



University of  
St Andrews

600  
YEARS

**MINUTE OF THE STATUTORY HALF-YEARLY MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL  
HELD ON SATURDAY 25 JUNE 2011 at 11am in PARLIAMENT HALL, UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS**

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Louise Richardson was in the Chair. The meeting opened with a prayer by the Principal of St Mary's College. The Principal and Vice-Chancellor welcomed 140 members to the meeting.

**1. MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY HALF-YEARLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2010**

The minutes of this meeting, held in Durham, were received and *agreed* as a correct record.

**2. BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

**Report of the Committee's meeting on 19 March 2011**

The Council considered and approved the full report of the meeting held on 20 March 2011, taking particular note of the following items of business highlighted by the Convener, Mr M P L Strachan:

- a. **General Council and Graduation or Completion Fee** - this one-time fee would be collected from all students undertaking a credit-bearing programme or course at first matriculation.
- b. **Working Group on 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Projects** – a gift of £80,000 from the General Council to support the provision of study areas in the refurbished library had been approved at Meeting in Durham in November 2010 and the Council's generosity commended by the University Court.
- c. **Working Group on Purposes and Venue** – the next meeting of the General Council would be held in the Caledonian Club, London at 6.30pm on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011. Future autumn meetings would take place in Glasgow on 24 November 2012 and St Andrews in November 2013.
- d. **Chancellor and Assessor Election Ordinances** - a review of these Ordinances had been completed by a Business Committee Working Group with a view to moving to a more simplified process which would enable online voting to take place. It was noted that the option to vote by post would be retained. The Business Committee recommended that this proposal be progressed, hopefully in time to gain Privy Council approval in advance of the 2012 Assessor election. The University Court Office was now handling this matter with further progress expected over the summer and a further draft Ordinance submitted to the University Court in October. The local regulations, referred to in the March minute, would now be drafted for discussion and approval at a future meeting.

The Convener responded to two written submissions from General Council member Mr K Cochran. The first related to the text of the October 2010 Business Committee meeting and the General Council article in the *Alumnus Chronicle 2011*. Mr Cochran sought clarification that the General Council's statutory rights "to comment on all matters that affect the welfare of the university" as conferred by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858, section had not been diluted by the 2010 Governance & Nominations Committee review and the subsequent changes to the administration of the General Council fee. The Convener confirmed that this right had not been limited by the review or the subsequent changes. The Convener also confirmed that when the article was drafted for the *Alumnus Chronicle* the feature was constrained by the need to have regard to a word limit and to summarise the Business Committee's activities as succinctly as possible. The article and minutes were not intended to have a wider application, but related to the changes to the fee only.

The second issue related to the acceptance by the Business Committee of the University Court's removal of control of the General Council fee and subsequently of its finances and ability to promote its activities as it viewed to be appropriate. The Convener advised that the General Council fee had always been fixed by the University Court. However, since the early 1980s, the Court transferred the fee to the General Council in full, although nothing obliged it to do so. As a result of the review referred to above, this was no longer the case, but it should be noted that this change to the funding provided to the General Council in no way prevented it from continuing to exercise its statutory right to comment on matters that affect the well-being and prosperity of the university, alongside supporting alumni interests. The Convener stated, in response to a further question that there was no intention to alter anything other than the method of funding the Council's activities.

Further questions were raised by members including: level of guarantee that the Business Committee would receive the budget requested (*no specific guarantee but discussions would take place over any issues*); ability of the Council to undertake its own fundraising (*fundraising is the responsibility of the Development Office*); support of the Garden Parties (*supported from University funds, but sponsorship would be welcomed from companies*); and the possibility of adverts appearing in the *Alumnus Chronicle* (*this matter had been raised and noted at the March Business Committee meeting and was to be considered by the Committee of the Alumnus Association at its planning meeting in August 2011*).

#### **(b) Membership 2011-2012**

The Convener noted that the following members would complete their term of office on 30 June 2011: Mr A R Frith; Rev Dr R Hill; and Dr R F MacInnis, and expressed his thanks for their contribution to the work of the Business Committee over the last four years.

The Clerk to the General Council reported the results of the recent online election for three members to serve on its Business Committee. Seven candidates had stood for election and 1,168 General Council members voted. Ms F Laing, Mr D G Wynd and Mr K G Grainger were elected to serve as members of the Business Committee of the General Council for four years from 1 July 2011.

### **3. COMMITTEE OF THE ALUMNUS ASSOCIATION**

#### **Report of the meeting held on 15 January 2011**

The Council considered and approved the report of the Committee of the Alumnus Association meeting held on 15 January 2011.

The Convener, Miss K Patrick, reported on the success of the latest edition of the *Alumnus Chronicle*, which had been sent out to 41,466 alumni and other General Council members, 12,717 being to overseas addresses. The Convener highlighted that this overseas element was one indicator of the world-wide spread of the University and its international involvement. The magazine had generated very positive and enthusiastic feedback both in terms of its visual impact and the quality of its content. The Convener expressed thanks to the joint Editors, Ms L Lind and Mrs E Cartwright for their sterling efforts in drawing the elements of the magazine into a coherent whole and also commended those involved in compiling within a tight deadline the special internal supplement recording the launch of the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The Convener noted that one of the features of the St Andrews experience was the strength of the loyalty of its alumni and their continuing attachment to the University. Many of those attending the meeting were in St Andrews to enjoy the annual Alumni Reunion weekend and other smaller informal reunions. 274 alumni, spanning graduation years from 1944 to 2010, were registered to take part in one or more of the programme of events over the weekend accompanied by 92 spouses, partners and other guests. Alumni had travelled from USA, Canada, Australia, Czech Republic, Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Norway, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands, as well as all parts of the UK, reflecting the cosmopolitan nature of the University.

The oldest extant mixed alumni club, the After Many Days Club, expected around 100 to attend its annual summer luncheon in St Andrews. There was new alumni club activity in Paris, Germany, Latin America and Newfoundland & Labrador and reports of the activities of established clubs could be found in the *Alumnus Chronicle* along with a list of clubs on the alumni website. There was also interest in forming a club for our local alumni, possibly under the name of the Raisin Alumni Club.

The Convener closed her remarks by encouraging members to participate in some element(s) of the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities and to keep up to date with developments through the revamped 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary website.

#### **(b) Committee Membership 2011-12**

The Clerk reported that Mr M Johnson was the sole candidate at the closing date of 31 March 2011 and was elected by the General Council to serve on the Committee of the Alumnus Association for a period of five years from 1 July 2011.

#### **4. UNIVERSITY ADDRESS & 600<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

The Vice-Principal (External Relations), also Registrar to the General Council, Mr S R Magee addressed the members and highlighted a number of local, national and international areas of interest to the University.

In terms of local issues the Vice-Principal spoke about the complicated but highly significant situation with Madras College. The University was working with Fife Council to establish exactly what area of land on the North Haugh would be included in the excambion for all or part of the Madras College site on South Street. While not underestimating the complexities, the Vice Principal emphasised just how important a potential development this could be for the whole community and for generations of school children.

The Vice-Principal remarked that the University had been working over the last fifteen months to identify a way forward in relation to the St Andrews Botanic Gardens. It was noted that the University cannot afford to pay for something that is not a central to its core mission and Fife Council is also facing financial constraints in the current difficult economic climate. The aim was to create a tripartite Trust comprising the University, Fife Council and other relevant stake holders to preserve the bulk of the space as gardens.

The University acquired the former paper mill at Guardbridge in 2010 and was still planning how the facility could best be used. Options included accommodation for spin-out companies, research facilities and other sustainable development uses. Moving on to the challenge of rising utility bills the Vice-Principal reported that with annual increases of over 20% the University had to be proactive in terms of its energy generation, including the development of wind turbines at the Boarhills site.

It was noted that restructuring was currently on-going in two University Units, IT Services and Residential and Business Services. There was a legal requirement to undertake certain steps within a formal process and it was recognised this had caused upset among a number of members of staff. The Vice-Principal reported that there was a risk of a small number of posts being made redundant over a long term.

The subject of student accommodation and HMO licenses (houses in multiple occupation) continues to be looked at in discussion with the Students' Association.

Turning to national issues the Vice-Principal highlighted the continued challenges of University Funding and reported that the Principal was very proactive in discussions with the Scottish Government and Funding Councils in this complex area. The main problem with the current fee regime was that Scottish universities charged 'home' students but students from elsewhere in EU do not pay. An announcement was expected on 29 June which would provide more clarity on the road ahead.

The Vice-Principal reported that in terms of league tables St Andrews continued to perform very well but that the University must be vigilant to ensure this success continued as it was extremely important for the University's national and international profile in attracting top students. Finally the Vice-Principal spoke of the internationalism of St Andrews and that members should celebrate the mix of students (one third from Scotland, one third from rest of EU including rest of UK and one third from overseas). The University aimed to work hard to maintain this position while continuing to strive for academic excellence in all areas.

The Director of Development opened the presentation on the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign by reading an extract from the new 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign brochure which had been published in time for Graduation week. All alumni were to receive a postcard with a link to an electronic copy of the brochure and / or could contact the Development Office to arrange for a copy to be sent to them.

The Director of Development reported that £26.6m in cash and pledges had been secured to date since the campaign started in August 2008. The quiet phase ran until February 2011, when the now Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, launched the public appeal and the fundraising period would run until 2016 at which time it is hoped that the target figure of £100m would have been secured in gifts and written pledges. The fundraising campaign focused on the 36 projects featured in the Campaign brochure under six themes: Keeping ahead: leading the academic field; Home and abroad: taking Scotland to the world; A better chance: opening doors more widely; Life on earth: addressing the threats that face us; Land and sea: learning from the earth and its oceans; Living here: looking after our students; and Arches and artefacts: preserving the University's built and made heritage.

The Director of Development closed his presentation by inviting members to help to build on the success of the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary launch event in February and hoped that members had noticed and liked the new branding which had been in evidence across the Graduation and Reunion events and materials.

The Vice-Principal and Director of Development took questions from the floor including the following:

**University and local community:** type of feasibility study carried out on the wind farm and availability of costs (*feasibility studies are carried out for every project and members are welcome to contact the Vice-Principal directly for more information about costs*); installation of solar panels on University building roofs (*not many roofs are suitable due to their configuration and many are listed buildings*); merit of four year degrees compared with three year degrees (*rest of world tend to offer four-year degrees and so the University's approach works well in attracting students from all over the world. There are no plans to reduce degree to three years but these matters are kept under review*); timescale for reaching agreement with Fife Council over Madras College (*complicated set of circumstances with appropriate land values to be agreed by all parties*).

**600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign:** alumni involvement in and communication of the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events programme (*launch took place earlier than originally planned which meant changes to some of the earlier plans. Full details would be published on the new 600<sup>th</sup> website and in other publications and forums. A number of additional 600<sup>th</sup> events had taken place during graduation week and over the reunion weekend including: lectures; chapel concert; chapel service; Family Dinner; historical events at the Castle and Cathedral; and the Mediaeval Banquet was now full with 330 tickets sold*); inspiring campaign brochure - what level of contribution expected from alumni (*aim to encourage 15-20% of alumni and friends to give compared to current level of 7.3% - all contributions were important and would be gratefully received*); level of fundraising activity in North American (*University has a North American Development representative and a long-standing American Foundation Board to which US donors could make tax-effective gifts. There were also arrangements in place for Canadians to make tax-effective donations*).

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor thanked the Vice-Principal and Director of Development for their interesting presentations and responses to the various questions.

## 5. PRESENTATION BY THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN & DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY SERVICES

The recently appointed University Librarian & Director of Library Services, Mr John MacColl provided members with an update on the redevelopment of the University Library and other library initiatives.

Mr MacColl began by commenting that he had arrived at a time of welcome investment in the Library. The Library's performance in league tables indicated a need for improved facilities to meet the demands of today's students who had different expectations than when the Library was first built. Students were now looking not only for space for reading and quiet work but for areas where they could undertake group work, prepare presentations and seminars and access technology. Mr MacColl thanked the members for the generous gift of £80,000 from the General Council to support the development of study and learning pods which would help to provide some of these facilities.

The redevelopment work was already underway with the Main Library closed for the summer. When completed the Library development would provide a light and airy space with a range of enhanced facilities including study spaces, increased IT provision, a café with the students suggesting the name *Café 1413* and new security gates. Investment would also be made in the acquisitions and not only the fabric of the building.

The Special Collections had been decanted to the library annex at the North Haugh. This move had uncovered a number of hidden gems in the collections and it was estimated that the University has c. 200,000 rare books (17% of the total collection) with a large number still to be catalogued. The development of an appropriate space for the extensive and impressive special collections was one of the key 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign projects at a cost of £10m. The Special Collections now boasted two new books, *Treasures of the St Andrews University Library* which highlighted the fifty top University Treasures and a new book by Dr N Reid, *Ever to Excel*.

Mr MacColl spoke about the University's Research collections and that these must be improved to match our size and academic excellence as it was vital to have a high quality collection to help attract top academics to St Andrews.

Beyond the Main Library work is on-going to enhance other library resources including the King James Library as the University sought to release the value in its holdings and the cultural elements of the Library spaces. Mr MacColl emphasised the importance of the stewardship of these resources, not only for researchers here and now but also for future generations of students and staff.

Mr MacColl answered a number of questions from members including: walk-in access for registered library users to e-communications, including journals (*this is high on the agenda but there are complex licensing problems which St Andrews and other Scottish Universities are working to overcome*); St Andrews' promotion of the Scholarly Communication Program (*there is a St Andrews team working on this*); access to repository for staff and student research papers (*Repository is accessible and University aims to make as much information as possible freely available within copyright and licence restrictions. 1000<sup>th</sup> addition was made to this repository during graduation week*).

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor thanked Mr MacColl for his interesting presentation and responses to the questions.

## **6. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

The Clerk read out the following statement which had been received from Dr Tom Jones, Senior Lecturer and member of General Council, under his own signature: "*we (writes Dr Jones) wish to register our opposition to the restructuring happening in various parts of the University, which will have damaging effects on many members of staff including some of the most vulnerable and lowest paid. We do not accept that the case for restructuring has been made convincingly, nor that information about restructuring has been properly communicated to staff and students. We call upon University management to ensure that the restructuring process is fully open and transparent, and that any changes made will not be to the detriment of the terms, conditions, and income of current staff.*"

The Principal confirmed that the statement would be noted and invited comments from the floor. Declarations in support of Dr Jones' statement were made, among others, by Professor S Reicher and the President of the Students' Association.

There being no further items of business the meeting closed with the pronouncement of the benediction.

Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
Professor Louise Richardson