

There were 18 people in attendance and therefore the meeting was declared quorate.

Norman Chipakupaku was delayed in traffic, Mike Ross opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. It was agreed to amend the agenda and delay the President's update until Norman's arrival.

1. UPDATE FROM DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI OFFICE

Kerryn Kirkpatrick, recently appointed Head of Development and Alumni Office, presented highlights from a circulated handout.

- The launch of Strategy 2025 has shown the direction in which the University is now going.
 - A big piece of alumni research was conducted in early 2019 with over 1,000 respondents.
 - Over the past few years there has been a greatly improved relationship between DAO and The Watt Club Council. Interaction between the University and alumni must be a two way process. Kerryn thanked Norman, Mike and Heather for their work over the past three years. Kerryn extended her thanks also to Cameron Miller and Trish Gray for their work on Council and congratulated Mike and Patrick on their new posts. Kerryn also welcomed Joe Pacitt on to Council.
 - DAO priority is to enhance alumni engagement and increase the number of alumni who are actively engaged.
 - Focus on what is working and rationalise other areas. Opportunities to deepen the bonds through mentoring and other activities.
 - The functionality of wattclubconnect.com is currently being reviewed.
 - 132,000 alumni in 192 countries, 38% of contactable alumni are engaged with the University.
 - 19 Branches at different stages of maturity and development

Questions Arising

Robert Maer questioned why only 60,000 alumni were actively engaged from a contactable database of 132,000? Perhaps more effort should be made to promote Wattclubconnect, alumni are obviously active on other platforms. Wattclubconnect is perhaps too cumbersome? Is there a need to find other ways of social interaction given the dicotomy between younger and older adults? Robert also suggested The Watt Club could offer generic Continuous Professional Development programmes.

Norman Chipakupaku joined the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 23 October 2018 were approved as a fair record. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Proposed Patrick Corbett / Seconded Trish Gray

3. ACCOUNTS

Mike Ross, Vice President presented the accounts for 2018/19 and the budget for 2019/20. The subvention remains at £15k per annum. The principal expenses are the Secretary's honorarium, the provision of Watt Club medals and prizes and Branch funding to help activate alumni activity in new locations.

This year the decision was taken to stock pile medals and prizes in order to allow a great allocation of funds in 2019/20. Branch funding will link with AGM reports to provide accountability.

During 2019 there has been a change to the election system. The previous provider, ERS had constantly increased costs. It was estimated that the three way election process held in the summer of 2019 would have cost £5k/£6k plus VAT. The Student Union operates an election system which remains within the University network and this was successfully used for the first time for the summer 2019 elections at a cost of £3k. This cost will reduce further to £2.7k after the initial set up.

Heritage is an important area and there will be a small allocation of funding made available to help drive this work forward.

It is the responsibility of Council to make £15k stretch as far as possible in terms of value and impact.
The meeting approved the 2018/19 accounts.

Questions Arising

David Brews questioned why there was no provision of a balance sheet, as had been included in the past, a balance sheet would break down the detail and show value of any Reserves.

Trish Gray reminded the meeting that funding had changed some years previously from an amount/student to an annual lump sum. No accounts were provided as The Watt Club was no longer an independent charity.

Keith Wallace suggested there was a need to review, to ensure Council spent all allocated money and there was also a need to approve, to ensure Council spent appropriately. A proforma balance sheet would be useful to show monies coming in and expenditure going out. A note of funds for specific projects would also be useful as it could perhaps encourage further funding.

David Brews questioned what development funding might be spent on? Keith Wallace highlighted that Branches might only require one off ad hoc funding. Previously such funding had not been available and Keith regarded this budget provision as a positive step.

4. UPDATE FROM BRANCHES

Branch update reports had been received from London, New York, San Francisco, Texas, Zambia, Malaysia and Singapore. Only 7 out of 19 Branches had submitted reports, this will have an impact on funding decisions. Branch reports were collated into a separate report.

Questions Arising

Robert Maer asked what was currently happening with the Norwegian Branch? Mike confirmed there had been a conversation regarding payment of the British Chamber of Commerce fees, the Norwegian Branch is heavily reliant upon the Chamber of Commerce.

Robert Maer also suggested it might be useful to have a breakdown of engaged alumni by subject and school. Mike was optimistic that increased use of data engineering going forward would provide a greater insight into such areas. There may be a move away from specific geographical Branches towards schools/ year groups/ reunions?

5. UPDATE FROM THE WATT CLUB PRESIDENT

Norman apologised for the traffic and for his delayed arrival.

Norman congratulated Mike on his election as President and gave his opinion that it had been a very good election with great results. Norman reflected on his own involvement with The Watt Club for the previous 8 years and felt the last 3 years had seen a very good team in place. Norman expressed his satisfaction at having Edinburgh Business School fully on board and the subsequent rebranding to one global Watt Club.

Norman reported that Council had met regularly and the University had been very supportive. The biggest challenge was funding but the door is still open to renegotiate, Norway being a good example of what could be redistributed.

During his Presidency Norman had promised to bring Zambia on board and he was delighted that had been achieved. Now it is time to prepare for the 2021 celebrations.

Norman thanked The Watt Club for having had the opportunity to be the first African President and advised all present that 24th October was Zambian Independence Day!

Keith Wallace reminded those present of the difficulties he had faced during his last eighteen months as President. If he could have chosen a succession plan it would have been for Norman to have succeeded him, followed by Mike. For that to occur, in parallel with a re-generated and successful relationship between The Watt Club and DAO, could not possibly have been foreseen at the time. An excellent outcome all round.

6. DATE OF 2018 AGM

The 2020 AGM will be held on Thursday 22nd October. Venue to be confirmed.