NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL
3 April 2017

Present: Mr Mark I’Anson (Chair of Council), Vice-Chancellor, Professor Tony Stevenson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Mr Neil Braithwaite, Professor Paul Christensen, Mr Mike Davison, Mr Christopher Duddy (Education Officer, Students’ Union), Dr Jonathan Galloway, Mr Stephen Lightley, Mr Jeff McIntosh, Ms Dianne Nelmes, Dr Ole Pedersen, Mr Jack Taylor (President, Students’ Union), Mr Paul Walker and Ms Vicky Wright.

In attendance: Professor David Burn, Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Professor Richard Davies, Professor Julie Sanders, Professor Phillip Wright (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Mr Richard Dale (Executive Director of Finance), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Ms Abi Kelly (Executive Director of Corporate Affairs), Mrs Lizzie Taylor (Executive Officer (Governance)), Miss Janice Trewick (Executive Officer (Governance)) and Mrs Judith Whitaker (Executive Director of Human Resources).

Apologies: Mr Jonathan Glass, Mrs Teresa Graham, Mrs Jacqui Henderson, Professor Tom Joyce, Mrs Heidi Mottram and Professor Nick Wright.

Miss Lucy Buckhurst (Head of Student Recruitment & Admissions) attended the meeting for Minute 93 and Mr Alex Metcalfe (Director of International Affairs) attended the meeting for Minute 94.

M I N U T E S

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

85. MINUTES

Noted that:

1. The new member of Audit Committee referred to under Minute 75.5 had experience in large scale project management rather than property.

2. Subject to the amendment above the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 6 February 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed.

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

86. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted that there were no matters arising from the minutes.

87. HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

Received the Annual Health and Safety report for 2015-16, presented by Mrs Judith Whitaker, Executive Director of Human Resources, on behalf of Executive Board.

   [Circulated with the agenda as Document B. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
Council, 3 April 2017

Noted that:

1. The University had a robust Health and Safety management system in place. Compared with other Russell Group Universities, Newcastle appear in the third quartile for reporting incidents which represents a strong culture of reporting.

2. The planned external audit on Health & Safety and reporting of incidents would provide further assurance to Council.

88. CHAIR’S BUSINESS

Noted that:

1. Members of Council were invited to submit nominations for the lay category of members on Council and other University committees. Nominations to be submitted by 26 April, 2017.

2. There will be an opportunity for Council to visit the School of Modern Languages and the Learning Resource Centre prior to the meeting on 22 May, 2017.

89. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

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

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

Noted that:

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. The Government had announced a series of proposed amendments to the Higher Education and Research Bill in response to concerns in the House of Lords and by various groups including UUK and the Russell Group.

3. The University would be submitting an entry for the 12th biennial round of Queen’s Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education. The submission would focus on the work and achievements of the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Service (CURDS) for its long standing and internationally recognised academic excellence and policy relevance.

4. The University had been given a red rating in Freedom of Speech rankings published by the online magazine Spiked. The ratings are based on a number of factors including Policy and the number of speakers whom had been banned by the University. The University rebutted the rating as no speakers had been banned by either the University or the Students’ Union.

5. The latest results from the International Student Barometer (ISB) place the University 5th in the UK and 18th in the world with an overall satisfaction rating of 94% - a 1% rise on the previous year.

6. The Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2017 places Newcastle University 8th overall in the UK, cementing it as one of the leading institutions in the country for the experience it offers to its students.
7. A total of 27 subject areas at Newcastle University appear in the QS World University Rankings by subject across the three Faculties. Dentistry and Geography have been rated as the best performing subjects, standing at 32 and 50 in the world respectively.

*Resolved that Council record its congratulations to the staff in the subject areas concerned.*

8. The Newcastle led Biofilms IKC (Innovation and Knowledge Centre) is a bid being prepared for submission to BBSRC/Innovate UK to establish a single centre in the UK for Biofilms research and commercialisation.

*Resolved that Council delegate authority to the Chair of Council to approve the full proposal for submission to BBSRC/Innovate UK.*

9. The Confucius Institute is coming to the end of the initial period of agreement with Hanban and Xiamen University. Both Universities recognise that the Confucius Institute is an important part of the joint institutional partnership and their respective commitment was reaffirmed at the Confucius Institute Board on 14 November, 2016, (a meeting with representatives of Newcastle and Xiamen University).

10. Universities UK have issued a briefing note on the Great Repeal Bill which was published by Government on 30 March, 2017.

11. The University had been informed that it won the award for Best University Employability Strategy at the National Graduate Recruitment Awards. The award had been presented at a dinner in London on 30 March 2017 attended by 1,100 graduate recruiters.

*Resolved that Council record its congratulations to all concerned.*

12. Minute classified as 'strictly confidential'.

90. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Received the summary risk register 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 two new strategic risks had been added to the register which were the transfer of the School of Medicine, Pharmacy & Health from Durham University (SR5N) and the implementation of the SAgE faculty restructure (SR50).

*Council confirmed that it had received sufficient assurance that the risks facing the University were being managed appropriately.*

91. **INSTITUTIONAL KPI SUMMARY REPORT**

Received the summary KPI report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. There are no changes to the ratings for KPI since the latest version presented to Council in February 2017.
2. The approach to preparing and reviewing KPI will be reconsidered as part of the development of the new strategy.

92. SUMMARY REPORT FROM MEETING OF SENATE, 7 MARCH 2017

Received a summary report from the meeting of Senate that took place on 7 March 2017.

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

Noted that:

1. Senators had submitted questions regarding the Science and Engineering Excellence (SEE) project and these will be addressed as part of the business plan at the meeting of Senate on 2 May, 2017, where the SEE project would be the main strategic item.

93. STUDENT RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PROGRESS REPORT

Received the Student Recruitment Strategic Progress Report and PowerPoint presentation from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning & Teaching, supported by Miss Lucy Backhurst, Head of Student Recruitment & Admissions

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents G. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]
[Copies of PowerPoint slides filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The recruitment for Home students is a dynamic environment and competition is fierce. There will be a decline in the number of 18 years old from now until mid-2020. The outcome of Brexit on EU student recruitment is still uncertain. The student recruitment for 2016 had overall been positive.

2. The figures for 2017 recruitment showed an increase in applications at UG level for both UG home and UG EU, however PGT and PGR numbers were reported as low. The PGT offer approved by Senate and will support PG recruitment.

4. The University is a national leader in Widening Participation and the PARTNERS programme is successful. Nationally WP students had difficulties getting graduate level employment.

5. A number of new initiatives have been introduced including access to Medicine and the Careers Insight Programme which aims to address graduate level employment.

94. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT PRESENTATION

Received a PowerPoint presentation from Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Internationalisation & Engagement supported by Mr Alex Metcalfe, Director of International Affairs.

[Copies of PowerPoint slides filed in Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The International Office had devised 8 tactical areas which they are working towards. They have identified priority markets and will be working with faculties and Schools to develop their plans. They will also work with the Advancement Office to develop relationships with alumni.

2. There are opportunities for international students to gain work experience through a range of activities and also through the modules offered by the Careers Service.
3. The International Office will be analysing a range of data and systems to develop the strategy.

95. **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIC PROGRESS REPORT**

Received the Public Relations Strategic Progress Report from Ms Abi Kelly, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. In 2018 the PR Strategy will be replaced by a more far-reaching Marketing and Communications Strategy.

2. A perception survey will be launched next month and this will help formulate the strategy.

3. A new Head of Digital Experience had been appointed.

96. **REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Received a report from the meeting of Finance Committee held on 8 March 2017.

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

Noted that:

Minute classified as ‘strictly confidential’.

97. **LEARNING AND TEACHING CENTRE REPORT**

Received an update report on the Learning and Teaching Centre from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. The testing of the proposed moveable wall has identified that the single wall will not provide suitable sound proofing, therefore a double moveable wall has been proposed which will incur additional costs.

2. The link bridge between the two buildings will create a wind tunnel which will be dangerous for cyclists and other users, therefore it had been agreed to remove the link bridge which will result in a cost saving.

98. **HEFCE’S ANNUAL PROVIDER REVIEW PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT**

Received the Annual Provider Review Preliminary Assessment provided by HEFCE.

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

99. **ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT CASEWORK**

Received the Annual Report on Student Casework.

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

100. **ETHICS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

Received the Ethics Committee Annual Report.
Resolved that Council approved the revised Ethics Policy for Research, Teaching and Consultancy

101. KING’S GATE CLADDING UPDATE

Received an update report on the King’s Gate Cladding, from Dr John Hogan, on behalf of Executive Board.

102. MEMBERS OF SENATE ELECTED TO SERVE ON COUNCIL

It was reported that the following individuals have been elected by their colleagues on Senate to serve on Council from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2020:

Professor Caroline Austin, Institute for Cell and Molecular Biosciences
Professor Nicola Curtin, Northern Institute for Cancer Research
Dr Sara Maioli, Newcastle University Business School

103. DATES OF MEETING 2017-18

Council will meet on the following dates in 2017-18:

- 2.00pm – 5.00pm             Monday 16 October 2017
- 2.00pm – 5.00pm             Monday 11 December 2017
- 2.00pm – 5.00pm             Monday 19 February 2018
- 10.30am – 1.00pm           Monday 16 April 2018 (followed by lunch)
- 1.45pm – 5.00pm             Monday 16 April 2018 (Joint meeting of Council and Senate)
- 2.00pm – 5.00pm             Monday 11 June 2018
- 2.00pm – 5.00pm             Monday 16 July 2018 (to be followed by a drinks reception/dinner)

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

105. CHAIR’S CIRCULAR

Noted that no Chair’s Circular was issued in advance of the meeting.