NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

COURT

23 October 2007

Present: The Chancellor (in the Chair), Mrs MO Grant (Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council), Vice-Chancellor, Professor JB Goddard (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor GJ Docherty (acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (HASS)), Professor OR Hinton, Professor TF Page, Professor ER Ritchie (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Mr AG Balls, Mr NE Braithwaite, Sir Peter Carr, Ms M Coyle, Dr EGN Cross, Sir Michael Darrington, Councillor D Faulkner, Ms C Galley, Mr AE Glenton, Professor EV Haimes, Dr VA Hammond, Councillor M Henry, Mr CJ Hilton, Lady Irvine, Mr J Jeffery, Lord Judd of Portsea, Miss FM Kirkby, Dr H Loebl, Mrs S Murray, The Rt Rev the Lord Bishop of Newcastle, Professor PJW Olive, Mr S Pleydell, Mr BA Potter (Education Officer), Sir George Russell, Mr N Sherlock, Mr HM Shukla, Professor MJ Whitaker, Professor NG Wright, Professor PL Younger.

In attendance: Dr JV Hogan (Registrar) and Mr HB Farnhill (Bursar).

Apologies for absence: Sir Thomas Allen, The Rt Hon Alan Beith MP, Mr A Bergshaven, Sir Patrick Brown, Mr J Edwards, Mr A Fenwick, Mrs CM Harvey, Dr R Hawley, His Honour Judge David Hodson, Mr PM Johnson, Lord Joicey, Mr JW Leng, Mr RH Maudslay, Judge Mithani, Dr MW Ridley, Mr P Shaw, Mrs J Sjøvoll, Professor AC Stevenson (Pro-Vice-Chancellor), Dr M Stoppard, Mr I Stratford, Mr R Taylor, The Rt Hon Sir Mark Waller, Lord Walton of Detchant.

MINUTES

1. WELCOME

The Chancellor welcomed the following to their first meeting of Court:

Professor Brink (Vice-Chancellor)
Professor Gerry Docherty (Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences)
Sir Michael Darrington
Mr Ben Potter (Union Society Education Officer)

The Chancellor also congratulated Sir Peter Carr, lay member of Court, on his award of a Knighthood in the Queen’s Birthday Honours in June 2007.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Received a copy of the membership of Court for 2007-08.
[Circulated with the Agenda as Document A. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
3. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed.

4. **VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

Received a short oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

Noted that:

1. The Vice-Chancellor explained that he had been attracted to Newcastle University by its vision and mission. The University’s Mission Statement included a commitment to achieving excellence in teaching and research and also a desire to engage with the region.

2. The Vice-Chancellor had given priority to visiting Newcastle City Council, One North East (the Regional Development Agency) and Durham University in order to demonstrate the University’s intention to work closely with these bodies.

3. The North East region had witnessed significant regeneration as a result of recent cultural developments. The Vice-Chancellor considered the Newcastle Gateshead Initiative to be an excellent project and hoped that the University could become more involved with it as the Cultural Quarter developed.

4. The Vice-Chancellor hoped that Court members would act as ambassadors for the University to help disseminate its message. It was acknowledged that this should be a two-way process; Court members should also be able to inform the University of the needs of the wider community. In this way the role of Court would be linked to the University’s engagement agenda.

5. It was hoped that there would be greater opportunity for discussion at future meetings of Court.

6. The issue of possible engagement with the other regional universities would be addressed at the forthcoming meeting of Universities for the North East.

7. The ‘ncl+’ concept had been developed to encouraged students to undertake extra-curricular activities, such as volunteer work or work placements, in order to enhance their degree and also their employment prospects.

5. **CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

Received an oral report from Dr Eric Cross, Dean of Cultural Affairs, on the University’s cultural activities.
Noted that:

1. The University had a strong tradition of cultural engagement and the development of the Cultural Quarter in recent years had helped to emphasise this. A number of partnerships had been established with local cultural bodies such as Tyne & Wear Museums, Northern Stage and the Sage Gateshead.

2. The implementation of Sir Terry Farrell’s masterplan would help to open the University campus to the public. Events at the Union Society, widening participation activities and the programme of public lectures helped to encourage the public onto campus whilst a website was being developed which would offer access to a ‘virtual’ Cultural Quarter.

3. A key component of the Cultural Quarter was the Great North Museum and the University had established partnerships with a number of stakeholders in order to develop this project. The Museum, which would open in early 2009, had received funding from European sources and also the Heritage Lottery Fund. The University had almost achieved its own fundraising target of £2 million via philanthropic giving.

4. Northern Stage and the Culture Lab were two aspects of the Cultural Quarter already in operation. Future developments included a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Music and the Northern Writers’ Centre. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences had committed £2.5 million to the Northern Writers’ Centre and Court’s assistance was requested to help identify potential sources for the remaining £2.5 million that was required.

5. The School of English, Language and Linguistics was considered to be one of the main centres for creative writing in the country. The School of Arts and Cultures offered a unique folk and traditional music degree programme. A number of cross-faculty initiatives were also being developed.

7. **DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Reported that:

(a) The next meeting of Court would be held at 10.30am on Friday 11 April 2008.

(b) The proposed date for the subsequent meeting of Court was 21 October 2008. Court members would receive confirmation of this at a later date.