



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
The General Council

# Billet

SUMMER 2018

## Welcome to *Billet* summer 2018

We hope that you enjoy this issue, which also contains the papers for the Half-Yearly Meeting to be held on Saturday 9 June 2018.

*Edit*, the magazine for alumni of the University, is printed every summer. The electronic version of *Edit* is available online at [www.ed.ac.uk/edit-magazine](http://www.ed.ac.uk/edit-magazine).

The General Council provides graduates with a continuing voice in the management of the University's affairs, and every graduate automatically becomes a member. Academic staff and members of the University's governing body, the University Court, are also members of the General Council. It meets twice a year and has the right to comment on matters affecting the University's prosperity and wellbeing. For more information on the work of the General Council, visit [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk).



*This lovely sunny shot of the Meadows was taken by international student Jaanvi Gopalakrishnan from India, who was one of the winners of the University's annual Edinburgh Global photo competition: "This is Edinburgh summer life as we know it: blue skies, tall trees, green grass that seems endless. But more than that is the incredible community. Sharing stories over barbecues, having frisbee competitions, reading books, loving the cool breeze: it's the epitome of good vibes in Edinburgh."*

## Report

by **Professor Stuart Macpherson**

*Convener of the Business Committee of the General Council*

I wish to comment particularly on the General Council Half-Yearly Meeting held on 24 February 2018 as there were a number of very significant aspects to the occasion.

Firstly, the meeting was held in the new conference space developed below the recently refurbished McEwan Hall. Both the Statutory Meeting and the following lunch were held in this accommodation. The event also gave members the opportunity to visit the Hall itself. This has undergone a £33 million restoration to its former glory and once again represents a magnificent facility at the heart of the University and the city. I would recommend General Council members to take any opportunity they might have to view the Hall – particularly the newly enlivened and vibrant painted murals which decorate the ceiling and walls.



The Principal gives his annual report based on the University's *Annual Review 2016/17* activity to each February Half-Yearly Meeting. Since our new Principal, Professor Peter Mathieson, had only been in post for three weeks we were very grateful to Senior Vice-Principal Professor Charlie Jeffrey for undertaking this task. It was pleasing to hear of the current excellent state of the University and the recognition given to many outstanding members of staff.

Professor Mathieson followed this with a talk introducing himself, explaining his background and laying out his plans and aspirations for his time as Principal. Peter (as the Principal would like to be known) has a distinguished research record in his specialty of renal medicine but he repeatedly emphasized his desire to advance the learning and education aspect of the University's role. He also described his early involvement in the pension dispute and associated industrial action, which was prevailing at the time, and then took questions from members present.

A video of the meeting can be viewed on the General Council website at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/media](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/media), a verbatim transcript is published in the *Annex* to the *Billet* and a precis of both presentations appears in the minutes on page 12.

The meeting was the last appearance of Dr Mike Mitchell as Secretary of the General Council. Dr Mitchell has been a member of the Business Committee for 12 years. He was previously Chair of the Public Affairs Standing Committee and has served as Secretary for the past seven years. The meeting warmly recognised Dr Mitchell's service and by acclamation thanked him for his invaluable commitment.



*The new Principal, Professor Peter Mathieson, gave a talk to introduce himself at the February Half-Yearly Meeting.*

Members present also agreed that Professor Ann Smyth be appointed to the position of Secretary. A summary of her background is on page 5, I am confident she will make a worthy successor to Dr Mitchell.

An important matter on the agenda was the General Council's membership of the University Court. The meeting by a substantial majority approved the agreement reached between the Business Committee and the University on this. The detail of the agreed new appointment process is described in detail elsewhere in *Billet* (page 6).

Following lunch Mr John (JJ) Chalmers gave an inspiring presentation which received a standing ovation. After graduating in 2009 he served in Helmand, Afghanistan, as a Royal Marine with 42 commando and sustained devastating injuries in a bomb blast. Almost losing his life, he described a painful but ultimately triumphant journey through rehabilitation to winning a gold medal in the Invictus Games and now pursuing a successful media career. It was an uplifting account. Sharing his story, one could understand it would have been all too easy to give up, but this was someone who, with courage and humour, was determined to overcome the adversities that life had dealt him and retain a positive outlook.

The four Standing Committees continue their work. Philip Mawer's Finance and Services Committee recently met with the Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events, Mr Richard Kington to discuss student accommodation. The Committee will be visiting the Holyrood Student Residencies on 3 May.

I was delighted with the enthusiasm shown for recent elections to the Business Committee. These have resulted in the election of Mr Aaron Ashton, Dr William Duncan, Professor Ario Santini and Ms Candice Donnelly. We look forward to welcoming them to future meetings. I was also very pleased that Dr David Houston was re-elected for a further term.

Unfortunately, this is the time of the year when we have to say thank you and goodbye to members who have reached the end of their term. This year we lose Sir Philip Mawer and Mr Sam Trett. I thank them both for their contributions to the Business Committee and their interest in and commitment to the development of our University.

## News

### Scrolling through time: The General Council Meeting and programme of events in Edinburgh, 9 June 2018

The next Statutory Half-Yearly Meeting will take place on **Saturday 9 June 2018** at 12.30pm (buffet lunch available) in Appleton Tower, 11 Crichton Street (George Square area). This is a free event which includes presentations from senior University colleagues to highlight the range of learning resources available from manuscripts to digital programmes. This will be followed by a tour of the University Main Library and the Centre for Research Collections. For more information see page 7.

All members of the General Council are warmly invited to attend.

Book online at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/newsandevents/half-yearly-june-event-2018](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/newsandevents/half-yearly-june-event-2018)

The closing date for booking is **Thursday, 31 May 2018**.

### Introducing the new Secretary of the General Council

#### Professor Ann Smyth

Ann graduated from the University of Edinburgh with a BSc in Psychology in 1970, a PhD in 1974 and MPhil in Clinical Psychology in 1975.

She worked in clinical practice across a range of medical settings developing a special interest in oncology. She led a research group exploring patient's experience of cancer and cancer treatment and, latterly, the impact of developments in cancer genetics.

She played a leading role in the development of methodology for assessing patient-reported outcomes in international clinical trials. She became Director of Training for Psychology Services in NHS Education for Scotland, with responsibility for commissioning postgraduate programmes, brokering partnership working between Universities and the NHS in support of practice-based education and research training. She was awarded an Honorary Professorship by the University of Glasgow in 2006.

From 2007 to 2015 Ann was a General Council Assessor on the Court of the University of Edinburgh, serving on numerous Court committees, working groups and governance reviews and on the General Council's Business Committee. She was a member of the steering group which reviewed the Scottish Code of Higher Education (HE) Governance in the light of changes in legislation and contemporary best practice. The new code was ratified in October 2017.



## New appointment process for General Council Assessors

The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 removed the requirement for the governing bodies of the ancient Scottish universities to include positions reserved for General Council representatives and the Chancellor's Assessor. The University Court tasked its Nominations Committee with considering how to respond. Its outline proposals were accepted by the General Council Business Committee in July 2017 and by the University Court in September 2017. More detailed proposals for the appointment process were approved by the Business Committee and the University Court in January 2018. These can be summarised as follows:

- Retain three General Council Assessors but introduce a selection and appointment process similar to that used for 'Co-opted' members of Court;
- One of the three to be Chancellor's Assessor, with a selection and appointment procedure that retains an appropriate formal role for the Chancellor;
- These positions to be openly advertised, with eligibility restricted to General Council members;
- The recruitment process to be overseen by a selection panel including General Council appointees and other members appointed by the Nominations Committee;
- Applicants to be assessed on the skills and experience they could bring to Court with consideration of the equality and diversity of Court membership;
- The General Council Assessor positions are formally appointed by Court; the joint General Council & Chancellor's Assessor would have a final stage of formal appointment by the Chancellor. In each case the appointments will be for four years in the first instance.

The Motion proposing these changes was passed at the General Council Half-Yearly meeting on 24 February 2018.

Implementation of these proposals will require changes to University ordinances. While the timeframe for compliance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 allows for a transition period to the end of 2020. We are working to the ends of the terms of office of existing Assessors. The intention is that processes will be in place to secure the appointment of two Assessors in time to fill the vacancies that arise on 1 August 2019. The remaining General Council Assessor has a term of office which runs until summer 2021 and she will continue until then.

## Obituary

### Very Rev Dr Duncan Shaw

*Billet* does not normally carry obituaries but on this occasion we wanted to mark the passing of an exceptionally long serving former Secretary of the General Council. Duncan Shaw graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1951 and with a PhD in Scottish History in 1962. Remarkably, he was Secretary of the General Council from 1965 to 1993, spanning the periods of office of four Principals and 10 Rectors. His dedicated service to the General Council was recognised in an Honorary Doctorate conferred by the University in 1990. In retirement he continued his academic interests in church history and in the Clan Shaw of Argyll and the Isles. He died in Edinburgh on 20 February 2018. The General Council was represented at his funeral by the Convener of the Business Committee, Professor Stuart Macpherson.

## General Council Meeting

### Edinburgh, 9 June 2018

The June 2018 Half-Yearly Meeting will be held in Edinburgh on Saturday 9 June. The location will be in George Square, starting in the refurbished Appleton Tower then moving to the University Main Library. In addition to the formal business meeting of the General Council, which will be kept as brief as possible, we will be hearing from our leading academic colleagues



on the current priorities and challenges facing the Library and information technology with some suggestions as to how these might continue to develop in future. Following the presentations we will be visiting the Main Library and the Centre for Research Collections, creating opportunities to meet and engage with a number of leading library personnel and users, seeing their work and finding out how much study and curation has moved on.

Following the successful format of recent years there will not be a formal General Council lunch. Instead, we plan to start with a snack lunch from 12.30pm onwards and then to move on to the meeting and the engagement sessions, finishing later in the afternoon.

More information will become available by spring 2018. We will be sending out further communications and there will be more on the General Council website.

## Meet the team

Here we profile three members of the General Council Business Committee

**Name: Andrew Miller**

**Education:** Foulford Primary School and Beath High School.

BSc (Hons I) in Chemistry (1958), PhD in X-ray Crystallography (1962). Did Psychology I – very useful.

**Current home:** Edinburgh.

**Previous roles:** include Professor of Biochemistry (1984–94) and Vice-Principal for Research, Computing and the Library (1993–4), both at the University of Edinburgh; Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of Stirling (1994–2001).

**Favourite student memory:** I joined a group of around 16 students from the Scottish students unions. We spent one month travelling by train from Ostend to West and East Germany, Poland, USSR and Ukraine in 1961, meeting university students in these countries. An exciting group of memorable characters. I can still see and hear them in late night discussions with our hosts.

**Best staff memory:** My research supervisor Arnold Beevers, a brilliant scientist, rather eccentric, a Quaker who ran what was then called the Edinburgh Cripple Aid Society and encouraged community singing at scientific conferences. He had a habit of whistling Gilbert and Sullivan tunes continuously in the lab.

**Favourite student venue:** Cowan House. A huge privilege to live in this hall of residence, then in George Square on the site of the present University Main Library, with around 80 very bright and lively characters for three years – transformed my life.

**Most valuable lesson:** listen first, then think, then speak.

An outline of my research career is as follows. Using X-ray diffraction and neutron scattering, I worked out how the molecules in biological fibres of keratin, collagen and muscle are packed together in native fibres. I published around 180 research papers in journals like *Nature* and the *Journal of Molecular Biology*. I did some similar work on viruses – influenza, crane-fly virus and baculoviruses, the latter with David Kelly.

Two thirds of my time was spent in universities – Edinburgh, Oxford and Stirling and one third in national research laboratories in Melbourne, Cambridge, Washington DC and Grenoble. On leaving Stirling, I enjoyed a variety of jobs – six months as Interim Chief Executive Officer at Cancer Research UK, merger mechanic, not oncologist, fusing ICRF and CRC, nine years as Secretary of the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, five years as General Secretary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, two years on the Board of the UK Food Standards Agency, and four years on the Council of the Open University. Some of these posts were concurrent.



**Name: Briana Pegado**

**Education:** MA Sustainable Development (2014)

**Current home:** Edinburgh

**Current roles and interests:** Cofounder of Povo, a formless consultancy that uses principles of play and the creative process to help people unpack their ideas. Chief Collaborator with Artists In Residence, University of Edinburgh's Design Informatics. Founder and Director, Edinburgh Student Arts Festival. Speaker Coach, Creative Mornings Edinburgh. Business Development, Custom Lane – Scotland's Centre For Design and Making. Trustee, YWCA Scotland – the Young Women's Movement. Steering Group Member, Creative Edinburgh. Advisory Board Member, the Travelling Gallery.

**Favourite student memory:** Graduating as one of three people part of the first cohort for the MA Sustainable Development and being elected Edinburgh University Students' Association's first black woman president in 2014.

**Most memorable staff member:** Claire Haggett, Programme Director for the MA in Sustainable Development.

**Favourite student venue:** Rainy Hall, New College (Rainy Hall for life!).

**Most valuable lesson:** It is never about marks or how well you do on exams, it is always about the people you meet and what you do with your time outside of lectures. It only takes one person to change the course of history and it can simply start with you.

At the end of 2017, I was named one of Scotland's 30 Under 30 Inspiring Young Women by YWCA Scotland – the Young Women's Movement. Edinburgh has been my home for my entire adult life and throughout my time at university I committed myself to my community, university and city. This has manifested itself in a career committed to supporting the next generation of creative thinkers that are going to solve the world's challenges and co-create a better future for all of us. I have always believed this future will be born out of the creative industries and I have committed my career to supporting this next generation of social innovators through exposing the creative industries to Scotland's world leading social enterprise milieu. The work continues as my career continues to apply principles I perfected in my Sustainable Development degree with representation, social justice, environmental justice, sustainability, innovation, creativity and play.

It has been an honour to serve on the Business Committee and I continue to support Scotland in its world-leading drive for social innovation which leads to long-lasting social change.



**Name: Brian Arthur Smith**

**Education:** George Heriot's School; University of Edinburgh, MA Mental Philosophy (1966) University of Cambridge, MA Theology (1972) and MLitt (1973). General Ordination Examination, for entering ordained ministry.

**Current home:** Edinburgh

**Previous roles:** include Bishop of Edinburgh until retirement in 2011. I served on school governing bodies and two UNESCO committees (Scotland Committee and UK Memory of the World Committee) and visited Botswana as a voluntary teacher of theology in their recently founded theological school.

**Favourite student memory:** I have a vivid memory of the Scottish Premier of Carl Orff's 'Carmina Burana' being sung in the McEwan Hall, and of Walton and Sitwell's 'Façade' being performed in Adam House. They have remained favourites ever since. I shall never forget the splendid demonstration of the working of the 'Wilberforce spring' given by Professor Norman Feather in his course on Vibrations and Waves. Whenever I walk along the bank of the canal, I recall memories of rowing, and especially lifting the boat out of the water in icy weather.

**Most memorable staff member:** It was a privilege to have had lectures on the enlightenment philosophers from Dr George Davie, who wrote extensively on the history of the Scottish universities.

**Favourite social venue:** The 'Men's Union' (now Teviot Row House) as a place to eat and to sit (haggis was always on the menu) and events in the University Chaplaincy centre, in what has now become the Bedlam Theatre.

**Most valuable lesson:** The teaching given in Mental Philosophy. I have drawn upon this so often in my life. As a member of the Students' Representative Council I got familiar with Committee Processes – also a useful life skill!

After leaving Edinburgh, I read Theology at Cambridge, and trained for ordination (Anglican). I held posts in Oxford and later in Yorkshire with parochial and training responsibilities, while holding national responsibilities as an examiner in Christian Doctrine, and as an inspector of the churches Theological Colleges and Courses. I was appointed an Archdeacon in Bradford Diocese, and later, Bishop of Tonbridge. In 2001 I returned home as Bishop of Edinburgh and became a director of Waverley Care.

A memorable physics teacher at school introduced us to the joys of picking up old electronic equipment in scrap yards. I thus developed the habit of seeking out such items and fiddling with them in an attempt (often vain) to restore them to life – easier in the days of large thermionic valves, more difficult in the days of transistors, and virtually impossible when dealing with damaged integrated circuits!



## Papers for the General Council Half-Yearly Meeting

**Scrolling through time:** Presentations and a tour of the University Main Library and Centre for Research Collections – incorporating the General Council Half-Yearly Meeting.

**Saturday 9 June 2018**

**Appleton Tower and University Main Library, Edinburgh**

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 12.30pm     | Light lunch on arrival and an opportunity to learn about some of the current projects funded by Innovation Initiative Grants  |
| 1.15pm      | General Council Business Meeting  |
| 1.35pm      | <p>Presentation by <b>Gavin McLachlan</b>,<br/>Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University:<br/>'Lifelong learning, digital learning and the use of technology in education'</p> <p>Presentation by <b>Jeremy Upton</b>,<br/>Director of Library and University Collections:<br/>'A history of the University of Edinburgh Library through to a vision of its future'</p> |
| 2.45–4.15pm | Six revolving sessions covering the Centre for Research Collections and the Library's modern facilities for exhibiting, researching, conserving and digitising the University's heritage collections  |
| 4.15pm      | Guests depart   |

## Agenda for the General Council Meeting

- 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in the McEwan Hall, Edinburgh on 24 February 2018 (Paper A)
- 2 Matters arising
- 3 Report of the Business Committee
- 4 Dates of future meetings of the General Council
- 5 Notice of forthcoming Elections
- 6 Any other competent business
- 7 Adjournment
- 8 **Scrolling through time:** Presentations and Library tour

## Paper A

Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Edinburgh on 24 February 2018.

### Present

Mr Steve Morrison	University Rector, in the Chair
Ms Sarah Smith	University Secretary
Professor Peter Mathieson	Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Professor Charlie Jeffery	Senior Vice-Principal
Dr Michael Mitchell	Secretary of the General Council
Professor Stuart Macpherson	Convener of the Business Committee
Rev Dr Harriet Harris	Chaplain to the University
73 Members present	

### 1. Result of the Elections of five Members of the Business Committee

The Chairman announced that the five new members of the Business Committee elected to serve for a period of four years from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2022 were Mr Aaron Ashton, Ms Candice Donnelly, Professor William Duncan, Dr David Houston and Professor Ario Santini.

### 2. Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in the Queen's Medical Research Institute, Little France, Edinburgh

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2017 were approved.

### 3. Matters arising

The Chairman reported that there were no matters arising from the Minutes.

### 4. Report of the Business Committee

The Convener began by warmly welcoming the incoming Principal, Professor Peter Mathieson, to the University and to comment on the reception held for his predecessor, Sir Timothy O'Shea, who had demitted role after 15 years as Principal. He received a personal gift from the General Council of a piece of engraved glass depicting Old College – a photograph of it can be viewed on the General Council website. Monies collected from General Council members were also donated to the O'Shea Global Scholars Initiative at Sir Tim's request.

The Convener drew attention to the changes to the requirement of General Council members to serve on the University Court as a result of the implementation of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. He was happy to report that although this means there is now no statutory requirement for General Council Court

Assessors, the University has made it very clear that it values the contributions made by them in the past and wishes General Council members to continue on Court.

The Convener outlined the priorities of the Business Committee for the coming session. These are set following an informal meeting with the current officers of the Edinburgh University Students' Association. The objectives agreed are under four headings. Firstly, the student experience encompassing teaching and learning in particular teaching quality, the personal tutor system and the teaching/research balance. Secondly, student wellbeing especially mental health and counselling, transport, ensuring accessibility and housing. Then, outreach, paying particular attention to widening access and integrating the student community. Finally, constitutional change, including leaving the European Union and the General Council changes to the appointment of Court Assessors. The four standing Committees then take these objectives and plan their meetings accordingly.

The Academic Standing Committee and its Convener Professor Steve Hillier, had held a formal meeting with senior officers from the Students' Association and recently met with the newly appointed Director of Student Wellbeing.

The Constitutional Standing Committee, chaired by Professor David Munro, had been closely involved with the change to the Court Assessors and had met with the Head of Court Services to finalise the new arrangements for their appointment. The Convener added that Professor Munro also keeps a watching brief on the implications of Brexit and will arrange further meetings as the facts become clearer.

Sir Philip Mawer chairs the Finance and Services Standing Committee who held its annual meeting with the University Director of Finance on 24 January. The Finance Director reported another successful year for the University and Sir Philip particularly noted highlights as a 10 per cent year on year rise in research grants and the award of £9.7 million through undergraduate bursary schemes. The Convener reported that the expenditure on capital schemes continues apace with plans to spend £200 million over the next 10 years on schemes designed to improve the experience of students. The Committee also noted the University's major involvement in the forthcoming Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal Region Deal.

The Convener welcomed Ms Sophie Marshall to the chair of the Public Affairs Standing Committee. They had met with Vice-Principal People and Cultures to discuss the Disability Review. The Committee endorsed the recommendations pertaining to both the implementation of adjustments and the accessibility of the estate and appreciates that these improvements will take some time before they are fully in place. They intend to keep the subject on their agenda.

The Convener thanked the four Chairs of the Standing Committees for their work and the senior University personnel who always respond so willingly to the General Council's request for presentations and discussions. He praised the present members of the

Business Committee for their commitment, willingly attending meetings, fulfilling their responsibilities enthusiastically and representing the General Council at official University functions such as graduations, St Giles services and the Remembrance event. He added that the membership has a good equality and diversity balance reflected in the interest of those standing for the vacant positions in this year's elections.

Finally, the Convener gave enormous thanks to Dr Mike Mitchell who stepped down from his position as Secretary of the General Council after seven years. Dr Mitchell had given 12 years of service to the Business Committee, including chairing the Public Affairs Standing Committee. His extensive experience and knowledge of the University and the background history of the General Council will be sadly missed.

The report of the Business Committee was approved. The full text of the Convener's remarks is contained in the *Annex* to *Billet*.

## 5. Dates of future meetings of the General Council

The next Half-Yearly Meeting would take place on Saturday 9 June 2018 in the Appleton Tower, Crichton Street (George Square area). Any Motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 21 March 2018. The following Statutory Half-Yearly Meeting would be held on Saturday 16 February 2019 at the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation and any Motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by Wednesday 21 November 2018.

## 6. Notice of forthcoming Elections

There would be elections for five Members of the Business Committee in February 2019. Nominations on forms available from the General Council Office and on the website should be received in the General Council Office by Wednesday 21 November 2018.

## 7. Motion – Changes to the appointment of General Council Court Assessors

The Motion was approved.

## 8. Motion – Appointment of Secretary

The Motion was approved.

## 9a. Presentation by the Senior Vice-Principal of the annual report of the University

The Senior Vice-Principal presented the annual report based on the University's *Annual Review 2016/2017* ([www.ed.ac.uk/about/annual-review](http://www.ed.ac.uk/about/annual-review))

This records another year of strong performance by the University. The student body now numbers nearly 40,000 of whom 13 per cent come from other EU countries. The University's engagement with the EU has increased since the referendum: EU student

recruitment is increasing; there was a net increase in EU staff numbers of 250; income from EU research grants significantly increased. Edinburgh is now the top University in the UK for incoming and outgoing students on the Erasmus programme.

We are still the number one recruiter in the UK of students from the US but, for the first time, the number of students from China outstripped that from the US. Looking at the global profile of students, the main concern is the relatively low number of students coming from India. The tone of immigration discussions has had a negative impact on student recruitment. The recent relaxation of restrictions on student visas is welcomed. We are a majority female university. That majority is growing. This is a positive development from historic male dominance, but the significant deficit in the numbers of young men from disadvantaged backgrounds entering the University is of growing concern.

Three of the newly appointed professors had special mention: Alison Koslowski, Social & Political Science, whose Personal Chair and Chancellor's Award at a relatively early stage in her career have been achieved in the face of significant physical disability; Geoff Sim, Global Agriculture & Food Security, who is re-establishing agriculture as a School, with a strong emphasis on animal genetics and the use of technology; David Aspinall, Software Safety & Security, who leads the Centre for Cybersecurity, a UK-wide network.

Among many awards, prizes and honours Professor Jeffery drew out a few examples. It was pleasing to see a senior leader recognised for their commitment to teaching: Vice-Principal Chris Breward, Head of Edinburgh College of Art, and Niki Moran won the Best Course Award. Chris has since become a director in the National Galleries. The Edinburgh University Students' Association Teaching Awards are now recognised as important for academic CVs and in promotions. Of the Chancellor's Awards, the work on pathways out of crime for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, led by Lesley McAra and Susan McVie, was given special mention for its community impact. Among the Principal's Medals, Amy Woodgate's work establishing the technologies to enable the University to deliver MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) was highlighted. Sadly, Jon Oberlander, who won the Tam Dalyell Prize (for Excellence in Engaging the Public in Science), died last December. The celebration of his life attracted the biggest attendance ever in the Playfair Library. Recognition in the Queen's Honours was awarded, among others, to: Kathleen Hood, for widening participation; Harriet Harris, for creating a multi-faith community in the University; and Colin Adams, for commercialisation of our research in informatics.

The *Annual Review* lists some prominent recognition of research, from an alumnus of the University winning a Nobel Prize in Chemistry – Professor Sir J Fraser Stoddart, to additional recognition for Peter Higgs' outstanding contribution to Physics. Of particular note was the Royal Scottish Geographical Society award to Andy Hein because he is a Chancellor's Fellow. There are now 300 outstanding early career researchers from

around the world on this programme which invests in supporting future leaders. Chancellor's Fellows are often also among the University's most innovative teachers.

Among the Honorary Graduates, Joshua Littlejohn is well known for his visionary work in support of homeless people. Helga Nowotny, now Head of the European Research Council, was also recognised for her commitment to research excellence in Europe.

The University is in a strong financial position. With annual income heading towards £1 billion this is one of Scotland's most significant enterprises.

The *Annual Review* covers a range of key events over the past year, significant among which is the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal, co-funded by Scottish and UK governments, which is about the application of data technologies for the benefit of private enterprise and the public sector.

Finally, the contribution of the alumni community to the successful renovation of the McEwan Hall was particularly applauded.

## 9b. Presentation by the Principal

The Principal paid tribute to his predecessor, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, for the strong performance of the University and for a gracious handover of responsibilities. He particularly thanked Vice-Principal Professor Jeffery and the University Secretary, Sarah Smith, for their work in keeping him informed in the inter-regnum. He pointed out that the global distribution of students entering the University would soon represent an army of members of the General Council, ambassadors for the University all over the world. The Principal requested that he be addressed as Peter. Introducing himself as having been brought up in Cornwall, but not Cornish, he explained his connection to Scotland through his father, who came from Edinburgh and introduced him to the city, as well as to the Mathiesons' history as wardens of Eilean Donan. Sadly his father died prematurely when Peter was a child. His wife Tina, whom he met at university, is an orthodontist.

The University of Edinburgh accounts for 25 per cent of higher education in Scotland. The Principal pointed out that this position brings civic, national and international responsibilities. He shared his optimism for the exciting potential the City Deal offers the University for wide engagement with its community, through its strength in data science. He reflected on his pride in collecting the Queen's Anniversary Prize for the societal impact of the University's 30 years of work on issues in women's health, a programme now led by Vice-Principal Jane Norman. Commenting on the University's extraordinary record of growing research funding, the Principal cautioned that this growth could not continue indefinitely. Although research is the main determinant of international reputation, it loses money for the institution whereas the running costs are paid by teaching and other activities. Recognition of this fact is important in managing a comprehensive university.

On the international front, Brexit is a driver to universities to realise and capitalise on their potential beyond Europe. The Principal drew particularly on his experience of China to alert us to the risks as well as the potential for development for the University there and across Asia. He was particularly supportive of work in Africa e.g. the MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program, which brings bright African graduates here and encourages them to return to apply their new knowledge and skills in their own country. Given the implications of population explosion in Africa e.g. for healthcare and education, there is enthusiasm for our greater engagement, particularly using data science.

British universities are not as well developed in alumni engagement as their US or even their Hong Kong counterparts. While most alumni will not be able to be philanthropic givers early in their careers there is much they can do to help their university through, for example, mentorship and internship, being critical friends in Edinburgh and beyond. The Principal is strongly supportive of the work going on to develop relationships with alumni.

A key concern across the Russell Group, shared by our Principal, is how universities articulate their value to society, not only to our staff and students but the wider society. Professor Mathieson affirmed his personal commitment both to the quality of the student experience and widening participation. He signalled that he did not foresee the need for any major structural change in the University but perhaps a slight shift in cultural emphasis to rebalance attention between teaching and research, to ensure excellence in teaching and knowledge exchange are appropriately prized. With regard to the latter he gave a nice example of bi-directional exchange from an experiential student-learning project from Hong Kong in rural China.

The Principal thanked the General Council for their support of the University, past, present and future and agreed to take questions. The full text of the Principal's and Vice-Principal's remarks, as well as the record of the discussion that followed the presentation, are contained in the *Annex* to the *Billet*. The presentations can also be viewed at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/media](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/media).

## 10. Any other competent business

There was no other competent business.

## 11. Adjournment

The Motion by the Convener of the Business Committee that, for the purpose of considering matters which may be transmitted to the General Council by the University Court or any other business of a competent nature, the Business Committee be empowered to act on behalf of the Council, and that this meeting be adjourned to a date to be fixed by the Business Committee, was approved.

Rev Dr Harriet Harris closed the meeting with a benediction.

The *Annex* to the *Billet* containing supporting papers for the Agenda, including communications from the University Court, full Standing Committee reports, a transcript of the Principal's presentation, and the Business Committee's report to the meeting on 18 February 2017 is available at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/media](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/media). General Council members may also request it by post from:

Ms Alison MacLeary  
 General Council Office  
 Charles Stewart House  
 9–16 Chambers Street T: +44 (0)131 650 2152  
 Edinburgh EH1 1HT E: [general.council@ed.ac.uk](mailto:general.council@ed.ac.uk)

or pick a copy up at the location of the General Council Meeting from half-an-hour beforehand.

### Officers

*Chairman:* HRH The Princess Royal  
*Secretary:* Ann Smyth BSc, MPhil (ClinPsychol), PhD 2022  
*Registrar:* Sarah Smith, University Secretary *ex-officio*

#### General Council Assessors on the University Court

Doreen Davidson, BA, AIPD 2021  
 Dr Alan D G Brown, MBChB, FRCOG, FRCSEd 2019  
 Ritchie Walker, MA, BSc, DipEd 2019

#### Business Committee

*Convener:* Stuart Macpherson, OBE, MBChB, FRCS, FRCP, FRCGP 2020  
*Vice Convener:* Gordon D Cairns, LLB 2020  
 A Convener of Academic Standing Committee:  
 Stephen Hillier, OBE, DSc 2020  
 C Convener of Constitutional Standing Committee:  
 David M Munro, MBE, BSc, PhD 2020  
 F Convener of Finance and Services Standing Committee:  
 Sir Philip Mawer, D Litt, LLD (Hon), MA, DPA, Hon FIFA 2018  
 P Convener of Public Affairs Standing Committee:  
 Sophie Marshall, MA 2019

#### Members

*Chancellor's Assessor:* Sheriff Principal Edward F Bowen, CBE, TD, QC *ex-officio*  
 F David Houston, BSc, MBA, PhD, FSITM 2018  
 P Samuel Trett, MBA, MA 2018  
 C Moyra Forrest, MA 2019  
 F Jock Millican, BSc, FCILT 2019  
 P Kristin Hannesdóttir, BArch(Hons), BA, MFA 2019  
 P Bruce Ritson, OBE, MD, FRCPE, FRCPsych 2019  
 A Briana Pegado, MA 2020  
 C Krystyna Szumelukowa, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI 2020  
 F Kirsty MacGregor, MA, MBA, DipEd 2020  
 F Hamish McKenzie, MA 2020  
 A Professor Andrew Miller, CBE DUniv, FRSE 2021  
 A Ms Judith Drake, MA, MSc 2021  
 C Rt Rev Brian Smith, MA, MLitt 2021  
 P John Clifford, MSc 2021  
*Assistant to the Secretary:* Alison MacLeary, MA

'A' denotes a member of the Academic Standing Committee  
 'C' a member of the Constitutional Standing Committee  
 'F' a member of the Finance and Services Standing Committee  
 'P' a member of the Public Affairs Standing Committee.

## The June 2018 General Council Lunch Booking Form

**Appleton Tower, Saturday 9 June 2018, 12.30pm**

Tickets for this event are free.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

..... Postcode .....

Name(s) of guest(s) .....

.....

Dietary requirements/preferences .....

.....

Year of graduation and subject of study.....

.....

*Please return to:* Ms Alison MacLeary  
 Assistant to the Secretary of the General Council  
 The University of Edinburgh  
 Charles Stewart House  
 9–16 Chambers Street  
 Edinburgh EH1 1HT  
 Scotland, UK

Alternatively, book online at: [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/whats-happening](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/whats-happening)

Closing date for applications: **Thursday 31 May 2018**

This publication is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact: [communications.office@ed.ac.uk](mailto:communications.office@ed.ac.uk)

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'Edinburgh' from Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London: 1577) vol. II, at p.1868.

This image can be found in the University's Special Collections. The General Council meeting on 9 June 2018 will include presentations highlighting the range of learning resources available from manuscripts to digital programmes, followed by a tour of the University's Main Library and Centre for Research Collections.

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