NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL
26 March 2012

Present: Mr Mark l’Anson (in the Chair), the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Dr Peter Andras, Mr Neil Braithwaite, Professor Vicki Bruce, Mr Liam Dale (Education Officer), Ms Jacqui Henderson, Mr Robert Hull, Mr Peter Johnson, Mr Jeff McIntosh, Professor David Manning, Mrs Heidi Mottram, Professor David Parker, Mr Simon Pallett, Mr Simon Pleydell, Ms Kate Priestley, Mr Ian Shott 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 (Administrative Officer).

MINUTES

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

77. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 6 February 2012 and the Minutes of the joint meeting with Senate on 6 February 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed.

78. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Progress of business: actions carried forward from previous meetings

There were no outstanding items on the business tracking form.

(ii) Joint meeting with Senate (Minute 56, 6.2.2012)

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

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

After noting that:

1. The debate highlighted the crucial importance of a strategic approach to student recruitment, at a time when markets are both highly competitive and potentially volatile.

2. The key outcomes and recommendations from the meeting are considered to be appropriate and well thought through.

3. The following recommendations will be put in place to address the issues:
(i) An Executive Board Working Group will be established.

(ii) Comprehensive training and support will be provided for staff responsible for the delivery of student recruitment activity.

(iii) The ‘PGT offer’ will be developed further to enhance the attractiveness of our provision.

(iv) The University will bid for research council Doctoral Training Centres (DTC) or Equivalent, alone, or in collaboration with partner institutions, to enhance the quality of PGR students.

Resolved that the key outcomes and recommendations will form part of the annual review of the Teaching and Learning strategy and will be reported to a future meeting of Council. (Action: PVC Learning and Teaching)

79. HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

Noted that a member of the Health and Safety Executive is carrying out an audit in Medical Sciences, on systems and competence management within this area.

Resolved that the outcome of this audit will be reported to a future meeting of Council. (Action: Executive Director of HR)

80. CHAIR’S BUSINESS

(i) Council induction programme

The Chair reminded members about forthcoming sessions in the Council induction programme and encouraged attendance.

(ii) Viscount Ridley

The Chair reported the death of Viscount Ridley, former Chancellor of the University from 1989 to 31 December 1998.

Resolved that Council record its gratitude for the service of Viscount Ridley as a former Chancellor of the University, and its deep regret and sympathy for the relatives concerned.

(iii) Review of Audit Committee (Minute 67, 6.2.2012)

The Chair reported that Mr Jeff McIntosh and Mr Simon Pallett had been appointed to undertake the review of Audit Committee that was agreed at the last meeting and extended an invitation to lay members for an additional member to be appointed if a willing volunteer could be identified.

(iv) Northern Group of University Chairs

The Chair reported that he has recently attended a meeting of the Northern Group of Chairs, and items discussed included:
Student Recruitment: The Chair reported that Universities in attendance had reported that they were comfortable with the current student numbers.

Pay bargaining: there appeared to be a move for more institutions to prepare for local pay bargaining.

Remuneration Committees: The Chair reported that the process undertaken by Newcastle University appeared to be either typical or ahead of other universities, and was acknowledged as in line with best practice.

(v) Council representative on Senate

The Chair requested volunteers from lay members of Council to be the new Council representative at the meetings of Senate. The current representative, the Deputy Chair of Council will no longer be the representative after 31 July 2012.

Resolved that expressions of interest from members to be the Council representative at meetings of Senate, should be sent to the Chair directly.

(Action: Lay Members)

81. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

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

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

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. Undergraduate recruitment for September 2012

Received an oral update from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching on behalf of Executive Board.

Received the summary UCAS information report dated 23 March 2012

[ Copy filed in the Minute Book. ]

It was noted that it is too early in the admissions cycle to draw any firm conclusions about conversion rates.

3. HEFCE grant allocations 2012/13

Received an oral update from Mr Richard Dale, Executive Director of Finance on behalf of Executive Board.

After noting that:

(i) HEFCE funding for 2012-13 was communicated to the University under embargo on 19 March 2012. The provisional grant for Newcastle for 2012/13 was published nationally on 22 March.
(ii) The net impact on teaching funding is a year on year reduction of 19.6% from £60.3m to £48.5m. This is £0.6m better than the five year forecast approved by Council at its meeting on 24 October 2011.

(iii) The net impact on research funding is a year on increase of 0.6% from £34.6m to £34.8m. This is exactly in line with the five year forecast approved by Council at its meeting on 24 October 2011.

(iv) Announcements to date are broadly in line with expectations and slightly better than the October 2011 forecast. The funding made available for PGT and Erasmus is a welcome recognition of the significant risks in those areas. The withdrawal of QR funding for 2-star research is not a surprise and will be taken into account in the 2012-13 budget build for the University.

4. Newcastle Science City

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Science City SIG has had a presentation on the Gateway Building. This will be the first building to go up on the Science Central site. The City Council will build and manage the building, and the proposal is that Newcastle University will rent floor space within the building for CPD activity.

5. Late news: Student Initiative

Students have recently been invited to take part in an ‘Appathon’ competition, which gave them the opportunity to write an App for a Smart phone that will be used for the students' benefit. 248 entries were received and a shortlist of 3 has been produced. Discussions are taking place to determine the design and development possibilities of the three shortlisted proposals and the winning entry will be announced shortly.

6. Fundraising

Attention was drawn to the half year report on fundraising which suggested that the University’s targets might be missed. This will be considered in more detail at the next meeting of Council. (Action: Registrar)

82. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER SUMMARY

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

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

After noting that:

1. The Strategic Risk Register Summary report will be presented by the Registrar to each meeting of Council to ensure that Council members are regularly updated on any movements within it or any areas of specific concern.

2. The summary report is a useful way of drawing Council’s attention to areas that may require further action and will enable members to review progress on actions that are being taken to mitigate those risks.

3. Members would appreciate further explanation of the methodology for calculating the risk scores.
Resolved that an explanation of the formula and methodology for the calculation of the risk scores will be included in the next presentation. (Action: Registrar)

83. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES – KPIs: FINANCIAL HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Considered a paper from Mr Richard Dale, Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document F. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. Research Contribution

   Research contribution is expected to decline this year due to a shift in the income mix from the Research Councils to Charities, actions by RCUK to reduce Full Economic Cost payments and the absence of one-off gains to date this year.

2. Research Process Efficiency

   New IT software is to be introduced for the purpose of research process efficiency.

3. Carbon Footprint Reduction

   The Carbon Management Plan which was approved by Council has a target of 43% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020/21 against a 2005/06 baseline, which is line with the HEFCE target for the sector. Council noted that Government has to deliver its commitment on decarbonising the power supply to achieve this.

   In 2010/11, an overall gross reduction in carbon emissions of 5% was achieved. Whilst part of the reduction is the result of changing classifications 1.7% of the reduction is a real decline on a like for like basis. As new buildings come on stream over the next two years, it should be recognised that the carbon footprint will also likely grow. Although, the fact that a real reduction of 1.7% has occurred indicates that our current carbon reductions measures are having an impact.

84. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Finance Committee held on 7 March 2012.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document G. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that Finance Committee received a report on proposed changes to UK VAT rules which will allow universities to introduce shared services without having to charge each other irrecoverable VAT. This is expected to be included in the 2012 Finance Act. Finance Committee agreed that the University should continue to actively investigate opportunities for introducing shared services where possible.

85. REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY/STUDENTS’ UNION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE AND RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT

Received:

(a) A report from the Partnership Committee meeting held on 28 February 2012.

(b) The Relationship Agreement.
Noted that Ms Laura Perry has been re-elected as President of the Students’ Union for a further year and offered her its congratulations.

86. REPORT FROM REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting held on 21 November 2011.

Resolved that Council approved the content of the report.

87. OVERVIEW REPORT : ANNUAL REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Reported that the Working Group on Governance recommended that Executive Board should ensure that at least once a year Council and Senate receive overview reports on the key strategies within Vision 2021, in addition to the current reports on finance.

Considered the Annual Report from University Research Committee, endorsed by Executive Board.

After noting that:

1. The number of applications has increased by 6% in 2010/11 compared to last year to 1487, and the value of applications has increased by 2%.

2. The number of grants awarded has increased by 35% with an increase in value of 14% to £92m. This value is the best ever achieved by the University and Council wished to record its congratulations on this success.

3. Awards reported by the Research Councils, and analysed by the Times Higher Education have placed Newcastle University in 13th position by value of new awards.

4. It was suggested that the URC report would benefit from including future plans. (Action: PVC Research and Innovation)

88. POLICIES FOR DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND CONSULTANCY

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

Resolved that:

1. Policy regarding Declarations of Interests and Conflicts of Interest Policy, and the Procedure for the Acceptance of External Appointments held by University Staff

This be approved subject to further consideration of section 4 ‘Procedure for acceptance of external appointments (including directorships)’ concerning the definition of external appointments and the reporting/approval route. (Action: Registrar)
2. **Policies on consultancy and other professional external work**

   Noted that the Policy on Personal Consultancy should be listed as the last policy in the document.

   Council approve the following revised policies with immediate effect:

   (i) Policy on Remuneration for Academic Professional Services;
   (ii) Policy on University Consultancy;
   (iii) Policy on Additional Clinical Practice;
   (iv) Policy on University Staff Involvement in Spin-Out Companies;
   (v) Policy on Personal Consultancy.

   The policies are available on the University’s website at [https://my.ncl.ac.uk/staff/policies/](https://my.ncl.ac.uk/staff/policies/)

89. **WOOLF REPORT**

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

   Received an extract from the draft Senate Minutes of 28 February 2012 on Senate’s consideration of this item.

   [Circulated with the agenda as Documents N & O. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

   Council members discussed the benefit of having an overarching statement that outlined the cultural approach to these matters for the University.

   **Resolved that:**

   1. Council approve the revisions to the Ethical Policy for the Acceptance of Corporate Gifts and Donations: Major Gifts.

   2. The Registrar is asked to prepare a draft statement for Executive Board, which should then be presented to Senate and Council for approval, on the University’s approach on ethical policy including an escalation process (Action: Registrar)

   The policy is available on the University’s website at [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/giving/people/donors/index.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/giving/people/donors/index.htm)

90. **VISION 2021 UPDATE : PAPER VERSION** (Minute 70, 6.2.2012)

   Considered a recommendation that Council approve the paper version of Vision 2021.

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

   After noting that:

   1. The strap line ‘Excellence with a purpose’ is now included in the document.

   2. Council members suggested that the visual content and layout could be improved.

   **Resolved that the Chair invited members of Council to give feedback to him on the paper version of Vision 2021. (Action: Members)**
91. FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES STRATEGY

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

[A copy of the slides used in the presentation is filed in the Minute Book.]

92. OPTIONS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY’S UK ESTATE 2012-2017

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

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

After noting that:

1. The purpose of the report is to outline the University’s UK Estate Strategy for the next five years and to provide information and options to Council, to ensure that they have the relevant information available when asked to make future decisions on specific business cases.

2. Council members suggested that it will be useful to know the timeframe for when any future decisions will need to be made, and the financial implications of new build on current plans. (Action: PVC Planning and Resources)

93. ARMSTRONG REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Considered a report from Professor Charles Harvey, Pro-Vice-Chancellor HASS, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

After noting that:

1. Each phase of the Armstrong Redevelopment project will be brought to Council for approval which will include details of the phased scope of works and financial implications.

2. It was clarified that Council are asked to approve the direction of travel for the project and not the actual spend at this stage.

3. Council members suggested that the suggested timeframe for this project may be subject to change once the communication with contractors begins.

Resolved that Council approve, in principle, up to a £25 million spend over eight years to enable the University to proceed with the phased comprehensive re-development of the Armstrong Building. (PVC H&SS)

94. REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GRAND HOTEL

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

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

Resolved that Council approve the business case, outlined in Document S, for the redevelopment of the student accommodation in the Grand Hotel, at an estimated cost...
of £2.5m which will be capitalised and covered by Accommodation and Hospitality Services reserves. (Action: PVC Planning and Resources)

95. PROJECT 2012 : SCORECARD

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

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

96. CHAIR’S CIRCULAR

The Chair’s circular of routine business was sent to members on 7 March 2012. No issues on the circular were raised by members and the business was, therefore, deemed to have been approved by Council.

[The approved business and a copy of the circular is filed in the Minute Book.]

Approved business:

(i) New Estate Biodiversity Policy.

The above policy will be added to the University’s Policies and Procedures website at: https://my.ncl.ac.uk/staff/policies/

(ii) Amendments to Standing Orders of Council.

(iii) Change in the title of the School of Historical Studies to the School of History, Classics and Archaeology with immediate effect.

(iv) Fees Schedule 2012-13, subject to the following change:

Page 10, Paragraph 15, 4th Bullet point:
Delete: ‘……supported by the School….’
Substitute: ‘……supported by the University….’

Items for information:

(v) The election of Professor Alan Boddy as a Senate appointed member of Council from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2015.

(vi) Dates of meetings of Council in 2012-13:

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<tr>
<td>2 pm</td>
<td>10 September 2012</td>
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<td>2 pm</td>
<td>22 October 2012</td>
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<td>2 pm</td>
<td>10 December 2012</td>
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<td>2 pm</td>
<td>11 March 2013</td>
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<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>29 April 2013 (Council meeting in the morning, joint meeting with Senate in the afternoon at 2pm)</td>
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<td>3 pm</td>
<td>17 June 2013 (followed by dinner)</td>
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(vii) Paper of reported business.