

## COURT

## Minutes

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|------------------------|---|--|
| In the Chair:          | Ms Morag McNeill  | Date of Meeting: 16 December 2021  |
| Present also:          | Dr Richard Armour (not M21/99 to /106)<br>Professor Scott Arthur<br>Professor Lynne Baillie (after M21/89)<br>Professor Mark Biggs<br>Ms Hannah Copeland<br>Professor Marc Desmulliez<br>Mr Graeme Dickson<br>Dr Fadi Ghaith<br>Mr Steve Heathcote<br>Mr Brian Henderson<br>Mr Gary Kildare | Ms Emily King<br>Mr Paul Lewis<br>Dr Bill MacPherson<br>Mr Cameron Millar<br>Mr Jürgen Munz<br>Mr Chris Pirie<br>Mr Alan Robertson<br>Mr Mike Tumilty<br>Mr Graham Watson<br>Professor Richard Williams<br>Ms Dorothy Wright |
| In attendance:         | Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi<br>Mr Richard Claughton<br>Ms Sue Collier<br>Ms Lucy Everest<br>Mr Andrew Jefferson<br>Professor Ammar Kaka  | Ms Ruth Moir (Secretary)<br>Dr Gill Murray<br>Professor John Sawkins<br>Ms Kirsty Scanlan (M21/96 only)<br>Dr Caroline Howitt (M21/97 only)<br>Mr Les Allan (M21/109 only)<br>Mr John McDermott (Clerk)                      |
| Apologies for absence: | Ms Marta Phillips, Professor Garry Pender, Lord Vallance  |  |

### **M21/87 WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting, making special mention of Mr Kildare who was attending his first meeting since joining Court on 1 August.

The apologies for absence were noted.

### **M21/88 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chair invited declarations of interest relating to the matters under discussion. No new declarations were made.

### **M21/89 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER OF COURT**

With reference to paper Ct9/21/68, the report from the Governance and Nominations Committee (GNC), the Chair invited the Court, on the recommendation of the GNC, to approve the nomination of Professor Lynne Baillie as the member of the Court who is nominated by the campus academic Trade Unions (in accordance with Ordinance B13).

The Court approved the appointment of Professor Baillie and noted her membership of Court would take immediate effect and would continue to 31 July 2023 (being the remainder of the period of her predecessor). Professor Baillie would be eligible to be considered for reappointment at the end of this initial period of membership.

The Chair welcomed Professor Baillie into membership of the Court and to the meeting.

### **M21/90 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Court approved the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 as an accurate record and noted that the notes from the Strategy Day held on 4 November 2021 would be submitted to the next meeting.

### **M21/91 MATTERS ARISING / COURT ACTION LOG**

- 91.1** The Court received and noted the Action Log, making particular note of the matter that the Court had considered by correspondence between meetings: the appointment of Ms Phillips as Acting Deputy Chair of Court to 31 July 2022 in the first instance.

**91.2** With reference to M21/74.3, the Court noted that work was continuing on the action plan and timeline to be derived from the outcomes of the Staff Survey. The action plan would come to a future Court meeting after due consideration by the Executive and the Staff Committee.

**M21/92 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR (Oral report)**

The Chair noted that there had been many recent opportunities to celebrate successes, not least the graduation ceremonies conducted in Dubai and Edinburgh. These had all run seamlessly and the Chair recorded thanks to the team of organisers and all who had contributed to making the events so successful.

**M21/93 UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL (Paper Ct9/21/56)**

The Court considered the report presented by the Principal and noted the contents, which drew attention to strategic topics and many areas of activity since the previous meeting of the Court. The Principal added verbal comments, including to thank the Court members who had participated in the recent graduation ceremonies and to thank staff for their continued efforts in dealing so professionally with the difficult circumstances dictated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Principal highlighted some key points in the report, drawing attention to the strong recruitment trends in the January student intake. The award of a further Queen's Anniversary Prize was celebrated. This accolade was in the area of photonics, a longstanding and substantial science research activity in the University, which made it particularly pleasing for its impact to be recognised in this prestigious manner. The Court extended congratulations to all involved in gaining this success.

The Court further noted the positive impact made by the University at Expo2020 in Dubai. A celebration and conference at the UK Pavilion had been very reaffirming for staff and many of our important partners. The opportunity had been taken to launch Heriot-Watt Online and inform of the intention to establish the HW Global Foundation College. The Court noted that the process to select a successor to Professor Kaka as Provost and Vice-Principal (Dubai) was well underway, with shortlisted candidates to be interviewed in January. After demitting office later in 2022 Professor Kaka would be retained as 'Emeritus Provost' to continue to add his specialist experience to support the mission to further expand the operation in Dubai.

The Principal commended the work of the Covid Team, which, under the leadership of Ms Collier and Professor Jones, had continued to meet throughout the pandemic to provide guidance and expertise in addressing the many and varied issues that continued to emerge. The latest variant, and the responses of different governments to deal with it, was the latest such issue and the University would continue to remain cautious and to monitor the situation with actions seeking to balance the 'four harms' (direct impact, other health impacts, social impact, economic impacts) and caring for students and staff whilst following the different restrictions in place in the various jurisdictions in which the University operates. Particular concerns at the current time included seeking to continue lab – based research, planning for in-person learning activities in Semester 2, and providing continued support to the students resident on campus. It was anticipated that around two hundred students would remain on campus in Scotland over the Christmas period. This would be difficult for those residents as well as for the safeguarding and residences staff. The efforts of all the staff were highly appreciated.

Comments and observations arising in the course of the discussion included a welcome for the dashboard on milestones included in the report. The Court also discussed the success of the graduate apprenticeship scheme and the possible implications of students in that scheme now being included in the funding cap. It was noted that the position would continue to be monitored and the University would not advocate reductions. The Court also noted reassurance with regard to mitigation of the impact of the recent loss of two members of staff to other institutions. It was noted that whilst it was disappointing to lose the research expertise of these former colleagues, their particular section was one of eight pillars that contributed to overall work of the NetZero Global Research Institute. In addition it was hoped that the individuals concerned would retain an association with the University in the interests of academic collaboration.

The Court welcomed the report and thanked the Principal for the information provided.

**M21/94 REPORT FROM THE STUDENT UNION (Paper Ct9/21/42)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Student Union (SU) as presented by the Student Union President. The President highlighted in particular: the great success of the graduation ceremonies; the ongoing work of the Union was continuing despite colleagues being on sick-leave; a large increase in the number of student societies which bode well for student engagement and social activity especially once the pandemic restrictions continued to be relaxed; a class rep 'thank you' event had been able to be held under current restrictions, which had been well received; sports events also had been able to be held; an academic congress had received a very useful presentation and discussion on academic architecture; mitigating circumstances featured highly in casework being undertaken, and the SU was liaising with the appropriate University officers on this; discussions were ongoing regarding the SU funding and the relevant University officers had been very receptive to proposals, with particular support being received for specific projects to enhance the student experience. The President would discuss with the Principal offline a particular need regarding to the hardship fund being under pressure in relation to international students.

In discussion the Court explored further a theme in the report regarding a student housing crisis. The lack of affordable accommodation, despite the proliferation of private providers, was noted to be Scotland-wide and was being raised with Government by both NUS Scotland that the combined chairs of universities. The situation was exacerbated by the growing instances of students being subject of accommodation scams.

The Court welcomed the positive report and congratulated the President and her team on the continued tremendous work.

**M21/95 REPORT FROM THE SENATE (Paper Ct9/21/58)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Senate which related to the meeting of the Senate held on 24 November 2021 and which was introduced by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor.

It was noted that the Senate had endorsed modifications to Ordinance F8 for the Court to approve (Head of School), which would be considered later in the meeting under the report from the Governance and Nominations Committee (M21/104.2).

The Court noted that the key matters considered at the meeting had included the continuing discussions on the University's Academic Architecture, a proposal on which would be brought to Court later in 2022 after Senate endorsement had been attained. It was noted that the Senate would receive at its next meeting a report of the considerable consultation that had been conducted on this matter.

**M21/96 SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2022/23 (Paper Ct9/21/59)**

The Court received and approved the interim submission to the Funding Council (SFC) on the Outcome Agreement as presented by the Director of Strategic Planning & Performance. The Court noted that it was a formal requirement for the Court to approve the return before it would be submitted to SFC and that the Interim Outcome Agreement would be published on the SFC website in early 2022, alongside those from other Scottish institutions. The Court noted that, to meet reporting timelines, a submission had previously made that had been approved by the University Executive, however once the Court had approved this return, a further submission would be made to the SFC.

The Court noted that this interim submission was more concise than the full return, which would be expected in the next reporting cycle, and would report on a three-year period. The interim return captured, at a high level, contributions, impact and outcomes, and provided assurance on use of allocated funding in 2021/22. The themes in the return included reporting on the priority areas of health & wellbeing, recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, fair access and transition, and impactful research and innovation.

The Court welcomed the information in the report, which would also help to inform a coherent solid institutional voice in all publications. It was noted that this interim return focused firmly on students and that the full return would permit scrutiny of such matters as staff engagement among others.

The Court expressed thanks to the Director of Strategic Planning & Performance and her team for the detailed work in preparing the information. The Court was content to approve the return for submission to the SFC.

**M21/97 PANMURE HOUSE STRATEGIC DIRECTION (Paper Ct9/21/60)**

The Court received and endorsed a report on the successes and strategic direction of Panmure House as introduced by Mr Watson in his capacity as the Chair of Panmure House Advisory Board, with further detail presented by the Programme Director: Panmure House. The aim was to build on the successes of Panmure House and to develop its operation into a Global Research Institute (GRI).

It was noted to be an opportune time to bring to the Court the plans for Panmure House which had been informed by the visionary support of the Principal and the Executive Dean of Edinburgh Business School. The refurbishment of Panmure House and its incorporation into the overall University had been a great success, as evidenced by the remarkable events held under its auspices in the previous year to eighteen months. Panmure House offered a vibrant brand and asset as well as providing a significant external fundraising opportunity and a focus for considerable research activity, that would become a GRI.

The Court noted the considerable successes, including the online lecture given by Nobel laureate Professor Angus Deaton, the Panmure House prize, and the Hutton series of lectures on climate change, the collected outcomes of which had been presented to the COP26 conference on global sustainability and published widely. The Court further noted the charitable gifts that had been received, including the funding for a chair in sustainable capitalism and supporting team. Panmure House offered a unique selling point and aimed to provide an environment to help turn the theories of Adam Smith into practical use. The 300th birthday of Smith in 2023 would provide further development opportunities. It was noted that to become a GRI, the operation would need to maintain research quality to set standards including as a standard for others. This would require quality and critical mass and would be measured in research output and impact. A transdisciplinary approach was crucial.

In discussion the Court welcomed the information provided and congratulated Dr Howitt and her small team for the significant progress to date. The Court was content to endorse the direction of travel for Panmure House. It was noted that detailed work would be required on governance and financial reporting and that the business plan would be considered as part of the 2022 planning round. It was noted that the accounting status of Panmure House would be considered in the discussions. It was further noted that the Court usefully could receive a briefing on the governance structure for and financial sustainability of GRIs.

The Court welcomed the focus of the intended Panmure House GRI as explained in the presentation and noted that this was a very opportune time to bring together the interdisciplinary nature of Smith with economies needing to recover and fairness and equity being strong features. It was noted that there was evidence of demand for support and that the aim was to continue to build a significant endowment as well the as range of activities. It was intended to grow the team very quickly to attain critical mass for impactful research output.

It was noted that whilst building on the convening power of Adam Smith's name and utilising the brand of Panmure House, staff in the research institute would be based in different locations across the University. Detailed planning would be conducted. The name of the proposed institute was not yet decided, but it would reflect the need for most impact. Court members offered assistance in arriving at the name and looked forward to considering the business plan.

After discussion, the Court agreed to endorse the Strategy and noted that a detailed proposal would come forward regarding the GRI as part of the planning process in 2022. The Court reiterated its congratulations and thanks to Dr Howitt and her team for the excellent work in taking Panmure House forward.

**M21/98 REPORT FROM THE COURT INTERIM BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/61)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Court Interim Business Committee (CIBC) which informed the Court of a decision made on its behalf by the CIBC since the September meeting of the Court. The decision related to the appointment of Professor Igor Guz to the position of Head of the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS). The Court noted that Professor Guz would join Heriot-Watt in the early months of 2022 (exact date to be confirmed), and that Professor Duncan Hand would continue to serve as Acting Head until Professor Guz was fully in post.

**M21/99 REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/62)**

The Court received and discussed a report from the Finance Committee which related to the meetings of the Committee held on 17 November 2021 and 8 December 2021. No matters were presented for approval on this occasion however a number of substantial matters were reported to the Court for information.

The Chair of Finance Committee introduced the report and highlighted: the scrutiny the Committee had given to the Finance Assurance Dashboard; the approval of a significant additional budget allocation to help the ERP project to progress with gateways to approve in principle further additional funding; the request for an independent review to be conducted on the ERP project to understand what had not gone to plan and learn lessons for future projects; that although there were no management accounts yet available that the Finance Team was working very hard, with extra help, to rectify the situation; consideration of the year-end figures for 2020/21, which would inform the Audited Accounts; the Unitary Business School Project Report (where excellent progress had been noted and great credit could be given to the leadership team and staff of the combined School); the endorsement of the financial case for the Global Foundation College (a presentation on which will come to Court at either a future Court meeting, or as the subject of a Court briefing event in early 2022); a discussion on the Resource Efficiency Strategic Performance Indicator, which would come to the Court at a suitable point in 2022; the Treasury Management Policy, which had been approved by the Committee on the delegated authority of the Court; the implementation of AP2.0 investment which would be returned to at a future meeting; and the benefit of the strategic planning approach to look at metrics, especially Student:Staff Ratios and the information gained from the Cubane exercise.

**99.1 Finance Assurance Dashboard**

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor introduced the Finance Assurance Dashboard, that had been updated since the previous meeting and which kept the Court (and the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees) apprised of the progress of various important elements in the action for change programme. It was noted that the format had changed a little to help the narrative.

**XXX(..)XXX Reserved section (Ref Sections 30, 33 FOI(S)A).**

The Court took reassurance from the report, although noted that the situation was still serious. The Court welcomed the continuing involvement of the Principal and the Executive team in maintaining a close oversight of the risks and mitigating actions, including clear communication with staff. The Court thanked the Principal, the GCOO, the GCFO and the other contributors for the clear and helpful report and dashboard.

**99.2 XXX(..)XXX Reserved section (Ref Sections 30, 33 FOI(S)A).****99.3 Global Research Institutes (GRI) Annual Reviews**

The Court noted that the Finance Committee had received an informative presentation from the Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation), details of which had also been provided with the Court papers. The Court noted that this was the first cycle of external annual reviews and consideration of reports for the GRIs and had included comments on honing KPIs on specific impactful outcomes. The external advisory panel had also been very encouraging. It was noted that future reports would include additional financial information. The Finance Committee had asked that in future a framework for GRI reporting should be developed to create an element of consistency and with appropriate financial reporting, both of which would be especially important as the number of GRIs increased.

**M21/100 REPORT FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/63)**

The Court received and noted the report from the Audit and Risk Committee, relating to the meeting of the Committee held on 10 November 2021 and presented by the Committee Chair.

The Court noted that the Committee had considered and agreed to recommend the revised Data Protection Policy. The discussion on this had been informed by a useful and informative presentation from the Head of Information Governance and Data Protection Officer. The Court was content to approve the revised Policy and thanked those involved in its preparation.

The Court noted the different areas of business that the Committee had considered, which included: the Annual Procurement Report, which the ARC received on behalf of the Court under

delegated authority; the Finance Assurance Dashboard, where concerns had been raised over the absence of Management Accounts in the year to date; and support for the establishment of an independent review of the ERP implementation.

**M21/101 REPORT FROM THE STAFF COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/64)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Staff Committee, relating to the meeting of the Committee held on 1 November 2021 and which was presented by the Chair of the Committee.

The Court noted that the Committee had considered and agreed to recommend the revised Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Policy. The revised Policy was now much less complex and was a high-level policy that would be underpinned by detailed procedures that could be updated and referenced as required. The Court was content to approve the revised Policy and thanked those involved in its preparation.

The remaining matters for Court to note included ongoing discussions around what reporting is desirable on the statutory requirements of equality, diversity and inclusion. The Committee also had considered the preparatory work towards hybrid working, as well as a series of papers on workforce and succession planning. The Committee had also noted that the HR elements of the new ERP system had permitted the provision of greater breadth and quality of management information.

**M21/102 REPORT FROM THE GLOBAL STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/66)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Committee, relating to the meeting of the Committee held on 27 September 2021. The Court noted that there would be opportunity to have discussions at a future meeting on the important topics that the GSLC considers, not least the Student Partnership Agreement, which included the student representative bodies at all campuses of the University.

**M21/103 REPORT FROM THE REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/67)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Committee, relating to the meeting of the Committee held on 14 October 2021, which had been chaired by Mr Watson.

The Court noted that there had been a very full discussion at the meeting, with input of particular value from the independent member. The Committee had requested some minor adjustments to its Terms of Reference, which the Court was content to approve.

The Court noted that there remained an outstanding action to establish and oversee processes which seek the views of representatives of staff of the University, including representatives of recognised trade unions, in relation to the remuneration of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, the Vice-Principals and the University Secretary. A recommendation would be discussed by the Remuneration Committee at its May 2022 meeting.

The Court noted that the Committee had considered the checks on the gender balance of awards made for senior pay and that these awards are scrutinised and moderated. That there remained a significant proportion of males at senior levels formed a significant part of ongoing discussions to review the gender balance and pay gap. It was recognised that this was at least a one to two year project to deliver change, however suitably spaced interim reports on the project would be brought to the Court ahead of the final submission. The Court noted that data were also collected around other protected characteristics to further inform discussions.

The Court thanked Mr Watson for chairing the recent meeting and reporting accordingly.

**M21/104 REPORT FROM THE GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/68)**

The Court received and noted a report from the Governance and Nominations Committee (GNC) which related to the meeting of the Committee held on 1 December 2021. The Court considered the following matters presented as recommendations for approval. The Court noted other items which had been presented for information.

**104.1 Appointment of Chair of Court, Deputy Chair and Acting Deputy Chair**

The Court received and noted a report presented by the University Secretary which provided an update on the appointments of Chair of Court, Deputy Chair of Court, and Acting Deputy Chair of Court. The previous meeting of Court had welcomed the reappointment of Ms Morag McNeill as Deputy Chair of Court, which meant that Ms McNeill would hold office as Chair of the Court until

such time as the new Chair takes up the role. Subsequently, the Court had agreed by correspondence that Ms Marta Phillips would take on the role of Acting Deputy Chair of Court to 31 July 2022 in the first instance.

Ms Phillip's appointment had permitted the Chair of Court Selection Committee (CoCSC) to be progressed, and members of the Court had come forward accordingly for the various categories of membership of the CoCSC as previously prescribed by Court. It was noted that the Court Interim Business Committee would decide in the coming week which of the independent lay members who had expressed interest would be appointed. It was intended to ensure resilience in the membership of the committee by appointing more than the minimum requirement of independent members. In addition, some further independent members would be invited to be held 'in reserve' should circumstances require one or more replacement members to be appointed.

Once the CoCSC was in place, work could continue in earnest. In the meantime discussions were being held with search consultants to identify a company with the desired credentials. Work had also commenced to prepare a role description that would be shared widely once a draft had progressed.

The Court thanked the University Secretary and noted the update report.

#### **104.2 Revision to Ordinance F8 *Head of School***

The Court received and approved the proposed revisions to Ordinance F8, including the new title "Heads of Primary Academic Units". It was noted that the revisions, which had recently been scrutinised by the Ordinances and Regulations Committee, the Senate, and the GNC, reflected the terminology of Primary Academic Unit (PAU) that was given in the Charter and Statutes, as well as ensuring that the processes for recruiting a Head of PAU would be properly aligned with other Ordinances and with best practice. The Ordinance now also permitted the use of the preferred title of a Head of PAU as 'Executive Dean'. This provision had been introduced following feedback received during recent recruitment exercises, where it had been noted that the University was out of kilter with terminology used elsewhere in the sector.

After discussion, the Court was content to approve the revised Ordinance F8 for immediate implementation.

#### **104.3 Revision to Ordinance H1 *Appointment and Appraisal of Principal and Vice-Chancellor***

The Court received and approved the proposed revisions to Ordinance H1 as presented by the Global Director of Governance and Legal Services. It was noted that the revisions were to ensure that this Ordinance would be properly aligned with other Ordinances as previously agreed. The changes had been scrutinised by the Ordinances and Regulations Committee, the Senate and the Governance and Nominations Committee.

After a brief discussion the Court was content to approve the revised Ordinance H1 for immediate implementation.

#### **104.4 Appointment of member of Court nominated by the Academic Trade Unions**

The Court noted that this matter from the GNC report had been taken earlier in the meeting (minute M21/89 refers).

#### **104.5 Reappointment of Court Members to Court and to Committees**

The Court received notification from the University Secretary of members whose terms of office were due to expire in 2022 and who were eligible for reappointment. On the recommendation of the GNC the Court approved the reappointment of the undernoted Court members for a further period of three years, and confirmed their reappointment, also for three-year periods, to Committees of the Court, as stated below:

- Dr Richard Armour reappointed to Court, ARC and HWU Malaysia Board;
- Mr Steve Heathcote reappointed to Court, and Finance Committee
- Mr Cameron Millar reappointed to Court, Donations and Investments Committee (which he chairs), and Finance Committee
- Mr Alan Robertson reappointed to Court, Infrastructure Committee (which he chairs), Finance Committee and the Court Interim Business Committee

The Court also confirmed the appointment of Professor Lynne Baillie to the Staff Committee for the period of her initial term as member of Court.

#### **104.5 Court Governance Documents**

The Court received and approved a series of revised governance documents, as presented by the Global Director of Governance and Legal Services. It was noted that the documents, the Attendance and Participation Policy, the Court Standing Orders, and the Court Committee Standing Orders had been scrutinised by the GNC, with changes made in particular to avoid gender-specific language. In the case of the Attendance and Participation Policy, the revisions reflected improved practices and decision of Court in 2021 to conduct meetings online.

After brief discussion the Court was content to approve the revised documents.

#### **104.6 Court Effectiveness Review update report**

The Court received and noted a verbal update from the University Secretary, who reminded members that a short Court Effectiveness Survey had been issued in the previous week and that every member was encouraged to submit a response, regardless of length of service. The perspective of newer members would be particularly welcome. The Survey was noted to be relatively light touch and would be open until the third week in January. Members' contributions would continue to help to tailor provision to specific needs and to develop revisions to the Plan, which would be brought to a meeting in March 2022.

#### **M21/105 UNIVERSITY COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 (Paper Ct9/21/69)**

The Court received and approved the Annual Report of Complaints for the previous academic session as introduced by the University Secretary.

In discussion, the Court noted the efforts to provide a report that was more joined up and noted that several of the elements reflected matters highlighted to the Court by the Student Union President. It was further noted that improved processes for capturing complaints had led to an increase being recorded. The Court expressed pleasure in the evident improvement in completion rates despite the challenging circumstances.

In approving the Report, the Court recorded its appreciation of the Head of Policy and Governance, Mr Quinn, and his team for the excellent work in managing this difficult process and in preparing this report.

#### **M21/106 WATT CLUB CONSTITUTION UPDATES (Paper Ct9/21/70)**

The Court received and ratified changes to the Watt Club Constitution that had been approved by the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Watt Club in 2020. The Global Director of Governance and Legal Services introduced the modifications, which were minor in nature, and reported that it was a formal requirement for the Court to ratify any such changes to the Watt Club Constitution.

The Court noted that although further modifications had been considered at a subsequent Watt Club AGM, the governance requirements of the Club had not been met for these to proceed at this time. It was anticipated however, that the Court would receive a formal request in 2022 to ratify further changes.

#### **M21/107 RESEARCH CONCORDAT ACTION PLAN (Paper Ct9/21/71)**

The Court received and approved the Action Plan, which had been scrutinised and recommended by the University Committee for Research and Innovation and submitted by the Deputy Principal, Research and Innovation. The Court noted that the Concordat codified the steps within the University to support the career development of researchers. It was noted that two areas of ongoing discussions were the impact of fixed-term research contracts on career support, and the capacity to link outcomes of Professional Development Review discussions with resources. The Court noted that the Global Director of Human Resources would discuss these matters directly with the Court member who had raised them.

#### **M21/108 COURT MEETINGS SCHEDULE 2022-23 (Paper Ct9/21/72)**

The Court received and noted the intended schedule of meetings for Court and its Committees in session 2022-23. It was noted that the respective committee chairs should flag any difficulties with their clerks, but it was hoped that the schedule would run as presented. It was intended that this



model would be used as the basis for the schedules for future years, which would be issued early in 2022 in order to give some certainty for members' forward diary planning.

**M21/109 ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE SCOTTISH CAMPUSES HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (Paper Ct9/21/65)**

The Court received and approved the annual report from the Health & Safety Committee, which was presented by Mr Allan, Director of Safeguarding Services, in lieu of the Chair of the Committee. Mr Allan was welcomed to the meeting and the Court congratulated him and his team on the several accolades received in recent months.

The Court noted that the Health & Safety team were key players in the work of the University across all campuses. The ongoing fostering of a safety culture had contributed to Heriot-Watt consistently recording lower rates of accidents than the UK and Scotland Sector average. The approach of proactively managing hazards and accident prevention had resulted in only one, relatively minor, incident in the preceding year that had warranted a RIDDOR report.

The Court noted that the Safeguarding service was the only service to have been onsite continually throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. It was noted that many students and staff had found the lockdown period in particular very difficult. The Court commended Mr Allan and his team for the diligent work in ensuring the Health and Safety of the University, especially during the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic. Thanks were expressed to all the staff concerned.

In approving the report, the Court indicated it was very pleased with the contents.

**M21/110 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**110.1 Court rolling programme of business (as at December 2021) (Paper Ct9/21/73)**

The Court noted the rolling programme of forward business. Members were reminded of the open invitation to propose via the University Secretary items for discussion in future agendas.

**110.2 Valediction**

The Chair recorded Court's gratitude to and appreciation of Professor Garry Pender, who would retire as Deputy Principal (Research and innovation) on 31 December 2021. Garry had previously served as a Head of School and as Professor of Environmental Engineering. In each of his roles he had brought a straightforward approach and a sense of humour which will be much missed.

The Court particularly noted that Professor Pender had played an integral part in developing the research strategy and in growing such initiatives as the Global Research Institutes and the Bicentennial Research Leaders Scheme. The Court wished Professor Pender a long and enjoyable retirement.

**110.3 Closing Remarks**

The Principal extended his thanks to the members of the Court for their contributions in the preceding year, noting that the circumstances of 2021 – like 2020 – meant that the input of Court was appreciated more than ever before. Among the many successes for which the Principal wished to thank Court members was the 1821 appeal, which had gained a high profile and had progressed very well with significant donations being received during the year.

The Chair thanked the Principal for his comments and added her own thanks to the members of Court and those who had attended and supported the Court in 2021. The Chair closed the meeting by wishing all participants a restful and joyful break over the Christmas period.

**M21/111 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next business meeting would take place on **Thursday 3 February 2022** and that an additional meeting had been scheduled for **Wednesday 23 February 2022** with the purpose of considering the Annual Accounts and Financial Statements for 2020/21.

Chair's Signature .....

Date .....