must address racism now and put its words and values into action.

3. REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

(i) Principal's Report

Written

Court received the Principal's written Report (on file, Court 19/76) which provided an update to Court on recent events, activities and general University news. Court noted its contents including the appointments of three new Heads of School: Professor Tobias Jung, Head of School of Management (1 June 2020); Professor Richard White, Head of the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences (1 August 2020); and Professor Ian Johnson, Head of School of English (1 August 2020). Professor Mark Harris would continue as Head of the School of Philosophical, Anthropological, and Film Studies until 31 July 2022, and Professor Alan Sutherland would continue as Head of the School of Economics and Finance until 31 July 2023.

(ii) Verbal report and update

The Principal provided a detailed verbal report to Court on a number of matters as detailed below:

Covid-19

The Principal extended condolences to all of those who had lost family and friends to Covid-19 and acknowledged the worries and challenges that the pandemic had caused for all.

Black Lives Matter

The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the consequent dynamism throughout the world of the Black Lives Matter movement had been a momentous matter that had caused all to confront mortality, values, and priorities. For decades St Andrews had not got its engagement with its BAME community right, and had let down its BAME students and staff. The University had been, and continued to be, so much the poorer for it. The Principal informed

Court that she had apologised for that, on behalf of the institution, in a message which had been issued to the University community¹.

The University had a responsibility to do much more to prioritise and develop BAME staff and students, and to build on the extensive work, sustained and evidence-based, which had been undertaken since the Principal took up appointment and as a result of the Diverse St Andrews theme in the University Strategy.

As a result of this work, and the valuable engagement with the University BAME community, the University had:

- published comprehensive Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Progress reports. These represented the culmination of a year-long project to generate extensive and reliable evidence against which progress could be measured;
- set up a name blind working group with staff and students to examine the advantages and disadvantages of name-blind applicants. This had been done in direct response to requests from students of colour. The University was acting on its recommendations, in relation to recruitment and the admissions process; and
- launched the first Race, Ethnicity, Religion and Belief Equality Group to identify and address issues which disadvantaged BAME people in the University community. This working group had a majority of BAME staff and students on it.

Externally the University was prominently represented in race equality work nationally, particularly with the Scottish Race Equality Network which was chaired by the University's Head of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, Sukhi Bains.

In March Jasmin Hinds, an expert on race in higher education had been appointed as Research Fellow and Project Manager in Equalities to work with Ruth Woodfield, the Assistant Vice-Principal for Diversity.

There was a need to build more momentum. In doing so it was crucial to work with the student community and the BAME community. To take this forward immediately, the Principal's office had with the assistance of the Interim Rector's Assessor, Papa Obeng, organised a round table discussion with BAME students which would take place before the end of the month and would be attended by the Principal along with the AVP Diversity, Jasmin Hinds, and the Interim Rector's Assessor. These discussions would inform the response to the open letter signed by staff and students seeking University action on Black Lives Matter which had recently been sent to the Principal.

Matters supplemental to the written report

¹ Principal's email dated 12 June, St Andrews and Black Lives matter refers.

SFC review

The Scottish Government had commissioned the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to undertake a review of coherent provision and sustainability in the higher education and further education sector (on file, Court 1976-addition) and requested that 'early considerations' be shared by the end of August. This was a major intervention with potentially far-reaching sectoral consequences, and one which communicated Ministers' sense of the potential gravity of the financial and structural situation facing higher education and further education post Covid-19.

Easing of lockdown

Internally and externally, the University was focused on the extensive and meticulous preparations for emergence from lockdown.

The Principal had been extensively engaged in positioning the University as visibly and effectively as possible with the Scottish and UK Governments. The Principal had been speaking regularly and personally with Gavin Williamson (Secretary of State for Education), and with Michele Donelan, the Education and Universities Ministers.

Efforts with the Scottish Government had been particularly focused on conveying to the Deputy First Minister and to Mr Lochhead, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science the crucial importance of universities gaining an early opportunity to begin reopening sites if they are effectively to restart research and to prepare for teaching and the next academic year. The University was cognisant of the challenges for all categories of our staff, and students, in relation both to research and teaching that the demands of the next months and the next semester would pose. The guidelines and advice that would be rolled out took full account of the challenges of home working, both for academic and professional staff. The Vice-Principal Education's office had issued extensive and exemplary guidance on preparations for dual delivery to Heads of Schools and Directors of Teaching to provide a guidance framework which Schools could adapt to be both subject specific and person specific. Its rollout would be supplemented by drop-in sessions being held over the next fortnight by the Assistant Deans.

League Tables

The University had performed extremely well on both the domestic and the global stage. The University had retained third place in the Complete University Guide for 2021, behind Cambridge and Oxford, and narrowed the gap with Oxford by 12 points. This year all subjects ranked within the top 10, something which had not been achieved in any of the past five years. Medicine had climbed 17 places to enter the top 10 at position 8, this had been a terrific achievement.

Internationally the University had bucked the trend in the intensely competitive QS world rankings. This year the majority of UK and Scottish universities that feature in the QS top 200 had fallen in the rankings, but St Andrews had gone up from 100 to 96 and in doing so had overtaken Lund University, Penn State University, Nottingham, and Boston Universities. The Principal commended the work of the Academic Ranking advisory group led by the Senior Vice Principal whose strategic and targeted interventions had done so much to make this happen.

Project Sponsor Madras

Professor Christopher Smith of the School of Classics, and Project Sponsor of the Madras site project, had been announced as the UK Government's preferred candidate to be the new Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Professor Smith would be on secondment from the University in that post and would be stepping down from his role as Project Sponsor of the Madras project, to be replaced by Professor Frank Muller, currently Dean of Arts and Divinity.

During the discussion which followed, Court sought clarification and further detail on:- the strategies being considered to address the challenges faced to increase diversity, including those relating to the composition of Court and Court committees and the role to be played by Court; issues of governance; student engagement; engagement with the University BAME community, both staff and student; dual delivery and the guidance notes issued (in relation to which the VP Education and Deputy Principal responded to questions of detail and logistics); and issues relevant to the widening access agenda.

4. Covid-19

(i) Update to Court

Court received and noted the paper (on file, Court 19/77) which provided an update on the University's activities to manage the Coronavirus pandemic; covered key developments since the last meeting of Court; and looked ahead to the next phase of activity to prepare the University for the new Academic Year with particular focus on: Estates; Students; Staff; Remote Learning and Teaching; Research; Events and Graduation; NHS and Community Support; Learning and Teaching; and Forward Planning.

The paper also presented an overview of the detailed planning being progressed through the series of workstreams led by members of the PO which covered: Teaching and Student Experience; Research; Safe Working Environment; Student and Staff Well-being; Epidemiology; Community Support; External Relations; and Communications.

It was confirmed that the possibility of a 'second spike' had been factored into forward planning considerations and that the University continued to work

closely with Health Protection Scotland and to adhere to all appropriate Government advice and guidance.

(ii) Update on Student Numbers

The Senior Vice-Principal introduced the paper (on file, Court 19/78) with Appendix.

The Covid-19 pandemic had resulted in unprecedented uncertainty in the 2020/2021 admissions and matriculation cycle, with extensive disruption both in the UK and internationally. This meant that historical data which enabled previous entrant number predictive modelling could not be relied upon. Prospective entrants faced daily changing political, legal, geographical and personal factors that might affect their ability to commence studies. There were, therefore, too many variables operating in the process for a definitive view to be taken. The paper provided an update for Court on (i) current student recruitment numbers for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research admissions for September 2020; and (ii) available information relating to returning students. The full picture would not become clear until September but there was some reason to be cautiously optimistic about overall numbers.

The Senior Vice-Principal (i) expanded on the detail of the paper and provided additional commentary on, and explanation of, the numbers contained in the report, including highlighting progress toward target for each cohort; (ii) expanded on the steps being taken by the Admissions, Planning and Registry teams to maximise the conversion of offers to acceptances and to monitor market behaviour; and (iii) responded to questions from Members on the operation and potential impact of the UK Government student number cap for students from England² with a RUK fee status studying in the devolved nations

Court noted the update and commended the Senior Vice-Principal on the clarity of the information presented.

II. PARC BUSINESS

5. Minute of the Meeting held on 21 May 2020

Members noted the minute of the meeting (on file, Court 19/79).

6. USS Pension Update

Court received the written paper (on file, Court 19/80) presented to PARC which provided an update on developments relating to the USS Pension Scheme since Court's meeting in April, as well as the associated industrial action.

7. Projects for Information

² Introduced by the UK Government on 1 June.

Court received the Projects for Information paper (on file, Court 19/81) which provided a general overview of the impact on Capital works onsite along with information about the individual capital projects.

8. Institutional Indicators Update

Members received the report (on file, Court 19/82). The report noted by PARC had contained the annotated update on institutional performance indicators and accompanying commentary with indicator status and associated escalated risks.

9. Summary Financial report to 30 April 2020

Members received the report (on file, Court 19/83) which provided a summary of the University's financial position at 30 April 2020 together with a forecast outturn for the year which included Covid-19 impacts.

Court noted the report.

10. Draft Financial Plan

Court received the papers (on file, Court 19/84A, 19/84B) presented for information. The papers updated Court on the progress of the development of the draft Financial Plan. PARC had at its meeting of 21 May 2020 approved the steps outlined in PARC 19/46, for developing a plan to agree the draft Financial Plan by the end of June 2020.

The Quaestor and Factor provided Court with an update on Financial Plan Development (Sharepoint - supplementary document Court 19/84). Members noted that RECC (at its meeting of 29 May) had subsequently agreed that the Financial Plan would come to the RECC meeting on 26 June for approval. Given the prevailing uncertainties, it would be premature to submit it as usual to this June Court meeting for approval.

11. Business Transformation Plan Update

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/85) presented for information, which updated PARC on the progress of the Business Transformation Plan across the University.

12. Enabling Strategies Update

Court received the paper (on file, Court 19/86) which reported to PARC on the progress of the University's five enabling strategies: People, Digital, Estate, Accommodation and Finance.

III REGULAR BUSINESS

13. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Professor Sir David Wallace, Convenor of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC), presented ARC business.

Court was invited to note that, owing to the current situation, ARC had taken the decision to postpone the self-assessment exercise, scheduled for this summer.

(i) Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 February 2020

Members noted the report of the meeting (on file, Court 19/87).

ii) Risk Management Update

The Convenor commended the Risk Management Update (on file, Court 19/88) to Court.

14. GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Professor Stuart Monro, Convenor of the Governance & Nominations Committee presented G&N business.

Court was aware that the G&N Committee had been focused on efforts to increase diversity on Court and Court committees, with limited success. The Black Lives Matter movement made the importance of addressing racial diversity all the more pressing and, as Convenor of the Committee, he wished to make suggestions to Court for ways in which to translate thought to action.

The People & Diversity Assurance Group (PDAG)

The Executive was requested to consider appointing an individual from a BAME background as an additional member on this group, with co-option in the first instance and a proposal to be formulated for consideration by G&N in the autumn.

Recruitment of Non-executive Members of Court

Court needed to give immediate attention to the lack of diversity in its current composition. Whilst any potential candidate for a Non-executive appointment would have to meet the criteria and job specification set by Court, including the necessary and desirable skills set out in the skills Matrix, the importance of diversity should be re-emphasised to the Executive Search Agency assisting in the upcoming recruitment process. In addition, Court needed to be more proactive in the process and all members of Court should consider potential candidates known to them through their own professional networks, and to encourage such candidates to engage with the recruitment process. The suggestion that in the longer term, there should be consideration of the imposition of quotas for Court membership was also discussed with Members expressing differing views as to the efficacy, practicality and desirability of quotas over targets.

i) Minute of the Meeting held on 22 May 2020

Members noted the minute (on file Court19/89).

ii) Nomination of Trade Union Representative

Court ratified the nominations of Mr Alex Duncan and Dr Malcolm Petrie (on file, Court 19/90)

15. ACADEMIC COUNCIL

i) Minute of the meeting held on 27 May 2020

Members noted the report of the meeting held on 27 May 2020 (on file, Court 19/91).

16. COURT OFFICE BUSINESS.

i) Amendment to Athletic Union Policy

Court approved the revised Alcohol and Initiations Policy (on file, Court 19/92). Court noted that as the Athletic Union was a body constitutionally separate from the University the sanctions (including disciplinary measures) that could be imposed by the Athletic Union for breach of the policy were therefore limited to those available to the individual sports clubs. Students' conduct within those clubs remained subject to the University's non-academic misconduct policy.

ii) Rectorial Election

Court noted the update (on file, Court 19/93) and approved the timetable for the Rectorial Election 2020.

IV ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

i) Pre-Court meeting with Lay members

It was noted that the recent pre-court meeting with Lay members, organised by the Senate Assessors to Court, had been well attended. On this occasion the directly elected members of Academic Council had been invited to provide a staff view. A range of topics had been covered, and a number of voices heard during what had been a valuable meeting. A note of the meeting would be prepared and made available to Court members for information.

Senior Governor

Court noted that this was the last meeting of Court which would be attended by Dame Anne Pringle as Senior Governor and chair (although not the final Court meeting to be attended by Dame Anne). Dame Anne would demit as Senior Governor on 31 July 2020 with Catherine Stihler taking up appointment as Senior

Lay Member from 1 August 2020. Dame Anne would remain a Court member until 31 December 2020, having kindly agreed to extend her term, but it was appropriate to mark the occasion of her last meeting in this role.

Appreciation

The Principal gave a vote of thanks.

Dame Anne had been Senior Governor and chair of Court and PARC since 2016. Her oversight and chairing of Court had been exemplary and she had been fair, incisive, and powerfully attuned to the best interests of the University. She inhabited the role of Trustee as all should.

The role of Senior Governor extended well beyond Court and carried a wider range of responsibilities, to the University and to the community. Dame Anne had carried these out with utter commitment and in a way that was hugely supportive to the institution.

The Principal led Court in warm applause to express wholehearted thanks to Dame Anne for her tenure as Senior Governor, for her service to the University and for the many ways in which she has helped the University to excel.

Dame Anne thanked Court for its appreciation. Being associated with the University had been one of the great privileges of her life. Her job had been made easier by the work and effort of an outstanding Principal with an outstanding Senior Management Team who had demonstrated great humanity and consideration of people and had guided the University in what had been an extremely challenging year.

Colleagues on Court were also thanked for their contributions and skills which Dame Anne had endeavoured to use to best effect.

Dame Anne concluded by wishing every success to Catherine Stihler in her role as Senior Lay Member.

V DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Court Away Day will take place on Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 September 2020 starting at **12 Noon** in Upper and Lower College Hall (subject to Covid-19 restrictions).

Dame Anne Pringle, Senior Governor (Presiding)

Margaret Sinclair,

Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate

Clerk to Court

22 June 2020