NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL
10 September 2012

Present:  Mr Mark I’Anson (in the Chair), the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Dr John Appleby, Dr Peter Andras, Professor Alan Boddy, Mr Neil Braithwaite, Mr Mike Davison, Mr Colin FitzPatrick, Professor Deborah Henderson, Mr Robert Hull, Mr Peter Johnson, Mr Jeff McIntosh, Mrs Heidi Mottam, Mrs Kate Priestley, Ms Laura Perry (President, Students’ Union), Mr Simon Pleydell, Ms Rachael Thornton (Education Officer), 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), and Mrs Lizzie Taylor (Executive Officer (Governance)).

Apologies:  Professor Vicki Bruce, Ms Jacqui Henderson and Mrs Veryan Johnston.

Dr Andrew Young, Director of Science City, attended for Minute 12.
Ms Abi Kelly, Director of Public Relations, attended for Minutes 17 & 18.

MINUTES

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

2. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Dr John Appleby, Professor Alan Boddy, Professor Deborah Henderson and Ms Rachael Thornton to their first meeting of Council.

3. MINUTES

Noted that:

1. In relation to Minute 102, Item 8 – Student Attendance Monitoring – from the meeting of Council on 28 May, the Sabbatical Officers requested that the Minute be further amended as follows:

‘The Sabbatical Officers asked for their opposition to biometric monitoring to be noted. The Sabbatical Officers asked for the opposition of the Students’ Union to biometric monitoring to be noted, given the indicative policy passed at a Students' Union Council meeting.’

2. In relation to Minute 131, Item 12 – A-levels – the Sabbatical Officers requested that the Minute be amended as follows:

‘The Sabbatical Officers expressed concerns at the intention to allow universities to run A-levels and suggested that granting universities control over what and how a subject is studied could be viewed as unethical. The Sabbatical Officers expressed concerns at the intention to allow Russell Group universities to run and award A-levels, and suggested that granting universities control over attainment at that level could be viewed as unethical.'
Council 10 September 2012

due to universities currently being regulated by the grades that students receive in their A-level qualifications.'

Subject to the above amendments the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 9 July 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Council representative on Senate [Minute 127, 09.07.12]

Noted that Mr Robert Hull has been appointed as Council's representative on Senate, replacing Ms Jacqui Henderson who has served on Senate since January 2007.

Council recorded its thanks to Ms Henderson for her support of Senate over the past five years and also to Mr Hull for agreeing to take over the role.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Received a report from Mrs Veryan Johnston, Executive Director of Human Resources, presented by the Registrar, on current health and safety issues affecting the University, including performance measures and actions taken.

Noted that:

1. The Registrar expressed his thanks to Mrs Heidi Mottram and her colleagues at Northumbria Water for the Health and Safety advice they had provided since the previous meeting of Council.

2. The University intends to conduct further work into the Universities’ Safety and Health Association (USHA) statistics.

3. Mr Brian McBride, the new Assistant Director of HR (Health & Safety), took up his post on 1 August 2012.

6. CHAIR’S BUSINESS

1. Council Induction Programme

The Chair reminded members about the recently issued 2012-13 Council Induction Programme and encouraged members to attend.

The forthcoming meetings from the programme are:

9.00am – 12.30pm, 4 October 2012 – Audit Committee
11.30am – 12.15pm, 22 October 2012 – Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy

Members of Council who would like to attend either of the above sessions are asked to inform the Chair of Audit Committee or Lizzie Taylor (Lizzie.Taylor@ncl.ac.uk).

2. Effectiveness of Council

The Chair reported that in line with guidance from the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) and best practice in corporate governance, a review of the effectiveness of Council and of individual members is conducted annually.
It was noted that the outcome of the recently completed on-line questionnaire, would be reported to the meeting of Council on 22 October 2012.

3. **Register of Interest**

Lay member of Council members were reminded to complete and return their Register of Interest forms to the Governance Office as soon as possible. Academic members of Council were reminded to update the Declaration of Interests section of the MyImpact system.

7. **VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

Received the Vice-Chancellor's report. Highlights of this report were discussed below.

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

1. **Deaths**

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

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

2. **Undergraduate recruitment for September 2012 and 2013.**

The University has recruited roughly the same number of students as last year, and we have slightly improved our ratio of AAB+ students as a proportion of total intake. We did not hit our increased target of AAB+ student numbers, but indications are that some other Russell Group universities similarly failed to increase their AAB numbers.

As previously reported to Council, in April 2012 HEFCE announced the next phase in its numbers management process as required by the Government (Medicine, Dentistry and Speech are not affected by these requirements). For 2013 entry, the grade threshold for un-regulated recruitment will be ABB or equivalent.

Executive Board has approved a strategy for the management of Home Undergraduate admissions for 2013 entry in the light of experience of the admissions process for 2012 entry and the further extension of HEFCE’s numbers management arrangements for 2013 entry. As part of that strategy, a group has been established to manage the student recruitment process for next year, using project management methodology. This will be chaired by the PVC Learning and Teaching as the EB member responsible for student recruitment.

3. **Socially Responsible Investment Policy**

The Socially Responsible Investment Policy was approved by Council at its meeting 11 July 2011. Executive Board has within its terms of reference, the responsibility to report to Council on ethical issues other than in research, teaching and consultancy which are managed by Ethics Committee.

Having this policy in place was one of the contributing factors to the University being awarded a “first-class" by People and Planet this year. Executive Board reviews this policy on an annual basis and reports to Council on any occasions that the policy may have been invoked during the previous year.
Executive Board reviewed this policy on the 10 July 2012, does not recommend any changes to it, and confirms that there were no occasions during 2011/12 when the policy was invoked.

Resolved that Council agree that no changes to the policy are necessary.

4. NUMed Malyasia

Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed) has just celebrated its first year and is looking ahead to an exciting future as the campus expands.

In 2011, when NUMed moved into the new, cutting-edge campus in Nusajaya we became the first ever UK University to establish a fully owned international branch campus for medicine in Malaysia.

By September 2012, when NUMed will welcome an estimated intake of 100 new undergraduates, there will be around 220 students studying across four years. We will not be able to confirm the final number of new students for a couple of weeks yet, but currently there are about 80 students, and we are confident that the target of 100 will be met.

There is a maximum capacity for 1,000 students on the campus and as this population grows the teaching faculty will also be expanded.

5. INTO Newcastle building

The new £74million buildings [funded by INTO] where international students can live and learn at Newcastle University are nearing completion.

The INTO Newcastle Centre will welcome its first students from 24th September. Around 800 students will benefit from excellent facilities including science laboratories, computer labs, lecture theatre and social areas. There will also be 537 new, high-quality student bedrooms situated nearby so students can study and live on campus in the heart of the city.

Newcastle University formed a partnership with INTO – which prepares international students for undergraduate and postgraduate study – in 2007. Since then, more than 4,000 students have studied at INTO Newcastle and many have carried on their education at the University. The students, who come from 51 different countries, enjoy their time in the city with a 94% student satisfaction rate.

6. Science Central update

Hall Construction Group will start work on Science Central in September, subject to some final planning and environmental discussions, to prepare the land to allow the first phase of building construction to begin in early 2013. The contractors will facilitate the extraction of near surface coal to ensure any risk is removed from existing former shallow mine works to allow further development of the land; creating a permanently stable platform for all future buildings. This work will be completed by Spring 2013.

A community consultation event was held on 23 August which was almost unanimously positive about the work and communications about progress.

A "reserved matters" planning application was submitted in July for the next stage of infrastructure work on the site and approval is expected during September. The
procurement exercise for this work and construction of the Gateway Building is underway. Following a pre-qualification exercise, the full invitation to tender was issued on 3 September with an anticipated contract award on 11 December. Work is expected to start in February 2013 and be completed by Summer 2014.

The European Research Development Fund (ERDF) has approved a grant of £5.9m towards the costs of the Gateway Building and some of the neighbouring infrastructure work. The final due diligence report from RSM Tenon (an accountancy firm) on the £6m Regional Growth Fund bid has been received and it is anticipated that the final offer of funding from BIS will be received during September. The ERDF grant has challenging output targets for jobs created as a result of the Gateway Building and an early objective is the appointment of an operator and marketing agent for the building. The procurement process for this will be undertaken during the autumn. The City Deal announced by government in July provides additional opportunities for public funding for the development.

7. VAT shared services exemption

The 2012 Finance Act received royal assent on 17 July 2012. This enables universities and others to create cost sharing groups to operate shared services without needing to charge irrecoverable VAT to each other. HM Revenue and Customs have yet to issue the detailed guidance which is needed but there will be strong Treasury and BIS expectations that the sector, which has argued long and hard for this element of European law to be enacted, will embrace the opportunity for shared services. We continue useful discussions with Newcastle City Council on shared services, which is already producing valuable cost savings through joint procurement. In addition, we are looking to use the Realising Opportunities programme (chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor) as an early case study for the sector. Without a cost sharing group, we will be forced to charge £235k of irrecoverable VAT over the next three years, which will more than cover the administrative costs of creating a cost sharing group. HEFCE and the British Universities Finance Directors Group want to support this as a pathfinder project and use the knowledge gained as a case study for the sector.

8. UK Research Partnership Investment Fund: 2012-15

It was reported at the July meeting of Council that the University had submitted a first stage application to this fund, with a proposal to build an R&D Centre for Sub-sea and Offshore Engineering on the North Bank of the Tyne. We were subsequently invited to submit to stage two of the process with a deadline of 23 August, which we have done with the support of broad consortium of fast growing UK companies that are focussed primarily on the sub-sea and offshore industries. This consortium is represented by Sub-sea North-East which is a long established industrial cluster organisation that is closely affiliated to Subsea UK (see http://www.subsea.uk.com) which represents the sector across the whole UK.

The centre will be situated on the Walker Riverside on the North Bank of the Tyne which has been the most dynamic hub for inward investment and job creation in Newcastle over the past five years.

9. Impetus for open access in publicly funded research

In March 2011 David Willetts established a working group, chaired by Dame Janet Finch, ex VC of Keele University, to identify the mechanisms and key principles that would support the objective of improving access to research outputs. The Finch Report, “Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand access to research publications”,
was published in June 2012 and HEFCE announced their plans to make publicly-funded research more freely available.

The recommendations in the report have sparked a good deal of controversy and concern within the sector. These are largely around the financial implications of the decision.

The report makes clear that several different channels for communicating research results will remain important over the next few years. But it recommends a clear policy direction in the UK towards support for ‘Gold’ open access publishing, where publishers receive their revenues from authors rather than readers, and so research articles become freely accessible to everyone immediately upon publication. At the same time, the report recommended extensions to current licensing arrangements in the higher education, health and other sectors; improvements to the infrastructure of repositories, and support for the moves by publishers to provide access to the great majority of journals in public libraries.

The Government response to the report accepts all the report’s recommendations and looks to the Funding Councils and Research Councils to implement them in consultation with universities, research institutions, researchers and publishers.

HEFCE say that they intend to consult the higher education sector on how to implement a requirement that research outputs submitted to any future Research Excellence Framework (REF) should be as widely accessible as possible at the time. This would not affect the current REF due to be completed in 2014.

The report suggests that the additional costs should be met by: a reallocation of research funding by funding councils; increased funding from the “public purse”; increased expenditure from universities’ own budgets.

Executive Board is concerned about the potential financial implications of this decision for the University and will closely monitor developments, with guidance from the PVC R&I and the University Librarian.

10. Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014

On 6 July, the University received written confirmation from HEFCE that, having considered the advice from the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP), our institution’s ‘Code of Practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for submission for the REF2014’ meets the requirements and guidance published by HEFCE.

The University is committed to ensuring that decisions about selecting staff for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. In order to uphold this commitment, and to ensure all staff have access to the relevant information, we have now published the following documents on the internal REF website:

   (i) Code of Practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for submission to the REF2014.

   (ii) Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) from Phase 1 of the Internal Quality Review (research outputs)

These documents and further information about the REF are available to download at: www.ncl.ac.uk/ref
11. **NSS Results 2012**

Quantitative results from the NSS 2012 were released to individual universities on Friday 3 August and students’ free text comments were available from 31 August. On 17 September we will be able to access publicly available data for other institutions including overall satisfaction scores and national rankings for level 3 subjects.

First sight of the National Student Survey (NSS) 2012 results have indicated some positive results:

(i) **Q22**: Newcastle’s overall satisfaction score at 89% (based on a 71% response rate, compared to a 68% response rate in 2011) remains static, having seen an increase of 2% in 2011. Scores for Question 22 – overall I am satisfied with the quality of my course – since 2006 have been: 81%, 82%, 86%, 87%, 87%, 89%.

(ii) **Q16**: 90% – The library resources and services are good enough for my needs – an increase of 5%.

(iii) **Q17**: 86% – I have been able to access general IT resources when I need to – an improvement of 4%.

(iv) **Q18**: 82% – I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I need to – an increase of 5%.

(v) **Q23**: Satisfaction with the Students’ Union – a score of 76% against a sector score of 66%.

The only area in which Newcastle’s scores have seen a decrease is that of Organisation and Management, with an overall decrease of 2% to 84%. Scores in this area since 2006 have been 74%, 76%, 79%, 81%, 83% and 86%. Two questions (‘Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively’ and ‘The course is well organised and is running smoothly’) fell by 3% to 84%. There are a number of reasons why this may have occurred and open comments should help to shed some light on these issues. The only other question in this section, ‘The timetable works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned’, saw an increase of 2% to 86%.

12. **Appointment of a Director of the Business School.**

Following a comprehensive recruitment and selection process, Professor John Wilson has accepted the appointment as Director of Newcastle University Business School. Professor Wilson was the Professor of Strategy in the Management School, Liverpool University.

13. **Sporting Success: British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) table**

British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) is the national governing body for higher education sport in the UK. It has been confirmed that Newcastle University has finished 10th (out of 150 institutions) in the 2011/12 final BUCS table with 1952.8 points.

The University finished the year four places ahead of its position last year with a series of excellent performances in more than 40 sports and remains among the top sporting universities in the UK. This is undoubtedly our best performance since the new league was created and it is really difficult to make the top 10.

This position also puts Newcastle in fifth position in terms of our Russell Group comparators just behind Birmingham, Edinburgh, Manchester and Nottingham.

The BUCS table is available to view at: [http://www.bucs.org.uk/bucscore/BUCSPoints.aspx](http://www.bucs.org.uk/bucscore/BUCSPoints.aspx)
14. **University Environmental Management System (EMS) awarded EcoCampus Platinum**

Following a 4 day environmental audit by NQA from 17-20 July, the EMS for the University has been certified by ISO14001 and awarded EcoCampus Platinum. NQA is a leading assessment, verification and certification body and works in partnership with a wide range of businesses, government departments and charitable organisations to help improve performance in quality, environment and health and safety management. NQA is a trading name of Ascertiva Group Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Electrical Safety Council.

The achievement of these awards demonstrates the commitment of the University towards reducing its environmental impact and fully integrating sustainability in all of its day to day activities and services. It is an excellent achievement for staff and students across campus. The fully functioning EMS will now continue to provide a framework for monitoring, measuring and reviewing environmental objectives and targets.

15. **Flood Damage update**

Following the initial flood damage on 28 June which caused extensive damage to the University, there were hundreds of minor and major repairs reported, which affected almost all of the buildings and sites on a huge scale. After five weeks of drying out and recovery work, many areas have suffered further flood damage, some worse than the initial flood and also some new areas suffered flood damage. Estates Support Services had 250 flood related jobs in addition to their heavy summer workload so the teams were stretched. Some routine maintenance jobs have been suspended and low priority jobs will take longer. Inevitably staff will come back from holiday to find flood damaged premises and it will not be possible to complete all works in time for the start of the new term.

As well as the immediate recovery works, through flood analysis, ESS will identify preventative work. This is potentially a costly programme of works to buildings, drainage and landscaping that will take time and resource to develop and implement. At the moment the main effort is concentrated on dealing with flood damage.

16. **UK Border Agency compliance**

Members of Council will have seen the media reports on the decision by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) to revoke London Metropolitan University's licence to sponsor non-EU students. This is an unprecedented situation which relates only to London Metropolitan University and does not affect our existing or future international students.

As reported previously to Council, we have had verbal feedback from our compliance manager who is reassured that we are taking the issue of attendance monitoring seriously and that we will be compliant by September 2012. He has confirmed that our new attendance monitoring policy will make us compliant.

This issue will be discussed at the forthcoming Universities UK Annual Members’ Conference. Within the sector it is considered that the messages sent out to international students by this development are unhelpful. Sector-wide guidance on the arrangements required to ensure compliance has been promised but has yet to be delivered.
8. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER SUMMARY

Received the Strategic Risk Register Summary from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. Recent developments such as the UKBA decision in relation to London Metropolitan University and the summer floods (see Minute 7, items 16 & 17 above) have impacted upon a number of the strategic risks included in the register, however, following a review, it has been decided that the ratings for these risks should remain unchanged. Executive Board is aware of the need for careful management of these issues.

2. Three of the University's unions will hold a ballot on industrial action on pay. The potential consequences of this development for the student experience should be noted.

3. A suggestion has been made that the Business School should be included as a risk in its own right, similar to the risks listed for NUMed and Singapore. This will be given further consideration.

9. HEFCE ASSURANCE REVIEW

Received the report from the HEFCE Assurance Review conducted on 22 May 2012.

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

Noted that:

1. Council was advised of the outcome of the HEFCE Assurance Review at its meeting on 9 July 2012. The report confirms that the University has been granted a satisfactory level of assurance, the highest grade which can be awarded.

2. The report recommends that the Vice-Chancellor should attend meetings of Audit Committee on an annual basis. In response to this, the Vice-Chancellor attended the meeting of Audit Committee on 19 July 2012.

10. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

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

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

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

11. REPORT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

Considered a report from the meeting of Audit Committee, held on 19 July 2012.

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

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

12. AUDIT COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

Considered a report from Mr Jeff McIntosh, Chair of the Audit Committee Effectiveness Review Panel.
Council 10 September 2012

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

Noted that:

1. The review concluded that Audit Committee is operating effectively and that it works well with Internal Audit and the external auditors. A number of recommendations have been made which are intended to further enhance the Committee’s effectiveness.

2. It is proposed that a skills review should be conducted to gain a better understanding of the skills available within the Committee and to help identify where co-opted skills may be required.

3. It is necessary to improve the information flow to the members of Audit Committee who are not members of Council. It was proposed that this could be addressed by inviting these members to attend the briefing lunches for members of Council or by inviting them to become members of Court. The view was also expressed that the membership of Audit Committee should be comprised solely of Council members, however, past difficulties in recruiting sufficient Council members onto Audit Committee was cited as a reason for opening membership to non-Council members. It was suggested that those members who are not members of Council should be recruited due to the specific expertise they can provide.

4. It is considered desirable for Audit Committee’s relationship with Senate and its role in overseeing the ‘academic environment’ to be clarified. It is also necessary to consider how the Committee membership’s understanding of the academic environment could be enhanced. The Committee of University Chairs’ ‘Handbook for Members of Audit Committees in Higher Education Institutions’ emphasises that members must be independent, objective and non-executive, which prevents both students and staff from being members of the Committee.

5. Members of Audit Committee require further information on the University’s approach to Value for Money (VFM).

6. It is considered that greater interaction from Council on the issues arising from the Audit Committee reports would be desirable. Comments on how the reports to Council could be amended to facilitate this were requested. It was suggested that items in the reports from Audit Committee should be classified so as to ensure that Council’s attention is drawn to the most important issues and those on which it is required to take further action.

Resolved that:

(i) Mr McIntosh, Mr Pallett and Dr Young be thanked for their report.

(ii) The Effectiveness Review Report be considered at the next meeting of Audit Committee.

(iii) The Chair of Audit Committee should prepare a response to the report, on behalf of Audit Committee, to be submitted to the next meeting of Council. The response should be discussed with the Chair of Council and Mr McIntosh prior to the meeting of Council.

13. PROJECT 2012: SCORECARD

Received the latest Project 2012 scorecard from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching, on behalf of Executive Board.
Noted that:

1. The current format of the report will be continued until the end of the calendar year after which time a text based report will be prepared.

2. Significant progress has been made in relation to the projects included under the Learning and Teaching section of the scorecard. A number of the projects listed will continue beyond September 2012.

3. The area of ‘Assessment & Feedback’ is rated as amber due to the results from the National Student Survey as it is an area where the University is less well placed compared to the sector. Action is being taken to bring about improvements.

14. UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS UPDATE

Received a report on Undergraduate admissions from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

15. VISION 2021: INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND KPIs – DRAFT INSTITUTIONAL KPI REPORT

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

Noted that:

1. Document K introduced the new reporting arrangements for the institutional strategic objectives and KPIs. Strategy specific KPIs will be scheduled to be presented at specific meetings throughout the year. Council will receive the full set of institutional KPIs on an annual basis, usually at the last meeting of the academic year.

2. Members of Council who wish to comment on the detail included in Document K are invited to contact Professor Stevenson.

Resolved that the proposed approach to the reporting of institutional strategic objectives and KPIs be approved.

16. FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Received a PowerPoint presentation from Professor Chris Day, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Faculty of Medical Sciences, on behalf of Executive Board.

Resolved that Professor Day be thanked for an informative presentation.

17. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Considered a report from Professor Ella Ritchie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Executive Board.
Noted that an implementation plan for the Engagement Strategy is in the process of being developed and will be presented to Council, together with a set of KPIs, at its meeting in December 2012.

**Resolved that the Engagement Strategy be approved.**

18. **PR STRATEGY REPORT**

Considered a report from Professor Ella Ritchie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and Ms Abi Kelly, Director of Public Relations, on behalf of Executive Board.

Noted that:

1. A series of KPIs are being developed for the PR strategy which will be included in the next update. The KPIs will include a target for the number of media mentions and column inches secured.

2. It was suggested that it would be useful to monitor the impact of case studies for the purposes of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). At present, the Press Office does not usually revisit press releases following their release but it is intended to do this in future for items released under the banner of the Societal Challenge Themes to demonstrate how the themes have progressed over time.

**Resolved that the PR Strategy be approved.**

19. **SINGAPORE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

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

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

20. **CHAIR’S CIRCULAR**

The Chair’s circular of routine business was sent to members on 21 August 2012. No issues on the circular were raised by members and the business was, therefore, deemed to have been approved by Council.

Approved business:

There were no items of business to approve.

**Items for information:**

1. **Membership of Council 2012-13**

2. **Statement of Primary Responsibilities**

3. **Delegation of Powers and Authority**
4. Principles of Council

5. Council Schedule of Business

6. Council meeting dates and Briefing Lunches

7. Statutory University Returns