



University of  
St Andrews

600  
YEARS

**MINUTE OF THE STATUTORY HALF-YEARLY MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL HELD  
AT 18:30 ON FRIDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2012 IN THE WOLFSON MEDICAL SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW**

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Louise Richardson FRSE, was in the Chair and welcomed 49 members and guests to the meeting. The opening prayer was given by the Rev Joanne Hood, (BD 2002), Minister, St John's Church, Hamilton.

**1. Minute of the last ordinary half yearly meeting of the General Council held on 23 June 2012**

The minute of this meeting, held in St Andrews, was received and agreed as a correct record. There were no matters arising from the minute.

**2. Business Committee**

**a. Report of the Committee's meeting on 20 October 2012**

The Council considered and approved the full report of the meeting held on 20 October 2012, taking particular note of the following items of business highlighted by the Convener, Mr M P L Strachan:

**(i) University Financial Report** - Mr Andy Goor, Director of Finance, provided the Business Committee with an update on the University Financial Plan and the financial statements which had been approved by the University Court on 19 October (available online). The overall outcome was better than originally planned and achieved against a difficult set of economic pressures. Research grant income had increased by 2.4% in 2011-2012 to £37.3m. There had been modest growth in areas where there had been recent investment in new or upgraded facilities. Other income increased by 5% to £33.7m boosted by a rise in income from unrestricted gifts, summer conference/school income and income from the commercialisation of research. Pay costs continued to be the largest element of expenditure at 56.6% of total income, against the ceiling of 59% of total income. A new target of between 53% and 57% of turnover had been agreed by Court. Other operating expenses increased to £56m with energy costs rising by 11% due to price inflation.

**(ii) Purposes & Venue Working Group Report** – a meeting had taken place in September 2012 with the new General Council Assessor to the University Court, Mr Nigel Christie. A number of topics were discussed including the relationship between the Business Committee, Committee of the Alumnus Association and the Development Office. A further meeting was to be held between the Working Group and the Assessors in the near future.

**(iii) General Council Accounts and future budget** - the Committee received and noted the General Council accounts for 2011-2012. The overall position was an underspend against the original budget. The main area of expenditure related to the production of the *Alumnus Chronicle*, which cost less than had been budgeted, and the mailing costs of the magazine and billet. The Committee received and noted the General Council expenditure budget for 2012-2013 which had been granted by the University. The accounts demonstrated a division of the cost of printing, fulfilment and postage of the General Council billet for the June meeting.

Mr Strachan secured the approval of the General Council for the Business Committee's proposal that from 2013 the summer meeting billet would be sent electronically *via* a link in an email to all General Council members with an email address on record in the Development Office. This currently accounted for around 50% of members. The email would contain an invitation to request a hard copy if they so desired. The remaining members would be sent the billet with the *Alumnus Chronicle* as usual, but there would be an intimation that this was the last time the billet would be sent in a paper format unless the recipient specifically requested a hard copy. This would significantly reduce printing and postage costs for the summer billet. The Clerk confirmed that members could request a hard copy of the billet at any time from the General Council Office.

### **b. Membership 2012 – 2013**

The Convener gave formal notification to the Council of the Business Committee membership for 2012-2013.

The Council noted the timetable for the nomination of three new members of the Business Committee to serve for a four-year period from 1 July 2013. The members due to retire in June 2013 were Mr A R Frith and Mr M P L Strachan. Mr J M North resigned in April 2012.

The voting process would follow that of previous years with a call for nominations issued in January 2013 and nominations closing on 29 March 2013. Information about how to vote would be sent to General Council members in May and voting would run from 14 May to 10 June 2013. The result would be announced at the General Council meeting in St Andrews on 29 June 2013. Further details about the voting process and the revised Constitution were available from the Clerk.

There being no questions the Principal and Vice-Chancellor thanked Mr Strachan for his detailed update.

### **3. Committee of the Alumnus Association**

#### **a. Report of the Committee's meetings held on 29 September and 10 November 2012**

The Council considered and approved the report of the Committee of the Alumnus Association meetings held on 29 September and 10 November 2012 taking particular note of the following items highlighted by the Convener, Miss K M Patrick.

The 2012 edition of the *Alumnus Chronicle* had been well received with particular praise for the features and the overall quality in appearance and content. The design and print work was managed in-house by the University's Print & Design Unit and the cost was less than budgeted. However, a substantial increase in postal charges had caused the overall cost to exceed budget. Sufficient funds were made available from savings elsewhere in the General Council budget to meet the overspend.

Work was already underway on the 2013 *Alumnus Chronicle* with plans for the front cover to feature an image of the human crest, created by students, staff and alumni gathering on St Salvator's Quadrangle lawn earlier in 2012. This edition would also include articles about the virtual reconstruction of St Andrews Cathedral, the 'Your600<sup>th</sup>' student initiative, graduates of the School of Geography & Geosciences, University Hall, as well as the regular items of alumni, reunion and University news. There would be a commemorative 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary pull-out in the 2013 edition.

The Convener provided an update on recent events and activities carried out by the Development Office including the appointment of a new Director of Development, Mr Robert Fleming, who was in attendance at the meeting. The Alumni Relations team had organised a series of bejant and parent receptions for new students at the start of the academic year in locations in Scotland and North America. The annual telephone appeal was under way in the US and Canada and the UK appeal would take place in the spring, along with a further appeal to North America.

#### **b. Membership 2012-2013**

Members noted the Committee of the Alumnus Association membership for 2012-2013.

The Council noted the timetable for the nomination of one new member of the Committee of the Alumnus Association to serve for a five-year period from 1 July 2013. The timetable would follow that outlined above for the Business Committee with the result announced at the General Council Meeting on 29 June 2013. Further details about the voting process and the revised Constitution were available from the Clerk.

The Convener paid tribute to Mr G R C Scott who would retire from the Committee in June 2013 and thanked him for his valuable contribution to the work of the Committee over many years. Miss Patrick also gave thanks to the rest of the Committee, including the President of the Students' Association Freddie fforde who was in attendance at the General Council meeting.

There being no questions the Principal and Vice-Chancellor thanked Miss Patrick for her informative report.

### **4. University Address by Stephen Magee, Vice-Principal (External Relations) & General Council Registrar**

The Vice-Principal addressed members on a number of areas of interest to the University community.

The University remained a centre of excellence for teaching, learning and research and remained competitive both on a national and international basis. The University continued to perform well in domestic league tables but there had been a

relative decline in one international league table, partly due to the emergence of universities in Asia which had invested heavily to improve their research standings.

St Andrews continued to attract well-qualified students from across the world including Scotland and the rest of the UK, as well as from overseas. Broadly speaking, one third of students were from Scotland and the EU (other than the rest of UK), one third from the rest of the UK (RUK) and the final third from overseas. The student population was made up of 80% undergraduates, 10% taught postgraduates and 10% research postgraduates. The University's strategy was to increase research postgraduate numbers by 5% over the next five to ten years (growing the number to 1,300). The main issue was funding for postgraduates and therefore fundraising for scholarships continued to be a priority.

The Vice-Principal spoke about the ongoing issue of University funding and tuition fees. The Scottish Government's decision to cease direct funding for RUK students who choose to study in Scotland from 2012-2013 meant, that from that date, Scottish universities had to set and collect their own fees from this cohort of students. Under the Treaty of Rome, students from the rest of the EU would continue not to pay tuition fees in Scotland. This had led to a large number of Scottish-based students deciding not to go to England to study but to stay in Scotland, which increased application numbers from this cohort. This also led to an increase in applications from rest of EU students who could attend St Andrews without paying tuition fees.

On the important subject of widening participation, the Vice-Principal reported that the University was working hard across the country in schools to attract those with the most potential to come to study in St Andrews. The University had set a new target to increase its annual intake of students from the 20% most deprived areas in the country by 45%. However, the University had to maintain its academic entrance requirements and find ways to encourage more qualified students from the deprived areas to apply to St Andrew. In looking at the statistics of the 8,872 fifth-year pupils from the most deprived areas in in 2011, only 220 achieved three A Higher passes or better, of these, 55 applied to St Andrews, and offers were made to 34. Only 14 accepted these offers.

The Vice-Principal mentioned the two ongoing local issues which had been addressed in recent General Council and Business Committee meetings: Madras College and the St Andrews Botanic Gardens. In terms of the former the University had made one last land swap offer in early November to try to resolve this matter. Working along with Fife Council and the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, the University was trying to help find a way to ensure a sustainable future for the Botanic Gardens. Therefore, both matters were still not fully resolved. Also, on local issues, the Vice-Principal mentioned that a Housing Commission was being set up to look into the challenges around student accommodation in the town.

The Vice-Principal invited the new Director of Development, Mr Robert Fleming, to give an update on the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events and fundraising campaign. The Director commented that it was a privilege to join the University during the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. The 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner, held in early November and attended by the Campaign Patron, had been a tremendous success both in terms of the funds raised and the worldwide media coverage received. The London Alumni Club's forthcoming Thanksgiving Service in St Paul's Cathedral promised to be a wonderful occasion with more than 2,000 alumni due to attend. The ticket sales from this event had already established an endowed London Scholarship fund. A number of screenings of the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary film, *Ever to Excel*, were planned for early 2013 in Glasgow, Edinburgh and London. In June 2013, a 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Golf Tournament would take place in St Andrews with funds raised going towards key Anniversary campaign projects. Towards the end of the 2013 celebrations, an Academic Celebration would be held in St Andrews to celebrate 600 years of academic achievement and to bring together world-renowned 'great minds' to debate the future of universities. The Director closed his remarks by thanking Mr fforde, his colleagues at the Students' Association and many students from within the student body for all their hard work in taking on the 2013 Class Gift and the 'Your600<sup>th</sup>' student fundraising campaign.

The Vice-Principal took questions from the floor on subjects including: the Botanic Gardens; widening participation and access activities, including provision of summer schools; growth in the student population; staff numbers and the potential impact of independence on the HE sector.

The Principal thanked the Vice-Principal and Director of Development for their interesting updates and for taking questions from the floor.

## **5. *Glasgow and St Andrews* by Professor Robert Crawford FRSE, Bishop Wardlaw Professor, School of English**

Professor Crawford spoke to the members on the theme of *Glasgow and St Andrews* providing an interesting account of the differences and similarities between the two places. Professor Crawford emphasised his love for both places being a Glasgow graduate and now a St Andrews scholar – highlighting that this journey was the opposite of many of those in the room who had gone from St Andrews to Glasgow. Professor Crawford spoke of the many changes to both cities and the universities over the years. This included at St Andrews the physical changes (the School of English is now located on the Scores), changes to its personalities (one third of the current staff in the School are creative writers, making it the most writerly among Departments of English in the UK, if not the world) and the change to its student demographics (increasing numbers of overseas students).

Professor Crawford spoke about the important role St Andrews played in the development of photography, with the former Principal, Sir David Brewster, inventing the kaleidoscope. Sir David was also the catalyst at St Andrews for the production of the first experimental works in photography by John and Robert Adamson and was instrumental in the formation of the renowned partnership in photography between David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson.

The Council members were treated to a reading by Professor Crawford of his poem *St Andrews* which captured the specialness of St Andrews in four lines.

Professor Crawford closed his remarks by highlighting the importance of philanthropy in keeping St Andrews special and ensuring that academically qualified individuals of all backgrounds were able to experience the town and receive a top-class education, as he had done through the support of a scholarship at Glasgow.

The Principal paid tribute to the calibre of the academic community at St Andrews which was highlighted by Professor Crawford and his informative and engaging presentation.

## **6. Any Other Competent Business**

The next statutory half-yearly meeting would take place on Saturday 29 June 2013 in St Andrews.

The Principal closed the meeting at 19:50 by thanking the speakers for their contributions and Council members for their attendance and participation. A wine and canapé reception was held following the meeting.