



General Council Meeting of 6 June 2015: Annex to Billet

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Contents

Page

Papers for the General Council Meeting on 6 June 2015

1	Formal communications from the University Court	2
2	Report of the Academic Standing Committee	2
3	Report of the Constitutional Standing Committee	3
4	Report of the Finance and Services Standing Committee	4
5	Report of the Public Affairs Standing Committee	5
6	Meetings of the Business Committee	6

Papers from the General Council Meeting on 14 February 2015

A	Presentation on the Annual Report by the Principal	6
B	Presentation of the Report of the Business Committee	18

Papers for the General Council Meeting on 6 June 2015

1 Formal communications from the University Court

The following Draft Resolutions have been received:

- 10/2015 Foundation of a Chair of Chemical Reaction Catalysis
- 11/2015 Foundation of a Chair of Applied Control Engineering
- 12/2015 Foundation of a Chair of Tropical Livestock Generics and Health
- 13/2015 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Environmental Law
- 14/2015 Foundation of a Chair of Cyber Security and Privacy
- 15/2015 Alteration of the title of the chair of Epigenetics
- 16/2015 Abolition of the Waddington Chair of Systems Biology
- 17/2015 Foundation of a Chair of Materials Engineering
- 18/2015 Boards of Studies
- 19/2015 Code of Student Conduct
- 20/2015 Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 21/2015 Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 22/2015 Degree of Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent)

2 Report of the Academic Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 6 June 2015

Convener of the Academic Standing Committee: Professor Stuart Macpherson

The Committee has met on two occasions to fulfill the remit it set itself for the current session which was set out in the Winter 2015 report.

Meeting on 21 January 2015.

The Committee met with Mr Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary –Student Experience and Ms Kathleen Hood, Head of Widening Participation and Deputy Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions to discuss the strategy behind increasing student numbers and plans to alleviate any impact this increase may have on the quality of the student experience.

It was explained that student numbers had grown more slowly in the period 2010 – 2016 mainly due to non-UK undergraduates and a steady increase in distance learners. The numbers of non-EU international students was growing steadily and they now constituted 36% of the student population. The University had a positive aspiration to grow the postgraduate research numbers but the future global market was very competitive. Although it was expected that the total number of undergraduates would remain stable over the next few years there was likely to be an increase in the proportion of overseas students as there would be a decline in the number of UK 18 year olds. The University was aware that overseas students came from varying educational and cultural backgrounds and this required a range of approaches to optimize their experience in Edinburgh.

Strenuous efforts are being made to improve the student experience. These include an investment in Personal Tutors for all students and very early assessment has shown that 75% found their Personal tutor helpful. The Student Experience Project was examining possible improvements in student services and covered a wide variety of topics including pre-arrival support, induction, provision of student information points across the campus, student communication with focused web and online services, student surveys and peer support. Successful initiatives would continue as mainstream university policy.

Assessment and Feedback had been identified as requiring attention in the National Student Survey. One of the main criticisms was turnaround time and an audit of this was currently underway alongside a trail of a University set timetable for these issues.

Meeting on 21 April 2015.

The Committee met with Dr Eve Hepburn, Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations to discuss principally the balance between the delivery of high quality of education and research for individual academics. Dr Hepburn has received The University's "Rising Star Award". The Principal has stated that The University must deliver both excellent education and research.

Dr Hepburn impressed the Committee with her understanding of student requirements and her clear enthusiasm for her work. She pointed out that an academic needs to be a multi-tasker undertaking diverse roles including teaching, inspiring students, imparting knowledge, performing peer judged high quality research and administration.

Dr Hepburn felt that constantly increasing monitoring exercises and teaching related administration consumed time the academic could more profitably have utilized in education or research. As far as the balance between research and education was concerned Dr Hepburn was of the opinion that undergraduates felt excluded from the research agenda and she had made impressive attempts to involve her students in her research interests.

The Committee gained a very favourable impression of Dr Hepburn's interpretation of and solutions for addressing the challenges facing the present day young academic. They were however disappointed to hear of the emphasis on research in the University's appraisal system at the expense of delivery of education.

3 Report of the Constitutional Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 6 June 2015

Convener of the Constitutional Standing Committee: Mr Gordon Cairns

The Committee has met on two occasions since my last half-yearly report which have involved continuing monitoring of, and discussions and implications of, the result of last year's Referendum and the resultant draft legislation produced by the Smith Commission published in January of this year.

A response was submitted to the Consultation Paper on the Higher Education Governance Bill and at our April meeting consideration was given to the resultant Feedback Report.

Some debate has taken place around clarification of the current definitions of "general council membership" and further discussions are taking place with the Registrar of the General Council before any further decisions are taken.

The Committee is also considering proposals for the updating of information provided to those who are interested in becoming members of the Business Committee of the General Council and also methods by which we can better explain the purpose of the General Council to its current and future members. This project will be a joint effort with the Public Affairs Standing Committee.

My thanks as always to my Committee Members and to Mike Mitchell and Mary Scott for their continued efforts and support.

4 Report of the Finance and Services Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 6 June 2015

Convener of the Finance and Services Standing Committee: Ms Kirsty MacGregor

The Finance and Services Standing Committee has met twice since the previous report to the General Council on 14th February 2015.

At the meeting on the 20th January 2015 the committee met with Mr Phil McNaul, University Director of Finances.

Mr McNaul reported that overall this had been a very successful year for Edinburgh. It has moved up in the REF and 83% of the University's research activity was in the highest categories; 4* and 3* which were classified as "world leading" or "internationally excellent". The University has continued to demonstrate excellence in education, research and innovation.

Key facts & statistics include:

- The University is in a strong financial position with total revenue of £781m
- Student numbers are up to 33,110 with 41% of these being international
- Student satisfaction ratings are a continued focus for attention and going in the right direction
- 98% of students were in employment or further study six months after graduation
- Staff appraisal completion has gone up to 92% from 72% in 2013
- 35 new companies and 48 commercial licenses were registered
- Social sustainability and responsibility is now at the heart of the University's strategy. 35 departments received Sustainability awards and we are reviewing our investment strategy.
- The LiFi Research & Development Centre has been established; this new technology could add £56M GVA per annum to the Scottish economy within ten years and support over 1,000 jobs

Key Development Areas:

- Making better use of the University estate as a contributor to the financial sustainability of the University. The estate strategy is currently under review and the University plan to improve utilisation
- The actuarial deficit on the USS pension scheme was increasing due to a combination of low bond yields, lower return on equities and people living longer. It was likely that employee and employer contribution would have to increase and the benefits package be restructured for the USS scheme to remain financially viable while reducing its long term deficit.

The Convener and committee thanked Mr McNaul warmly for a very stimulating and informative presentation and discussion.

At the meeting on the 10th March 2015 FSSC met with Professor Iain Clarke, Dean of the Business School

Professor Clarke took up the role of Dean of the Business School in November 2012. His key message to the committee was that following a period of rapid growth, the School had been making improvements that were enabled by the unique financial regime of the School which enabled rapid investment, flexibility and a degree of autonomy that EQUIS and AACSB accrediting bodies saw as essential for a top business school.

Professor Clarke spoke to the themes of growth, internationalisation and interdisciplinary working as had been requested by the Business Committee.

The School's vision is: *"to be recognized as a progressive and connected community for thought leadership on the international business stage". To become one of the top 5-10 UK business schools.*

To achieve this the central emphasis was on improving research and teaching to levels equivalent to, or better than, the other top UK business schools.

The Top Priorities are:

- Better quality and participation in research
- Student experience – innovation in programmes, technology and better pedagogy
- Simplification of operations and culture

Growth statistics

- Total student numbers have grown from 1423 in 2010 – 11 to 1,594 at present
- 38% of Undergrads were international. Up from 29% in 2008
- 71% of PGs were international, up from 65% in 2008
- 92 nationalities were represented across the student body
- Faculty & staff numbers have increased from 68 in 2010-11 to 101 in 2014-15.
- Faculty represented over 30 countries (53% of staff were international, including dual nationalities)
- School income has grown by 50% since 2010-11.

The Convener and committee warmly thanked Professor Clarke very much for his illuminating presentation and discussion.

5 Report of the Public Affairs Standing Committee

for the General Council Meeting on 21 June 2014

Convener of the Public Affairs Standing Committee: Mr Matthew McPherson

I was lucky enough to be at Lucy Lumsden's talk at the Half Yearly Meeting Lunch in January. A graduate of Edinburgh, she is now Head of Comedy at Sky Entertainment. Lucy spoke fondly of how her time at Edinburgh had helped shape who she was and the career she decided to undertake. Who would have thought that when putting on our televisions for some of the nation's favourite comedy shows we would be watching in part the product of what our great University has to offer. It was a reminder to me of the far reaching and immensely varied destinations of our graduates. Our function as a General Council is to give graduates an opportunity to have a role in the governance of the University.

With an increasingly diverse graduate body, the work of the General Council has grown rapidly both in challenge and in opportunity.

As Convener, I have attempted to ensure that the role of the Public Affairs Standing Committee (PASC) continues to focus on the operational engagement of the General Council's members. This task is immense in size, and it is therefore essential that our strategy continues to be one of partnership with the Development and Alumni department of the University of Edinburgh. On the back of several of their successful ventures, we have been able to build both the reputation and relevance of the General Council's work in securing the future of the University from which we have all benefited.

The renewal of the General Council's introductory leaflet seeks to widen the knowledge to University friends, partners, and, above all, recent graduates, the work of the General Council. We hope that our increased online presence will continue to enhance the ability of people around the world to easily find relevant and detailed information about the General Council.

PASC has also worked closely with the University on building a relationship with the wider community in Edinburgh. With around 80,000 students in the city, pressures on housing and other public amenities are an inevitable consequence, and PASC has been listening and inputting into how the University's expansion can be made in the most sustainable and respectable way. The Alumni Weekend of 2015 promises to deliver an exceptional programme, and following much discussion at PASC will include a Q and A session with the

Principal himself, hosted by the General Council. PASC has made it clear that it hopes engagement can be accessible and relevant, and this event represents exactly that. Should you wish to have further involvement with the PASC, or indeed if the committee could be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Matt McPherson PASC Convener

6 Meetings of the Business Committee

The Committee has met twice since its last Report was printed, viz. 19 March and 21 May 2015.

Papers from the General Council Meeting on 14 February 2015

A Presentation of the Annual Report of the University

at the General Council Meeting on 14 February 2015

Principal and Vice-Chancellor: Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea

Principal: Thank you very much. Good morning. A great pleasure to be here. Up to 1858 the Principal used to be accountable to the Lord Provost of the City and the Curators of Patronage, who used to regularly, and the word you would find in the Council Minutes was 'chastise', but mostly verbal I think, but chastise the Principal and the professors. That all changed with the 1858 Act and since then, for the last 157 years I am obliged by Parliamentary legislation to address you once a year and give you an annual review. It is a tremendous pleasure, and I do not perceive any risk of imminent chastisement, so I am very pleased to do that.

I want to start by expressing my great appreciation for the work of the General Council, Charles (Swainson) as Convener of the Business Committee, Mike (Mitchell) as Secretary, and the Business Committee as a whole, and the other committees that have been very helpful to the University, and obviously the high point being as mentioned the very successful meeting in Toronto, which involved alumni and others. We have had incredible devotion and hard work from the three General Council Assessors to the Court. That is not an honorific position, we tend to work them very hard indeed, and particularly in demanding matters related to personnel and a whole range of things. And obviously the fun bit is processing through the rain to St Giles for important services, but apart from that fun bit there are also some quite serious bits involving University Court committees, and I greatly appreciate that. Of course, as you are all very well aware under the 1858 Act you elected the Princess Royal as our Chancellor. She has been tremendously assiduous and in the last couple of weeks has carried out five different visits in the University; has received about 200 long-term donors, and at the same time engaged with about thirty major donors. So seven different events, we are getting tremendous support from the Chancellor that you elected.

Coming on then to the Annual Review; it is a beautiful document, and I will follow my normal practice, which is I shall basically take you through it quite quickly starting from the back. One of the key questions is; how many students have we got and where are they? Well about two thirds are in Humanities & Social Science, which would make it on its own quite a big university. Even in Science & Engineering there are about 8,000 students, which would be the size of a lot of British universities. Since 2002 the student body has been growing at a rate of about 1,000 a year. If you go back it has been surprisingly steady, some years it has grown by 900, some years it has grown by 1,100, but basically we have been growing at 1,000 a year. If you look at the level of study you will see two thirds are undergraduates; for a leading research university that is slightly

surprising, in most leading research universities the ratio probably would be reversed, it would be two thirds postgraduate to one third undergraduate, and if you look at the major US research universities that is much more likely what you will find. But that model has been working really well for us.

If you look at domicile, then if you like Scotland is the big third, non-UK is the big quarter, Other UK is a sort of regular quarter, and that represents quite a change. More than 40% of our students now come from outside the United Kingdom. For the whole of the 20th Century it was pretty constant at 19%. In 2000 19% came from outside the United Kingdom, and I got furious a couple of years ago and went back to 1900 and 19% came up, but since then that has been changing at a rate of almost 2% a year. So within that overall growth we have been seeing lots of immensely high quality students from around the world. The two most important places for us in that regard are the United States of America and you see that makes us extraordinary in the UK, that is the biggest number of students from the United States that any British university has. That number of US students represents about 6% of the student body. You can do the sums yourself, but it is fairly obvious, it is about 6%. What is surprising there is that if you go into the records 200 years ago 10% of our students came from the United States. We were at the end of the 18th century the dominant university in the English speaking world, and if you were in the United States, or Canada, or elsewhere and you wanted your son and I am afraid it was your son. There was one exception who was a woman, but it was not her parents who got her in, she snuck in, but apart from Miranda Barry, if you wanted to be your son to be a doctor, then the best university in the world was Edinburgh, and for all sorts of other subjects.

Then of course we have had the recent tremendous growth in students from the Peoples' Republic of China, and when you add those to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore you see that we have got a very substantial cohort of students whose first language is either Mandarin or Cantonese. We are surprisingly strong in Germany. India does not represent a tremendous number really, particularly when you think back that at the end of the 19th century when we had the biggest cohort of Indian students in the UK, but we are building that and we are one of the few British universities where the number of students from India and the Indian sub-continent is actually growing. So you see the pattern. One thing to be aware of is, we are all aware that the Peoples' Republic of China represents about a fifth of the world, and it has got a really growing economy and we see it there. Of course the United States is not a fifth of the world, but it still has by far the world's most successful economy, so that is not too surprising. The demographics and the numbers tell us that India will very soon be like China in terms of proportion of the world, so it would be surprising if we did not see, if General Council say in ten years from now, did not see India up in the top three as well, or maybe India number one would not surprise me too much.

We are very popular. We had, in the round that is in the review, more than 55,000 applications. A thing to be aware about these applications is they are, to use the jargon, nearly all 'competent', that is to say these students are people who are not stupid, and their teachers are not stupid, they do not apply to Edinburgh if they do not have the grades. So we have the difficult task of choosing from more than 55,000 students pretty much all of whom have, or are predicted to have, the Highers or A Levels that are adequate, more than adequate in most cases, to study at the University of Edinburgh. It is a hard selection task for us. We let in more in the undergraduate programme than we ever have before, almost 6,000, and we did that partly in response to the immensely high quality of the applicant pool that we had. That is a very large number of undergraduates, and again if you think through the earlier numbers I showed you it would be very difficult for us to let in 6,000 a year, because obviously with a four year degree the undergraduate population would quickly hit 24,000 which would be very large indeed. But of course that problem is also an opportunity to ensure that the very best students do come here, so that is where we are with that.

I am just going to make a few comments on the different Chairs. Really this is a sign of the success of the University and a sign of the range of the University. So Personal Chairs are given to colleagues who have performed outstandingly well and are already on the staff. A thing to be aware of is it is harder to get a Personal Chair in the University of Edinburgh than to get an Established Chair. That may be mingy of us, but

if you work for us already you really have got to demonstrate that you are the business. Whereas as an Established Chair would also represent an appointment that needs to be filled. So actually it is very hard to get a Personal Chair, and there are some very interesting ones here. I point to Olga Taxidou, Personal Chair of Drama and Performance Studies, that shows us growing Edinburgh College of Art. Professor Heather Wilkinson, Personal Chair of Dementia Practice and Partnership, that is a very big area for the University of Edinburgh, concern with healthy aging in all sorts of regards. So the Chair titles are quite interesting, because they do show in some important ways where the University is going. These are the established Chairs, you will notice that mostly here we are appointing into the Business School; four of the six here are in the Business School and one is in Economics, and that is because we were determined to invest in the Business School to up its leadership capability.

Then the Honorary Professorships, these are very distinguished people who are giving of their time for free. You notice for example, that the School of Law has Sir Gerald Gordon, a very distinguished QC. Business School has got Sir David Tweedie, who would be regarded by most as the most accomplished and senior accountancy figure in the whole of the United Kingdom. The point about these, you should smile at these, because a) they are very distinguished, b) they teach, and c) they do not cost us a penny. So this is a good thing. In Medicine & Veterinary Medicine you get an idea of where we are going. Well, Cellular Neurobiology, a Personal Chair in Undergraduate Medical Education, so someone who is distinguished in their work there. Cancer Therapeutics and Clinical Neurology; give you a picture of where our colleagues are excelling. Then where is Medicine & Veterinary Medicine investing? Well, in Molecular Pathology, Haematological Regeneration, and as I have told you at previous meetings we are world leaders in the synthesis of human blood, so in a way it is not too surprising that we are appointing to a Chair of Haematological Regeneration. We are world leaders in zoonotic diseases, diseases that jump from one species to another, like HIV, AIDS or SARS, so not too surprising that we are going out to get an international star in the area of Infectious Disease Pathology. Then a whole range of very distinguished individuals who are donating time to the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine.

We come onto Science & Engineering. Where is Science & Engineering booming, well High Performance Computing, Surface Geodynamics, Reproductive Biology, Astrophysics, Observational Astrophysics, it gives you a good picture of where we are really excelling. One does not get one of these Personal Chairs without an elaborate process. They will typically involve six external referees, two external referees nominated by the candidate, two external referees chosen by the School and two external referees chosen quite independently, and unless all of the six references are quite unequivocal people do not get this promotion. So it is a very demanding situation. If you look at professorships; Applied Hydrodynamics, Organic Chemistry, a very, very good appointment, Synthetic Biology, Professor Rosser, an absolute star. I am trying to remember if it is £5M or £6M, but we appointed her to the Chair of Synthetic Biology, and within months of arriving she had secured in the order of £6M of research money in Synthetic Biology, so when we go externally we are looking for people who are really very good. Again Professor Guy Lloyd-Jones, since he has joined us from Manchester we have been doing stunningly well in Chemistry. So these are really very, very good individuals. There are some key Honorary Professorships; the one I am particularly delighted about there is Fabiola Gianotti, an extremely charming Italian physicist, who has just been appointed Director General of SERN, but appointed Director General of SERN after she accepted the Honorary Professorship. She was the person who actually led the practical work, so she was the chief experimentalist working at SERN on the large Hadron Collider, obviously a good friend of ours, and it is absolutely wonderful that despite the cares of office that she will get as Director General of SERN she is keen to teach for free in our School of Physics and Astronomy.

We have had lots of international acclaim. We have all sorts of acclaim, and you can read through, but I would just draw your attention to some; Sir Adrian Bird, who keeps getting wonderful awards for his work in Epigenetics, so very important. Of course Epigenetics was a subject invented in the University of Edinburgh by (C H) Waddington in the 20s. Euan Brechin, Professor of Co-ordination Chemistry getting the Indian Academy's Award. I am very pleased that Stefano Brandini has been made Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella d'Italia, and we had an appropriate ceremony. If you are going to get an Italian star you get a nice dinner, no

messaging about, but very nice that the Italian Government chose to recognise our Chair of Chemical Engineering, just as we are delighted that John Peacock was awarded Asia's most prestigious prize for his work in Cosmology and that Pedro Vale was recognised by ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich), ETH being where Einstein researched for his work.

The EUSA Teaching Awards have a tremendous impact. The Students Union chooses through a very competitive process; about 2,500 nominations from our student body. That is a lot of nominations, a very elaborate process and then determining who is the best research supervisor, best postgraduate tutor, best Personal Tutor or best at giving feedback. It is very highly motivating for the staff. Staff who are nominated take it very seriously, staff who are runners-up or who get the award are obviously delighted with it.

Then University awards, Lesley Yellowlees, also President of the Royal Society of Chemistry and successful Head of the College of Science & Engineering, was made Alumnus of the Year. I am really excited about Agata Smoktunowicz, she is an incredibly successful young mathematician. It would be extremely unusual for a woman to receive Mathematics' highest honour worldwide, but Agata is definitely in the running. This is someone who as well as having a stella reputation is as charming and as devoted to the students as you could wish for. And Helen Cameron, who as I mentioned got a Personal Chair for her work in Medical Education, also received the Chancellor's Award, and we have Catherine Heymans, one of a number of very successful up and coming young female scientists in the School of Physics & Astronomy. Some of the other awards have gone very well. I am really pleased that Professor Murray, for his wonderful work in palliative care, particularly related to St Columba's, was recognised. Rebecca MacKenzie; we do tremendous pro bona work in Law, it is wonderful training for the students. It is highly supervised obviously, one does not want people in need to be given inappropriate or incorrect legal advice, but that is a scheme that seems to be going very well. Of course for that scheme to work it means that a lot of highly competent legal professionals have to donate time to supervise the students, so that anything that is said in any formal way to the people who come to our free Law Centre, has to be monitored by a qualified professional. Then the Tam Dalyell Prize for Excellence went to Harold Haas who has done wonderful work on LiFi (Light-Fidelity, high speed wireless communications through light emitting diodes), but is an absolutely brilliant public communicator.

Queen's Honours, we have been doing very well. Adrian Bird got his Knighthood, highly appropriate. Four CBEs on that list for that period, and of course Margaret Tait sitting in the room, University Court Member, MBE, and Tom Devine, easily Scotland's most distinguished historian, also got a Knighthood, and for me it is a pleasure to see how many very well recognised people associated with the University are in the Honours List. I was very delighted that Aziz Sheikh who does wonderful work on Asthma and has really changed the way people think about how you treat asthma through his leadership was also recognised.

There are a lot of people in the Honorary Graduations. For me a particular highlight in Canada was Margaret Atwood. It was enormous pleasure to see her entertainingly tease the Convener of the Business Committee over dinner, and make lots of interesting jokes. She also made jokes at other peoples' expense too, but somehow Charles got the brunt of it. It was interesting to meet an author who was as engaging as her books. This was not someone who just writes in a sparkling off the wall way, this is also somebody who teases in an off the wall and sparkling way, and that was very good to encounter. I was delighted that the former President of India, Dr Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam, both received an Honorary Degree and came for the formal opening of our Indian Institute, a deeply inspirational figure. He is quite unusual, a Head of State with really serious credentials in science. This is somebody who knows how to design aeroplanes, this is somebody who knows about irrigation and dams, a very compelling person. It was a great pleasure for me that we gave an award to Anne Donovan. I do not know if any of you have read Buddha Da, yes, good. Even if you think you cannot read Scots, you will be able to read it. It is all in Scots, it is three different voices in Scots. It is just an extraordinarily funny book, and Anne has donated time to the teaching of Scots in the University, but writes fabulous books. If you have not read Buddha Da I would encourage you to do so, and if you have not read Margaret Atwood, read Margaret Atwood. Very nice that we were able to honour François Englert, while at the same ceremony his university, the Free University of Brussels, honoured Peter Higgs, two totally different

personalities. François Englert is probably one of the most expansive people. This is somebody who really projects, you know he is there, big gestures, and he is obviously a pair with Peter Higgs, who like me is a quiet retiring person. To see the two together on the same stage was wonderful. It was wonderful that we were able to honour the former Archbishop of Canterbury, and a very moving event when in the context of the work on the United Nations Charter on Human Rights that group meeting in the McEwan we were able to honour Malala Yousafzai.

So we are in good shape. Anybody who is at all Micawberish will look and say 'Income £781M, Expenditure £747M', so there are a couple of pence in the gap there. I am a deeply Micawberish person. One of my roles, if you look at my job description, is Chief Accounting Officer of the University, so I like these numbers. If they were reversed I would be deeply unhappy. Research Grants make up 28% of income. What we have not put up there, which is an interesting figure, is Formula Funding. We have got an income of £781M, what percentage of that is Formula Funding from the Scottish Government? The answer is 26%, and essentially we have been pushing that down 1% a year now for a number of years. It is very important, we love the Scottish Government, we trust the Scottish Government, but we would still like to be more financially independent of the Scottish Government. Our accounts show very clearly that each year we become that bit more independent. We created 35 new companies, issued 48 new commercial licenses, and this is obviously one of the reasons why the Scottish Government loves us, because we are very successful at that. Now within Southeast Scotland that is becoming highly, highly visible. So if you go to the Quartermile you will find Skyscanner, that is a firm that was not spun out from the University of Edinburgh, it is a very successful online firm that sells travel bookings. It is a spin-out from the University of Manchester, but it decided that it would be better placed next to us, so it has brought a few hundred high quality jobs to Edinburgh, it got me to open it when it started. Immediately above them is a company called FanDuel. FanDuel is a University of Edinburgh spin-out. It is a firm which is basically targeted entirely at the United States of America. What it does is it provides gaming in things like fantasy football. You play to assemble an American team, an American football team or an American basketball team or hockey team, your fantasy best one, and you do this with lots of other people doing it and then it is tested and developed against the actual games that happen in the United States. So I went to visit FanDuel on Thanksgiving, which is the obvious place to go because that is the big day for American Football in the United States. We are talking now about millions of people in the United States paying to play this game. Of course, if you go on the website it talks with an American accent, it looks American. There are plenty of people in the world who are happily using this and the idea that it is actually being run from a few hundred metres from here would startle them, because it sounds American, it looks American, and gosh it is a successful company. It is a very successful company indeed. We have seen Amazon locate, I do not know if any of you buy stuff on Amazon. Anybody ever bought anything on Amazon? The surprising thing about Amazon is the user interface, again it looks sort of American, it is all designed and implemented in Waverley Gate in the former Post Office, and nearly everybody working there has got a Masters in Computer Science from the University of Edinburgh. So what has happened there is Amazon, which is a worldwide firm, it can choose where it decides to build its interfaces has decided that the best place on the planet is not Boston, not San Francisco, it is Edinburgh, and it is staffed almost entirely by Edinburgh graduates who go into high quality jobs. We have IBM co-locating with us. So there is a real boom. When you look at this 35 new companies we have got, statistically we expect about 80% of them to survive and stay in Southeast Scotland; most in Edinburgh, but some will go out to Midlothian, some will go out to West Lothian. Again, Micawberish, it is important to have some assets, we have £1.7b of assets in the University, and that is helpful.

Just galloping through the review of the year, during the Arts Festival there was an amazing event, again which you could Google, from Nam June Pak, on technology and robots doing really interesting things. We have done a really good campaign to communicate to the students how we are improving the student experience, the learning experience, the Chancellor opened the Carbon innovation Centre, where as you have been told you will be meeting. It is wonderful that we have a Georgian Building, famous for the place where Lister was, famous as the Royal High School, the only Georgian Building that has got the top BREEAM rating, the top rating for environmental efficiency. We had wonderful Gifford Lectures from Rowan Williams.

I will tell you what the outcome, but the Research Excellence Framework is a massive enterprise, and we submitted the return at the end of December 2013, and just a year later we got the result. We have done lots of collaborative research, particularly with Delhi. You will notice that we gave the Vice Chancellor of Delhi University an Honorary Degree. Next week I shall be Delhi where we will have a joint conference. We are doing a lot of work in Biology. One of the things I have spotted is when we were making all the fuss about Higgs everybody forgot about Bose. Of course Bose was the famous Indian physicist after whom the boson is named. So we had a big celebration of the Higgs boson in Delhi, with Indian physicists. I was delighted with that and the Indians were delighted, because we seemed to be the only people who remembered that the Higgs boson had a Bose in it as well. So that was a nice thing. We had an online MOOC about Scotland's Referendum. £43M worth of super-computing out at Easter Bush, which means that we now have about £200M worth out there. We have dominated British university super-computing for the last twelve years, and recently it was announced that we were one of five UK institutions to be in the UK Alan Turing Institute, the other four being Oxford, Cambridge, University College London and Warwick, so we are part of a UK level enterprise on data science. It is very important, a big enterprise, but we have got a head start because we have got the last three big super-computers run by the University of Edinburgh, and big super-computers do tend to cost £100M or £50M, and £43M, so it is a bargain.

We launched the UK's first Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability in a university and launched a 'Go Abroad' fund. One of the strange problems we have is that with the possible exception of California it is pretty hard to get our students to spend a year abroad, whereas lots of students from abroad want to come here. So we are working very hard to persuade our students to put up with the indignity of spending a year in Paris, Florence, Kazakhstan or Moscow. It is part of the international endeavour, it is wonderful that 41% of our students come from outside the United Kingdom, but it would also be wonderful if more of our students went to spend part of their study away.

As I said, we had a lovely event where we honoured both Englert and Peter Higgs, and in addition to the MOOC on Scotland's Referendum we are doing our bit for Scottish sports capability with a very good MOOC called "Understanding Football"! And who knows, we have a robotic football team, we have a MOOC called "Understanding Football", I do not think that this university can do more to help Scotland progress its position internationally in the world of football.

We celebrated the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, here are six of the 100 photos. If you have not seen it go to the west end of George Street and you will see these six and the other 94. Top centre you have got Anne Richards, our new Vice Convener of Court, and of course to her left you have got Lesley Lellowlees, Head of the College of Science & Engineering, and to her right the University Secretary. Then below to the left Alex Brown, who is an alumnus of ours and who is also Chair of the Scottish Funding Council. Natascha Gentz is in the middle bottom, an incredibly dynamic and successful Head of our Confucius Institute, and then on the right you have got the Chancellor you elected, the Princess Royal.

Some different topics; the work on visualising a cure for cancer, I would encourage you to read about that. It is a really very, very promising use of technology and pharmacology with regard to cancer. Lots of work involved in bringing together different groups of international students; the Gather festival had 53 different types. We have become the world's centre for looking at the benefits of having more than one language, bi-lingualism. Professor Sorace has done very, very well indeed with a lot of media coverage. For a long time lots of families believed that you should not clutter up a child's mind, so you would have Italian families let us say in Scotland who would not speak Italian in front of the children, because they thought that might not be helpful for their ability to learn English, or Polish families not speaking Polish. I myself had the benefit of being brought up in a German/Irish family where we always spoke German at home, so that was very helpful for me. When the University did the research systematically what it showed very clearly was that if there is a second language available it really is both a short term and a long term benefit to have serious mastery of another language to the kids when they are at school and it also delays in a statistical sense the advance of dementia as you get older. So bi-lingualism is a really good thing and if there is anyone in the audience who

is not bi-lingual I do encourage you. We have an office of Life Long Learning, wonderful courses in many languages, get working on it. It is never too late to learn a second or third language, I do encourage you.

The virtual cadaver got a lot of coverage around the world, and our medics and our vets have always been at the forefront of using computer technology for their work. Our work in Africa with a consortium of twenty one international partners, a lot of online work there, which is of course a very economical way of delivering training, postgraduate training, in countries like Tanzania and Uganda. It is going very well indeed. The Global Health Academy is very active in this. Vice Principal Welburn, responsible for Global Access, has recently been very successful in getting scholarships for students from Africa to come to the University of Edinburgh to work in this area. I have to say I am very proud of the work we do in Africa. Working in Africa is demanding, it is demanding in a whole range of ways. It is easy for you to imagine, but it is also demanding in terms of resources. If you are going to work successfully in Africa you have to treat the universities you work with, as we work with Makerere, as equal partners, at the same time there is no money there; if you work with Harvard there is money in the United States, if we work with Africa we have to find the money and then spend a lot of it in Africa. So the colleagues who do that really are dedicated and some of the time they are working in circumstances that for practical reasons are really very demanding, so it is something that this university should be very proud of, the work that we do in Africa.

This new dinosaur got an awful lot of coverage, the long snouted *Pinocchio rex*. As I mentioned we had the former President of India visit, that was wonderful. Subsequently Gandhi's grandson came and spoke extremely powerfully and the collaborations with India are going apace in all sorts of ways and we are very pleased. Our office in Mumbai is working very well and we are working very strongly in Delhi, but also in Calcutta in Bangalore.

This was wonderful, this was a knockout. The terracotta warriors; everyone flocked in. They looked amazing and should I mention the Kelpies? Yes, this was such a success that we are now going to get the two maquettes of the Kelpies, and when I say maquettes I am talking about something a hell of a lot bigger than me. I do not know if any of you have seen the Kelpies, but if you go down the motorway, west on the motorway, you see the Kelpies. Well the Kelpies like the terracotta warriors, are going to inhabit the Quad. I did a bit of problem-solving, because there was some fussing about there being a beating of the retreat in August while we have the Kelpies, and I took an executive decision of the type I sometimes do and said 'I think it would be very attractive to have massed pipes proceeding between a pair of Kelpies, so I think it will make a very nice picture indeed. I am looking forward to that.

We had the tenth anniversary of the Confucius Institute and we were at the foot of the Mound, more than 5,000 visitors, two colleagues dressed as pandas, even in September it was quite warm walking about dressed as a panda so I thought that was very noble of them. Two colleagues dressed as pandas, but we had a pop-up tea ceremony, we had calligraphy, we had dance, it was a really fabulous thing, and a really wonderful exhibition of poster art of modern China. It is very interesting because the history of China over the last hundred years is very complex, it is not a simple move from one style of government to another style and what was fascinating about the exhibit was looking at the posters from China in the 1920s and 1930s, immediately after the Second World War, during the Cultural Revolution in China, again completely different kinds of posters were used. It was a wonderful exhibition.

Research Excellence Framework; the Research Excellence Framework has replaced something that used to be called Research Assessment Exercise and is UK-wide. It happens every five or six years. The last time it happened was 2008. It compares all subjects and they are assessed. 83% of our research was categorised either in the top as four star, that is world-leading, or three star internationally leading. We submitted 200 more colleagues than we submitted in 2008. The quality also went up. The universities that did better than us were Oxford, Cambridge and University College London. We came fourth at the UK level. Those are all in research star terms quite a bit bigger than us. We are easily Scotland's top ranked research institution. Of the 19 universities in Scotland a bit more than a third of the top research is in our university, University of

Edinburgh, so a big win. Lots of media coverage of this. We were treated very well in the Times and we are a member of the Russell Group. The Russell Group are the top 24 universities in the United Kingdom. The other Scottish university to be in the Russell Group is Glasgow. My assumption in the REF was that we would go up, it was obvious we would go up, because there was so much high quality work being done, but most of the Russell Group would go up. In fact we went up, Oxford went up, University College London went up, most of the Russell Group went down, so compared to the sector we did very well indeed. So you should not take from this that all the British universities did not do better, they did, but we did better. We did better quite substantially, and it was very nice that newspapers like the Times of London, the Independent and the Guardian, as well as obviously the Scotsman and the Herald, and interestingly the Courier were commenting on how well the University of Edinburgh had done.

Our research in Sociology came top in the UK for the first time, Earth Systems and Environmental Science came top, Computer Science has always been top and stayed top. We came easily top in Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science, top in General Engineering jointly with Heriot Watt, stayed top in Linguistics, so top in six in the UK. One thing that distinguished us from the other British universities is we did more joint submissions than anybody else. We did two jointly with St Andrews, Physics and Chemistry, we did three jointly with Heriot Watt, Mathematics which in old money would have been more than three but this time Pure Mathematics, Applied Mathematics and Statistics were put together so we submitted jointly in Mathematics with Heriot Watt, in Engineering with Heriot Watt and in Architecture with Heriot Watt, and in Veterinary Science we submitted jointly with Scotland's Rural College. Just to give you an idea, across the whole of the UK there were thirteen joint submissions, but six of them were at the University of Edinburgh; that shows our ability to do detailed work with others. In terms of this, what has it meant? It has been a tremendous morale boost for all staff. I was particularly delighted by the way that all of our 13,000 staff shared the success. It was very clear to me as I was visiting units before Christmas that colleagues in support roles were as delighted as the 1,800 academic colleagues whose work had been directly submitted. So a tremendous morale boost, and tremendous at the subject level. It means for example, we were recruiting very recently in Byzantine Studies, in Chemistry and in Mathematics, all areas where we were strong and are now visibly stronger, and that is a tremendous motivator. An open issue for us is whether or not the Scottish Government will reward this. The way the Research Excellence Framework is supposed to work is we have got something called the Dual Funding Model. This determines Formula Funding to particular areas like the Humanities where you cannot get big grants, or laboratories that might be used by a lot of different research projects, so this then generates Formula Funding. When this was originally put in place the idea was for each £1 of Formula Funding we would generate about a £1 of competitive funding, but we massively over-achieve that, we produce more than £3 of competitive funding for each £1 of Formula Funding, and so we are as it were curious to see whether or not the Scottish Government will recognise our success. Because essentially what has happened in this University is that subjects that did incredibly well in 2008, like Clinical Medicine and Informatics continue to do it, and subjects that had headwind to improve did. I was delighted that our three big professional schools, Business, Engineering and Education all did amazingly well in the REF. So that is where we are in the Research Excellence Framework.

Finally, where are we? We have an immensely high quality staff and student body, you have seen how selective we are on students, you have seen all the awards the staff get. We have a tremendous number of buoyant international partnerships, and that gives us cultural diversity on the campus, gives us collaborative opportunities overseas, and you should think of it as a kit. We have got four Global Academies; Health, Development, Justice and Environment. We have got four overseas offices; New York, Sao Paulo, Mumbai and Beijing. We have got lots of area studies institutes on campus for countries like Russia, China, India, United States, Canada, Latin America, and that all comes together to be part of a very important international outlook. Lots of breakthroughs that get world press, lots of success at celebrations of achievements. And with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) we have a leadership position within Britain. It is now 1.3m from 200 countries who have studied with us with these short free courses. If you go home and Google Astrobiology or Equine Health, we come number one, we come above the Wikipedia entry. Why is that? It is

because we have got successful Open Online Courses. So things are going very well indeed and I really thank you for all the support you have given your University. Thank you very much.

Ian Sutherland: We saw in the General Council Business Committee Report that they were continuing to look at the Student Experience. I am delighted to see that continuing. There is, however, a reverse side to the coin, the staff experience, and nowadays we have just heard from the Principal about the achievements of many members of staff, but there are also many staff who spend most of their time, I would have said previously at the 'chalk face' but I suppose it is now in front of the white board or the overhead projector. Do we get any feedback from them as to how they see their position in a situation where the number of students is expanding, the pressure on resources both in staff and in text resources is increasing all the time. I think it is something that would be interesting to hear, both from the General Council point of view and the Principal's point of view?

Principal: The main source of information that we would get is the Annual Review process. All staff participate in Annual Reviews. It is a two-way process. Obviously they talk to whoever is reviewing them about what they have done the previous year, what they plan to do the next year, but as part of that they will always be talking about their experience and as part of the Annual Review staff are quite explicitly asked if they have any impediments or difficulties in the practice of their function.

Convener: A very good question, and the Business Committee has considered aspects of what you are talking about in two major ways. The first is that we are wanting to, and we have been to some extent pressing the University, but we are interested in how the University does reward excellence in teaching and how it balances that against rewarding people for excellence in research. It has been quite clear over the last five or six years that the University has moved significantly to do that and one of the ways in which we see that is the Chancellor's Awards each year to people who have quite clearly demonstrated teaching excellence. The second area that we have been working with the University on is exactly what you are saying, is the change in student numbers which the Principal has said is one to two percent every year, rising gradually. What pressures does that bring and how does the University more broadly than just teaching accommodate that and also the change in the mix of students. There is a growing number of international students who bring their own particular issues and potential difficulties with them, both for the staff and for the students themselves, so it is an area that we are keeping a close eye on and enquiring about, because it is an ever changing theme.

Flick Monk: My name is Flick Monk, I graduated two years ago, 2013 in International Relations. Thank you, that was an excellent presentation and it makes me very proud to be a part of this university. A quick question on the University's investment practices, given that a series of papers have been published calling for around 75% of fossil fuel reserves to be kept in the ground to avoid an average global temperature rise of 2 degrees, and that a consultation that ran last year at the University found that the majority of respondents were in favour of divesting the University's Endowment Fund of fossil fuels, and a letter calling for divestment has been signed by fifty staff at the University, and that Glasgow University divested last year, why has the University published a new investment policy that has not included divestment? Why was the working group looking at divestment not set up at the time of the consultation, and when is the University going to divest from fossil fuels? It is actually Global Divestment Day today, so I hope you have got some good news. Thank you.

Principal: Thank you very much for the question. The University has an ethical investment policy. We take these issues very seriously when they are raised. We joined the United Nations set of Principles for Responsible Investment. When the issue of fossil fuel divestment was raised we set up a review group chaired by the Senior Vice Principal, with representatives from all the interested parties within the University, and the thing to be clear on this is, we are a community of about 50,000, about 35,000 students now, and one has to look at the position of that whole community. This review group has obviously got people who are concerned with environmental issues, it has got colleagues who know about climate change mitigation and

fossil fuel exploration, as well as representatives from EUSA, and representatives from the Investment Committee, and the group is working on a report which will be finalised in March, and considered for any consequent action by the Central Management Group in April. It is really quite important I think to consult the community as a whole, and we have a wide and very diverse community, to be quite thoughtful of the different positions that one might take and that has been done. But what we are looking at is the basic climate science, and we have endorsed that position, the diversity of fossil fuels for energy and other things, the teaching and research portfolios we have in relevant fields, the extent our endowment funds are invested in fossil fuel companies, and the extent of engagement by our investment managers with such companies on climate change issues.

It is not new territory for us, the University divested from tobacco companies, but it is something which I think has to be done carefully and thoughtfully, so I think that the way that has been set up under the aegis of the Central Management Group and the University Court is appropriate.

Brian Smith: Just one question in what was an absolutely excellent presentation, but one thing that was not present in it was the issue of student accommodation, and I wondered whether given the increase in numbers, particularly those from overseas, what steps the University takes to as it were ensure that the accommodation within the centre and where else in the City of Edinburgh is adequate to that demand and whether there are co-operative ventures with the Council, or private enterprise, just what is being done on that front to ensure adequacy given the large numbers of people who are coming from outside the city?

Principal: That is a very good question indeed, and student accommodation is something that preoccupies us. We provide accommodation which is directly operated by the University for about a quarter of the student body, and at the moment we have just completed Deaconess House, which is for about 350. We will shortly have completed the development down at Holyrood, which is will be accommodation for about 1,200. That is one source. Some other accommodation is done in various forms of partnership. So for example you will notice that the (Royal Company of) Archers have, to my mind slightly sadly, built on their bowling green and put student accommodation there. Obviously they did that with a clear view that Edinburgh University Students would lease to live there. The Festival Theatre has produced an actually very attractive accommodation block, at the back of the Theatre, which again is focussed on us. We quite often engage in partnerships where we do not put in the money, but we agree with an outside provider what we would consider to be the maximum rents, the appropriate level of security and pastoral care, and at the moment if you go down Leith Walk you will see Ziggurat which is building a very substantial piece of accommodation on what was a very ugly derelict site. That is being done in partnership with the University.

An interesting example is on the Cowgate, the Smart City Hostel, and what happened there was that when they wanted to build the hostel they approached the University and the arrangement we have is, we have guaranteed to occupy it in term time, out of term time the people running it, there are single rooms, double rooms, rooms for four and family rooms for six, do extremely well in the Festival and at Hogmanay. Outside of the Festival and Hogmanay then those rooms, and some students get very good rooms, are all single rooms for the University. We guaranteed to occupy it provided it was maintained to a reasonable standard and provided the rents were not too high. This allowed the developers to raise the money to build it. So the Smart City Hostel is an interesting example of a project that the University did not put any money into, but was able to control the quality of for the benefit of the students. So we are continually looking at this.

The other thing we are doing is with technology, we now have a very nice interactive map of the city. So a student who is not from south east Scotland can go online and can look and be told 'here are places where there are flats', and be told that 'the university thinks this flat is a reasonable rental' and that 'this place is a reasonable place to walk to King's Buildings or to George Square from', or to be told 'the University does not think this is a reasonable rental, we would not encourage you', or 'we do not think you should attempt to walk from Gorgie to Little France' or whatever. So it is a very nice electronic app, and of course people who are providing accommodation to rent to students are very anxious to be approved by the University so they will come to us, and we are very pedantic, 'Is this appropriate in terms of price, location and facilities?' It is a

constant preoccupation of ours, as is the preoccupation of ensuring that our students are good neighbours for other people in the city regardless of whose accommodation they are staying in.

Sophie Marshall: Thank you for your speech Principal. In your speech, and in the Annual Review, the Go Abroad fund was mentioned and the Annual Review states that the Go Abroad fund is for 'short international experiences'. However, you mentioned a reduction in students applying to stay for a whole year abroad. Cost is obviously one of the explanations for this. Given that the year abroad is hugely eye-opening and a beneficial experience in line with the University's international focus, is there also financial support available for students wishing to study for a whole year abroad?

Principal: You are quite right, the whole year abroad is much more expensive, it is a domain that we fund-raise for, but it would be very difficult for us to pay those costs for a large number of students. The only way to do it would be to really up the fee which would be something that we would be quite uncomfortable doing. But you are quite right it can be expensive. For some there is a financial barrier, but there does seem also to be a cultural barrier.

John Clifford: Thank you very much for the excellent and comprehensive presentation. You mentioned, languages, and I think languages obviously are very important, and you now mention the word culture. I wonder how far a lot of students feel inhibited about going abroad for a whole year because they do not have perhaps the language of certain countries that might come into the frame. And also, given something that is taxing a lot of people at the moment is the question of language learning in Scottish schools, particularly when children, although they might start off at one plus two they end up of course in the later stages of schooling dropping a language altogether. I wonder if there would be mileage in the University once again going back to the requirement that a student should be proficient in another language other than the native tongue.

Principal: A very good question. Language competence clearly is an issue, and I have to say that I deeply regret the changes in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, and also the changes in England, which made it easier for school pupils to avoid the risk of acquiring any serious proficiency in a second language, it is a matter of regret, and it is something I have taxed the Scottish Government on, and I am delighted that yourself and other consuls in the City of Edinburgh have pointed it out; particularly the previous German consul who pointed out quite vociferously, that if Scotland wished to be an international country reducing the opportunities for learning languages in secondary schools did not seem a good way of going there. So there is an issue. I do not think it would be helpful for us to introduce an additional language test. What we have done, which is an initiative I am very supportive of, is we have got a scheme called 'Languages for All' which allows undergraduates, regardless of what they are studying, if they wish to learn French, German, Italian they can, and we are trying to add to the number of languages. My own view is there are two things we should do; one is whenever any of you see an MSP from the Scottish Government, say to them, so what are you doing to encourage language teaching in the Scottish school system, and point two is to really promote the ease in the curriculum for students once they are here to acquire that important language. You are quite right, and it is very visible that students are very reluctant to go to interesting places like Japan or China because of the language issue, and an institution like SOAS, the School of Orient and African Studies, is much better than us at doing that, and that is because they teach a lot of students Japanese and Mandarin.

Sophie Marshall: Regarding the Financial Review, you mentioned that the University receives 26% of its money from the Scottish Government, but you would prefer the University to become more financially independent. How do you anticipate that would be achieved?

Principal: There are two ways it might be achieved, because there is one way I would not like it to be achieved, and that is if the Scottish Government to give us less money, so let us try to avoid that at all costs. What I would like to see is the other activities growing. We have seen that particularly strongly in research grants, which generate overheads. We have seen that in consultancy, where there has been modest growth. We

have seen that with the online Masters. We now have more than sixty online Masters. Online Masters are a very graceful way of growing because, obviously if you have an online Masters that has ten students and an online Masters that has a thousand students, the actual preparation work is identical. You do need more staff for tutorials, in proportion, but the staffing pattern is quite different and beneficial, and of course you do not need a lecture theatre. If you look, particularly at the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, you can see what real scope this University, which is now getting a strong reputation for the quality of its electronic offerings, to grow there. So I think we have got a number of routes, and in a way the more independent we are the more we guard ourselves against some unimaginable financial catastrophe in government funding say twenty years from now, the extent to which the University has an independent funding stream is the extent to which it is really robust.

Alan Brown: I am delighted to be representing the General Council as a Court Assessor, but can I raise the problems that the online voting system has, the MyEd EASE portal. I do not know about other members here, but I certainly had about twelve people emailing me saying they found it impossible to vote online, for various reasons, and they were trying to do so for over an hour and they just did not succeed. I know it works in-house for undergraduates and postgraduates, I gather, but for the occasional General Council user I think there are serious problems.

Principal: A very good question which I delegate to the University Secretary.

University Secretary: Thank you Principal. Yes, the Secretary of the General Council raised this issue with me earlier this week, and some of the issues that people have faced. I think the main issue is that for any voting in the University, because we take any electoral process very seriously, any voting within the University we use EASE, and that is the University's secure login system. We do that because it is a secure login system, and I gather that some of the feedback that we have received about this has been that people have found it challenging because it is not their normal credentials that they put in for their normal accounts, and obviously for many colleagues you are not using it very often. I really appreciate that that is a challenge, but on the other hand whatever we do do going forward we have to be absolutely confident it is secure and that the identity is secure, otherwise the legitimacy of the election itself would fall into disrepute. What I did ask your Secretary about was whether he would like to discuss it with IS, following this experience and talk through some of the examples of what worked and what did not work, and see if there is anything we can do either in terms of dissemination of information in advance, some kind of even clearer guidelines of how to use this, or whether we should be looking at that whole secure system and seeing whether there is anything that can be done to make it more accessible. So I have certainly heard the points made and have asked that there are further discussions that follow through on that. But there is a reason, I am sure you are aware, that we need to be confident that the process is legitimate.

B Presentation of the Report of the Business Committee

at the General Council Meeting on 14 February 2015

Convener of the Business Committee: Professor Charles Swainson

Convener: Thank you Rector. Chancellor's Assessor, Rector, Principal, Members of the General Council and guests. Winter has had us in its icy grip for a short time this year, but I am delighted to say that much is sunny and warm in our University. I am delighted to welcome you to our Half-Yearly Meeting today. The last time we met and had a Half-Yearly Meeting was in the warmer climate of Toronto where our University and General Council met alumni and supporters at a series of truly wonderful events. A very well-timed discussion on separatism, comparing and contrasting Quebec and Scotland, was extremely good, and it is interesting to reflect now that Vice Principal Charlie Jeffrey's up to date analysis of voting intentions turned out to be quite right, although perhaps the margin was narrower than even he expected. Our University also honoured prominent Canadians; bibliophile and donor Garret Herman; Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, Beverley McLachlin and author and environmental activist, Margaret Atwood, with Honorary Degrees. We had a splendid Gala Dinner with colleagues and the University of Toronto, and the visit finished with our Half-Yearly Meeting.

At this particular meeting, following reflections from the Principal on the internationalisation of the University, Vice Principal Steve Hillier gave his account of how these activities have grown over the years he had been in post, and of the reach of our university and the practical consequences, and the future of teaching and learning. Steve has retired now and we wish him well in the next phase of what I am sure will continue to be a busy and productive life.

The results of the Rectorial Election by the students have just been announced and Mr Steve Morrison has been elected. We look forward to working with him once he has been installed. This means that our current Rector, Peter, will be finishing his term of office shortly. I would like to thank him very warmly for all that he has done for the University, and his support for the General Council in particular. This has been much appreciated and we wish him well for the future.

Although the Referendum gave a 'no' result, further legislation is going to be passed as you know in the UK Parliament to give further powers to the Scottish Parliament. Your Constitutional Standing Committee, ably chaired by Gordon Cairns, delivered a private paper to the University Secretary out-lining your Business Committee's views on the issues to be considered by the University in the event of either a yes or a no vote in the Referendum, and those issues have not gone away. So your committee will be responding to further consultations by the Scottish Government, as they have done already on Higher Education Governance. Although the overall principles of Higher Education Governance were very admirable, we had quite significant reservations over the detailed proposals and we have emphasised, as we have done before, the important role of General Council, and in particular of your General Council Assessors on the University Court.

Your Academic Standing Committee, chaired now by Stuart Macpherson, again has had a focus on excellence in teaching and improving results in both local and national surveys of student satisfaction. The most recent national survey was in January, and we will all be awaiting the results with interest. Your Committee has met with the University of Edinburgh Students' Association President and Vice Presidents, as they do every year, and with the Deputy Secretary Student Experience, Gavin Douglas, and Kathleen Hood, Head of Widening Participation. One of the interesting discussions with them was that the admissions environments for all universities is going to become challenging over the next ten to twenty years as the number of eighteen year olds in the population begins to fall significantly.

Your Public Affairs Standing Committee is chaired this year by Matt McPherson, a previous EUSA President. The Committee is concerned to support Kirsty MacDonald, Director of Development & Alumni, with new strategies for engaging and involving alumni in the University. As you know alumni can contribute in many

ways to our University through mentoring for careers advice and support, volunteering, and of course the donations to the Edinburgh Fund and other funds run by the Development Trust. This year the Development Trust reported to us recently that they had an excellent year in the last year of their accounts raising over £14m which has been dispersed throughout the University. In particular over £2m was put into student bursaries, helping this university along with internal resources from the University, to be the most generous in the UK to students and ensure that the best students can come here without worrying over much about the money. The rest is spent on a variety of teaching and research initiatives across Schools and Departments.

The Committee will be discussing the future of further away Half-Yearly Meetings. It is now some twelve years since we started that process with a visit to London, and ten since we took them outside the United Kingdom. The University Secretary is quite properly reviewing how the University's International Strategy will be delivered in future, and we are delighted to be able to contribute to that and we will see the results of that in good time and consider how we can fit with the University and continue to visit enthusiastic alumni in different parts of the world. This is a good time I think to review the impact of our visits so far and consider how we go forward in the future.

Your Finance and Services Standing Committee is chaired by Kirsty MacGregor. Sadly one of the members, a member of the Business Committee, Dr Robert (Bobby) Burt, had to resign earlier this year for family reasons. I am very grateful for the effort he put into the Business Committee, despite his family responsibilities. We have, therefore, co-opted a further member until July 2016, Willie Jack.

Your committee has reviewed the Annual Report and Accounts with Phil McNaull, the Director of Finance, and it is so pleasing to be able to report that the University continued to make a modest surplus last year. Research income has continued to rise, which is extraordinary as the cake across the United Kingdom and internationally has been shrinking. So it is clear that the excellence of our staff in conducting and publishing research to an international competitive standard is reflected in their ability to continue to win grant income and is also reflected in the recent Research Excellence Framework, to which I am sure the Principal will refer, where Edinburgh excelled and again moved up league tables, and is near the top of the tree in the United Kingdom. I have no doubt also that this does not come about just by academic excellence, but is also in no small part due to the very high quality of the overall leadership of our university, as reflected at this table.

As just reported you will have noted that our elections to the Business Committee have not been the success of previous years, and I take responsibility for that. We had two good candidates for five places, and in future I will try harder to ensure that we have a larger number of candidates for the available places, so that we do have an election. I am delighted with the candidates and the new members we have got. However, it does leave some gaps in the Committee, so your Secretary and I will be taking a plan to the Business Committee in March for the co-option of people who can fill the gaps in your Committee. The elections for General Council Assessors; we will be delighted to be working with both Alan Brown and Ritchie Walker in the future. Very many congratulations.

This concludes the report of your Business Committee.