NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL
28 April 2014

Present: Mr Mark I’Anson (in the Chair), Professor Brink (Vice-Chancellor), Dr Peter Andras, Dr John Appleby, Ms Eve Berwin (Education Officer, Students’ Union), Professor Alan Boddy, Mr Neil Braithwaite, Professor Vicki Bruce, Mr Mike Davison, Mr Jonathan Glass, Professor Deborah Henderson, Mrs Jacqui Henderson, Mr Jeff McIntosh, Mr Robert Hull, Mrs Heidi Mottram, Mr Simon Pleydell, Professor Ella Ritchie and Mr Paul Walker.

In attendance: Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Professor Chris Day, Professor Charles Harvey, Professor Steve Homans, Professor Tony Stevenson and Professor Nick Wright (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Mr Richard Dale (Executive Director of Finance), Mrs Veryan Johnston (Executive Director of Human Resources), and Mrs Sam Taylor (Executive Officer (Governance)).

Apologies: Mr Stephen Lightley and Mr Calum Mackenzie (President, Students’ Union).

Mrs Heidi Mottram was not present for item 107.
Mr Jeff McIntosh was not present for item 107.
Ms Jacqui Henderson was not present for item 111.
Mr Mark I’Anson was not present for item 112.

MINUTES

85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

86. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2014.

Noted that:

In relation to Minute 78 – noted that: Council would welcome the consideration of a more ambitious approach to the development of the University Sports Strategy development plan and especially the capital projects.

Subject to the above amendment - the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 24 February 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed.

87. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There are no matters arising or outstanding actions from the previous minutes.

88. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Received an oral report from Mrs Veryan Johnston, Executive Director of Human Resources, on the current health and safety issues affecting the University.

Noted that further discussions on the pension provision for the Fire Service were due to take place from Friday 2 May to Sunday 4 May. Staff and students would be advised on the outcome of these discussions.
Received the Annual Safety Report 2012-13, from Mrs Veryan Johnston, Executive Director of Human Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that with regard to the enforcement letter which was issued in June 2013, following a visit from the Health and Safety Executive, Council were assured that the majority of the required actions have now been completed and that residual actions would be completed ahead of the deadline.

Considered a report on the University Health and Safety Action Plan, from Mrs Veryan Johnston, Executive Director of Human Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document C. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that Council approve the implementation of the University Health and Safety Strategic Action Plan.

89. CHAIR’S BUSINESS

Council Briefing Sessions

Council members were reminded of the forthcoming Council Briefing sessions:

- 21 May 2014, 10am-11am – Tour of Science Central (meet at level 1 Reception area of King’s Gate).
- 16 June 2014, 11.30am-12.15pm, L5.18 King’s Gate – Human Resources Strategy: overview and current projects and issues.
- 16 June 2014, 12.15pm-1.15pm - President of Students’ Union and Education Officer: Tour of the Students’ Union (meet at Reception area of Students’ Union)

Council members were reminded to inform Sam Taylor if they planned to attend these sessions.

90. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

Received the Vice-Chancellor’s report.

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

Noted:

1. Deaths

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

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

2. Late News

(a) Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Internationalisation)

Professor Richard Davies, currently Dean of Knowledge Exchange and Impact at the University of Durham, has been appointed as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Internationalisation), with effect from 1 August 2014.
(b) Medical Pilgrims

Newcastle University hosted a three day Scientific Meeting of the Medical Pilgrims from 24 April to 26 April. Speakers from across the University from all three faculties contributed to the conference which was also attended by the Government’s Chief Scientific Officer. The conference was a great success with positive feedback received.

(c) City Council

Councillor Nick Forbes from Newcastle City Council has formed a stakeholder forum, working with partners including Newcastle University, Northumbria University, Newcastle College, the Hospitals Trust, Northumbria Police, and Northumbrian Water to establish a City Futures initiative, to discuss and progress views on the requirements for the future development of the city.

91. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER SUMMARY

Received:

The Strategic Risk Register Summary.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents E. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

The following risks were highlighted:

1. SR2C – The intake and projected intake of widening participation students is encouraging.

2. SR4C – The changing nature of the partnership in Singapore.

3. The necessity for the temporary Pop-Up Library in the King’s Road Centre reflects the changes in student study behaviour patterns, and the requirement for a plan to identify further study space in the future.

92. VISION 2021: INSTITUTIONAL KPI REPORT

Received a report on the Institutional Strategic Objectives and KPIs from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that there are no changes to the report on this occasion and the ratings remain the same as those reported to Council at its meeting on 24 February 2014.

93. ESTATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT

Received the strategic progress report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. The question of whether dedicated decant space would be provided for future projects within the main campus was raised. It was noted that the general intention was to construct new buildings prior to demolition and thus reduce decant requirements.
2. Professor Stevenson and the Estates team were commended for the progress achieved with the Estate and Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

94. **ACCOMMODATION AND HOSPITALITY**

Considered the revised Accommodation and Hospitality Strategy from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. The length of the annual lease of University accommodation for students is currently 38 weeks. It was noted that most institutions lease for a period of 40-42 weeks.

2. Newcastle University should retain an element of management control with external providers, to ensure the students’ best interest is maintained.

3. The need to maintain a range of accommodation to cater for student preferences including costs.

*Resolved that Council endorsed the revised Accommodation and Hospitality Strategy.*

95. **RAISING THE BAR – IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY’S CAPITAL PLAN**

Considered a report on strategic matters from the Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. Council will receive a 2 year budget presentation and a 5 year financial forecast, at the next meeting of Council, 16 June 2014.

2. The discussion at the joint meeting of Senate and Council on the morning of 28 April, proved to be a positive collaborative exercise, the outcome of which will be a response from Executive Board.

3. There is a portfolio of developmental projects which could be considered if an opportunity to progress with an individual project arose. There is a planned approach to University expenditure for capital investments, but when funding opportunities arose it was right to respond flexibly.

4. For the purposes of deciding on whether to proceed with projects which could enhance the student experience and the reputation of the University, it would be helpful for Council to have an understanding of the borrowing risks involved, and the gearing status in relation to the sector.

5. Decisions on the projects listed within the paper, should be considered in relation to competitor advantage.

6. The Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors reported differing priorities for what needs to be delivered by each faculty in relation to the report. It was recognised that they each have different requirements to ensure the successful development of each faculty.
7. Individual lay members of Council offered their support to the Executive Director of Finance to review certain aspects of the financial plan

Resolved that:

(i) The proposals outlined in the report be approved subject to the review of the outcomes of the joint meeting of Senate and Council held on 28 April 2014.

(ii) Members of Executive Board and Lay Council be thanked for their contribution to the Raising the Bar report.

96. RICHARDSON ROAD

Considered a report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document K. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.

97. ARMSTRONG BUILDING

Considered a report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document L. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.

98. TEACHING CENTRE ON SCIENCE CENTRAL

Considered a report from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document M. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.

99. MR SCANNER BUSINESS CASE

Considered a report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document N. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.

100. IT SERVER AND STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE CONSOLIDATION

Considered a report from Mr Richard Dale, Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.
ACQUISITION OF A BUILDING

Received an oral report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.

INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Received a report from Professor Ella Ritchie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document P. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

REPORT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Audit Committee, held on 3 April 2014.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document Q. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

Resolved that Council approve the group audit fee for the 2014 year end.

REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Finance Committee, held on 14 March 2014.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document R. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY/STUDENTS’ UNION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of University/Students’ Union Partnership Committee, held on 11 March 2014.

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

REPORT FROM ETHICS COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Ethics Committee, held on 9 January 2014.

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

‘Commercial in confidence’ Minute, filed in the Minute Book.

REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Considered a report from the meeting of Nominations Committee, held on 2 April 2014.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document U. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

Noted that further transparency in the recruitment of lay members of University Committees, including Council should be considered, and that an annual expression of interest advertisement, identifying areas of particular expertise, could be used.

Resolved that:

(i) Council approve the recommendation that Mr Jeff McIntosh and Mrs Heidi Mottram be re-appointed as lay members of Council, from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2017.

(ii) Council approve that Mr Andrew Newman be re-appointed as Chairman of the Health and Safety Committee from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2017.
Council noted that Chair’s action has been taken to appoint Professor William Maloney as Chairman of the Radiation Protection Sub-Committee from 17 October 2013 to 31 July 2016.

108. **HEFCE’S ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL RISK**

Received a report from Mr Richard Dale, Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

109. **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 Chair of Council on behalf of Council, and by other University bodies and Chairs.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document W. Copy filed in the Minute Book]

110. **CHAIR’S CIRCULAR**

Chair’s circulars of routine business were sent to members on 7 April 2014.

**Approved business:**

(i) Fees Schedule.

**Items for information:**

(i) Universities UK Agreement on institutional designation.
(ii) Members of Senate elected to serve on Council.