M I N U T E S

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. WELCOME

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed Dr Simi Ali, Dr Peter Andras, Professor Alan Boddy, Professor Vicki Bruce, Professor Ian Clarke, Ms Elizabeth Collingham (student member), Professor Eric Cross, Ms Andi Georgiou (President, Union Society), Dr David Kennedy, Professor John Kirby, Professor Pete Lee, Professor Chris Rodgers, Dr Candy Rowe and Professor Paul Watson to their first meeting of Senate.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 21 July 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed.

4. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Progress of business

Received a business tracking form.

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

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

Received the Vice-Chancellor’s report.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document C. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
(i) Deaths

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

Resolved that Senate record its deep regret and sympathy for the relatives concerned.

(ii) Think Tanks

A Think Tank on Information Technology was planned for December. Members of Senate were invited to submit possible discussion items to the Registrar or the Director of Information Systems and Services.

(iii) Great North Museum

The Great North Museum had been officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen on Friday 6 November 2009.

(iv) ‘Higher Ambitions’ – the Government’s Framework for Higher Education

On 3 November, Lord Mandelson, the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, had released a report entitled ‘Higher Ambitions’ which set out the Government’s intentions for the Higher Education sector for the next 10 years. The report identified five key areas of focus:

- Improving access;
- Assisting universities to make a bigger contribution to economic recovery and future growth;
- Strengthening the research capacity of universities and its translation into economic impact;
- Promoting quality teaching for all students in higher education;
- Strengthening engagement of students with communities.

The full report and an executive summary were available on the following website:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/higher-ambitions

(v) Tuition Fees

The Government had recently announced a major review of the current system of student fees, grants and loans to be chaired by Lord Browne.

6. LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

Considered the latest draft of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy.

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

After noting that:

1. Students did not perceive learning and teaching as being distinct from the wider student experience and the integration of these two aspects in the strategy document sought to reflect this.

2. The strategy document had been considered by Executive Board but its comments had not yet been incorporated. The strategy aimed to address two themes articulated in the Vision 2021 document, education for life and parity of esteem.

3. It was suggested that it would be useful for the University’s current performance to be included alongside the targets for each of the KPIs.
4. Executive Board had noted that the strategy should include a stronger reference to the teaching estate. It was noted that recent refurbishments had focussed on improving lecture theatres and a similar investment in laboratory spaces was considered necessary. There was also considered to be a shortage of spaces where students could work together on projects in small groups. There was also a need for further investment to improve accessibility for disabled students.

5. It was suggested that the University should develop more open access facilities which could be used by students to develop the skills required by employers. The University had developed the Graduate Skills Framework, which was yet to be embedded in all modules. Ncl+ provided students with the opportunity to develop their skills and a career development module was also available. It was necessary to increase awareness of what was available.

6. Student representation featured heavily throughout the document and this was welcomed.

7. It was suggested that more cross-referencing of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy with the Engagement Strategy should take place. It was important to consider how the University's engagement activities impacted positively on the student experience.

8. Reference to the internationalised nature of the University was welcomed.

Resolved that, subject to the above comments being taken into account, the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy be approved.

7. SOCIETAL CHALLENGE THEMES

Considered a report from Executive Board.

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

Received an extract from the draft Council Minutes on Council’s discussion of this item at its meeting on 26 October.

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

After noting that:

1. It was proposed that the second Societal Challenge Theme should be ‘Sustainability’ under the leadership of the Faculty of SAgE. Sustainability performed well against the criteria that had been established for the Societal Challenge Themes. Engagement was an area where our performance was not as strong as it could be, but pockets of good practice did exist across the University.

2. In his recent report (see Minute 5(iv) above), Lord Mandelson, had noted that institutions were to be encouraged to increase their engagement with civil society. The pursuit of the Social Challenge Themes provided one means by which the University could demonstrate that it was addressing this.

3. A steering group had been established to develop the Sustainability theme. It was noted that this would be a cross-faculty steering group.

4. In the first instance, it was intended that there would be three Societal Challenge Themes and it was hoped that all academics would be able to participate in at least one of these.

5. In the Council minute on this item (Document F) it was noted that an alternative title of ‘Sustainability Science’ had been suggested. The title ‘Sustainability’ was considered to be preferable as it was thought to encourage wider participation. The term ‘Sustainability Science’ was not thought to be inclusive of the ethical or philosophical aspects of the Sustainability debate. The more general title of Sustainability was considered to have greater longevity.
6. It was noted that the theme of Sustainability would provide opportunities for behavioural changes to be addressed and this was an area in which the Union Society wished to participate.

7. It was suggested that the term ‘Sustainability’ had become too generic in recent years. It would be necessary to try and avoid this by identifying particular areas of focus as part of the University’s distinct contribution.

**Resolved that the following proposals be approved:**

(i) *The University adopt Sustainability as the second societal challenge theme under the leadership of the SAgE Faculty.*

(ii) *The Energy and Environment theme of Newcastle Science City be progressed in the context of Sustainability.*

(iii) *An outline plan be developed for a Sustainability infrastructure and support arrangements on Science Central in conjunction with the overall Estate Strategy.*

(iv) *The University develop an outline plan for the Sustainability theme. This report should be presented at future meetings of Senate and Council to allow further discussion to take place.*

8. **ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (Minute 76, 16.6.2009)**

Considered the latest draft of the Engagement Strategy.

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

After noting that:

1. The membership of the Engagement Strategy Development Group had been drawn from the three Faculties and included a number of interested parties from the Central Services. The strategy which had been prepared sought to address the objectives set out in the *Vision 2021* document.

2. Recent capital developments had sought to improve the University’s engagement with the city and future developments would need to continue this.

3. It was suggested that the use of the term ‘third-strand’ should be discontinued as it was important to view engagement as an integral part of the University’s teaching, research and service activities.

4. Further clarification of the proposed investment in public relations (PR) activities was requested. It was noted that the majority of the investment for the implementation of the engagement strategy would not be in PR but some pro-active PR would be required.

5. Greater emphasis on the positive contribution of students to the local area needed to be developed. The Union Society had established links with individuals in the City Council and it was hoped that students would be able to increase their representation on bodies within the local community.

6. The emphasis should be on ‘high quality’ engagement and guidance on how academics could promote and develop this was requested. It was suggested that the PDR process would provide one mechanism by which academics could be asked to address the engagement agenda.

7. The ‘open minds / open doors’ description included on page iii of the document was considered to be a good way of categorising the University’s approach. Opening up services and facilities to the community was one development but this would need to be embedded in the University’s activities and not treated as an isolated ‘bolt-on’.
8. As part of the development of its engagement strategy the University should seek to support industrial and commercial development in the region. A dialogue with industry was useful for the development of new programmes and this should be emphasised in the strategy document.

9. It was important to understand the possible implications of the strategy for the University’s alumni. The alumni could be used as an important vehicle for engagement and it was suggested that this could be emphasised further in the document.

10. Further information was requested about the ‘open chairs’ concept and its resource implications in particular.

11. It was suggested that the Societal Challenge Themes could be given greater prominence in the document.

12. It was noted that engagement was a two way process and new engagement opportunities would arise as a result of the strategy. Resources should be put aside to allow the University to respond to these opportunities as they arose.

13. Pages 6 to 7 of the strategy set out five Strategic Engagement Objectives. An action plan was to be prepared to help achieve these objectives. It was noted that some of the actions were included in the Engagement Strategy Map.

14. Fundraising was an important aspect of the University’s engagement activities but it was noted that the strategy document made no reference to this.

15. It was important to cross-reference the Engagement Strategy with the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy to highlight areas of overlap and to identify who would be responsible for delivery in these areas.

Resolved that, subject to the above comments being taken into account, the Engagement Strategy be approved for onward submission to Council.

9. REVIEW OF THE RAE AND PREPARING FOR THE REF

Considered a report prepared by Professor Nick Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation on behalf of University Research Committee and endorsed by Executive Board.

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

Received an extract from Council Minutes of 13 July 2009 on Council’s discussion of this item.

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

After noting that:

1. The University’s performance in each of the units of assessment (UoA) had been reviewed by the University Research Committee (URC). The University’s overall performance could be described as ‘solid’ but there was room for improvement and it was important to guard against complacency.

2. The URC had identified ten recommendations which were considered essential to ensure the University improved its performance in the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

3. The REF was proposing to place a heavy emphasis on the impact of research which had caused a lively debate.

4. There was concern about the timescale to be used for the assessment period and whether this would be sufficient for the production of substantial monographs.
5. The results from the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) had shown that the University had been successful in some UoAs due to the structure and strategy adopted but, in some cases, the UoAs did not fit naturally with the University’s existing structures. This finding identified the importance of preparing the University to work towards the UoAs as soon as they were known.

Resolved that Senate approved recommendations 1-10 in Appendix A to Document H.

10. REPORT FROM THE HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE

Considered a recommendation from the Honorary Degrees Committee that Senate approve the list of proposed honorary graduands and the honorary degrees for which they would be presented at the congregation ceremony to be held on 16 April 2010.

[Report circulated with the Agenda as Document K. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

After a vote on a motion ‘that the list be approved’, which was approved nem.con,

Resolved that the nominations made by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the award of honorary degrees on 16 April 2010 be approved.

Senate noted the remaining item in the report.

[Note: Senators were reminded of the continued confidential classification of the report until further notice.]
(i) The establishment of the Centre for Integrated Systems Biology of Ageing and Nutrition (CISBAN) for a period of three years from 1 October 2009 and the appointment of Professor Tom Kirkwood as Director for the same period.

(ii) The establishment of the Centre for Brain Ageing and Vitality for a period of three years from 1 October 2009 and the appointment of Professor Doug Turnbull as Director for the same period.

(iii) That the Informatics Institute be re-branded as the Digital Institute for a period of five years from 1 January 2010, subject to the agreement of Council.

(iv) A change to the type and title of the Institute for Nanoscale Science and Technology, to the nanoLAB Research Centre, for a period of three years from 1 January 2010, subject to the agreement of Council.

(v) That the current structures in SWAN and IRES continue until further notice, with the existing Directors in post, until Executive Board was able to give this matter more detailed consideration, subject to the agreement of Council.

14. REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Received a report from UTLC.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document P. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

15. ACADEMIC AUDIT COMMITTEE

Considered amendments to the membership of Academic Audit Committee.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document Q. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Received the Annual Report from Academic Audit Committee for 2008-09.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document R. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that the amendments to the membership of Academic Audit Committee, as set out in Document Q, be approved.

16. CHARITY COMMISSION GUIDANCE ON RESEARCH IN HE

Reported that the Charity Commission had published revised guidance on research in Higher Education, available at: http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/supportingcharities/higherres.asp.
The guidance explained how the requirements of charity law applied to research carried out by HEIs, particularly research conducted in partnership with non-charitable organisations. It clarified some issues which had arisen regarding the practical application of the public benefit tests.

Considered a recommendation that Senate approve:

(i) The following policy statement which had been prepared by Executive Board to guide the University’s work in this area, and which had been approved by Council at its meeting on 26 October:

‘The University is a charity regulated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The object of the University is, for the public benefit, to advance education, learning and research. The University expects that useful knowledge acquired through research will be disseminated to the public and others able to benefit from such research. The University normally expects that any private (non-charitable) benefit will be legitimately incidental to the achievement of the University’s charitable aims for public benefit. The terms and conditions of all externally funded research activity will be assessed prior to acceptance in terms of the public benefit test for charitable purpose. An annual report on externally funded research and charitable purpose will be provided to Executive Board by the Process Controller identified in the University’s Delegated Authority Regulations.’
(ii) The addition of the following paragraph under the ‘Intellectual Property, Research Grants and Contracts, Services Rendered and Consultancy’ section of the Delegation of Authority Regulations, which had also been approved by Council:

'REQUIREMENTS OF THE CHARITIES ACT

Ensuring the effective identification of charitable and non-charitable activity takes place and is kept under review in line with guidance as received from HEFCE as regulator – Director of the Business Development Directorate.'

Resolved that the above recommendation be approved.

17. STATUTES AND REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE

Reported that Council, at its meeting on 26 October 2009, had approved recommendations in a report from Mr G Coupland, Assistant Director of Human Resources.

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

18. NEWCASTLE SCIENCE CITY

Received a progress report from Professor Nick Wright on behalf of Executive Board.

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

19. UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE OF THE INTO JOINT VENTURE

Reported that Executive Board had approved an amendment to the membership of Diversity Committee, as follows:

delete: A Senior Officer, who is a member of Executive Board (Chairman)

substitute: A Senior Officer, who is a member of Executive Board, or a senior member of the academic staff appointed by Executive Board (Chairman)

21. MEMBERSHIP OF SENATE 2009-10

Reported that the Union Society had appointed Ms Elizabeth Collingham (BA Hons History, Stage 3) to serve on Senate for 2009-10.

Received the membership of Senate for 2009-10.

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

22. SEMESTERS AND TERM DATES 2009/10

Reported that the dates of terms and semesters for 2009/10 were as follows:

Academic Year 2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>Monday 21 September - Friday 11 December 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Monday 4 January - Friday 19 March 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Monday 19 April - Friday 11 June 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>Monday 21 September 2009 - Friday 22 January 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>Monday 25 January - Friday 11 June 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. 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 W. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

RESERVED BUSINESS

24. RE-APPOINTMENT OF PRO-VICE-CHANCELLORS

Reported that Senate Standing Order X stated that 'The Vice-Chancellor may recommend to Senate and Council the re-appointment of an existing Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor and the period of the re-appointment.'

Considered recommendations in a paper from the Vice-Chancellor which had been approved by Council at its meeting on 26 October 2009.

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

Resolved that:

(i) Professor Ella Ritchie be re-appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning from 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2014.

(ii) Professor Tony Stevenson be re-appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources from 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2015.

(iii) Professor Oliver Hinton be re-appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor SAgE from 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2012.

25. ACADEMIC DISTINCTIONS : TITLE OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS (STATUTE 31(4))

Reported that, in accordance with Statute 31(4), Senate may accord the title of Professor Emeritus on professors retiring from the University.

Considered proposals from the Vice-Chancellor, following consultation with the faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors, for the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus.

Resolved that the title of Professor Emeritus be conferred on the following from the date shown:

Professor David Bates, from 1 October 2009
Professor Jim Burdess, from 1 October 2009
Professor Tom Cain, from 1 October 2009
Professor Rolando Carrasco, from 1 January 2010
Professor Alan Jack, from 6 March 2010
Professor Peter Olive, from 1 October 2009
Professor Robert Perry, from 1 October 2009
Professor Colin Self, from 1 October 2009
Professor Brian Stimpson, from 1 October 2009
Professor Derek Thompson, from 1 October 2009