

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY THE 11th DECEMBER 2025 AT 5.00 PM  
WILLIAMS ROOM, MCINTYRE BUILDING AND ZOOM

Present: As per sederunt

Apologies: L Thompson, N Pranay, L Holmes, K Kirkpatrick, A Shaikh, Z Haque

Attending: G Connor, J Small, M Card (clerk), K Allan (clerk)

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**1) Welcome, Apologies and Sederunt**

Prior to the commencement of the formal meeting Council welcomed Frank Coton; Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor, (Academic) who delivered an update on the development of the new University strategy.

**2) Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

D Calvert explained he had followed up with Chris Buckland from UKVI Compliance about a query from the previous Council meeting regarding international student concerns on communication being sent from the University about visa requirements and the SafeZone app. D Calvert would update Council at January meeting once a response was received from C Buckland.

**3) Trustees Report and Financial Statements – Gina Connor**

G Connor summarised the Trustees report, highlighting the work delivered by the Executive, Council, and staff during 2024–25. Under the “Representation” aim much had been achieved including a significant increase in number of class representatives trained whilst the SRC played a key role working with the University on the review of wellbeing policies to ensure the policies are student-focused, supportive, and accessible; this work remains ongoing.

Under Support and Wellbeing, the Advice Centre reported a 24% increase in time spent on complex appeal cases compared with the previous year, with appeals, conduct, and finance issues identified as the most common themes. The SRC also expanded its Welcome 2024 programme, delivering over 100 events with footfall over 17,000 at the Welcome Fair.

Under Student Opportunities, additional funding enabled the SRC to significantly more than double the number of grant awards to clubs and societies against the previous year. SRC's Volunteer Services saw a clear uplift in engagement, with growing numbers of volunteers logging their hours and using the volunteering profile page to track skills, build records, and claim awards.

G. Connor highlighted the financial summary, noting an overall increase in SRC income compared with the previous year. This reflected additional core and designated funding to meet rising demand for services, alongside further income growth from new marketing contracts secured in Semester 2 and stronger-than-expected bank interest returns.

G. Connor reported on designated funds which supported new projects, partnership work, and one-off initiatives, all subject to review before any transfer to general funds. During the year, additional funding enabled the expansion of what was originally called the Community and Inclusion Project, with the aim of increasing support for clubs and societies, strengthening engagement at campaign events, and significantly boosting grant awards. Further designated funding supported a one-off pilot to enable GUSA to use MSL for membership sales, after which GUSA moved to its own system.

Expenditure increased compared with the previous year, reflecting targeted investment aligned with additional grant funding. This included enhanced support for clubs and societies, increased staffing across communications and the Advice Centre, and greater resourcing for grants and campaign activity.

G. Connor referred to the 'Funds as an Agent' section of the Financial Statements, explaining that the SRC supports affiliated clubs and societies by providing a platform for membership and ticket sales, alongside access to holding accounts for those who do not manage their own finances. In the 2023-24 financial year, income through the holding account totalled £353,713. This increased to £445,737 in 2024-25.

Expense payments for clubs and societies increased from £312,342 in 2023–24 to £376,475 in 2024–25, all processed through the new secure, GDPR-compliant Clubs Expense Portal with club-level approval prior to Finance Team processing. In addition, £376,017 in membership fees and event sales collected through the GUSA partnership was passed directly to GUSA to reimburse its clubs.

G Connor reported at the SRC's 2024-25-year end, it finished with a total surplus of £67,720. This surplus was driven by higher than anticipated revenue through marketing income, bank interest and a one-off saving of £28,000 in training costs arising from a review undertaken prior to the start of the academic year.

N Pooley proposed the Trustees Report and Financial Statements for approval. Approval was seconded by B Asmelash.

R Gardner proposed Alexander Sloan to continue as the SRC's auditors and approval was seconded by H Clarkson.

R Gardner proposed Govan Law Centre to continue as the SRC's solicitors and approval was seconded by S Millar.

#### **4) Council Reports**

Written Reports Received -

##### **a) SRC President: Duncan Calvert**

Following an identified trend of student complaints to the Advice Centre the SRC submitted a paper to the Student Experience Committee (SEC) in November. The SEC approved several recommendations, including the establishment of a joint University/SRC working group to improve how Finance and Student Collections teams communicate with students, in line with the University's values. Discussions with David Duncan and other SMG members are ongoing to take this forward.

UCU submitted a letter to Court seeking divestment from companies linked to the arms trade in relation to Gaza and Palestine. D. Calvert reported that the Divestment Working Group considered this a substantively new request and has referred it back to Court for review.

The Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee approved participation in the Emily Test Network, described as a community of good practice rather than the full charter. D. Calvert noted this as a positive step, particularly given the new Principal's openness to reviewing the University's position. The committee also discussed leaked EHRC guidance on trans people, raising concerns about potential discrimination, though implementation is unlikely in the near term.

Reform to the General Council is being proposed to Court, replacing elections for Court assessors with selection by a business committee. While this is justified by low participation, D. Calvert reported that the SRC has raised concerns about removing a democratic mechanism without first exploring ways to improve engagement. A final decision has been deferred until February.

From Library Committee, D Calvert said a brief presentation was delivered on the SRC's strategic aims, campaigns, and priorities. The Library prayer room is being moved to a larger space on Level 4 with access to plumbing for cleaning before prayer.

D Calvert said the SRC met with the College Appeals teams after raising concerns with Senate about long appeal waiting times. College Appeals offered an explanation that for some more complex cases that are taking longer than 3 months to resolve, this can

largely stem from delays on the School level before reaching the College level. The SRC will continue to review the process and ensure adequate resources are in place to support timely appeals to benefit students.

**In response to questions on the report, the following was noted:**

- The Library prayer room is expected to open during Semester 2. Information Services have identified this as a priority and a further update on timing will be provided.
- Student Collections communications are largely automated. This has contributed to student distress where students awaiting responses on payment plans continue to receive automated notices. Current processes are under review.
- The Divestment Working Group is a subgroup of Court, with membership limited to Court representatives in line with its agreed terms of reference. There are no other Student Bodies with a role in this.
- Concerns regarding Student Collections practices, including the removal of access to academic services due to academic debt, were identified as appropriate for consideration by the proposed oversight group, alongside related issues such as Library bans.
- Representations returned to Court are normally approved where there is no dissent; however, issues likely to attract significant disagreement, such as divestment, are referred back to Court for full debate.

**b) VP Education: Ayush Garg**

A Garg thanked the academic reps who met with him the last few weeks.

He reported that a new Moodle template will be rolled out for some courses in Semester 2 to improve accessibility and the student digital experience.

From the PGR Committee, it was noted that budget cuts mean there will be no PGR interns this year, placing PGR-focused activities, including the 3-Minute Thesis, on hold and creating risks for PGR engagement.

A. Garg also reported discussions with the Careers Service on catering-related job opportunities, which will be advertised via the Student Opportunities Hub, and reminded Council that Student Teaching Award nominations remain open until February 2026.

**c) VP Student Support: Frank Chen**

F. Chen reported fewer recent welfare meetings with the University but highlighted a range of campaign activity. This included strong attendance at the Building Inclusive

Clubs workshop during Disability History Month, delivered with Birds of Paradise Theatre Company, alongside filming of related promotional content.

Key recent campaigns included International Students' Day activity, the Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil, the Fight for the Night March, and the GBV Vigil. Thanks were recorded to Council members involved in 16 Days of Activism and wider campaign activity, as well as promotion of the Emily Test via SRC channels.

Attendance at the Emily Test annual conference was noted as positive, particularly following approval of the Emily Test Network, with an induction module for students now planned.

Winter de-stress activities were delivered across campuses, with further planning underway for the Christmas Market trip and January Welcome.

It was noted that the Cost-of-Living Action Group has not met since July and that steps will be taken to re-establish engagement with the University.

Concerns were also raised about the Accessibility Working Group, including limited agenda items, lack of minutes, and unclear reporting on the use of increased accessibility funding, which the SRC will continue to pursue.

**d) VP Student Activities: Eoghan Morris**

E. Morris apologised for the late submission of his report due to illness; it will be included in the late papers issued in January. He reported attending the Building Inclusive Clubs workshop and welcomed seeing how societies apply this learning next semester.

E. Morris also noted his participation in the Keystone Project Delivery Board, with discussions continuing on the Keystone building's development.

Council members were invited to attend an all-day de-stress film screening on 16 December at the WeeG, Gilchrist Postgraduate Club.

**e) Charities Officer: Molly Corbett**

M Corbett said on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, thanked Council members who participated in the Glasgow Northside to Southside walk to raise funds for Movember. She advised that over £150 was raised.

D Calvert thanked M Corbett for her work

**f) Environmental Officer: Alina Chauhan**

- g) Widening Participation Officer: Amy Hutchison
- h) Widening Participation Officer: Hannah Clarkson
- i) UG MVLS Convenor: Ebrahim Rezaei
- j) UG Science and Engineering Convenor: Salem Gelidi
- k) PG Arts & Humanities Convenor: Kelly Yu
- l) Biodiversity, One Health & Veterinary Medicine School Rep: Elena Eliza-Pérez
- m) Critical Studies School Rep: Liberty Holmes
- n) Culture & Creative Arts School Rep: Hannah Watters
- o) Engineering School Rep: Santiago Rivero Fafian
- p) Law School Rep: Wesley Chew
- q) Molecular Biosciences School Rep: Julia Stephen
- r) Physics & Astronomy School Rep: Daniel Keane
- s) Social & Political Sciences School Rep: Laurie Barr
- t) General Representative: Laura Thompson
- u) Mental Health Equality Officer: Batseba Asmelash

B Asmelash asked if there was an update regarding using a hybrid option for upcoming welfare forums.

D Calvert said staff are reviewing an accessibility statement template, provided at “Birds of Paradise” club/society training in November that can be used for upcoming SRC events, including welfare forums.

B Asmelash queried a matter relating to SRC staff.

It was confirmed as inappropriate to raise any employee related questions at Council. Any such queries should be submitted by confidential email to the Chief Executive.

B Asmelash met with Estates about sensory space progress after participating in a workshop in March 2025. Estates staff said there is a sensory space to be opened next year in a space between the JMS and Boyd Orr Building.

A Chauhan asked if it costs the SRC additional funding to host an event hybrid on Zoom.

D Calvert said no, as it is paid by the University.

G Connor said, while students have full access Zoom accounts, only two or three SRC staff have been left with full access after a decision made by the University to limit staff access. G Connor explained that there are only a few SRC staff Zoom accounts that can put in meetings and start them. If that individual cannot attend the meeting to start it, it will be an ongoing issue with having hybrid meetings due to limited zoom access for most SRC staff and sabbatical officers.

A Chauhan asked if there is consideration to move to Microsoft Teams if Zoom access is limited.

G. Connor confirmed this is under review, but noted that some students are experiencing difficulties downloading the latest version of Teams. She added that the University's rapid move away from Zoom and traditional telephones left SRC staff with little notice to adapt..

M. Corbett and N. Pooley raised concerns about some Council members not receiving key communications, including Welfare Forum and GBV Vigil emails. Members were advised to check with sabbatical officers or SRC staff if they are not receiving messages in their Council inbox.

D Calvert asked the welfare and equal opportunities representatives who met with the Queen Margaret Union President and staff member to provide an update to Council about the meeting, as it was not included in submitted Council reports.

No further discussion occurred.

- v) LGBTQ+ Equality Officer: Naomi Gillies
- w) International Students Officer: Reilly Gardner
- x) Psychology and Neuroscience School Rep: Somaria Maharaj

## **5) AOCB**

D. Calvert reported that the SRC had been asked to co-sign a coalition letter from student and staff groups to the Principal on improving support for students fleeing the war in Gaza, and sought Council's approval to do so.

A Chauhan asked if the Divestment Coalition can have their email added.

D Calvert said he does not have access to an editable version of the document and asked A Chauhan if they can feed this back to be updated by the Divestment Coalition.

With this being the final meeting before the new year, D Calvert asked that all on Council focus on prioritising professionalism and maintaining strong collaboration moving into 2026.

## **6) Date of next meeting – Thurs 22nd January, 2026**