Chairman: Norman Chipakupaku, President

Present at Riccarton:

Mike Ross, Vice President  Trish Gray
Heather Kay, Secretary     Tony Gray
Patrick Corbett, Council Member   Stephen Cunningham
Cameron Millar, Council Member    Phillip John
Kerryn Kirkpatrick, DAO        Ray Donnelly
Gregor Colville, Past President  Nathan Ward
Stefan Kay, Past President
David Brew, Past President

Ten remote attendees via webinar

In Attendance: Nuala Boyle, Assistant Principal (Development)

Apologies: Roger Murray, Dairmuid Cowan, Keith Wallace

Norman Chipakupaku, Watt Club President, welcomed everyone to the meeting both those physically present in the Craig Room Riccarton and those joining remotely via webinar.

The meeting was declared quorate and therefore all proceedings and decisions valid.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 29 October 2016 were approved as a fair record.
There were no matters arising from the minutes.
Proposed Trish Gray / Seconded Ray Donnelly

2. UPDATE FROM DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI OFFICE

Ms Nuala Boyle, Assistant Principal (Development) gave a very positive presentation outlining highlights for the University over the previous year.

- Heriot Watt voted International University of the Year by The Times at the end of 2017. The judging panel had been impressed by “Go Global” initiatives and enhanced employability. The University has also risen in world rankings. Capital investment has been made to enhance the student experience, to enable high quality teaching, to create an improved environment and to increase research capacity. This work began in Edinburgh and has now rolled out to Dubai and Malaysia. This is the twelfth year in Dubai, where there are 4,000 students and the fifth year in Malaysia. The first Malaysian graduations took place in 2017 and there are currently 1,700 students. The Orkney Campus was established in 1989 and is
centered on marine science and marine renewable energy. Future research will focus on the Blue Economy.

- At the Edinburgh campus Actuarial Science has become recognised by the Society of Actuaries (SOA) North America, as a Center of Actuarial Excellence, the only Center of Actuarial Excellence in Europe and one of only thirty worldwide. It is hoped this will also provide a key tool for student recruitment in America.

- The market for student recruitment is highly competitive. Watt Club Branches and alumni can act as ambassadors and help find new ways of linking into business. Heriot Watt is renowned for industry collaboration.

- Heriot Watt is fully engaged with government initiatives regarding student apprenticeships and has recently concluded a second three year agreement with Santander which will provide £50,000 per year for the next three years. This money which will support the University’s entrepreneurial activity, scholarships and global internship programme.

- Heriot Watt will partner Edinburgh University to establish the UK’s first Robotarium and this investment will also have significant effect on the local economy. In 2017 Heriot Watt were runners up in the prestigious Amazon Alexa Prize and a Heriot Watt team have been selected as the UK’s only entrant in the 2018 final.

- There has been major capital development in the creation of the Discovery and Innovation Centre and Enterprise Hub. In addition Panmuir House, the final home of Adam Smith, is owned by Edinburgh Business School and will be developed as a centre for economic and social debate, providing a Think Tank for economics of the future.

- The Watt Club has undergone a successful rebranding process, there are monthly online communications and an annual Watt Club Magazine. Wattclubconnect.org was launched in June 2017 to provide a virtual alumni community and has already attracted 5,000 members.

- The Annual Telethon raised £174,000 in 2017 and the current programme is underway.

- The Development and Alumni Office deliver global events and hope these can be bolstered by local Branch events. There are a growing number of Branches around the world.

- The biggest challenge is the introduction of GDPR in May 2018. All alumni are encouraged to actively opt in and express their preferred methods of communication. These regulations will equally apply overseas.

- A new five year strategic plan is being developed, in which alumni input is highly valued. An “Alumni Homecoming” event is planned for 20th May using the theme, “Year of the Sea”.

Unapproved Minutes of The Watt Club 2017 AGM
Circulated 3 March 2018
Questions Arising
Ray Donnelly asked whether interest could be revived in the Social Enterprise Institute? Money is available within the Edinburgh economy and these activities would show commitment to both our society and our graduates.
Nuala Bolye advised that EBS is currently incubating some such developments and social enterprise is a big part of the agenda.

Phillip John highlighted that the alumni database is key to providing activities and at what point can undergraduates be encourage to Opt In?
Kerryn Kirkpatrick advised that in November 2017, which were the first graduations following the launch of Wattclubconnect.org, 94% of graduates opted in for email communications. It was generally agreed that retrospective sign up is more difficult.

Ian Myles (via webinar) asked how to access information?
Kerryn Kirkpatrick advised that Wattclubconnect shows geographical area/degree/personal interests, etc.

David Brew suggested that Wattclubconnect.org was rather difficult for older members to use and more specific details and instruction were needed.
Nuala Boyle acknowledged this was useful feedback and DAO would work to improve and resolve.

Gregor Colville highlighted the advantage of the old database, which provided graduation lists by class. These were already in the public domain, as the information would have been published at graduation, provided no contact details were given.
Kerryn Kirkpatrick confirmed that this information is held by the University on Raisers Edge.

3. UPDATE FROM WATT CLUB PRESIDENT

The President apologised for the delay in holding the AGM, this was due to several issues one of which being the election re run. The 2018 AGM date has been set for Thursday 18th October and will be held in Panmuir House.

The President welcomed Cameron Millar and Ebbe Bergshaven as new Council members and welcomed Roger Murray as the new Court member on Council. The President, on behalf of Council and The Watt Club, thanked Trish Gray for her fantastic work on Council over the past three years.

The President has met with Adam Gilles, engagement officer for EBS and together they are working to ensure all Branches are branded as The Watt Club. There is a strong and positive relationship between Council, the University and Development and Alumni Office. Many new Watt Club Branches are being established, China, with Branches in Shanghai and Beijing, and in Africa Branches are setting up in Zambia, Nigeria, Ghana. In South Africa the former EBS Charter is now an affiliated Watt Club. There is sound governance with a clear constitution although some countries have to employ a slight “tweaking” of the constitution to allow for local legalities. All Branches are encouraged to be fully inclusive. The President recorded his thanks to Albert Teo, one of the longest serving Presidents.
of any local Branch, having served seventeen years building Watt Club Malaysia into the strong Branch it is today.

Questions Arising
Trish Gray requested a list of current Council members and Heather Kay agreed to circulate.
David Brew drew attention to the Council & Governance page of the website being out of date and DAO agreed to rectify.
Gregor Colville asked why Council was one member short and why there was no co-opted graduate member of University staff on Council?
Heather Kay explained that Altantuya Altankhyy’s (elected 2016), Council membership had expired due to lack of engagement. There was currently no co-opted graduate member of University staff on Council and this would be addressed.

Kerryn Kirkpatrick asked for clarification as to whether the method by which a Council member is replaced was within the main constitution, or the bye laws. Gregor Colville confirmed it was within the Bye Laws.

Norman Chipakupaku agreed to ensure all Council members receive appropriate induction but this could be hindered by geographical location.

There was much discussion within the meeting regarding the decision to delay the AGM from October. However, it was also highlighted that perhaps attention should be turned towards encouraging attendance and engagement rather than undue concern over timing.

4. ACCOUNTS

Mike Ross, Vice President presented the accounts for 2016/17 and these were accepted by the meeting.
Proposed David Brew/ Seconded Stefan Kay

Questions Arising
It was discussed and agreed that no Branch would receive continual funding. The percentage of the BNCC subs, paid on behalf of the Norwegian Branch, would be reduced over the following three years. Gregor Colville clarified that traditionally the University had paid this sub and at some point that commitment had been transferred to The Watt Club. Gregor also confirmed that there was no longer any relationship between numbers of graduates and monies received by The Watt Club. The subvention had been agreed with the University Secretary as £15,000 which was £3,000 greater than any previous figure. However, it was agreed that perhaps the time was right to negotiate an increased figure.

Trish Gray advised it was three years since the previous negotiation and therefore reasonable to approach the University again. If not reviewed annually, the subvention should be reviewed at least every three years, particularly considering the increasing number of Watt Club Branches. Branch development is one of the University’s key priorities and DAO budget could be complimented by Council funding.
Gregor Colville and Stefan Kay advised the meeting that there was significant alumni engagement within specific schools and disciplines, the value of which was not always recognised. For example the Chemical Engineering Advisory Board involved ten alumni, each contributing three or four working days per year. Kerryn Kirkpatrick assured the meeting that DAO would pick up upon that information and use knowledge of how schools remain in contact with their own alumni.

Norman Chipakupaku repeated his aim to encourage all Branches to host a minimum number of events per year. Future funding decisions might also reflect which Branches are engaging and providing updates.

Patrick Corbett introduced the meeting to the idea of a Heriot Watt Heritage Trail. This would possibly be a good event for an Edinburgh Branch meeting? With help from The Watt Club a Heritage Trail could provide a linked activity in the city centre which would also raise awareness and interest.

5. UPDATE FROM BRANCHES

Branch update reports had been received from London, Malaysia, New York, San Francisco and Singapore. These were distributed with the AGM papers and available to view online.

6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR AGMs

The meeting agreed that this area had already been discussed at some length. David Brew suggested that a social event, with the AGM as a tag on might encourage attendance. Heather Kay and Trish Gray referred to the experiences of 2016 when a proposed dinner and keynote speaker had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. A tour of Oriam had been provided but numbers remained below twenty. Trish Gray suggested asking alumni what kind of event they would like to attend?

7. AOB

Patrick Corbett raised the question of working with other charities, perhaps where there are already clusters of alumni, for example there is a developing link with The Scottish Oil Club.

Tony Gray gave his support to the idea of a city centre Heritage Trail and Nathan Ward suggested this could be made into an interactive activity with audio links/mobile app. etc.

8. VOTE OF THANKS

The President thanked all who had attended for their excellent discussion and also thanked those who had attended via webinar.

9. DATE OF 2018 AGM

The 2018 AGM will be held in Panmuir House on Thursday 18th October at 6.30pm.