Minutes of the Fifty-first Annual General Meeting held on 3 February 2017

The list of members present at the meeting and submitting their apologies for absence is given in Annex A to these Minutes (appended).

442 WELCOME

The Chair of Council welcomed all those present to the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the University's Court.

The Chair extended an especially warm welcome to the following:

- The Lord Mayor of the City of Canterbury
- Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce
- Sir Julian Brazier, MP for Canterbury and Whitstable

The Chair introduced the officers who were to speak to the annual reports for the Court’s meeting and those others who would be taking part in the presentations:

- Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow, Vice-Chancellor and President
- Bob Scruton, Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee
- Professor Jane Reeves, Co-Director of the Centre for Child Protection

443 MEMBERSHIP AND BUSINESS OF THE COURT

The Court noted Papers CT2016/1, Ordinance 9 concerning the Court’s membership and business, and CT2016/2, its current membership.

444 MINUTES OF THE COURT’S MEETING ON 22 JANUARY 2016

The Minutes of the Fiftieth Annual General Meeting held on 22 January 2016, Paper CT2016/3, were confirmed.

445 ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 2015/2016

1. Presentation of the Annual Review

The Vice-Chancellor and President presented the Annual Review for 2015/2016 and highlights of the University’s activities. Copies of the Vice-Chancellor’s slides for her presentation were tabled at the meeting.

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following areas.

i) Congratulations – New Year’s Honours

The Vice-Chancellor congratulated Sir Julian Brazier MP on his knighthood and University of Kent alumna and Olympic gold medallist Susannah Townsend on her MBE.

ii) Top UK University

The University of Kent had once again been recognised as a top UK university, coming 16th in the Guardian University Guide 2016, and 20th in the Times Higher Education Table of Tables 2016.
The ‘In Conversation’ series with Chancellor Gavin Esler had been a great success and to date guests had included Dame Diana Rigg and Herman Van Rompuy. This ongoing series engaged with students, staff, alumni and the local community and also raised funds for the Kent Opportunity Fund, established to support a broad range of scholarships, student projects to enhance extra-curricular activities at Kent, and bursaries to support students experiencing financial hardship.

iii) **Student Experience**

The University had been ranked 4th highest for overall student satisfaction in the National Student Survey 2016 and in a mock Teaching Excellence Framework exercise modelled by the Times Higher Education, Kent was ranked 5th.

Popular Summer Schools, launched in 2013, had taken place in Paris and Brussels to give the University’s students a taste of life there, and in October and November 2016, over £90,000 was raised for the Kent Opportunity Fund from the alumni telephone campaign.

iv) **Research Success**

The University’s research had gone from strength to strength and examples of research success included:

A number of academics led by Professor Mark Connelly, School of History, received Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funding for “Gateways to the First World War”, marking the centenary of the conflict.

Dr Kate Bedford, Reader at Kent Law School, received Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funding to consider the cultural and legal framework around bingo, a globally significant but under-studied form of gambling.

Dr Maria Alfredsson, School of Physical Sciences, continued her crucial work investigating whether there were alternatives to conventional batteries and worked with the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory to develop a non-metallic fibre battery.

Dr Matt Struebig, Senior Lecturer in Biological Conservation, School of Anthropology and Conservation, winner of the 2016 Faculty of Social Sciences Early Career Research Prize, received funding from the Leverhulme Trust for a long-term case study on Sumatran tigers living close to farming communities.

v) **Looking out for Lottie**

The award winning ‘Looking out for Lottie’ project: Lottie is a modern interactive simulation addressing the serious issues of online grooming and exploitation for professionals working with young people. Professor Jane Reeves, one of the Co-Directors of the Centre for Child Protection at the University, which devised the project, was invited to give a presentation to Court (see Minute 447 below).

vi) **Outstanding Staff**

The University’s outstanding members of staff were highlighted, including thirteen new Professors who had received internal professorial promotions made during the academic year; and two of the winners of University Research Prizes; Dr Ben Goult, School of Biosciences, who was awarded the University Prize for Early Career Research for his study of how cells sense and respond to their external environment, and Dr Heather Ferguson, School of Psychology, who won the University Prize for Research for her exceptional achievements which included attracting over £1.6m in
external funding for her research, as well as receiving a prestigious ERC Starting Grant and two Leverhulme Trust grants.

Two of the prize winners of the University Teaching Prizes were mentioned; Dr Henrik Schoenefeldt, Kent School of Architecture, for two initiatives, one introducing new practices of sustainable environmental design into architectural education and the second exploring the pedagogical potential of involving students in collaborative research; and Dr Harmonie Toros, School of Politics and International Relations, for her innovative and original work on the module ‘Humans at War’.

Professor Roger Vickerman, Dean for Europe, was awarded the Jules Dupuit Prize for his lifetime achievements in the field of transport research; Dr Reshmi Dutta-Flanders, School of European Culture and Languages, was awarded the ‘Hind Rattan’ award which is one of the highest Indian national awards granted to non-resident people of Indian origin; Professor Julia Twigg was awarded the British Society of Gerontology Outstanding Achievement Award 2016 for her research on how people feel and behave as they age and Dr Louise Naylor became the first member of University of Kent staff to be made a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**vii) Excellent Students**

The third annual Kent Student Awards celebrated the success of the University’s outstanding students. Nadia Perrotta was winner of the Outstanding Contribution to Arts and Culture award for her Wetlands project, bringing together students and the local community through art. Adeshina Adesokan was winner of the Outstanding Contribution to Sport Development award for his work with a new sports society focused on improving student health, wellbeing and fitness. Tom Barlass was Student of the Year and the winner of the Outstanding Contribution to College Life award for his dedication to enhancing college life for students. Aimee Butt was Outstanding Fundraiser of the Year for her work as fundraising officer for Canterbury Homeless Outreach Society and for coordinating a successful programme of events for ‘Help the Homeless Week’. Thomas Owen was the Outstanding Environmental and Sustainability Champion who volunteered his time to improve the Medway campus environment and community.

**viii) Kent Union**

Kent Union student volunteers celebrated their achievements at the Kent Union Awards 2016; the students had logged over 77,100 volunteering hours, and over £170,000 was raised through Raise and Give (RaG).

The annual competition held between sports teams from local Universities, Varsity, had again been a great success for Kent. Team Medway won Medway Varsity for the first time, with Team Medway (Universities at Medway - Kent and Greenwich) competing against the University of Greenwich’s other Campuses and Team Kent also won Canterbury Varsity for the 20th time, with the University of Kent competing against Canterbury Christ Church University.

**ix) Building our Estate**

New building projects included the Wigoder Building, home of the Kent Law Clinic, which opened in October 2016. The Sibson Building was scheduled to open in Spring Term 2017 as the new home of Kent Business School and the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science, and the new Student Hub opened on the Medway Campus in January 2017, a new Students’ Union building for Medway students which was a joint venture with the University of Greenwich.
Local Engagement

The Canterbury Street Marshal Scheme was now in its second year and had engaged with over 13,000 students and residents to date. Residents reported a 20% reduction in noise levels, fewer and less serious incidents of anti-social behaviour and fewer incidents of damage to property and vehicles. Students reported feeling safer and reassured by the presence of the Street Marshals. A Street Marshal trial had started at Medway to cover the area around Liberty Quays and the residential roads near Medway Park.

Over the last year, the University of Kent had contributed £780 million to the south-east economy, of which £580 million contributed to the Canterbury economy. It was noted that over 10% of Canterbury’s jobs could be attributed to the University.

A forthcoming venture for the University and the KM Group was the planned launch of KMTV in July 2017, which would be based at the University’s Medway campus and provide a channel on Freeview TV in Maidstone and Tonbridge.

Kent Law Clinic

The important work of the Kent Law Clinic, a partnership between students, academics and solicitors and barristers in practice locally, was highlighted following the Clinic’s move into its new premises in the Autumn Term 2016. The Clinic has long provided a public service for local people who need legal advice and representation but cannot afford to pay for it and has enhanced the education of students in the Kent Law School through direct experience of legal practice.

UK’s European University

The European Centres, in Brussels, Paris, Rome and Athens, have given an added dimension to the global presence of the University and have enabled the University to attract students in an international market by offering quality programmes at an appropriate location.

Global Reputation

The University remained committed to its European identity and hosted a range of events across its campuses. After the result of the EU Referendum the University committed to supporting its staff and students, as well as scoping out opportunities that Brexit might offer.

The Vice-Chancellor made visits to Paris, Japan, Berlin, Brussels and Hong Kong to extend the University’s relationships with partners around the world. Alumni events also took place in the USA, Malaysia and Greece, and the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, David Nightingale, attended the Innovation in Academia awards in Athens, as part of Brit Week.

Kent’s international reputation continued to grow with an ever increasing number of partners across the globe, currently 265, 169 of which were in Europe. Those partnerships included student exchange agreements, incoming study abroad agreements, memorandum of understandings and dual awards.

Council

Six new members of Council started their terms in 2016; Martin Cook, lay member; Professor John Fitzpatrick and Dr Owen Lyne, academic staff representatives; Charlotte Guy, non-academic staff representative; Rory Murray, Kent Union President and Sarah Hankins, student representative.
The Vice-Chancellor expressed her thanks to Sir David Warren, Chair of Council.

xv) **New Vice-Chancellor and President**

The Vice-Chancellor noted that this was her last meeting of Court and that the sixth Vice-Chancellor of the University would start her term on 1 August 2017. Professor Karen Cox, currently Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Nottingham, had been announced as the University of Kent’s new Vice-Chancellor and President in January 2017.

2. **Questions**

Sir Julian Brazier, MP for Canterbury and Whitstable, thanked the Vice-Chancellor for her outstanding achievements and extremely successful period of leadership, particularly noting the improved relationship between the University in Canterbury and the local community. Sir Julian offered the University his help within Parliament, particularly regarding research.

Professor Ted Parker, Emeritus Professor of Radio Communications, enquired about the Vice-Chancellor’s revised title “Vice-Chancellor and President” and the Vice-Chancellor responded to confirm that this was part of the University’s Internationalisation Strategy, as in many parts of the world, Vice-Chancellor was not a familiar term. Professor Parker also asked whether Russian Studies and the Russian language might be considered as part of the University’s curriculum. The Vice-Chancellor responded that language skills were important, although many Universities no longer taught modern languages, and that the University of Kent had set up a system of credit bearing and non-credit bearing language courses for students (and members of staff and the general public), including courses in the Russian language.

Dr Christopher Gay, former member of the University Council, asked the Vice-Chancellor for more information about the Street Marshal Scheme and whether it was a joint initiative. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that it was a joint scheme (a partnership between the University of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University, Kent Union, Christ Church Students’ Union, Kent Police, Canterbury City Council, the Residents’ Associations of north and south Canterbury and Right Guard Security), and that although the whole city was not covered, the scheme had been extended in Canterbury and was also being trialled at Medway.

Mary Berg, former member of the University Council, expressed pride at the University’s tagline “The UK’s European university” and asked what impact Brexit would have on the recruitment of overseas students. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University had still been very successful in recruiting overseas students, that the current rhetoric from the Home Office was not helpful and that Jo Johnson MP, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, had ensured that there were clear messages to European students about their funding position within days of the Brexit vote. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the future of overseas recruitment would depend very much on the visa regime and that this issue also affected 22% of the University’s academic staff, who were from overseas, and were unsure of their position despite having contributed much to the University, the city and the region.

The Lord Mayor of Canterbury asked about the University’s plans to increase parking as students parked in the streets of Canterbury and it caused congestion. The Vice-Chancellor replied that most of the traffic coming to the Canterbury Campus was members of staff traveling to work who were without access to public transport and that many cars used the Canterbury Campus as a short cut and were not University traffic. The Vice-Chancellor agreed that the University and the City Council needed to work together on this issue as further car parks on Campus would be very expensive and there was no guarantee that planning permission would be granted.
3. Resolution

The Court resolved to receive and note the Annual Review for 2015/2016.

446 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2016

1. Presentation of the Financial Statements

Bob Scruton, Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, presented the Financial Statements for 2015/2016. Copies of Mr Scruton’s slides for his presentation were tabled at the meeting.

Mr Scruton drew attention to a significant change in accounting policies, with a new requirement to produce financial statements under the FRS102 accounting standard. It stated that the Finance team had worked very hard to achieve the transition and that the External Auditors had been very complimentary. Mr Scruton added that this year, also for the first time, the University had been required to submit financial statements in accordance with US GAAP to the US Department of Education.

Mr Scruton highlighted the healthy surplus of £6.1 million at the end of the 2015/2016 financial year, against the budget of £5.4 million, in spite of the continued reductions in HEFCE teaching funding and with no increase in the £9,000 tuition fees. Mr Scruton pointed out that scholarships, bursaries and fee waivers had amounted to just under £21 million, including £15.2 million from University funds, and that staff costs had increased in real terms but had fallen as a percentage of income.

Mr Scruton explained that as part of the transition to the new accounting standard, the University had revalued its land, adding £119 million to the fixed assets, a one-off transitional arrangement which had strengthened the balance sheet. He also noted that the impact of triennial pension scheme valuations and deficit recovery plans put in place to address scheme funding deficits would lead to volatility in financial reporting in the future. The University’s cash days were still at 102 at the end of the year, which was well above the requirement. Debt levels had decreased to just over 37% of income.

Mr Scruton confirmed that capital expenditure had been £51 million, partly spent on the almost complete Sibson Building, the new building for Kent Business School and the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science, and on investment in the maintenance of the existing estate. Mr Scruton also confirmed the University’s plans to invest nearly £200 million over the next five years, to include the completion of existing major projects, space for Student Services and Activities, facilities for the Sciences and a further new academic building.

Regarding the University’s financial outlook, the budgeted surplus for 2016/2017 was £4.4 million, just under 2% of projected income, despite predicted cost pressures such as the continuing fall in the real value of fees, the cost of capital investment and staff cost pressures. The budget required efficiency savings. The budgeted capital expenditure for the year ahead was £62 million and it was likely that the cash reserves would reduce but would remain well ahead of the financial framework minimum of 40 cash days.

Mr Scruton noted the following challenges for the future:

- the intense competition for students;
- the demographic reduction in the age group 18 to 24;
- the implementation of the TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework);
- the tightening of visa restrictions for overseas students;
- the impact of Brexit and the present uncertainty;
- the global perception of the UK and its migration policies;
- the impact of graduate debt levels on postgraduate recruitment;
the tough research environment;
the further financial pressures on pension schemes.

Mr Scruton reached the conclusion that the University had completed another strong financial performance in 2015/2016 with a healthy balance sheet and high cash reserves. Mr Scruton drew attention to the challenging economic and competitive environment but confirmed that the University’s reputation was increasing, that it would continue to invest and remained well placed to meet future challenges.

2. Resolution

The Court resolved to receive and note the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2016.

447 PRESENTATION ON INNOVATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING; THE SUCCESS OF THE CENTRE FOR CHILD PROTECTION

1. Presentation

Professor Jane Reeves, Co-Director of the Centre for Child Protection, gave a presentation on the success of the Centre for Child Protection, making the following points:

- that the issue of child abuse was evolving, pervasive and complex, increased by the emergence of the internet, and that the Centre for Child Protection reached out into the community to effect change;
- the Centre’s vision was to capture the best of contemporary technology and gaming techniques to help professionals and children learn in a modern way, to help professionals protect children and to help children to protect themselves;
- the University of Kent had agreed to fund the Centre in 2012, to consider a totally different way of training professionals and to develop a world class international distance learning MA in Child Protection, which evolved into the MA in Advanced Child Protection and has registered 110 postgraduate students since 2012;
- that the Centre had completed training to 600 organisations and 5000 members of staff, with a potential reach of 100,000 children and young people;
- that the Centre had developed child protection training simulations, starting with Rosie (now Rosie 1), which was free to download from the University website and has been downloaded 7000 times. Rosie 2, on the subject of neglect, was used by local authorities all over the UK, and Rosie 3, Rosie goes to Court, was launched in summer 2016;
- the latest simulations are Looking out for Lottie, built in partnership with the NHS on child sexual exploitation and Zak, to raise awareness of online grooming and radicalisation. Both are used all over the UK and Looking out for Lottie won the Guardian Award for Digital Innovation 2016;
- the Centre’s research is ongoing into how people learn best, as training simulations are now widely used for customer service staff, pilots and doctors; and also the Centre works with young people to keep the training current, it has to be meaningful to them;
- two other simulations are Visiting Elliot, used to assess the risk of sex offenders on licence in the community, used for teaching and learning in criminology, and Behind Closed Doors on the radicalisation of young women travelling to Syria and the grooming of young adults at university funded by the Home Office, to be launched in February 2017;
- that the Centre’s work was part of a three year Erasmus + project;
- the Centre’s innovative approach has been welcomed and praised, and future plans included partnering with larger, more commercial entities and expanding the Centre’s international reach.
The Chair thanked Professor Reeves for her fascinating and powerful presentation, highlighting the University’s work at the cutting edge of teaching and learning.

448 DATE OF THE COURT’S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN 2018

The Court noted that the proposed date for its next Annual General Meeting would be at the end of January 2018. The Secretary would confirm the detailed arrangements for the Court’s meeting nearer the time.  

ACTION: Secretary

Any queries about the above should be directed to Dr Keith Lampard, Secretary of the Court [K.J.Lampard@kent.ac.uk].

KJL/hap/JLP
6.03.2017

Attachment: Annex A: Attendance and Apologies for the meeting
Present: Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow (Vice-Chancellor and President); Sir David Warren (Chair of the Council); Bob Scruton (Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee); Dr Keith Lampard (Secretary to the Council and the Court).

and those members who signed the Attendance Book:
Judith Armitt; Mary Berg; Professor David Birmingham; Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce; Sir Julian Brazier TD MP; Professor Alan Bull; Professor Mark Burchell; Dr Wayne Campbell; Professor Alan Chadwick; Professor Clive Church; Peter Clokey; Dr Richard Collier; Professor Joe Connor; Martin Cook; Dr Harry Cragg; Jane Crudgington-Higham; Professor Philippe De Wilde; Dr Keith Dimond; Professor John Dore; Dr Alister Dunning; Mark Ellis; Denise Everitt; Professor John Fitzpatrick; Professor Julien Forder; Professor Rachel Forrester-Jones; Chlöe Gallien; Dr Christopher Gay; Sarah Gibson; Professor Jim Groombridge; Professor Mark Green; Joanna Griffiths; Charlotte Guy; Richard Honey; Stef Hrycyszyn; Professor Peter Lee; Denis Linfoot; Dr Owen Lyne; Professor April McMahon; Professor Keith Mander; Dr Anthony Manning; Professor Sir David Melville; The Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr. George Metcalfe; Rory Murray; Andrew Newell; Dr Donald Niblett; David Nightingale; Dermot O’Brien; Professor Jan Pahl; Jeremy Park; Professor Ted Parker; Dr Juliette Pattinson; David Pentin; Rani Perinparaja; Stephen Phillpott; Dr John Rennison; Professor Philip Robinson; Adrian Roper; Professor Gerry Rubin; Cllr. Jennifer Samper; Revd Peter Sherred; Professor Yvonne Sherwood; Professor John Strange; Juliet Thomas; Professor John Todd; Cllr. Pat Todd; His Honour Judge Nigel Van der Bijl; Professor Roger Vickerman; Professor Jiangzhou Wang; John Wightman; Ruth Wilkinson; Professor Toni Williams; Malcolm Woolley.

Members who submitted apologies:
Professor Dominic Abrams; Professor Gerry Adler; Professor Paul Allain; Professor Malcolm Andrews; Professor Alan Armstrong; Professor John Baldock; Lord Berkeley; Dr James Bird; Professor Howard Bowman; Dame Ursula Brennan; Rt. Hon. James Brokenshire MP; Professor Heather Brown; Professor Jim Brown; Professor Peter Brown; Professor Frank Burnet; Professor John Butler; Colin Carmichael; Professor Alan Carruth; Paul Carter; Professor David Chadwick; Rt. Hon. Rehman Chishti MP; Martin Coleman; Professor Alan Common; Neil Cox; Professor John Craven; Professor Maurice Crosland; Professor Hugh Cunningham; Neil Davies; Viscount de L’Isle, Lord-Lieutenant of Kent; Professor Grayson Ditchfield; Robert Eager; Professor Rod Edmond; Professor Roy Ellen; Dr Gavin Esler; Professor Mary Evans; Rt. Hon. David Evennett MP; Christopher H.D. Everett; Rt. Hon. Michael Fallon MP; Professor Kenneth Fincham; Professor Stephen Flowers; Professor Gordana Fontana-Guisti; Sir Roger Gale MP; Jane Gled; Professor Nick Grief; Professor Richard Griffiths; Professor John Groom; Professor Christopher Hann; Revd. Canon Dr Philip Hesketh; Revd. Bill Hornsby; Professor Lyn Innes; Cllr. Alan Jarrett; Professor Emeritus Richard Jones; Professor Andy King; Nick Kirton; Iain Kiy; Professor Chris Knowles; Professor Tim Luckhurst; Robin Lunn; Professor Molly Mahood; Professor Wade Mansell; Professor Martin Michaels; Countess Mountbatten of Burma; Dr Peter Nicholls; Lady Northbourne; Dr Sakis Pappous; Brian Phillips; Professor Adrian Podoleanu; Tony Quigley; Dr Georgina Ransdley de Moura; Professor Gerald Rickayzen; Professor Martin Ridout; Professor Colin Robinson; His Honour Giles Rooke; Professor Brian Rutherford; Professor Richard Sakwa; Margaret Scott-Knight; Professor John Shackell; Tara Sherjan; Professor Robin Sibson; Dr Felicity Simpson; Professor Mark Smales; Professor MRI Song; Dr John Spence OBE DL; Stevie Spring; Professor Geoffrey Stephenson; Ann Sutton; Professor Peter Taylor-Gooby; Pat Todd; Rt. Hon. Kelly Tolhurst MP; Dr Harshad Topiwala; Cllr. Stuart Tranter, Mayor of Medway; Professor Nuria Triana-Toribio; Dr Melissa Trimingham; Professor Nick Tuite; Professor Sarah Vickerstaff; Alison Wainman; Professor Dermot Walsh; Dominic Wand; Kay Webber; Professor David Welch; Professor Michael Went; Dr John Wyman; John Whyte; Professor Jon Williamson; Alix Wolverson; Michael Woods; Sir Robert Worcester.

In attendance: Jo Pearsall (Deputy Secretary of the Council)