NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL
6 February 2012

Present: Mr Mark I’Anson (in the Chair), the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Dr Peter Andras, Mr Neil Braithwaite, Professor Vicki Bruce, Mr Laim Dale (Education Officer), Mr Mike Davison, Mr Colin FitzPatrick, Ms Jacqui Henderson, Mr Robert Hull, Mr Peter Johnson, Mr Jeff McIntosh, Professor David Manning, Mrs Heidi Mottram, Professor David Parker, Mr Simon Pleydell, Ms Kate Priestley, Ms Laura Perry (President, Students’ Union), 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).

The Vice-Chancellor was not present for Minute 60
Dr John Terry, Head of International Office attended for Minute 71.

MINUTES

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

58. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Professor Steve Homans, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of SAgE, to his first meeting of Council.

59. MINUTES

Noted that after the minutes were circulated, Minute 52 had been amended to include the following:

3. The terms of any agreement within the Private Sector cannot be guaranteed in advance, but Accommodation Services would ensure the Students’ Union was involved in discussions at an early stage to agree principles that could be incorporated into the nominations agreements.

Noted that the reference of the Students’ Union was for the University to manage its own stock of accommodation which it could make available to new students.

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 12 December 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed, including the above amendment.

60. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Report from Remuneration Committee (Minute 45, 12.12.2011)
[The Vice-Chancellor was not present for this item]
Reported that Council, at its meeting on 12 December 2011, resolved that the Registrar and the Chair of Remuneration Committee should produce a report on the terms of reference of Remuneration Committee and the nature of future reports to Council.

Considered a report from Ms Jacqui Henderson, Chair of Remuneration Committee. [Circulated with the supplementary agenda as Document P. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that:

(i) **Council approve the following amendment to the membership of Remuneration Committee:**

   delete: The Deputy Vice-Chancellor

(ii) **Remuneration Committee should report to Council after each of its meetings. The report should indicate what decisions had been taken but should not be used as a mechanism to discuss the remuneration of any individual. The Committee should also prepare an annual report to Council setting out in more detail the pattern and changes of remuneration to all staff at level I.**

61. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

   Reported that Council, at its meeting on 12 December 2011, were informed that the RIDDOR report would be deferred until the next meeting, to allow investigative actions to be undertaken at the request of Executive Board.

   Received:

   (i) The RIDDOR table 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.]

   (ii) An oral report from Mrs Veryan Johnston on behalf of Executive Board, on current health and safety issues affecting the University, including performance measures and actions taken.

   Noted that:

   1. A steering group had been established to investigate the continuing incidences of slips, trips and falls, their locations and the reason for the incidents and to develop an action plan for consideration at the May meeting of University Safety Committee.

   2. RIDDOR incidents are discussed as a standing item at the meeting of Faculty Safety Committees.

   3. From April 2012, a charge will be made for any visit by the Health and Safety Executive to the University, where a material breach is identified as a result of the inspection.

62. **CHAIR’S BUSINESS**

   **Council Induction programme**

   The Chair reminded members about forthcoming sessions in the Council induction programme and encouraged attendance.
63. 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.]

(i) Deaths

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

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

(ii) Missing Person

The Vice-Chancellor reported that a third year BA Hons Marketing and Management student had been reported as missing since 31 December 2011. A statement had been issued by the Police on 5 January 2012 which stated that this may be linked to an incident concerning a man who jumped from the Tyne Bridge on 31 December 2011.

Noted that the University would review its arrangements how support can be given to International students who were unable to return home during the holiday periods.

(iii) New Year Honours 2012

Reported that Professor Ella Ritchie (OBE) had been honoured for services to higher education and Professor Jimmy Steele (CBE) had been honoured for services to dentistry and oral health. Former staff members Professor Madeleine Atkins (CBE) and Mr Derek Nicholson (MBE) had also been honoured.

Resolved that Council record its congratulations to the persons concerned.

(iv) Cancer equipment delivered to Newcastle

Reported that a cutting-edge piece of cancer treatment and research equipment, purchased through a record £625,000 contribution from the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation has been installed in the University.

The ultra-compact ABT Molecular Imaging Biomarker Generator was only the second of its type in the world and the first in Europe and would help with the diagnosis and treatment of cancer and other serious diseases including Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s. The University had invested a further £600,000, to create a ‘specialist environment’ in the School of Chemistry to house the new equipment. The research was an excellent example of co-operation between Medical Sciences and SAgE.

This was an example of how Newcastle University could be promoted as ‘The only place in the world…..’ which would be an excellent opportunity to project a positive message.

(v) Wellcome Trust Centre for Mitochondrial Research

A new centre for research which could pave the way for in-vitro fertilisation treatment to prevent the hereditary transmission of devastating mitochondrial diseases would be launched in Newcastle.
The new Wellcome Trust Centre for Mitochondrial Research at Newcastle University would be opening due to a £5.8 million funding boost. The Wellcome Trust had awarded £4.4 million to Newcastle University to establish a world-leading centre dedicated to understanding the biology of mitochondria and its relation to health and disease. Newcastle University had contributed a further £1.4 million for the centre.

The techniques have been developed in human eggs by Professor Doug Turnbull and Professor May Herbert at Newcastle University. Professor Turnbull would be the Director of the Wellcome Trust for Mitochondrial research, where the follow-up work would take place.

The announcement had attracted widespread regional, national and international media coverage and resulted in over 600 women who have already come forward to support the research.

(vi) NUMed and the General Medical Council

Council was briefed on recent developments concerning quality assurance by the General Medical Council by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Medical Sciences.

(vii) Director of the Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal

Noted that the interviews for the Director of the Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal took place on 9 December 2011, but no appointment had been made. The post had then been advertised internally, with interviews held on 30 January 2012. The announcement of who would be appointed to the post was expected to be made imminently.

(viii) Initial Teacher Training funding and allocations

The University had received a letter from the Teaching and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), the body that was responsible for allocating and funding teacher training places. The letter announced a further cut in places for the next year which would adversely affect all initial teacher training providers.

(ix) Late News

Director of Science City

Recruitment for the Director of Science City was currently underway; interviews for this post would take place this month.

(x) Early warnings

UK Border Agency

Revised regulations in relation to travel outside of the UK for non UK individuals had been introduced by the UK Border Agency; this may be a problem for some members of staff seeking indefinite leave to remain, this included the Vice-Chancellor. The University was reviewing these regulations and would advise international members of staff.

64. COUNCIL PROCESS WORKING GROUP

Noted that Council, at its meeting on 24 October 2011, had approved a number of recommendations from the Council Process Working Group.
Received a report from Mr Mark l’Anson, Chair of Council and Mr Robert Hull, Chair of the Council Process Working Group, giving details of how the recommendations had been, or would be implemented.

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

65. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Reported that:

(a) Executive Board, at its meeting on 13 December 2011, carried out a review of the University’s Strategic Risk Register in its revised format.

(b) Audit Committee, on 12 January 2012, also considered this matter.

Received a covering note from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Considered the Strategic Risk Register.

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

After noting that:

1. The new methodology, endorsed by Audit Committee, had now been implemented. There was now a note of the evidence available to show that the control was in place and KPIs had been added for most of the strategic risks but some required further work. An indication of the progress made over a period of time was also included, based on the risk owner’s view.

2. It was considered that Risk SR5C – Failure to have an appropriate information strategy and control of data and Risk SR5I – Failure to meet home student recruitment targets should still be considered key areas of risk at the moment.

3. The Registrar was asked to consider if the UK Border Agency was featured prominently enough within the risk strategy.

Resolved that:

(i) **Council noted Executive Board’s current assessment of the University’s strategic risks and the controls that had been put in place to mitigate against them in the report.**

(ii) **The Registrar be thanked for work undertaken on the Risk Management strategy.**

66. **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES KPIs : STUDENT SATISFACTION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

Considered a paper from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

(i) The Student Satisfaction and Student Experience 2011-12 KPI was classified as ‘Amber’ under the Traffic Light definition system. The target was for each subject area to achieve
90% or above in the National Student Survey, and whilst 26 of the 48 subject areas had achieved a result of 90% or above, there were still some subject areas to reach the target.

(ii) The overall satisfaction in the National Student Survey (Q22) result for 2011 was 89% which was an increase of 2% from the previous year, and was 1.5% higher than the comparator group.

(iii) The areas of dissatisfaction in the National Student Survey had been reviewed to identify any area for improvement.

(iv) The 2011 outcome for the institutional KPI ‘UK graduate first destinations in graduate level jobs and postgraduate study’ was 15th position, which was an improvement of 14 places from the previous year, although the date referred to 2009-10.

67. REPORT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Audit Committee held on 12 January 2012.

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

Noted that:

1. The purpose of Audit Committee was to ensure the University procedures were being adhered to on behalf of Council. Any member of Council who had a suggestion of what Audit Committee should review was invited to contact the Chair of Council, or the Chair of the Committee or the Registrar.

2. Audit Committee had requested an amendment to the Conflicts of Interest Policy to address the situation in which a Principal Investigator held a position with a funding provider from which he/she also received research funding.

3. Audit Committee had requested to receive an update on Disaster Recovery Testing at six monthly intervals (January and July), following the KPMG review.

4. Audit Committee had requested to receive the action plan prepared in response to the KPMG IT review at its meeting on 19 July 2012.

5. The Chair of Council was asked to appoint one academic member and one lay member of Council to undertake a review of Audit Committee. These individuals should not be current members of Audit Committee and would be required to attend a meeting of the committee.

6. The length of time an audit took from the initial request until the outcome was reported to the Committee was considered. The Chair of Audit Committee would raise any potential issues with the Chair of Council who would discuss them with the Registrar.

Resolved that any member of Council who was interested in serving on the group mentioned in point 5 above should contact the Chair of Council or the Registrar.

68. REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY/STUDENTS’ UNION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Received a report from the University/Students’ Union Partnership Committee on the meeting held on 13 December 2011.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document J. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
69. **TRAC RESULTS 2010-11**

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

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

Noted that:

1. TRAC had been exceptionally useful in demonstrating the way research is underfunded.

2. The estates laboratory costs are heavily influenced by the pattern of laboratory refurbishments and will fluctuate year on year.

70. **VISION 2021 UPDATE: OBJECTIVES AND KPIs**

Received a report from the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. ‘Civic University’ referred to more than just the University’s relationship with the city of Newcastle. Any member of Council who had comments to offer on the topic of a ‘civic university’ should contact the Vice-Chancellor.

2. It was clarified that once the University objectives and KPIs had been set, they would then be adopted for use as Faculty objectives and KPIs, which would then be used in Schools and Institutes. They would be reviewed on an annual basis. This would ensure that there was a common understanding by Head of Schools, Directors of Institutes and other staff.

71. **INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY**

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

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

[A copy of the slides used by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor are filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that

1. The draft strategy would be circulated to Senate, the Faculties, key University committees and groups and the Heads of Unit Forum, before returning to Council for approval.

2. The statement of principle ‘We will always ensure that our activities and collaborations reach the highest ethical standards’ was discussed and it was suggested that this would need to be re-phrased.

3. The Societal Challenge Themes should be included as a Strategic Aim.

4. The Strategic Objective SO2 should not refer to any individual business by name.

5. Measures should be included in the document to demonstrate how the strategy could be reviewed.
6. The Students’ Union should be included in the strategy to demonstrate how they could support the student experience and the social environment.

7. A member of the Students’ Union should be invited to join the Special Interest Group for the Internationalisation Strategy.

8. Further consideration should be given to the possible development of ‘languages for all’.

72. KPMG AND THE DIGITAL CAMPUS INITITATIVE

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.]

Noted that:

1. Following the recent KPMG review which was undertaken in November 2011, the Registrar held a series of meetings during November to discuss key findings from the report and to explain the way in which the University would handle the outcome of the review.

2. Executive Board subsequently agreed that the outcome from the review would form one component of a Digital Campus Initiative that would cover four key aspects of the IT business:

   (i) Implementation of the recommendations from the KPMG report as appropriate (to be led by Steve Williams, Director of ISS).

   (ii) An academic led, open-ended future look at IT, including the use of social media, cloud computing etc (the lead for this is to be determined.)

   (iii) The external facing component that dealt with positioning the University (led by Abi Kelly, Director of PR).

   (iv) Our digital literacy : the way staff use the IT environment.

3. Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources had been appointed as the Executive Board lead for the overall project.

4. The timescale for implementing the recommendations reflected that progress in some areas would be much quicker than others and other areas would be considered more long-term for improvement and development.

5. The recommendations arising from the KPMG report would be taken as part of the Digital Campus Initiative and would not be implemented in isolation.

73. PROJECT 2012 : SCORECARD

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

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

74. NAMING OF BUILDING : NEWCASTLE BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH BUILDING
Noted that Executive Board considered that it was appropriate that the proposed name reflected the significant financial contribution received from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and the importance of the translational research being undertaken in the building.

The building was funded largely by the NIHR in order to house the two NIHR funded Research Centres:

Biomedical Research Unit – Dementia
Biomedical Research Centre

Resolved that Council approve the building name ‘Newcastle Biomedical Research Building’.

75. **CHAIR’S CIRCULAR**

The Chair’s circular of routine business was sent to members on 16 January 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) The disestablishment of the Statutory Committee on Promotions to Personal Professorships and Readerships

(ii) Approval of one new and two revised Policies:

1. Policy on Executive Board Expenses (new)
2. Policy on Gifts and Hospitality (revised)
3. Research Governance Policies (revised)

The above policies and procedures would now be added to the University’s Policies and Procedures website at: [https://my.ncl.ac.uk/staff/policies/](https://my.ncl.ac.uk/staff/policies/) subject to any comments from Senate on the Research Governance Policies.

(iii) The filling of the post of Dean of International Medical Education through internal advertisement in the Faculty of Medical Sciences

(iv) A change in the title of the School of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering to School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering

Items for information:

(v) Development Trust Annual Report

(vi) Paper of Reported Business