UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

COUNCIL

4 April 2005

Present: Mrs M O Grant (in the Chair), the Vice-Chancellor, Professor J B Goddard (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor E Ritchie (Pro-Vice-Chancellor), Dr J C Appleby, Mr L M Aviss, Mr N Blezard, Mrs B Dennis, Sir Leslie Elton, Mr J C Fitzpatrick, Professor M Goodfellow, Mr T Gorman (Communications Officer), Mr C J Hilton, Mr M I’Anson, Sir Miles Irving, Mr P M Johnson, Ms K Priestley, Sir John Willis and Mr G C Wilson.

In attendance: Professor A C Stevenson (Pro-Vice-Chancellor), Dr J V Hogan (Registrar), Mr H B Farnhill (Bursar), Mrs V S Johnson (Director of Human Resources), Mrs D A Michie (Senior Assistant Registrar) and Dr R Harrison (Administrator).

Mr G Dane (Freedom of Information Officer) attended for item 45, Mrs L Braiden (Director of Student Recruitment) and Mr T T McCarthy (Director of the International Office) attended for item 46, Ms C Rogers (Director of Estates) and Mr L Heslop (Head of Estates Planning) attended for item 53.

Note: Copies of documents are filed in the Minute Book and are normally available on request from barbara.akinhead@ncl.ac.uk or telephone 222 6087.

M I N U T E S

PART A : STRATEGIC ISSUES

45. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Received oral reports from Dr J V Hogan (Registrar) and Mr G Dane (Freedom of Information Officer) on the Freedom of Information Act, together with an accompanying paper.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document A. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

After noting that:

1. The Freedom of Information Act, which came fully into effect on 1 January 2005, required any public authority to disclose any recorded information that it held in response to any valid request received from any person. The Act represented an attempt to move from a culture of ‘need to know’ towards that of ‘right to know’ and signified a cultural change for all public authorities covered by it, including University;

2. The Act required the University to respond to a request within 20 working days. As a consequence of this, there was a need for the University to review and improve how its records were managed in order that information could be retrieved quickly and efficiently;
3. Careful attention would now need to be paid to the way information was expressed within documents, particularly if individuals were referred to within them. The same particular attention would need to be paid to the phrasing and terminology used in e-mails which were also subject to disclosure;

4. Awareness training had already been provided to a network of 65 nominated records officers representing schools and sections across the University. The network would provide the basis for targeted training as well as providing a feedback mechanism to training providers and to inform decisions in respect of further training needs;

5. The Act imposed a duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information or proposing to request information and a code of practice on how to comply had been produced by the Department of Constitutional Affairs. If the University failed to provide advice and assistance, the person making the request would have a right to complain. The University’s observance of the code of practice would be taken into account in the event of a complaint and, if the complaint was upheld, the Information Commissioner had powers of enforcement available, including practice recommendations;

6. Since the Act came into effect, the University had received 11 valid Freedom of Information requests, some of which had entailed a significant amount of work;

7. There were exemptions to disclosing information, some of which were absolute and some not absolute. Two of the exemptions were:

   - Section 41 - Information received in confidence. An example was contracts between the University and another body and where disclosure of the information might constitute an actionable breach of confidence. In applying the Section 41 exemption, the University would need to seek legal advice

   - Section 43 – Commercial interests. The exemption related to information which either constituted a ‘trade secret’ or the disclosure of which was likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the University). A trade secret was not clearly defined within the Act but was understood to be something a business would consider gave them a commercial advantage within the marketplace

8. Under the Act, the University would be required to disclose information, even where an exemption was properly applied, if the public interest in disclosure outweighed the public interest in maintaining the exemption. In applying the public interest test, it would be necessary for a judgement to be made on a case by case basis. Disclosure decisions would generally be made in a collaborative way but in some cases a decision would need to be made at the highest level;

9. The University would be unable to refuse to disclose information simply because it might cause embarrassment or loss of reputation;

10. The University ought to regard its need to comply with the Act as a risk and include it in the risk register. However, the introduction of the Act also needed to be regarded as an opportunity which could lead to the University managing its records much more effectively in the future than it currently did.
Resolved that:

(i) In order to allow Council to discharge its duties, a report should be made to a future meeting of Council on progress with reviewing and improving records management processes;

(ii) Records management should be included in the risk register;

(iv) Mr Dane be thanked for his useful briefing.

46. ACCESS BURSARIES AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Received oral reports from Mrs L Braiden (Director of Student Recruitment) and Mr T T McCarthy (Director of the International Office) on the University’s bursaries and student recruitment issues.

[Papers tabled at the meeting by Mrs Braiden and Mr McCarthy are filed in the Minute Book.]

After noting that:

1. The University’s Access Agreement had been approved by the Office for Fair Access on 11 March 2005. All other Agreements which had been approved were published on 17 March. There had therefore been an opportunity to compare this University’s Agreement with certain comparator universities;

2. The financial commitments incurred in the Agreement would constitute approximately 24% of the additional fee income once ‘steady state’ was reached in 2010-11. It would be higher in earlier years;

3. In order to address the concern previously expressed by Council, that there should not be restrictions on money allocated to faculties and schools, it had been agreed that faculties would determine how such income would be used;

4. In comparison with other universities, Newcastle’s bursary scheme was clear and easy to understand which should be of benefit to the University. Careful marketing of the scheme would be required as students could be confused by the differences between what universities were offering. It was hoped that the planned use of student ambassadors would help to promote the Newcastle offer;

5. Durham’s offer of £3,000 for all those in receipt of a full maintenance grant could pose a risk to Newcastle’s competitiveness in this area;

6. Newcastle University had not yet decided what it would be offering in terms of scholarships and prizes on entry to the University and so this had not been included in the Agreement. However, the University could now benefit from the delay in making this decision as it could look at what other universities were offering in their Agreements. There would be a major publicity event to launch this information in May as the approach to scholarships and prizes would be very important from a marketing perspective;

7. Northumbria University was to offer scholarships of varying amounts according to the market demand for each subject, with those not recruiting well offering more generous
scholarships. This could pose a risk to the University as it seemed likely that they would be generous in areas of direct competition. This would be kept under close review;

8. The introduction of the Agreements was making it necessary to be more aggressive in marketing the University as the sector was becoming much more competitive. This increased competition appeared to be in contrast to HEFCE’s wish for greater collaboration and the introduction of regional allocation of additional student numbers. Relationships with other regional institutions, including colleges, would need to be reviewed;

9. Total undergraduate applications to the University were down by 0.83% (home) and 17.56% (overseas) giving an overall decrease of 1.9% when compared to last year. However, this reduction should be set in the context of strong growth in home recruitment over the previous five-year period during which Newcastle had been in the top group of universities. There were certain factors which could explain the fall. Applications to Law had fallen following its raising the A level offer to three As, but this had been the intention of the raised offer. Religious Studies had moved to Durham and so there were no applications in that subject this year. Likewise there had been no undergraduate intake into Physics, which also affected applications to certain Joint Honours programmes. Applications to subjects were kept under close review and the Student Recruitment Office offered help to those schools where a decline in applications greater than the national average took place;

10. The United Kingdom was now an expensive place to study, with the depreciation of the US dollar, and there was fierce competition around the world for funded undergraduate students which was causing a national downward trend in applications. In addition the gap was narrowing between local demand for undergraduate study and local provision, with many more students doing their first degrees in their home country, as it was much cheaper, and then upgrading their qualification with the acquisition of a master’s award overseas. Newcastle would be further affected as it did not appear in the top 10 lists of subjects which many sponsors took into consideration when supporting an application. Consideration needed to be given to in-country provision to help counter this trend;

11. The issuing of visas had caused particular problems this year. The International Office was trying to help with this by asking students to pay fees in advance which then allowed the University to confirm that they were a genuine student. Students who applied for visas through the University’s agents in China were generally successful and so more were being encouraged to use this route. The University also intended to develop this facility in India;

12. Significant investment had been made in the recruitment of overseas students and, in the last four years, income had risen from £8m to £21m. It was therefore important that this continued, particularly as the proposed Barras Building development was heavily dependent upon an increase in overseas students in the Business School. There would be a major discussion on the University’s international strategy at Executive Board in May and this would be then brought to Council;

13. It was important that applications and offers were converted into acceptances, particularly in the case of overseas candidates. Work was required on improving the conversion rates and getting more candidates to place Newcastle as their first choice. To assist with this, the University was intending to invest in an electronic system which would help staff to
nurture applicants and make the process of enquiry to registration as seamless as possible. Staff would also be trained as part of the attempt to change the existing culture. It was hoped the benefits of this investment would be noticeable for the 2006 entry as it was planned to have the system in place by the end of October;

14. It was difficult for Council to give guidance and take decisions on student recruitment issues without having all the information available. This area was not simple and it was clear there were a great many variables which needed to be taken into consideration. All related information should therefore be provided in future;

15. Mr McCarthy would be retiring from the University at the end of the academic year.

Resolved that:

(i) Council be informed of the results of the introduction of the new enquiries to registration system in due course;

(ii) In future, the full context should be provided to allow a more informed discussion on student recruitment issues to take place and Council should be kept informed of progress on student recruitment;

(iii) Mrs Braiden and Mr McCarthy be thanked for their reports;

(iv) Council thank Mr McCarthy for his work for the University, which was much appreciated, and wish him well in his retirement.

PART B : GENERAL BUSINESS

47. MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed.

48. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Financial Overview
(Minute 32, 7.2.2005)

Reported that Council, at its meeting on 7 February 2005, had resolved that a preliminary report on how the University would present projects in future to meet the points noted under 10 to 12 in Minute 32, together with a timetable for its introduction be brought to a future meeting of Council.

Considered a Report from the Vice-Chancellor.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document C. Copy filed in the Minute Book, together with a further paper which was tabled at the meeting.]
After noting that:

1. The preliminary report on how the University might present projects in the future was in the form of a matrix. The projects had been divided into short- and medium-term ones and they had then been mapped against two axes to indicate their priority and affordability. So, for instance, in the short term, CETLs, the Great North Museum, the Culture Lab and the MR Scanner had high priority and were affordable as significant external funding was available for them. On the other hand, the rebranding proposal was given low priority and was not regarded as affordable as these projects generally cost more than was originally estimated. The medium term was more speculative. The multi-storey car park had been given a high priority as it would enable the Estate Masterplan to be implemented and it was thought to be affordable as it ought to pay for itself. In contrast, other projects, although they were given a high priority, relied on a major influx of external funding which had not yet been identified;

2. The University must not fall into the trap of only implementing those which were both of a high priority and affordable but instead use the matrix to show external bodies that a high priority was given to certain projects but funding had not yet been committed;

3. The format of the matrix made the position with regard to projects clearer. However, it would be helpful if the matrix could be linked more closely to the previous paper with the person responsible for the project identified in each case;

4. The matrix should be maintained as a living document and movement on it should be regularly monitored;

5. Two of the proposed projects, the Barras Bridge building and Singapore, would be brought to the next meeting of Council.

Resolved that, as the matrix of projects had been tabled at the meeting, members of Council should inform the Vice-Chancellor of any comments they had once they had had time to give more detailed consideration to it.

(b) Progress of business

Received a business tracking form.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document D. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

After noting that:

1. The Chairman had written to lay members of Council asking for nominations for a lay member to serve on Safety Committee, or for a volunteer, and was awaiting replies;

2. Many of the items on the business tracking form were marked as outstanding, with some having been outstanding for quite a long time.

Resolved that in future more pressure should be placed on those with actions against them to report on progress more quickly.
49. CHAIRMAN’S BUSINESS

(a) Honorary Fellowships

Reported that:

1. The University had decided that it would in future award Honorary Fellowships which would be complementary to the award of Honorary Degrees and Emeritus Professorships. Court Steering Committee was in the process of considering nominations for the first Honorary Fellowships and names would be put forward by that Committee for consideration by Court at its meeting in May;

2. As the awards were made by Court, the Chancellor would be required to present them and so the timing of any ceremony was dependant on his availability. It was also important that the Congregations Office was able to organise the ceremony so it could not coincide with the times of other, scheduled ceremonies;

3. Court Steering Committee would therefore be recommending that Court was rescheduled from its usual date in December to a date in October. The programme which would be considered by that Committee at its next meeting was:

   2.30 pm on 10 October 2005: meeting of Council
   7.00 pm on 10 October 2005: dinner at which the Honorary Fellowships would be awarded
   11.00 am on 11 October 2005: meeting of Court

4. If this proposal was approved, the joint lunch between members of Court, Council and Senate which was normally scheduled to take place between the meetings of Court and Council in December would no longer take place. Instead, the meeting of Council in December would take place in the morning and be followed by a lunch for members of Council and Senate;

5. It was hoped that the new arrangements would support efforts to make the relationship between the University and lay members of these bodies more effective.

   Resolved that the Registrar write to members of Council to inform them of the detailed arrangements once the programme had been finalised.

(b) Institutional Audit

Reported that:

1. The University’s Institutional Audit took place 14-18 March 2005 and included five discipline audit trails. Initial feedback had been received but the full report would not be received until 13 May 2005;

2. Results of the Audit were expressed in four categories: broad confidence, broad confidence but with some reservations, limited confidence and no confidence. The Quality Assurance Agency also makes recommendations. These are in three
categories: essential, advisable and desirable. The University has been informed that broad confidence could be placed in the soundness of its current and likely future management of the quality of its academic programmes and the academic standards of its awards. With regard to the five discipline audit trails, the audit found the standard of student achievement in all the programmes to be appropriate to the titles of the awards and that the quality of learning opportunities available to students was suitable for programmes of study leading to those awards. Three instances of good practice were identified and four recommendations made – two advisable and two desirable;

3. The letter thanked the University for the arrangements which had been made to support the audit process and for the willing co-operation of all those who gave their time to join the team in discussions. Particular thanks were given to Mrs Applegarth and her colleagues for the excellent arrangements made.

Resolved that Professor Ritchie, Mrs Applegarth and all those involved in the audit be thanked for their work, and the students for their invaluable contribution to the successful outcome of the audit.

50. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

Received a paper tabled at the meeting.

[Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

After noting that the income from the HEFCE for funding postgraduate training and supervision would actually be less than that received previously as funding for postgraduate research students had been reduced and extra funds allocated to support research. This could affect some schools adversely.

Resolved that Council be kept informed of developments, particularly any adverse impact on postgraduate training.

51. REPORT FROM SENATE

Considered a Report from the meeting of Senate held on 8 March 2005.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document E. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

(a) Final Report of the Committee to Review the Relationship between the University and the Union Society)  
(Minute 25, 13.12.2004)

After noting that:

1. The review, which had been informed by input from a range of people and by comparisons with other universities, had attempted to identify issues and what needed to be done rather than making direct recommendations as this was not considered appropriate when no budget was available;

2. While it was recognised that the Union Society delivered a wide range of other benefits and services which contributed to the student experience, such as the support of over 100 societies and 50 sports clubs, the space in the Union was
restricted and there was a strong need for some major upgrading of facilities if a student experience which compared favourably with other universities was to be delivered;

3. Under the terms of the Financial Memorandum with the HEFCE, the University cannot invest in buildings which it does not own. This made it difficult for the University to give the Trustees funds to make the repairs and maintenance which the Union Building required and would pose severe difficulties if major work was to be done. Council would need to be involved in any discussion on this issue;

4. The differences between the various interested parties, which was noted in the report from Executive Board, had only been in relation to the legal position relating to the Union Building. Aside from that there had been a satisfactory level of consensus which was particularly pleasing in view of the change of sabbatical officers;

5. All parties were anxious to move forward with developing the vision on the accommodation and facilities which would be required to meet the needs of the student population. Once the vision had been agreed by all parties, any legal issues which then hindered its implementation would be considered. A small group had been formed, had met once and progress was being made. It hoped to complete its work by July;

6. Although the Bursar received the Union accounts monthly, there was limited accountability on how the subvention was spent. Council was responsible for monitoring the financial affairs of the Union Society but the process for fulfilling this requirement was one conducted at arm’s length. The new partnership group would need to strengthen the transparency arrangements in order to ensure that the University was getting value for money from its investment.

Resolved that:

(i) The working group should report its findings to Council when a plan had been prepared;

(ii) The working group should specifically recommend a process for Council to monitor the financial affairs of the Union Society;

(iii) Mr Aviss, Mrs Michie, Mr Mitchell and all those involved be thanked for their work on the Review.

(b) Pro-Vice-Chancellor/Provosts under Statute 43

   Noted.

(c) Director of the Institute of Human Genetics

   Noted.
(d) Director of the Magnetic Resonance Centre

Noted.

52. REPORTS FROM EXECUTIVE BOARD

Considered Reports from the meetings of Executive Board held on 18 January (updated following the meeting of the Retirement Benefits Plan Trustees held on 7 March) and 8 March 2005.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Documents F & G. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

(a) Retirement Benefits Plan

After noting that:

1. The Retirement Benefits Plan was the final salary pension scheme provided by the University for its clerical, technical, maintenance and ancillary staff;

2. A valuation of the Plan was made triennially and in 2001 there had been a surplus in the fund of £12.8m. An increase in contributions had been recommended at that time but the Trustees had decided to hold the rate of contribution in view of the surplus. However, when the valuation was carried out in August 2004, a small deficit had been identified. Although the amount in the fund had increased slightly since then, from £91.4m to £97m, it had been decided that an increase in the rate of contributions was still required;

3. The revised contribution rate of 18.5% would be made up of an employer’s contribution of 12.25% and an employee’s contribution of 6.25%, an increase from 9% and 5% respectively;

4. The Fund had been carefully managed and the decision, taken in 2000, to reduce investment in equities had put it in a favourable position when compared to the performance of other pension funds.

Resolved that the contribution rates for the Retirement Benefits Plan be increased for the University from 9% to 12.25% and for employees from 5% to 6.25% with effect from 1 August 2005.

(b) Equal Opportunities Annual Report (2003-04)

After noting that:

1. The Annual Report was a retrospective report on progress against targets which was considered each year by the Equal Opportunities Committee;

2. The University had set targets for HEFCE of having 8.3% of academic staff from an ethnic minority background and 2.75% of support staff. These had been met with the University having 9% of academic staff and 3% of support staff. Increasingly stretching targets would be set in the future and this process would be helped by the existence of a reasonable database of ethnicity information which had been acquired after three surveys;
3. The University had a duty to assess the impact of its policies and functions upon people of different racial groups and a great deal of time and resource would be required to carry this out in the next few years. Preliminary work was taking place carrying out pilot studies with one or two policies to see which process would be the most effective. However, it was important that work on impact assessments was progressed as soon as possible and a timetable for this work would be brought to Council in October;

4. Efforts to raise awareness about race equality had been made including the University’s attendance at Newcastle Mela Festival and publication in ‘Ethnic Britain’ Wall chart. The University had been the only university represented at these and it was hoped that this would help with future contacts with the community;

5. With regards to promotion, the University had reached its target of having 12% of female academic staff in senior positions and would be setting more stretching targets in future. However, there were differences in pay by gender which would need to be monitored closely although these could be being caused by more men being employed in disciplines which attracted higher salaries;

6. Return rates on the survey of staff disability needed to be improved and work was being undertaken to reassure staff about the implications of disclosing information and to inform people of the increased help available, such as the loan of hardware. A great deal of work had taken place on the estate to improve matters for disabled students;

7. Applications for undergraduate programmes from ethnic minority groups had increased but the proportion of offers made to these groups was lower than the proportion for the ‘white’ group. Part of the cause for this could be that ethnic minority groups tended to apply for popular programmes. However, this was a complex situation and the full explanation had not yet been found and needed to be investigated more fully;

8. The progress of students from ethnic minority groups was also an issue as a higher proportion of these students withdraw than ‘white’ students. As with the application process, the reasons for this needed to be analysed more fully as the explanation was not clear;

9. There did not appear to be any discrepancy in the careers which ethnic minority students adopted after graduation in comparison with ‘white’ students;

10. The current committee structure for equal opportunities issues was not satisfactory and was to be reviewed. This would have an impact on the work of the Working Group on Governance and that Group should be kept informed of any changes.

Resolved that:

(i) A timetable for the conduct of impact assessments be brought to Council in October;
(ii) Work needed to be carried out to discover the causes for the racial equality issues affecting the recruitment and retention of students from ethnic minority backgrounds and progress on this should be reported to Council in October;

(iii) The Working Group on Governance be kept fully informed on any changes to the committee structure for equal opportunities matters.

53. TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

Considered the Transportation Strategy, endorsed by Transportation Strategy Group.  
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document H. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

After noting that:

1. In order to comply with government policy, all local planning authorities were required to develop plans to reduce traffic congestion in city centres. Newcastle City Council had made plans to have 10,000 parking places for the public in the city and was intending to produce targets for major employers to reduce the number of parking places on their sites;

2. The City Council had made it a condition for approval of any significant development application that the developer submitted a transportation strategy to demonstrate that transport issues had been considered in the wider context of the city and achieve the aim of reducing single car journeys to the city centre. The University therefore needed to have an approved strategy before it made its next planning application;

3. The strategy proposed that, by 2010, the number of places on campus be reduced from 1,036 to approximately 800. This would be achieved by building a multi-storey car park by 2007-08, removing some existing surface car parks and clearing ad hoc parking places on the campus. It was considered that this would still provide a reasonable amount of parking;

4. Under the terms of the Financial Memorandum with the HEFCE, the University would not be able to use HEFCE funds to develop car parking and so the multi-storey car park would have to be self-funding. It was therefore proposed that parking charges should be increased over the years to a rate of £955 in 2009-10 to cover these costs. The proposed rates were comparable to the charges made for on-street parking;

5. The University had originally intended to ask a commercial developer to provide the multi-storey car park but the City Council had not supported that suggestion as it would add to the amount of public parking in the City. Although this might not be a valid reason for refusing planning permission, the University had changed its plans to building the car park itself and allowing others to pay for using it when it was not being used by the University. However, by building the car park itself the University was incurring a risk. It would be important for the car park to be used by staff to ensure that it was self funding;

6. The method for allocating car parking permits would need to be reviewed and all estate and human resource issues given careful consideration as it could prove contentious. Further discussions would need to be held with the unions on the human resource implications of implementing a new methodology;
7. The University was investigating a range of initiatives to promote the use of sustainable travel, such as assisted travel schemes, secure parking and a journey sharing database;

8. The contents of the draft strategy had been discussed with officers in the City Council and the unions, and comments made by them had been incorporated into the version presented to Council for consideration. However the City Council had not yet agreed the strategy;

9. The Chairman declared an interest and raised concerns about the movement of disabled people in cars around campus;

10. The allocation of 100 parking places to students was historical and no reason for it was known;

11. A business case for the car park would be presented to Council on a future occasion.

Resolved that:

(i) Any outstanding issues, such as the possible implications for disabled people and the details of how permits would be allocated, be clarified and resolved and the results be reported back to a future meeting of Council;

(ii) A business case for the development of a multi-storey car park be brought to Council at a later date;

(iii) The transportation strategy be approved for submission to the City Council.

54. HEFCE GRANT 2005-06

Received a summary of the HEFCE grant letter prepared by the Bursar.  
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document J. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. In total income terms the grant settlement was good, with an increase of 7.1% over that for 2004-05;

2. Conditions were attached to the grant with regard to the teaching element. The University, at the time of restructuring, had applied for additional student numbers and 3.3% of the grant related to the extra student numbers allocated at that time. This was the last year the University would receive this funding. The additional student numbers would consequently incur additional teaching costs as the staff/student ratio could not be made worse than it was currently. Also, if the funding for the additional students was deducted from the settlement, this University had done less well that some others;

3. There were also conditions attached to the research funding. The increase in funds for this was one of a series of measures which the government was taking in its efforts to address the ‘black hole’ in research funding which had existed for several years. This funding could only be used to close the deficit in research funding and must not be used to expand research activity;
4. HEFCE claimed that funding for the ‘core’ teaching element of the grant showed no reduction in real terms. This claim was disputed in the sector.

55. QUARTERLY REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS TO 31 JANUARY 2005  
(Minute 27, 13.12.2004)

Received the accounts for the 2nd quarter to 31 January 2005.  
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document K. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The year-end forecast was for a surplus of £2.7m compared with a budget of a small deficit. This was due to a number of factors including the inclusion of a series of non-recurrent items, such as interest from the proceeds of the sale of Close House and the writing back to income of the provision for VAT liability of £0.7m which had been set aside in case the Customs and Excise had not accepted the University’s proposal for a new partial exemption scheme. A new agreement had been agreed which was operative for three years from 1 August 2004;

2. The surplus at mid year, which was £4.4m, was expected to reduce to the year-end forecast partly because some of the planned expenditure was phased;

3. Research income was not growing in real terms as quickly as had been predicted in the Business Plan which was a matter of some concern. However, other universities were experiencing similar patterns.

56. RISK MANAGEMENT  
(Minute 22(b), 13.12.2004)

Reported that Council, at its meeting on 13 December 2004, had resolved that with regard to risk of severe business disruption through major incident, a report should be presented to Council on the timescale for the role-out of the emergency planning document to all operating units.

Received a report from Dr J V Hogan, Registrar.  
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document L. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

After noting that:

1. The University required a robust emergency planning/disaster recovery procedure in order to react adequately to any emergency situations which might occur. A number of systems were in place. These had been tested by the fire in the Old Library Building that occurred in November 2003 and had been found to be effective;

2. These systems also needed to be embedded in the schools and so the University was looking to roll out and embed the recovery procedure. This work had been begun but was complex. Advice had been taken from other organisations and a decision had been taken to seek the advice of external consultants. Four pilot projects were therefore to take place and the roll out to all schools would be based on the results of these pilot studies. The results of the pilot projects would be known in June;
3. There was a communication issue as it would be important that everybody concerned was kept fully informed.

Resolved that a report on progress with the roll out of emergency planning to schools be brought to the July meeting of Council.

57. PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (PLANNING AND RESOURCES) UNDER STATUTE 13

Reported that the Chairman of Council, acting on behalf of Council, had approved a recommendation from the Vice-Chancellor and Senate for the creation of a third Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources) post under Statute 13.

[See also Minute 63 below.]

58. MEMBERS OF SENATE APPOINTED TO SERVE ON COUNCIL

Reported that the following had been elected/*re-elected by their colleagues on Senate to serve on Council from 1 August 2005 until 31 July 2008:

Professor C B Riordan
*Mr A M Wilton

59. DATES OF MEETINGS 2005-06

Reported that Council would meet on the following dates in 2005-06:

10 October 2005, 2.30 pm
12 December 2005, morning meeting (time to be confirmed) to be followed by lunch
6 February 2006, 2.30 pm
3 April 2006, 2.30 pm
22 May 2006, 2.30 pm
17 July 2006, 3.30 pm followed by dinner

60. STRATEGY BOARD MINUTES

Received the Minutes of the meeting of Strategy Board held on 1 March 2005.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document M. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

61. REPORTED BUSINESS

Received a report of action taken in accordance with agreed procedures, approved where necessary by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of Senate and/or the Chairman of Council on behalf of Council, and by other University bodies and Chairmen.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document N. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
PART C : RESERVED BUSINESS

62. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR UNDER STATUTE 12

Reported that the Chairman of Council, acting on behalf of Council, had approved a recommendation from the Committee on the Appointment of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor under Statute 12 and Senate that Professor John Goddard be re-appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor for a further three years, from 1 August 2005 until 31 July 2008.

63. PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (PLANNING AND RESOURCES) UNDER STATUTE 13

Reported that the Chairman of Council, acting on behalf of Council, had approved a recommendation from the Vice-Chancellor and Senate that Professor A C Stevenson, currently Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Humanities and Social Sciences) be appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources) from 1 August 2005 until 31 July 2008.

64. CONSOLIDATED REPORT FROM FACULTY APPOINTMENT BOARDS

Reported that the Chairman of Council, acting on behalf of Council, had approved the recommendation in the consolidated report from Faculty Appointment Boards, endorsed by Senate, for an extension to the appointment of those Deans and Heads of School listed in the report, whose initial three year period of appointment would end on 31 July 2005.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document O. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]