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TO: ALL MEMBERS OF COURT

A meeting of the University Court constituted under the University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2019 will be held on **Monday 7th February 2022 at 09:30 am via Microsoft Teams.**

Donna McMillan
Secretary to Court

AGENDA

	Welcome to New Member Apologies for Absence Declaration of Interest		
1.	Minutes		Document Attached
1.1	Minutes of meeting held on 23 rd November 2021	Approval	
2.	Matters Arising		
3.	Determination of Any Other Business		
4.	Chair's Business	Information	Oral Report
5.	Students' Association		
5.1	Students' Union Report to Court	Discussion	Paper 5.1
6.	Senate		
6.1	Report from meeting of Senate held on 1 st December 2021	Discussion	Paper 6.1
7.	Student Experience Programme Presentation from Professor Jonathan Powles, Vice Principal, Learning, Teaching & Students	Discussion	Oral Report
8.	Committee Reports		
8.1	Report from meeting of Governance & Nominations Committee held on 24 th January 2022 • Leave of Absence for Member of Court Protocol	Discussion & Approval	Paper 8.1
8.2	Report from meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 24 th January 2022	Information	Appendix 1 Paper 8.2
8.3	Report from meeting of Audit & Risk Committee held on 25 th January 2022	Information	Paper 8.3
9.	UWS Performance Report - February 2022	Discussion	Paper 9
10	Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Highlight Report	Information	Paper 10
11.	Any Other Business		

Paisley 23rd November 2021 being the 66th meeting of the Court of the University of the West of Scotland

Present: Mrs K Allum (Chair)
Ms E Gomersall
Mr A Gordon
Mr A Gubbay
Mr L Humberstone
Professor C MacDonald
Professor C Mahoney
Mr A Mallick
Ms A McKechin
Dr I McLellan
Dr L Meredith
Mr A Miller
Mr J Mone
Mr C Morgan
Mr A Munro
Mr K Murdoch (via Microsoft Teams)
Dr C O'Donnell
Ms R Paterson (via Microsoft Teams)
Mr K Quinlan
Mr H Stolkin (via Microsoft Teams)

In attendance: Ms D McMillan
Mrs A Loudon
Mr M Ross
Ms J Maguire
Professor J Powles
Mr A Maclver

Observer: Mr R Doherty (co-opted member of the Audit & Risk Committee)

Welcome

Members noted that the period of appointment as member of Court elected by "all other staff" of Ms M McCusker had concluded at the end of October 2021. On behalf of Court, the Chair thanked Ms McCusker for her support to the work of the Court during her period of appointment.

The Chair welcomed Mr J Mone to his first meeting of Court following his appointment as "all other staff" member on Court with effect from 1st November 2021 for a period of 3 years.

The Chair welcomed Mr R Doherty who was in attendance as an observer.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms A Buchanan, Mr A Burns and Ms T O'Donnell and for late arrival from Dr C O'Donnell.

Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were notified.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of meetings held on 26th June and 7th September were approved as a correct record.

2. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising other than those contained elsewhere in the agenda.

3. **Determination of Any Other Business**

No additional items of business had been notified.

4. **Chair's Business**

Court noted that item 13 on the agenda "Appointment of Principal & Vice-Chancellor" would be taken under Reserved Business.

5. **Students' Association**

5.1 **Students' Union Report to Court**

The President of the Students' Association spoke to the report which summarised activity and progress in meeting key priorities from the Association's Strategic Plan. She drew members' attention in particular to the continued positive partnership working between the Association and the University highlighting the recent signing of a Student Partnership Agreement.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

6. **Senate**

6.1 **Report from Meeting of Senate held on 6th October 2021**

The report from the meeting of Senate held on 6th October 2021 was noted for information.

7. **Committee Reports**

7.1 **Report from Meetings of the Remuneration Committee held on 6th September and 22nd October 2021**

The report from meetings of the Remuneration Committee held on 6th September and 22nd October was noted for information.

7.2 **Report from meetings of the Governance & Nominations Committee held on 24th August and 11th November 2021**

The Chair of Court drew members' attention to the report from meetings of the Governance & Nominations Committee held on 24th August and 11th November 2021.

Court approved the revised Scheme of Delegation which had been updated to reflect minor changes in responsibilities, job titles and committee names.

The Chair reminded members of the suite of mechanisms in place for the annual review of the effectiveness of Court which currently comprised a self evaluation questionnaire, 1-1 meetings with the Chair, the appraisal of the Chair and a review of the overall effectiveness of Court.

The outcome of the recent review of the overall effectiveness of Court had been considered at the meeting of the Governance & Nominations Committee. This had concluded that, overall, members were content with the effectiveness of the Court. The Chair advised that it was intended that a session to discuss some of the themes arising from the review with a

view to identifying opportunities to further enhance the effectiveness of the Court would be included as part of the February 2022 strategic residential event.

Court noted and endorsed the report which summarised the outcome of the 2020/2021 annual review of the effectiveness of Court for publication on the UWS website.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

7.3 Report from Meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 12th October 2021

Court noted for information the report from the meeting of the Resources & People Committee held on 12th October 2021.

The Chair of the Committee reminded members that the terms of reference of the Resources & People included responsibility to maintain oversight on behalf of the Court for the University's people (staff and students). He drew members' attention to discussion at the Committee of the people report which had included data on current UWS staff metrics. It was agreed that the Chair of Court and the incoming Chair of the Resources & People Committee would discuss further the expectations of the Committee in this regard.

The Vice Principal, Resources confirmed that all staff were invited to participate in a staff survey regularly with the focus of the most recent one being on the impact to staff of the current pandemic. Discussions were ongoing in relation to the focus of future staff surveys.

In response to a comment on the importance of collating data on the student population to inform strategy and as a driver for change, the Principal outlined the range of mechanisms in place at the University to monitor student satisfaction. This included the National Student Survey, which was a sector wide exercise with a specific question set.

The Vice Principal, Learning, Teaching & Students outlined for the information of Court the functionality within the online learning platform which provided measurable information on a range of student activity. This was a useful tool in identifying issues and enabling early interventions to ensure a personalised approach. The President of the Students' Association highlighted the importance of being able to predict issues at an early stage and offer support to students proactively. The data provided would also inform future curriculum design and support the fundamental principle of meeting the needs of students.

7.4 Report from Meeting of Audit & Risk Committee held on 19th October 2021

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee spoke to the report from the meeting held on 19th October. He drew members' attention to discussion at the Committee on the University's draft financial statements, the University's status as a "going concern" and the report from the external auditor. In addition, following the implementation of the revised Terms of Reference, the Committee had considered in detail financial performance as at 30th September 2021.

Court approved the revised University Financial Regulations, noting that these had been updated to reflect changes in the remits of the committees, key roles and responsibilities and the scheme of delegated financial authority.

Court endorsed the Internal Audit Service Annual Report and was reassured to note the positive statement of assurance provided on the adequacy and effectiveness of the University's risk management, internal control and governance arrangements. Members approved the Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report to Court.

The attention of Court was drawn to the Strategic Risk Register which replaced the former Corporate Risk Register and had been designed to more clearly align to the UWS Strategy 2025.

In response to a question, the University Secretary confirmed that the Strategic Risk Register detailed the highest level risks and that local risk registers were in place for every School, Professional Support Department and key project. The Strategic Risk Register was reviewed in detail by the Risk Group, the Vice Chancellor's Executive Group and the Audit & Risk Committee. As a practical example of the ongoing management of risk across the University, the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee highlighted the work of the Internal Audit Service which tested controls as part of the audit process.

It was noted that, since consideration at the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee, one further risk in relation to the departure of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor had been added to the Strategic Risk Register. After mitigation, the residual scoring of this risk reflected the processes being put in place to manage the selection process together with continuity in the day to day running of the University by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group.

Court endorsed the revised Strategic Risk Register.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

7.5 **Health & Safety Report to Court**

The Vice Principal, Resources spoke to the report which provided a summary of the work of the Health & Safety Committee during the 2020/2021 academic year, highlighting the key focus of the Committee during the period on the University's response to COVID-19.

In response to a question, the Chair of Court advised that further consideration would be given to the link between health & safety and the role and remit of the Resources & People Committee.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

8. **Financial Statements**

Following a presentation from the Director of Finance focussing on financial performance against budget and the key accounting judgements made by management in the preparation of the accounts, Court approved the Financial Statements for year ended 31st July 2021, subject to minor amendment.

Court endorsed the letter of representation noting that this would be signed by the Chair of Court and forwarded to the External Auditors.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

9. **Performance Framework**

The Vice Principal, Planning & Recruitment spoke to the report which outlined performance against trends and targets in the performance framework table and provided an analysis of action and activity underway to drive improvements in performance.

In response to a question, the Vice Principal, Resources outlined the range of initiatives in place to attract staff to the University and improve the staff : student ratio which, like others in the HE sector, had been impacted by a higher than normal labour turnover. These included the recruitment of Associate Lecturers who played a valuable role by providing ad hoc, professional teaching at the University.

The outcome of the recent National Student Survey was noted. It was noted that programmes heavily affected by COVID-19 factors external to the University had had a substantial negative impact on overall UWS results. Some programmes had, however,

received more positive results, particularly those where Programme Leads had maintained proactive engagement with students throughout the academic year.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

10. **Outcome Agreement**

Subject to minor amendment, Court endorsed the Outcome Agreement and Self Evaluation Report for onward submission to the Funding Council.

11. **Annual Governing Body Statement of Assurance - 2020/2021**

Court endorsed the Annual Governing Body Statement of Assurance noting that to meet SFC deadlines, the annual statement had been submitted to the Funding Council, subject to confirmation from the Chair that Court was satisfied on the arrangements for maintaining standards at the University and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision.

12. **Modern Slavery Statement**

Court approved the refreshed UWS Modern Slavery Statement which set out the steps the University had taken in the financial year ending 31st July 2021 to combat modern slavery and human trafficking.

It was agreed it would be useful for future reports would include detail of the impact of the actions outlined in the statement were having and how the University kept up to date with issues and developments in this area.

13. **Appointment of Principal & Vice-Chancellor**

This item was taken under Reserved Business

14. **Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Highlight Report**

Court noted for information the Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Highlight Report which provided a summary of general information on University developments and an overview of activities since the last meeting of Court.

15. **Any Other Business**

This being their last meeting of Court, the Chair thanked Professor C MacDonald and Mr A Gordon for their expertise and support of the work of the University Court and wished them well for the future.

Arrangements would be made to invite both back to the University in the near future to mark their contribution to Court.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.