

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE**UNIVERSITY COURT**

A meeting of the University Court was held on Monday 23 February 2009.

Present: Mr JR Milligan (in the Chair), Principal Sir Alan Langlands, Rector Mr CJ Murray, Professor RJ Abboud, Mr M Arnott, Mr WI Ball, Mr D Cathcart, Dr JR Elliott, Professor GLP Follett, Dr A Goligher, Mr BWM Johnston, Dr J Lowe, Mr D McLeod (President of the Students' Association), Dr H Marriage, Professor GJ Mires, Ms A Newton, Dr AM Roger, Dr LAL Rolland, Mr E Sanderson, Mr IDM Wright

In attendance: Vice-Principals Professor DH Boxer, Professor J Calderhead and Professor CP Downes, Professor JJ Belch (for item 44), Director of Finance, Director of Information Services & Deputy Secretary, Director of Human Resources, Director of Strategic Planning, Mr R Isles, Dr J McGeorge and Clerk to Court

34. MINUTES

The Court decided: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 15 December 2008.

35. MATTERS ARISINGSenior Appointments (Minute 32)

The Director of Human Resources reported on the progress that had been made in arrangements for appointing a new Principal. She confirmed that Odgers Ray & Berndtson had been appointed as the executive search agency to handle the process. Staff from Odgers had spent two days on campus meeting with members of the Appointing Committee, campus unions, students and staff. They had also conducted individual telephone interviews with others. The Director explained that the Senior Management Team and the Appointing Committee had discussed and approved the further particulars for the appointment and these had also been circulated to Court members for comment. The post had now been advertised in Times Higher Education, the Sunday Times and on jobs.ac.uk, with a closing date for applications of 6 March 2009, and the Director circulated copies of the advertisement to Court members. Early signs from Odgers were that they had been pleased with the calibre of those who had already shown interest in the post.

36. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that he and the Principal had met with their opposite numbers from the University of Abertay Dundee and from Dundee College. The meeting had been facilitated by the Chair and Chief Executive of the Scottish Funding Council (John McClelland and Mark Batho, respectively), and was an opportunity to discuss matters of mutual interest.

37. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Court received a report from the Principal (**Appendix 1**). The Principal began by outlining the financial position of the University at the end of the period to 31 December 2008. This showed that the University was broadly on track with budget and was currently forecast to achieve an operating surplus of £0.4m at 31 July 2009. Looking forward to 2009/10, the position was less certain, predominantly because the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) would only make clear its funding intentions in its Main Grant Letter, which universities would receive on 31 March 2009. This would provide information on the approach to funding through the SFC's two new streams: the General Fund, including the main teaching grant and the research excellence grant, and the Horizon Fund for new initiatives. The University had also yet to learn of any implications for its level of SFC Main Quality Research Grant arising from the publication of the Research Assessment Exercise outcomes in December 2008. The Principal expressed the opinion that he did not expect much volatility in the University's funding from the SFC, but the fine detail would only be known at the end of March.

In terms of learning and teaching issues, the Principal highlighted the results of the Times Higher Education student experience survey, in which the University had placed 12th in the UK. The University now knew the key dates for the Quality Assurance Agency's Enhancement-Led Institutional Review: a first visit would take place on 7-8 October 2009, with the main visit on 16-20 November 2009. The Principal also pointed to the strong January intake of new students, predominantly postgraduates; there were also encouraging signs for undergraduate recruitment for 2009/10, for which applications had risen by 16%. The Principal paid tribute to the hard work of staff in Admissions & Student Recruitment.

The Principal made special mention of a number of research awards, in particular the Milstein awards to Professors Irwin MacLean and Angus Lamond, but also Professor Claire Halpin's bioenergy research award from the Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). The University had also been the recipient of a number of recent EU research awards.

Finally, the Principal looked to the V&A Dundee conference taking place on 24 and 25 February 2009. The proposal to establish a V&A presence in Dundee was gaining momentum with full support from Dundee City Council, amongst others, as well as positive press coverage. It was hoped that the 'Making it Happen' Conference would provide a solid platform for further development of the proposals, which were being orchestrated by Professor Follett and the Director of External Relations.

38. FINANCE

(1) Finance & Policy Committee

The Court received a report from the meeting of the Committee on 2 February 2009 (**Appendix 2**). The Director of Finance brought to the Court's attention a number of issues.

Firstly, he outlined proposals to formalise the Ninewells Cancer Campaign as a formal Court committee reporting annually through the Finance & Policy Committee. The membership would comprise Dr Jacqui Wood (chair) and Lady Fiona Fraser (both instrumental in the work of the campaign in the past), the Principal, a representative from NHS Tayside, a legal adviser (to be confirmed) and two clinical and scientific assessors, who would add rigour to the process of allocating funds to appropriate projects. The Finance & Policy Committee had recommended to Court that it approve the proposals.

The Director reported that the Committee had agreed to set up a Pensions Sub-Group to take forward consideration of the outcomes of the actuarial review of the University of Dundee Superannuation Scheme. The membership of the group would be: Mr Sanderson (Chair), Vice-Principal Professor CP Downes [*now Acting Principal*], Dr J Lowe and Mr IDM Wright.

The Director reported on the discussion that had taken place at the Committee meeting surrounding proposals from the Students' Association that the University should divest its shares in BAe Systems and revise its ethical investment policy. The Director had reviewed existing policies within the sector, and the President of the Students' Association had presented the students' case. The Committee decided that it would revise the University's responsible investment policy and that as an interim measure, it would ask the University's investment managers to sell any material stocks in the defence industry.

The Court decided: to approve the adoption of the Ninewells Cancer Campaign as a committee of the University Court, reporting through the Finance & Policy Committee; and to approve the proposed membership, remit and governance arrangements.

(2) Borrowing Facility Renewal

The Director of Finance explained that at its meeting on 2 February 2009, the Finance & Policy Committee had recommended the renewal of the University's £9m borrowing facility with Barclays Bank plc. The terms of the renewed loan were less favourable than previously (the rate of interest had increased by 1% to LIBOR + 1.25%, there was a non-utilisation fee of 0.35%, and an arrangement fee of 0.5%), but the Court was persuaded that these terms were nevertheless favourable given current market conditions. It was felt advisable to retain the facility, although in cash terms the University was currently in a stronger than expected position.

The Court resolved:

- (i) that the Borrower [that is the University] accept the facilities offered by Barclays Bank PLC as outlined in the Facility Agreement, the terms and conditions of which had been exhibited to and accepted by the Court;
- (ii) that the acceptance of the facilities was considered to be in the best interest of

and to the advantage and further benefit of the Borrower;

- (iii) that the Facility Agreement to the Bank be approved, and the Director of Finance and the Deputy Secretary be authorised to sign the acceptance of the Facility Agreement on behalf of the Borrower and to bind the Borrower to the terms and conditions contained therein; and
- (iv) that the Borrower authorise the Bank to accept instructions and confirmations in connection with the Facility signed in accordance with the Bank's signing mandate current from time to time and to accept instructions in connection with drawings under the Facility, by telephone from any person specifically authorised to give such telephone instructions.

39. REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF THE RECESSION AND ANY SUBSEQUENT REDUCTION IN PUBLIC SPENDING ON THE UNIVERSITY'S ACTIVITIES

The Director of Finance presented a paper which set out the potential effects on the University of the current economic situation as well as of any subsequent reduction in public spending. The paper had been compiled in response to requests from the Audit Committee and the Court at their meetings in December 2008. The paper as presented had been discussed by the Senior Management Team as well as by the Directors of the Student & Academic Support Services, and it had also been considered at the Finance & Policy Committee meeting on 2 February 2009.

The Director of Finance highlighted some of the more important risks the University could face in the difficult economic climate. He noted the challenges in realising the 2008/9 disposals target in the current property market and indicated that the University had decided to delay some disposals rather than accept low offers. He remarked on the uncertainties surrounding the grant from the Scottish Funding Council in light of the New Horizons report [discussed at the meeting of Court on 15 December 2008, minute 28 refers] and the outcomes of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise. In terms of research income, he warned that available funding from both the Research Councils and other sources, such as charities, was likely to become tighter, meaning increased competition for these funds within the sector. The University would need to be alert to this in making bids to funding opportunities, although the University was also well positioned to benefit from the new funding programmes announced by the BBSRC and the Medical Research Council (MRC).

The Director, in summing up, added that the purpose of the paper had been to show that the University understood the risks posed by the economic climate and was taking active steps to address them.

In discussion, Court members wondered whether the University still expected to achieve the target for savings from the voluntary severance scheme. Whilst the Director of Finance acknowledged that the number of applications coming forward had slowed down, there was still an expectation that further savings would be achieved, and those applications that had originally been put on hold were actively being revisited.

There was some discussion about the likely effects on the recruitment of overseas students of new visa regulations and of the implementation of the Points-based System of Immigration by the UK Border Agency. Many members felt that the regulations might become a disincentive to overseas students, although contrary views were also expressed. The Rector counselled against too much reliance on the notion of the countercyclical nature of higher education, since this recession was hitting at a time when students themselves increasingly bore the financial responsibility for their learning.

40. **RESEARCH ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (RAE) 2008: OUTCOMES**

Professor Boxer introduced a paper which gave an overview of the results of the RAE. He explained the difference in methodology between the previous RAE and RAE 2008, and explained how submitted disciplines had received a grade profile identifying the percentage of research graded in each of five categories from 4* (leading international) to 1* (national quality) plus unclassified. One of the effects of this approach was that some pockets of excellence had been recognised in institutions where departments had received a poor overall grade under the old system. Conversely, in departments rated highly under the previous methodology, the exercise had revealed areas of relative weakness. For the University of Dundee, the RAE had shown continued strength in some areas (Laboratory subjects, Biological Sciences, Civil Engineering, Art & Design, Law and History) and emerging strength in others (Computing, Geography, Philosophy and Nursing).

There was some discussion of the level of detail in the data and analysis provided to Court members, although the Court understood that the presentation of the results as a quality profile meant that they could be interpreted in a number of different ways by different institutions as well as by the media. There was speculation on the effects of the results on the quality research funding from the Scottish Funding Council, although this would not be known until 31 March 2009.

The Court was informed that the Heads of the Colleges were engaged in discussions with their own College Management Teams to analyse the results and to consider ways forward. The balance of research and teaching within each of the Schools was different, and so Colleges needed to consider the RAE results within these individual contexts. It was suggested that the outcomes of these College dialogues could be brought for discussion to the Court Retreat in September.

The Court decided: to ask Heads of Colleges to present their research strategies for discussion at the Court Retreat.

41. **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: AIMS 6 & 7 – RESPONSIVENESS OF SUPPORT SERVICES & FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

The Director of Strategic Planning presented a report outlining the University's performance against aims 6 and 7 of the Strategic Framework to 2012. The paper had been discussed at the Finance & Policy Committee and parts of it were also seen by the Human Resources Committee. In discussion, Court members highlighted the importance of performance management as well as the efficient use of the University's space.

42. **COURT RETREAT ACTION POINTS – UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

The Principal introduced a paper which informed the Court of the progress made to date to address the action points resulting from the Court Retreat on 1 September 2008. There had been progress on all points.

The Court decided: to note the progress made.

43. **SUBSIDIARY AND OTHER RELATED COMPANIES**

The Court received a summary report on subsidiary and other companies in which the University had a significant interest.

The Court decided: to note the report.

44. **CLINICAL RESEARCH GOVERNANCE**

Professor Belch, Director of the Clinical Trials Unit, presented a paper to Court which explained the processes involved in approving clinical trials. In particular, she set out how the ethical aspects of research involving people were managed and the degree of lay involvement in the approvals process. Professor Belch explained that UK national legislation regulated how research ethics committees functioned and were composed, stipulating the extent of lay membership as well as the definition of what constituted lay membership.

The Court also discussed the ethical review of other non-clinical research projects, and learnt from Professor Boxer of the University's non-clinical Research Ethics Committee, chaired by Professor Willatts from the School of Psychology and comprising members from a number of Schools across the University that were engaged in research of this nature. The Vice-Principal assured Court that there was lay membership on this Committee.

45. **SUMMARY STATEMENT ON HOW THE UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE COURT DISCHARGES ITS STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITIES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT**

Professor Calderhead presented a statement for submission to the Scottish Funding Council. It had been prepared in response to a request from the Council

(SFC/30/2008) for universities to explain how their governing body discharged its strategic responsibility for quality. In discussion, Professor Calderhead explained the process whereby the quality of the University's teaching provision was ensured. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework (SCQF) set the overarching standards for the specific requirements of provision at different levels, and this was supported by a rigorous system of external examiners. These examiners not only played a role in moderating the assessment of students' work and in the award of degrees, but also contributed to the development and structure of individual programmes. Professor Calderhead also drew attention to the internal approvals procedure for new programmes as well as the role played by professional accrediting bodies.

46. **SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL: DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2009-2012 CONSULTATION (SFC/01/2009C)**

The Court received the Scottish Funding Council's draft corporate plan for the period 2009-12, and members were invited to forward any comments for inclusion in the University's response to the Clerk to Court. In discussion, members raised some concerns, namely, that, in the section of the document about employability, the focus seemed to have shifted away from the individual learning of students to a purely skills-based approach; that there was a need for the Council to be clear about which non-research areas it thought might benefit from pooling initiatives; and that the Council should clarify how it perceived its role in international alliances.

47. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS**

The Court received a report from the meeting of the Senatus on 11 February 2009 (**Appendix 3**).

The Court decided:

- (i) to note in particular that the elections to the Executive of the Students' Association would take place on Friday 27 March 2009; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the report.

48. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(1) Human Resources Committee

The Court received a report of the meeting of the Committee on 3 February 2009 (**Appendix 4**). The Convener of the Committee clarified two minor points arising from the Health & Safety Sub-Committee in relation to evacuation lifts in the Dalhousie Building and the control of hazardous substances. The Court was fully reassured on both issues.

The Court decided: to approve the report.

(2) Ethical Review Committee

The Court received the annual report from the Committee.

The Court decided: to approve the report.

49. **GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

Court members enquired when the review of the Court's effectiveness would take place. It had been five years since the last review, and good practice suggested that such reviews should take place quinquennially. The Clerk to Court confirmed that a review would take place in 2009, beginning in the spring, once the new Secretary, Dr McGeorge, had taken up his post and was in a position to contribute to the review. It was anticipated that a paper outlining the proposed arrangements for the review would be brought to the Court's next meeting on 27 April 2009.

50. **PROFESSOR DAVID BOXER**

The Chairman paid tribute to Professor Boxer's 35-year service to the life and success of the University. He praised Professor Boxer's scientific work and also recognised his role as one of the driving forces behind the expansion of life sciences at the University. Professor Boxer had been instrumental in the development of the Wellcome Trust Biocentre and had been a Director of Sensation and of the Scottish Crop Research Institute. He had also taken a special interest in the development and support of young scientists. The Court joined with the Chairman in thanking Professor Boxer for his industry in preparing for the recent Research Assessment Exercise and wished him good luck in his new post of Director of the BBSRC-sponsored Institute of Food Research in Norwich. For his part, Professor Boxer spoke of his fortune at having had the opportunity to work in such a vibrant community as the University of Dundee. He thanked the Court for its support and expressed his sorrow at leaving the University.

51. **SIR ALAN LANGLANDS**

The Chairman turned to the Principal, for whom the present meeting would also be the last before he left the University to take up the post of Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The Chairman praised the outstanding leadership and management skills that Sir Alan had brought to the University. In interactions with Court and Court members, the Chairman had always found Sir Alan to be a man of honesty, integrity and most importantly fairness. He had provided the Court with wise counsel and this would be sorely missed. Sir Alan had worked tirelessly with local stakeholders throughout his period of office and had shown an enviable capacity to harness the capabilities of the University and its staff and drive them forward to new and higher achievements. The Court joined the Chairman in thanking Sir Alan for all that he had done for the University and wished him well in his new role. For his part, the Principal paid tribute to Court members, who gave of their time freely for the good of the University. He singled out both the current Chairman, Mr Milligan, and the former Chairman, Dr Rolland, for special thanks in their support for him during his period

in office. It had, he said, been a privilege to be the Principal of the University and he had thoroughly enjoyed his time in Dundee.

APPENDIX 1

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Minute 37)

Finance & Policy

The management accounts for the period to 31 December 2008 show an operating surplus before voluntary severance costs of £4.5m to the end of Period 5, which represents a favourable variance of £3m compared with the phased budget.

The year end forecast operating surplus before voluntary severance costs, but after anticipated voluntary severance savings, is £0.4m. After voluntary severance costs of £2m and gain on disposals of £1.7m, a small bottom line surplus is forecast.

Capital expenditure of £19.8m is forecast for the year, part-funded by disposal receipts of £1.7m and external funding of £15m, including CIF and DIUS. Borrowing forecasts remain at manageable levels.

The preliminary results for month 6 confirm these trends. Student admission targets for January have been met and key assumptions on VSS and property disposals are being adjusted to reflect current market conditions. A half-year review of the forecast for 2008/9 will be reported to the next Finance & Policy Committee.

Looking forward, the position is less certain with changes in the SFC's approach to funding in 2009/10 – the implementation of the new General Fund and Horizon Fund – and the impact of the RAE results on QR allocations. It is likely that some capital funding will be brought forward to 2009/10 and 2010/11 but there is unlikely to be any significant real terms growth in the higher education sector as a whole. Dundee may be a net loser on QR funding but the final position will not be known until the SFC allocations are published on 31 March 2009 (see RAE analysis below).

The University is also looking carefully at the possible effects of the credit crunch and a period of recession on public funding, research income from charitable sources and commercial income. Coupled with cost pressures – particularly pay and pensions – the impact is likely to be a considerable squeeze on higher education funding over the next few years. Falling RPI and oil prices may provide some relief on non pay budgets and the weakness of the pound against other currencies whilst already leading to significant increases in library journal costs may enhance income from overseas student recruitment. The University has also been looking at its banking arrangements to ensure best value in a changing market.

Despite these uncertainties the budget setting process for 2009/10 is under way with first draft budgets being prepared in Schools by Deans with support from the College accountants. The budget process and timetable will follow the same pattern as last year with SMT reviews on 7 April and 5 May with final sign-off at the Court meeting on 15 June. The main School and College discussions will take place during February and March.

Learning and Teaching

Dundee came 12th in the recent Times Higher Student Experience Survey which surveyed over 12,000 undergraduate students throughout the UK on 21 aspects of the student experience. The library, the student union, the campus environment and the quality of staff and lectures were amongst the most highly rated aspects of the University.

Figures released on 16 February 2009 from UCAS show a continued rise in the number of university applicants with an increase of 7.8% across the UK as a whole. Dundee at 16.7% has the highest increase for any university in Scotland – Abertay (3.4%), Aberdeen (7.5%), Edinburgh (4.5%), Glasgow (14.3%) and St Andrews (10.7%). Helped by a positive January intake, recruitment to taught post-graduate programmes has increased by 39% in 2008/9 with solid growth in the UK market and significant increases from overseas.

The dates for the University's second QAA Enhancement Led Institutional Review have now been agreed, starting with a preliminary visit on 7/8 October and the main visit on 16 – 20 November. A series of workshops have been organised involving Colleges and Schools to help contribute to the Reflective Analysis which will be submitted to the last meeting of Senate this session.

The University will be awarding the UK's first internship graduate certificates – the Scottish Internship Graduate Certificate (SIGC) – a postgraduate certificate of three credit bearing modules following a six month placement with a Scottish company.

Angus Council is providing financial backing – for 15 students in the first instance – to support the University's summer school, ensuring that no young person from the Angus area is held back from striving for a university place as a result of financial or social factors.

The University has been awarded major funding from the European Union and the Government of Australia to train the next generation of specialists in the field of sustainable water resources. Five Australian universities and three European leading water universities have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to exchange 90 post graduate students and 30 academic members of staff in the coming three years. In total a grant of over AU\$ 1,000,000 (£500,000) has been awarded to the University and partners to enable students and staff members from the EU and Australia to share best practice and to improve global understanding of the importance of sustainability in water resources. The project is funded jointly by the Australian Government and the European Union.

In the Law School, a new Distance Learning LLM in International Dispute Resolution has been established and Mrs Betty Bott, a senior figure from the legal establishment in Scotland has been appointed Director of Professional and Legal Development.

Research and Enterprise

RAE 2008

The results of RAE 2008 are attached as Annex 1. This shows strong results in a number of units of assessment but also raises important questions about a lack of consistency in research performance across the University as a whole.

The University's overall performance, with 13% (4*) and 41% (3*) of activity graded 'leading international' and 'internationally excellent' respectively, has improved since RAE 2001. This headline figure of 54% of outputs in the 4* and 3* categories compares with Edinburgh (62%), St Andrews (59%), Glasgow (56%) and Aberdeen (54%).

Four of our submissions - laboratory based clinical sciences (65%, 4* and 3*), biological sciences (65%), civil engineering (85%), and art and design (55%) - each emerged as the leader in Scotland in terms of grade point average. The strong performances by law and history in RAE 2001 were further strengthened in RAE 2008.

Three disciplines - geography, computing and philosophy - made clear advances from their RAE 2001 positions. Nursing, which was submitted for the first time in RAE 2008, also demonstrated growing research strength, placed second in Scotland with 50% of its activity graded 4* and 3*.

However, this performance has to be viewed in relative terms against the performance of other institutions. Across the UK, and particularly in Scotland, the research performance of universities has much improved since RAE 2001 with little to distinguish the top performers in most disciplines. Dundee submitted 13% more staff than for RAE 2001, 505 academic staff, which mirrored the overall average Scottish increase. Significant pockets of research excellence have been recognised in all institutions – including the post '92 universities – which was not the case in RAE 2001.

The financial effects of these results will not be clear until the SFC QR allocations are made on 31 March 2009. Whilst Dundee may be a net loser in QR, this effect could be mitigated in part by a bias towards research excellence in the overall resource allocation methodology, greater recognition for charity research income and short term transition arrangements to limit volatility. There may also be some increase in SRDG allocations where the University has been successful in the past. Any loss in QR income has to be set alongside a strong performance in the past 18 months in winning competitive research funding. This includes an increase in EU programme awards from £2.7m in 2006/7 to £7.5m in 2007/8 with Dundee in the lead on a number of Framework 7 awards.

College Heads have been asked to review the RAE results in detail in collaboration with senior academic staff and to make recommendations for future action. There will of course be an opportunity to discuss this matter in more detail at the Court meeting.

Other Issues

In response to initiatives in England, there is a pan-Scotland discussion under way to develop a Scottish Academic Health Sciences Collaboration – with bases in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow – to coordinate early clinical development and translational research. Professor Irene Leigh is leading for Dundee. The MRC is also promoting translational research through a new Developmental Pathway Funding Scheme (DPFS). The MRC is piloting university DPFS portfolios (worth about £2m per institution) in 2009 and Dundee has been identified as a pilot alongside Edinburgh, King's College London, Nottingham and a partnership between the Universities of Bristol and Cardiff.

A new National Subsea Research Institute (NSRI) has been set up to fast-track new subsea technologies and expertise. It has been established by Subsea UK, the industry body, and Aberdeen, Dundee and Robert Gordon Universities via the Northern Research Partnership in Engineering with a focus on the recovery of oil and gas reserves around the world, particularly in mature offshore and deep water provinces.

The momentum which has built up over the past few years in relation to major research awards continues – for example the following awards have been made in recent months:

The University is the recipient of two highly prestigious MRC Milstein Awards. These are awarded to researchers who can demonstrate a highly innovative track record in their scientific field and whose ideas and approaches have contributed significantly to contemporary challenges in medical research:

- **£625k MRC Milstein Award to Professor Irwin McLean**
Optimised delivery of siRNA into human skin
Professor McLean has received this award to support pioneering research that could lead to the development of novel gene based therapies for skin diseases.
- **£529k MRC Milstein Award to Professor Angus Lamond**
SnoRNA vectors for sequence specific gene knockdown in human cells
Professor Lamond won the award for research that could pave the way to the development of SnoRNA vector technology as a novel therapeutic approach to gene therapy.

Other significant awards include:

- **£610k award from BBSRC Centre for Bioenergy Research to Professor Claire Halpin**
The biggest ever public investment in bioenergy to help provide clean, green and sustainable fuels, a £27m, BBSRC Bioenergy Centre has been launched to provide the science to underpin and develop the important and emerging UK sustainable bioenergy sector – and to replace the petrol in our cars with fuels derived from plants.

The University of Dundee has been named as one of the six research hubs of academic and industrial partners to benefit from the investment. The University project will work with a number of partners including the Scottish Crop Research Institute (SCRI), the Scottish Government Rural and Environment Research and Analysis Directorate (RERAD) and the University of York. The Dundee-led programme aims to alter production of barley to make it easier to produce bioenergy from waste straw without reducing the quality of the crop.

- **£240k award from EU FP7 Programme to Dr Alistair Rieu-Clarke, UNESCO Centre for Water Law LIVEDIVERSE**
Dr Alistair Rieu-Clarke in the UNESCO Centre for Water Law has been awarded funding for a significant EU funded project: LIVEDIVERSE. Working with several international colleagues, the project looks at water and environmental issues in comparative national settings in India, South Africa, Costa Rica and Cambodia.
- **£451k award from ESRC to Dr Nick Hopkins, Psychology Collective Participation and Social Identification**
The ESRC has awarded Dr Nick Hopkins in Psychology a grant of £450,874. The project title is: 'Collective participation and social identification. This is a study of the individual, interpersonal and collective dimensions of attendance at the Magh Mela, a major religious festival in India.' The Research will involve Clare Cassidy and Steve Reicher (St Andrews) and Mark Levine (Lancaster) as Co-Investigators and a team of Indian researchers led by Janak Pandey (Allahabad).
- **£1.3 million award from EPSRC to Dr Sandy Cochran, IMSaT Sonotweezers**

Sonotweezers is a cross disciplinary project involving four universities, Dundee, Bristol, Glasgow and Southampton. Called electronic sonotweezers, the objective is to develop a device that can manipulate microscopic particles such as biomolecules and cells. Its use will cover a number of areas including bioassay technology, homeland security and forensic science.

- **£1 million award from EU FP7 Programme to Dr Edik Rafailov, Electronic Engineering and Physics: FAST DOT**

FAST DOT is an EU FP7 project headed by the University of Dundee with 18 collaborative partners. Its objective is to develop small, inexpensive lasers that can do the same work as more expensive ones. Applications will range from minimal invasive, bleed free surgery to analysis of biological samples.

In addition, Colin Palmer's work on the obesity gene moves us a step closer to the promise of personalised drug therapy and Sir David Lane's teams in Dundee and Singapore have discovered a missing link in the way cells protect themselves against cancer. The University has also begun work using a new super-resolution microscope that can view tiny particles in cells. The OMX (optical microscopy experimental microscope) - funded by the Scottish Universities Life Science Alliance and the Scottish Funding Council - located in Jason Swedlow's laboratory will enhance cancer research and cast light on how genetic diseases occur and whether there is any possibility of intervention. The microscope is only one of seven in the world.

The new Centre for Freedom of Information in the Law School inspired by Alan Page and Janet McLean opens up the possibility of new areas of research in human rights, environmental decision making and legislation as it affects the governance of Scotland; and the Institute of Medical Science and Technology (IMSaT) is on fine grant winning form under the direction of Andreas Melzer with EU funding success in Nanoporation (ranked best out of 103 applications) and interventional imaging (ranked 10th out of 3000 applications).

Finally a team of dentists and physicists from the Universities of Dundee and Strathclyde have scooped a hat-trick of awards for developing new technology which has the potential to replace x-rays in dentistry. The infrared imaging system developed by Professor Nigel Pitts and Dr Chris Longbottom at Dundee and Professor John Girkin and Dr Simon Poland at Strathclyde, won three prizes at the Medical Futures Innovations Awards, held in London on 2 December.

People

Professor Marion McMurdo, head of Ageing and Health in the Medical School has been appointed Chair of the Age and Ageing Specialty Group of the UK Clinical Research Network.

Professor Sir Philip Cohen won the prestigious Scottish Enterprise Life Sciences Award for his many excellent contributions to basic science and knowledge transfer.

Professor David Boxer leaves the University in March after 35 years to take up the post of Director at the BBSRC-sponsored Institute of Food Research in Norwich. David has been a constant feature of the University for much of its independent life and he will be missed. As an active scientist, David had an international reputation in metal metabolism and microbial biochemistry and of course is hugely respected here and across the UK for his research leadership, the part he played in developing the Wellcome Building, his passion for building the PhD/Post-doc community and promoting the public understanding of science, his many contributions to building the research reputation of the University, his work in Rwanda and his (often unseen) encouragement for young, up and coming academic staff. We thank David and wish him and his wife Maureen - also a great supporter of the University - all good wishes for the future.

Events

The Discovery Day 2009 was well supported and our new professors and Royal Society/RSE gold medallists attracted and engaged a wide audience - I extend my congratulations and sincere thanks to all of them.

The 85th season of Saturday evening lectures got under way on 31 January with a 'full house' lecture from Deyan Sudjic, Director of the Design Museum, a former architecture critic for the Observer and Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Art. Forthcoming lectures include Professor Anne Anderson (Privacy in the Digital Age), Christopher and Julia Sommerville (Britain and Ireland's Wild Places) and Yasmin Alibhai-Brown (author of the Settler's Cookbook).

The Universities of Dundee, Abertay Dundee and St Andrews with SCRI and Sensation (the Dundee Science Centre) have organised a programme of events from 16 February - 20 March showcasing and celebrating women's achievements in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM). Details are available on the relevant university web sites.

Other significant outreach initiatives – the Dundee Literary Salons (featuring Ali Smith, Zoe Wicomb and Dan Franklin) and Café Science are also under way – check the University website and the notice boards for details.

Discussions about the development of the V & A at Dundee continue apace with strong support for the development of a major national gallery for contemporary design in a prize waterfront development. There is much goodwill from the Scottish Government, the V & A, local agencies (including the City Council, Scottish Enterprise and the universities) and strong encouragement from the arts establishment in Scotland including the National Galleries and the National Museums. The excellent RAE result at Duncan of Jordanstone underlines the case for parallel research initiatives from one of the leading academic centres in the UK. A public lecture and ‘stakeholder conference’ is planned for 24 and 25 February 2009 to discuss next steps.

. . . . and finally

This will be my last Court Report and meeting – it has been a privilege to be the Principal and Vice Chancellor of the University of Dundee and I greatly appreciate the unfailing support that I have received from Court. I am particularly grateful to John Milligan and Larry Rolland for all their advice and guidance and their chairmanship of Court. I also thank Court members who have given their time so willingly to chair and participate in Court committees and David Duncan, Neale Laker and Peter Evans who have supported me so well in preparing for Court meetings. I hope that I can take my Dundee insights on higher learning and research to the table at HEFCE and use them to good effect. I am confident that the University will continue to go from strength to strength under new leadership and I wish all members of Court and the students and staff of the University all the very best for the future.

Alan Langlands
Principal and Vice Chancellor

APPENDIX 2

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE (Minute 38(1))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 2 February 2009.

Present: Mr BWM Johnston (Convener), Principal Sir Alan Langlands, Mr WI Ball, Professor DH Boxer, Professor GLP Follett, Mr EF Sanderson, Mr IDM Wright.

In Attendance: Mr R Burns, Mr D McLeod (President of the Students' Association), Director and Deputy Director of Finance, Director of Information Services & Deputy Secretary, Director of Strategic Planning and Clerk to Court.

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 24 November 2008.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Botanic Garden (Minute 2(1))

The Director of Finance reported that work was progressing on putting together development proposals for Taypark House.

(2) West Park Conference Centre (WPCC) (Minute 2(2))

The Director of Finance reported that the business review of WPCC's performance would be presented to the DSV Board in mid-February, whereafter it would be brought to the Committee at its meeting on 30 March 2009.

(3) HBOS and DSV (Minute 4)

The Director of Finance agreed to seek further legal opinion on whether, since its takeover by Lloyds, HBOS would be able to sell its share of DSV without the permission of the DSV Board.

(4) Cash/Borrowings (Minute 7)

The Director of Finance explained the terms offered by the bank for renewal of the £9m working capital extension facility. This facility, if renewed, would be subject to an arrangement fee and a non-utilisation fee, and the rate of interest would be increased. The Committee recognised the difficulties in the current economic climate of securing borrowing facilities and was of the opinion that it was sensible to renew the facility despite the increased costs of retaining it. In the Committee's view it was more desirable to retain a facility at increased cost than to let it lapse and run the risk of being unable to secure borrowing at a later date.

Resolved: to agree that the Director of Finance proceed to renew the £9m borrowing facility under the revised terms.

(5) TMRC (Minute 10)

The Director of Strategic Planning reported on developments. Scottish Enterprise had now converted a proposed loan of £2.7m into a grant. The Wyeth labs, hitherto accommodated in the James Black Centre, had now moved to the new building at Ninewells and the rental lease had been completed, with rent falling due.

The Committee noted that the likely effects of changes to the leadership of the discovery team at Wyeth as well as the effects for Wyeth of its recently announced takeover by Pfizer remained uncertain. Scientists from Wyeth were to be visiting Dundee shortly. The Principal added that the University enjoyed a good and long-established relationship with Pfizer.

3. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – PERIOD 5

The Director of Finance introduced the management accounts for December 2008. These showed an operating surplus to date of £4.5m against the phased budget of £1.5m, however, the full-year forecast position was for a modest operating surplus of £0.4m. Both Colleges and the central services Directorates were forecast to be broadly on budget at year-end.

In terms of voluntary severance, savings so far for the year amounted to £1m, although the target for the full year had been £2m. It was now recognised that achieving this target would be difficult, and while this would not present a risk for the current year, since the savings would be offset by associated costs, this would present a budgetary risk going forward.

The forecast gain on disposals was £1.7m, compared with a budget of £3.5m; this was a reflection of the worsening market conditions. However, interest payments and VAT were projected to be lower than expected. The forecast bottom line position for the year end was break even.

At the end of period 5 the University had borrowings of £12m (including £8.5m related to the TMRI project), offset by cash of £19m, and therefore resulting in net funds of £7m. The forecast £15m of negative working capital movements of previous periods had now been softened to a forecast of £10m negative, following £3.5m of positive movements from research grants to date.

The Director informed the Committee that the University was reviewing its treasury policy and examining where was most prudent to deposit cash; currently it was held with Royal London Cash Management and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The Committee asked when favourable movements would be seen on the cost of utilities. The Director responded that he had asked the Utilities Manager to look at this issue carefully; utilities were now covered by a Scotland wide contract.

4. PENSION SCHEMES

The Convener outlined plans to establish a sub-group of the Committee to consider matters relating to the University of Dundee Superannuation Scheme (UoDSS), as part of the scheme's triennial actuarial review. The Convener proposed the following membership for the sub-group: Mr E Sanderson (Convener), Professor CP Downes, Dr J Lowe, Mr IDM Wright. It was expected that the Directors of Finance and Human Resources would attend meetings of the sub-group. It was suggested that the sub-group should aim to complete its work to be able to provide a report for the Finance & Policy Committee meeting on 18 May 2009.

Resolved: to establish a Pensions Sub-Group to consider matters relating to the UoDSS and its actuarial review.

5. BUDGET 2009/10 – PROPOSED TIMETABLE AND METHODOLOGY

The Committee received a paper from the Director of Finance, which outlined the process for agreeing the 2009/10 budget. The Committee noted the uncertainties remaining over funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as a result of changes to the allocation of the Main Teaching Grant following the outcomes of the New Horizons report of the Joint Future Thinking Taskforce for Universities and the re-organisation of funding into two streams: the General Fund and the Horizon Fund. It was confirmed that there was as yet no information on whether the Horizon Fund would consist of biddable funding. It was likely that for 2009/10, the SFC would maintain a degree of stability, and that therefore any shifts in funding priorities and mechanisms would be introduced in future years. It additionally acknowledged that the outcomes of the RAE 2008 might have a negative effect on the amount of Quality Research (QR) grant the University would receive from the SFC. The Director of Finance set out the reasoning for his proposed budget assumptions in relation to inflation, including pay inflation, and any funding increases.

The Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of models for charging internally for space. On the one hand it was recognised that charging for space would assist in identifying the real space needs of the University, although on the other hand it was realised that this was only meaningful if the University was thereby able to determine space that could be disposed of. The Director of Finance confirmed that there were no immediate plans for introducing a space charging model; he saw the introduction of such a model as a developmental process, the first stage of which was the central timetabling of rooms. There was a suggestion that space in the control of schools and units could carry a charge. This would encourage schools and units to consider the necessity of retaining space for their own use.

Professor Boxer provided the Committee with an assessment of the University's performance in the RAE 2008 and the possible effects this would have, in his opinion, on the University's QR funding. The SFC had not yet made any statement on how they would allocate QR funding beyond confirming that they would provide some funding for all starred levels of research quality (4*, 3*, 2* & 1*). In contrast, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) had indicated that it would not provide funding for 1* research, and that its funding of the other three categories would be heavily weighted (x7) in favour of 4* research. Other factors which would play a role in determining allocations were the volume of staff submitted and the degree of research excellence in institutions which had hitherto not received QR funding. The University of Dundee had submitted 13% more staff in RAE 2008 than in RAE 2001, but this reflected the average increase in volume across Scotland. The RAE 2008 methodology had uncovered pockets of excellence that had been masked by an aggregated rating in RAE 2001 in many newer and non-research intensive institutions. It was to be expected that these institutions would now receive QR allocations. The amount of QR that the University would receive would also depend on how much funding was available across the board for QR, whether there was any bias towards STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine), and whether there was any increase in the additional funding for institutions engaged in charity-funded research. Precise allocations would not be known until 31 March 2009, although there was speculation that the University might face a reduction in QR funding.

6. **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: AIMS 6 & 7**

The Director of Strategic Planning introduced a report detailing progress against two aims of the Strategic Framework to 2012. Aim 6 of the Framework addressed the responsiveness of the support services and aim 7 the University's longterm financial sustainability. Some of the quantitative data had been seen at previous meetings of the Committee or at Court, but it was here married with detailed qualitative data.

The Committee discussed the report and in particular sought further information on the performance indicator 7.1.2 (KPI 11) total income per academic staff FTE. There was a discussion of possible reasons why the University performed behind the Scottish average on this indicator. The Committee asked the Director of Strategic Planning to investigate the figures and report back with information on the basis for the calculations for the University and its comparators.

The Committee thanked the Director of Strategic Planning for what it felt was a clear and very helpful paper.

Resolved: to request the Director of Strategic Planning to provide additional feedback on the basis for the calculations underpinning PI 7.1.2.

7. **SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF THE RECESSION AND REDUCTIONS IN PUBLIC SPENDING**

The Committee received a paper setting out the potential risks faced by the University during the economic downturn, and suggesting actions to mitigate these risks.

There was a discussion of the opportunities available to the University in bidding for funding from EU initiatives and programmes, including the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The Director of Finance reported that the University had engaged specialists to assist with the complex application process for funding from the EU, and awareness among staff of these opportunities was growing. The University had had some significant recent successes in funding from this source.

Resolved: to invite the Director of Research & Innovation Services to attend the next meeting of the Committee and to compile a short paper for presentation at that meeting on the University's performance in EU funding applications.

8. **ENDOWMENTS**

(1) Endowments Sub-Committee

The Committee received a report from the sub-committee's meeting on 24 November 2008. The Committee expressed disappointment at the reduction in performance of fixed interest investments.

Resolved: to approve the report.

(2) Fee Proposal

The Committee considered correspondence from the University's investment managers, which sought agreement to an increase in the management fees.

Resolved: to reject the proposed increase in management fees.

9. **NINEWELLS CANCER CAMPAIGN**

The Committee received a proposal that the Court formally establish the Ninewells Cancer Campaign (NCC) as a University committee. The NCC was a hugely successful local fundraising body, which operated as a committee of the University. Prompted by the sad death of Dr Pat McPherson, who had been instrumental in the operation of the NCC, the remaining members had suggested a more formal arrangement to carry forward the NCC's work. The arrangements proposed inclusion in the committee of scientific advisors as a means of adding rigour to the allocation of funds raised. They also set out that the NCC should continue to operate under the University's Charity number, and suggested the manner in which the business of the NCC would be transacted. As part of the governance arrangements of the NCC, it was proposed that it would provide the Committee with an annual report.

Resolved: to recommend to Court that it approve the proposals as outlined.

10. **UNIVERSITY INVESTMENT POLICY**

The Committee received a paper from the President of the Students' Association, which called on the University to review its responsible investment policy and asked the Committee to recommend the divestment of the University's £196,642 of shares in BAe Systems. The Committee learnt that there was significant concern amongst the students about the University's investment holdings, and also that students had carried out a demonstration on campus on 5 February 2009, at which a number of demands were made of the University, including the divestment of BAe Systems shares. The Committee learnt that student groups had been active in this area at a number of universities across the UK as a result of the armed conflict in Gaza.

The Director of Finance informed the Committee that a number of the University's comparator institutions had more comprehensive responsible investment policies in place. The Committee was sympathetic to the adoption of reviewing and widening the scope of the University's responsible investment policy, and debated the issue of divestment in BAe Systems shares in detail.

Resolved:

- (i) to agree to revise and expand the University's responsible investment policy;
- (ii) to ask the University's investment managers to consider the implications of adopting a wider responsible investment policy on the University's investment policy and to report to the Endowments Sub-Committee as quickly as possible;
- (iii) as an interim step, and in the full expectation that material holdings in defence stocks would be prohibited as part of a revised responsible investment policy, to instruct the investment managers to sell immediately any material interests in defence industry stocks.

11. **PROFESSOR DAVID BOXER**

The Convener paid tribute to the work of Professor Boxer, who would be leaving the University in mid-March to take up the post of Director of the Institute of Food Research in Norwich, and who therefore was attending his last meeting of the Committee. The Convener in particular thanked Professor Boxer for his tireless work in preparation for the Research Assessment Exercise. Professor Boxer had made a substantial contribution to the affairs of the University and to the Committee over a long and distinguished career at Dundee.

12. **SIR ALAN LANGLANDS**

The Convener also paid tribute to the Principal, Sir Alan Langlands, who was also attending his last meeting of the Committee. Sir Alan was to take up the post of Chief Executive of the Higher Education

Funding Council for England at the beginning of April 2009. The Convener praised Sir Alan's thoughtful analysis, his readiness to listen to competing views and his helpful and constructive suggestions and opinions both in the work of the Committee and in his excellent leadership of the University. He had made a huge contribution to the life of the University and of Dundee itself. For his part, the Principal spoke of his great enjoyment of membership of the Committee.

APPENDIX 3**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS
(Minute 47)****1. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

On Finance and Policy, the Principal reported that the current financial position was reasonably stable and that, while the SFC allocations for 2009/10 would be delayed until 31 March, he expected there to be no great surprises. On QR funding, he indicated that he was less pessimistic now than when writing his report as it appeared that the SFC was to prioritise this area of funding. There were also indications that there would be positive movement on charitable research funding with some progress towards FEC standards.

It was noted that Professor Sir Philip Cohen had been awarded the Scottish Enterprise Life Sciences Award.

On behalf of the Senatus, the Principal congratulated Professor David Boxer on his new appointment in Norwich, thanked him for his huge contribution to the University over the past thirty-five years and wished him well for the future.

The Senatus decided: to note the report.

2. UNIVERSITY COURT

The Senatus received a communication from the meeting of the University Court held on 15 December 2008.

The Senatus decided: for its part, to approve the report.

3. DUSA EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

The Senatus noted: that the DUSA Executive elections will be held on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 March 2009.

APPENDIX 4

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
(Minute 48(1))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 3 February 2009.

Present: Dr J Lowe (Convener), Profesor RJ Abboud, Professor J Calderhead, Mr D Cathcart, Professor CP Downes, Professor GJ Mires, Dr AM Roger.

In Attendance: Director of Strategic Planning, Deputy Director of Human Resources and Clerk to Court.

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 2 October 2008.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Performance Management (Minute 2(2))

The Deputy Director of Human Resources reported on the performance management process that had been introduced for the professoriate. The greater part of this process had been completed before Christmas, although delays had occurred in the School of Medicine as a result of its ongoing restructuring. A more detailed discussion of performance management would take place later in the meeting (Minute 4(3) refers).

(2) Restructuring of the College of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing (Minute 2(3))

The Deputy Director of Human Resources explained the effects of the restructuring process in the School of Medicine. The School would be organised into two research divisions (Medical Sciences and Clinical & Population Sciences & Education) with two associated institutes (Biomedical Research Institute and Institute for Health Skills & Education). Discussion had now taken place on the deployment of support staff within the divisions and institutes. Where staff were externally funded, these posts were being moved with the research/academic staff being supported. Other posts were being matched to the roles required under the new structure. Where there was no match for the new roles, the roles would be or had been advertised. Professor Mires commented that there had been some anxiety amongst the support staff, but positive progress was now being made.

The Committee discussed whether savings were likely to be made in support staff costs as a result of the restructuring process. The Committee was reminded that there had been some anticipation that staff in the School of Medicine might be freed up to backfill applications for voluntary severance on the city campus. It was not yet clear what savings might be made.

Resolved: to note the progress being made and record the Committee's continued expectation that the exercise would elicit savings for the University.

(3) Dundee Branch of University & College Union (DUCU) (Minute 4(2))

The Clerk to Court circulated to members an extract of the minutes of the Court meeting on 15 December 2008, which set out Court's response to the Committee's request for endorsement of its statement on DUCU's behaviour in a recent dispute. The Court had recognised the views of the Committee, noting that relations between the University and DUCU had improved since the Committee's meeting on 8 September 2008. The Court also emphasised the importance of adhering to agreed procedures and expressed its full support for the Secretary and the Director of Human Resources.

The Committee noted that the issue which had sparked the disagreement between the University and DUCU had been considered by both parties with the assistance of ACAS, although the issue had not yet been fully resolved. The issue related to the payment of annual increments to staff who had been green-circled as part of the HERA evaluation process.

(4) Generic Skills (Minute 6)

In response to a comment at the previous meeting that the generic skills team had been experiencing difficulties in booking appropriate rooms, it was noted that this problem had not been raised again by the team, and that it was therefore to be assumed that the issue had been resolved.

(5) UCEA/USHA checklist (Minute 7)

The Convener reported that the University Secretary had provided Court and the Senior Management Team with a paper assessing the current governance of Health & Safety in the University against the checklist produced by the Universities & Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) and the Universities Safety & Health Association (USHA) and which the Committee had considered at its meeting on 2 October 2008.

6. **VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME**

The Deputy Director of Human Resources provided an update on the progress of the scheme. Since the last meeting of the Committee, the Court had discussed and approved the extension of the scheme under the same terms to the end of April 2009. Numbers of current applications were much fewer than earlier in the life of the scheme, although there was still encouragement for staff to consider the option of voluntary severance. There was some support in the Committee for a further email to staff explaining that the scheme was still operating but would be closing at the end of April. It was acknowledged that the timing of such a communication was crucial if it was to generate any additional applications. The Deputy Director would take this matter forward in discussion with colleagues.

7. **HUMAN RESOURCES**

(1) National Pay Negotiations

The Committee received a number of updates from UCEA on the UCU's pay claim for 2009. Since the Committee had last met, the UCU had made a claim for a pay increase of the greater of RPI + 5% or 8% for October 2009. The other higher education unions and UCEA had reached agreed on new arrangements for pay negotiations following the last payment under the 2006 pay claim. The UCU did not accept these arrangements, known as new JNCHES (Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff). Under these arrangements, the timetable for submitting pay claims was set to fit in with the receipt by universities of the main grant letters from the funding councils, informing them of their funding for the following academic session. Under the timetable, unions were to submit pay claims in March 2009, but UCU had submitted its pay claim in December 2008. Currently discussions were taking place between the two parties and ACAS to try and reach a resolution to the impasse.

The Deputy Director of Human Resources confirmed that at the end of last year the University had issued a HERMES message to all staff to explain the University's position in relation to any industrial action that UCU might take, and what action the University would take in respect of staff who did not fulfil their duties, either in full or in part, as part of any industrial action. The Committee noted that UCU was preparing to ballot its members on the issue of industrial action. It emerged that there appeared to be some confusion among staff on precisely when the University would deduct pay for action short of a strike. It was confirmed that a full day's pay would be deducted (calculated as 1/260th of a staff member's annual salary) for each day on which duties were not fulfilled, or only partly fulfilled, as a result of industrial action. Pay would continue to be deducted until the staff member resumed full duties, but any deductions made would not be repaid. Officers were asked to ensure that this clarification was conveyed to every member of staff. It was also confirmed that staff who only partially fulfilled their duties and therefore had pay deducted would not be prevented from carrying out those other duties they chose to perform, although they would receive no pay whilst carrying them out.

- Resolved:**
- (i) to note that negotiations using ACAS were ongoing between UCU and UCEA;
 - (ii) to ask officers to ensure that all staff properly understood the implications of the action the University would take in the event of UCU's taking industrial action.

(2) Framework Agreement

The Deputy Director of Human Resources reported on the progress being made in dealing with appeals made by staff as part of the HERA evaluation exercise to assimilate staff to the single pay spine as part of the framework agreement. Of 215 appeals submitted, 94 had been informally resolved, generally either as a result of additional information coming to light or as a result of changes to the post evaluated. So far 16 formal appeals had been received and work would begin shortly to hear them. The Committee wondered whether there were still sufficient HERA-trained staff to hear the appeals. The Deputy Director felt that this would be dependent upon the total number of formal appeals coming forward however given the number to date she believed that there were sufficient numbers of staff trained in the HERA methodology. It was confirmed that there would be training organised to refresh the skills of those originally trained. It was hoped that the entire process might be completed before the summer.

Resolved: to congratulate the Deputy Director and her team on their hard work in implementing the framework agreement.

(3) Performance Indicators

The Director of Strategic Planning introduced a paper which outlined the human resources elements of a wider paper on performance against the Strategic Framework which would be considered at Court at its meeting on 23 February 2009. The paper focussed on aims 6 & 7 of the Strategic Framework, which dealt with, respectively, improving the responsiveness of support services and ensuring the University's longterm financial sustainability.

The Committee was pleased to see that, in financial terms, the support services were operating efficiently, but emphasised the importance of maintaining the effectiveness of the support services. The Committee discussed the use to be made of the benchmarking report from Tribal, which the University would receive shortly. This would be a valuable tool in considering what constituted appropriate levels of resourcing for support services. The Committee requested sight of the report once received. The Committee was also pleased to see that a survey of stakeholder views on the effectiveness of the support services had been carried out in autumn 2008, and encouraged the University to ensure that such surveys were carried out regularly.

The Committee discussed what constituted a strategic approach to staff development, which was interpreted as an attempt to link development activity to the priorities of the discipline as well as of the individual member of staff. The Committee asked that the Director of Management and Personal Development should provide an assessment for the next meeting of the degree to which the University had adopted a strategic approach to staff development.

There was a discussion of succession planning within the University, and it was generally agreed that this could be more focussed in some areas of the University. There was some cause for concern in the recruitment of manual staff, given the ageing profile of current staff in these areas. The Deputy Director of Human Resources agreed to raise the issue with colleagues at other Scottish universities to investigate whether there was scope for a common approach to the issue.

The Committee discussed in detail progress on the implementation of performance management in the University, which the Court had agreed would constitute one of the University's 15 *key* performance indicators. Implementation amongst the professoriate was now complete, and the next stage was to implement the process amongst all other staff groups. To this end, proposed paperwork had been circulated to the Senior Management Team for comment and meetings with the campus unions would follow in due course. It was hoped that training in the process could be held during the summer, with full implementation in place by September 2009. It was acknowledged that successful implementation relied on embedding a commitment to the process across the University. It would require careful management and strong support from human resources officers.

Resolved:

- (i) to request sight of the Tribal benchmarking report at the next meeting of the Committee;
- (ii) to ask officers to ensure that surveys of stakeholder views on the effectiveness of the support services be carried out regularly;

- (iii) to ask officers to redraft the text of part PI 6.1.3 of the paper on performance indicators to more accurately reflect the issues to be addressed;
- (iv) to request that the full paper be considered at the next meeting of the Committee, once it had been considered at Court.

(4) Points-Based System of Immigration

The Deputy Director of Human Resources reported on new arrangements put in place by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) to admit migrant workers to the UK. Under the new arrangements the University would act as a sponsor to members of staff from overseas in order that they could obtain an entry visa. In order to do this, the University required a sponsorship licence from UKBA, which it had applied for and been granted with the top A-rating. As a sponsor the University now had duties in obligations to the UKBA in respect of the migrants it had sponsored. In particular, the University needed to ensure it rigorously applied its absence management policy, since unauthorised absence of overseas staff needed to be reported to UKBA within ten days. It was vital that all areas of the University understood the importance of adherence to the duties placed on the University, since failure to comply could mean the withdrawal of the sponsorship licence. There was a suggestion that it might be beneficial to discuss with the local police how the system could be best administered.

The Committee briefly discussed the issue of engaging visiting researchers. These would be sponsored under a separate tier of the points-based system, and application for sponsorship under this tier was being taken forward by Human Resources.

Resolved: to record the Committee's delight at the University's award of an A-rating in its sponsorship licence application.

8. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

The Committee noted the official launch of the online modules for equality and diversity training would take place at the end of February. The training was to be seen as a positive step in staff development. The training was iterative and personal to the individual, and therefore the results of the self-administered tests forming part of the training could not become part of the assessment of an individual's performance. The Convener confirmed that Court members would be asked to complete the training along with all other staff of the University. The training was compulsory for all members of staff, and the Committee discussed whether completion of the training should be monitored. It was agreed that an assessment of completion rates needed to be undertaken so that if there appeared to be a problem, the Committee could discuss what action might be necessary to encourage engagement.

Resolved: to ask officers to monitor completion rates and report back to the Committee.

9. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Committee received a report from the Director of Management & Personal Development and noted the addition in the report of statistics relating to the gender, age and ethnicity profiles of staff participating in training.

The Committee received a report from the Director of Academic & Professional Development, and praised the engagement with the quality enhancement themes of the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee.

The Committee received a report from Dr Milburn, manager of Generic Skills Dundee, including a report from the new Public Engagement/Outreach Co-ordinator, Dr Jon Urch. The Committee praised the programme of generic skills training provided by the University, but was concerned at the relatively low level of attendance at individual sessions. It was clear that there was still an issue of convincing relevant staff around the University of the benefits for postdoctoral researchers and PhD students of participating in the training on offer. The Committee encouraged Dr Milburn to continue to engage fully with supervisors of research students and with other key staff.

The Committee received a copy of the new Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The Committee welcomed the publication of the document and noted the launch events taking place at Dundee in mid-February to promote the document among the University's research community.

Resolved: to ask Dr Milburn to discuss with relevant staff the importance of preparing young researchers for a range of career possibilities.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Committee received a report from the Head of Safety Services, Dr Scragg. The Committee was alarmed to note that there had been two malicious fires in buildings on the University's campuses in 2008. The Deputy Director of Human Resources agreed to discuss these incidents with Dr Scragg, and he would be asked to respond at the next meeting of the Committee, at which he would be present. There was also some discussion of a personal injury claim concerned with the development of an allergy. The Committee wanted to know more about what measures the University took to prevent the development of allergies, and would likewise ask Dr Scragg for more information at its next meeting. The Committee noted the increase in accidents in Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design (DOJ). The Committee learnt that the DOJ Health & Safety team were preparing a report on activity in the workshops where the accidents had occurred, and the Committee looked forward to seeing the outcomes of the report.

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Health & Safety Sub-Committee on 21 January 2009.

Resolved: to ask the Head of Safety Services to report on a number of issues, outlined in the minutes above, at the next meeting of the Committee.

11. LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

(1) University/Unite Local Joint Committee

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2009 were received. The Committee noted that these had still to be agreed.

(2) University/Unison Local Joint Committee

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2009 were received. The Committee noted that these had still to be agreed.

(3) University/DUCU Local Joint Committee

The minutes of meetings held on 25 September and 15 October 2008 were received.

12. PROFESSOR PETE DOWNES

The Committee agreed that, since Professor Downes would have taken up the role of Acting Principal by the time of the Committee's next meeting on 25 May 2009, it was appropriate that he step down as a member of the Committee. The Committee agreed that it would be appropriate for one of the other Heads of College to join the Committee, and officers were asked to take this issue forward in time for the next meeting.

The Committee recorded its thanks to Professor Downes for his commitment to the work of the Committee during his membership.