NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COURT
11 OCTOBER 2016

Present: The Chancellor (in the Chair), Vice-Chancellor, Ms Parveen Akhtar, Councillor Joe Carlebach, Professor Jane Calvert, Mr Alan Clarke, Professor Richard Davies, Mr Andrew Davison, Mrs Olivia Grant, Rt Rev Christine Hardman, Councillor Mick Henry, Mr Jack Jeffery, Mr Mark I’Anson, Mr Peter Johnson, Mr Antony Jones, Lord Frank Judd, Ms Abi Kelly, Miss Florence Kirkby, Professor Patrick Lavery, Mr Stephen Lightley, Mr Richard Maudslay, Ms Pummi Mattu, Dr David Moffatt, Ms Claire Morgan, Mr Jonathan Parkinson, Councillor Sue Pearson, Sir George Russell, Mr Mark Scrimshaw, Sir Nigel Sherlock, Professor Mark Shucksmith, Mr Nitin Shukla, Mr Greg Smith, Ms Sarah Stewart, Mr Jack Taylor, Mr Rob Williamson, Ms Angela Woodburn, Mr Paul Woolston and Professor Nick Wright.

In attendance: Dr John Hogan (Registrar), and Mrs Yvonne Lee (Executive Assistant). Professor Anya Hurlbert and Dr Katie Harland-Edminson attended for item 4.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document A]

2. COURT MEMBERS

The Chair welcomed Professor Jane Calvert (Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor Medical Sciences), Rt Rev Christine Hardman, Mr Jack Taylor and Dr David Moffatt to their first meeting of Court.

Received:

(a) The membership of Court for 2016-17.

(b) A document detailing the profiles of members of Court.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents B and C]

3. PHILANTHROPIC FUNDRAISING

Received a presentation from Professor Anya Hurlbert, Dean of Advancement, on Philanthropic Fundraising.
Noted that:

Presentation:

1. Philanthropy across the UK is increasing rapidly, with Higher Education Providers (HEPs) receiving a major proportion of donations.

2. Best practice in the United States is considered for benchmarking purposes.

3. Advancement is now the common term used for activities in this area and is broadly defined as having the purpose of securing financial support for the institution, engaging alumni and promoting the University externally.

4. Advancement is a continuous process which has the objective for raising not just funds but the reputation of the Institution. In this regard there is a strong correlation between international league table ratings and those universities with active and successful advancement programmes.

5. The University's alumni network can be an effective recruitment tool and can also help students with placements and graduates with future career opportunities.

6. For an effective Advancement operation, it is not only the amount raised but how the donations are used, which is crucial.

7. Key appointments have been made with Professor Hurlbert as Dean and also strengthening the Advancement team lead by Teri Wishart. Executive Board has recently agreed further new positions, including that of a researcher to identify areas for donation.

8. We currently spend less on Advancement than our Russell Group comparator institutions but do get a high return on our investment.

9. The Advancement team is currently developing a strategy to include a new system to manage databases, better CPD opportunities through a professional network of alumni, mentoring for career support for current students and alumni and developing access to all University resources for alumni.

10. We are developing a global network of alumni from Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Norway and the USA. Our engagement with alumni does not just focus on financial support but on a range of ways their expertise can be utilised.

11. Notable recent fundraising successes include the Hatton Appeal, funding for the recently opened Wolfson Childhood Cancer Research Centre, funding for our Centre for Rural Economy, and for the refurbishment of the iconic Armstrong Building.

12. An Advancement Board is to be created to include among its members major donors and experienced fundraisers. This Board will consider whether we should launch a major appeal along the lines of the Bristol Centenary, which raised £103M out of a £100M goal. A similar campaign could raise not only funds but the profile of the Institution.

13. The Advancement team have identified around 200 potential donors with whom to develop a further relationship.
14. The Advancement strategy going forward will have to rise to the challenges of a complex environment, for example in maintaining our Alumni database in the context of our duty of care to all Alumni and complying with the principles of the Etherington Review to guard against harassment.

Discussion:

1. For many overseas students, Newcastle was the first place they had travelled outside of their own country and this lead to warmth towards the City in which they had studied and, particularly, to the University at which they studied.

2. Many are attracted to the idea of giving donations to the institution, but want to see tangible results and to have a real relationship with the University, which goes beyond thanks for a donation received.

3. Key donors need to be involved in a practical sense in the context of what their donation will mean. In this regard the University should stress the impact it makes on the whole area, for example how our societal challenge themes benefit the local region, with wider implications for national and international influence.

4. It is important to research potential donors and offer them a menu of funding options, with particular emphasis on their own interests and expertise.

5. Alumni should not be considered only in terms of raising money but investing in the current student body through work placements or studentship/foundership programmes.

6. The University should explore the possibility of tapping into the attention the area will receive through the Great Exhibition of the North and launching a funding campaign to coincide and tie-in with a particular element of the Exhibition.

7. Alumni who have an affinity with the City and the region as well as the University may be interested in funding projects which articulate the ‘Civic University’ in action.

8. The University needs a more sophisticated approach to fundraising going forward. We need to understand in more depth what people can offer and lay members of Court should be asked if there is any way they can help.

9. Lessons could be learned from the past in terms of ensuring the Director of Advancement has appropriate input into budget setting for this activity, ensuring that key initiatives like the Armstrong Circle do not fall into abeyance and, in particular, always explaining to an individual why specific offers or ideas have not been taken up.

10. It is important to ensure that the Advancement Strategy is embedded in Faculty/School strategies. An Alumni-engagement forum has already been held with Schools/Faculties and key members of the team are attending appropriate meetings to discuss our Advancement activities.

11. Advancement should not be primarily about money but about building personal relationships with individuals who are committed to the University and support its ‘Civic University’ engagement with and impact on the North East.
12. Personal relationships are hard to build with increasing numbers of students and engaging
with the current students before they graduate from the University could ensure they will want
to continue their relationship in the future.

13. The University should not forget that it is not just Alumni we should consider in the context of
Advancement. Many staff have shown a commitment to the institution through long service,
along with non-graduate lay members of key committees and, crucially, people who would be
willing to give due to a belief in the transformative nature of the University’s work.

Resolved that:

i. Professor Hurlbert and Dr Harland-Edminson be thanked for their contribution to the meeting.

ii. That, if the University decides on a specific campaign in the future, proposals should come
back to Court for input by the highly experienced and valued membership.

4. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S QUESTIONS

Received from Lord Judd:

(a) “A request for a full briefing on the Prevent agenda”.

(b) A report on the Prevent agenda prepared by the Registrar.

[ Circulated with the agenda as Document E ]

Noted that:

Briefing

1. The ‘Prevent’ duty arose out of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, came into force
for universities in September 2015 and will be monitored by HEFCE.

2. The legislation placed on a statutory footing areas in which the University was already active.

3. This is a difficult issue to handle as it can be seen to directly contradict the important principle
and legal requirement to uphold an individual's right to Freedom of Speech.

4. The University has both a large student body and workforce with diverse opinions on all
subjects.

5. Our approach is to treat this as predominantly a student wellbeing issue in that we have a
duty of care to all students, but in particular new students for whom University represents
their first experience of independent living, with consequent peer and other pressures which
may see them at risk of becoming radicalised whilst on campus. The University supports
such individuals through its Student Wellbeing Service and Personal Tutoring system.

6. There is now a more difficult bureaucratic burden in terms of monitoring guest speakers.

7. The University established an internal Prevent Group to ensure we have robust policies and
procedures in place. There are many reasons why particular web sites may be visited, for
example, for research into terrorist issues, so despite the Government suggestion that IT filter
use be considered, we have decided not to go down this route at present.
8. HEFCE approved our current approach in June, with a further report to be submitted by the University at the end of the year.

Discussion

1. This issue represents a particular challenge to universities whose ethos is to encourage original thought, challenge perceived views and encourage debate.

2. Universities are also about encouraging citizenship and educating responsible citizens of the future.

3. At the extreme, Universities could in future become an extension of the Security Services, something which should be guarded against.

4. The current focus in society on consumerism rather than citizenship could play into the hands of extremists and we need to find a balance between obeying this national directive, while managing it in the context of the local environment.

5. The current University approach was welcomed as striking a good balance.

5. **VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

Received:

A report from the Vice-Chancellor on current issues within the University.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document D]

Noted that:

Report

1. The Vice-Chancellor was delighted at the appointment of Professor Chris Day as his successor and wished him well.

2. One of the highlights of recent achievement in the area of research was the work led by Professor Phil Taylor and his team, which was recognised with £20m funding for the University’s third national centre – the EPSRC National Centre for Energy Systems Integration. The Centre will be based on the Science Central site.

3. In addition, the University recently launched a new research facility working with Northumbrian Water, which will allow scientists to develop more sustainable and affordable ways to treat wastewater.

4. The Stern Review and its recommendations will have implications for the REF 2020, for example, through greater focus on research “impact” to include influence on public engagement, culture and on teaching, avoiding distortions of research choices and careers.

5. The USS Pension Fund is heading for a significant deficit at its next valuation in March 2017, which may result in increases in contributions for both employees and employers and/or further changes to the benefit structure.
6. The University and the City Council have secured a third long term investment partner on Science Central in Legal and General. The initial investment will fund completion of two buildings on premium plots 1 and 2. Our Urban Sciences Building is currently under construction along with a City Council laboratory block, with plans for a hotel and office block in future.

7. The Newcastle City Futures initiative exemplifies a Civic University at work in focussing on one of our Societal Challenge Themes and being highly collaborative in nature, with the University working with local authorities and partners from business and the third sector, working towards a sustainable future for the City.

8. Following on from our Newcastle City Futures initiative, our Memorandum of Understanding with ENGIE, the global utility company, will allow us to explore opportunities for joint projects that span each of the three national research centres recently announced for Science Central looking at energy, smart data and ageing and take us a step closer to realising our vision for Science Central as an exemplar of sustainable urban development.

9. As part of the Freedom City 2017 programme of events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Dr Martin Luther King visiting Newcastle to receive an Honorary Degree, a statue is to be erected in the Armstrong Courtyard and this will become part of a ceremonial route out of King’s Hall after future events. The old Boiler House has been transformed into an event space to tie in with this.

10. The Government’s Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) will be introduced with a 4 year implementation phase. This is additional to the Quality Assurance Agency’s work and will be regulated by HEFCE. Outcomes of Gold and Silver will allow undergraduate fee increases in due course.

11. International Student Recruitment numbers have been a concern for the University, along with the sector in general and can be seen in the context of the nationwide debate on immigration. The University took the decision to recruit more home students this year and has strategic and operational plans in place to address the consequent reduction in fee income.

12. The transfer of Durham University’s School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health to Newcastle University has been achieved with the help of both Chairs of Council and represents an attractive option to both students and staff who will be transferring from Durham to Newcastle.

13. The University leads the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership, which involves all of the regional universities as well as 19 colleges. The Partnership has been successful with a major application to the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP).

14. The Department of Education’s ‘Schools that work for Everyone’ initiative represents challenges for us in that we currently work with Schools in general through our PARTNERS Programme, rather than singling out an individual School. Discussions are ongoing and the university will be submitting a response as part of the consultation exercise.

15. The University is part of a Doctoral Training Partnership with Durham, Northumbria, Sunderland, Teesside, Ulster and Queen’s University Belfast. The scheme will provide training for students across a broad range of subjects.
16. The main hyperbaric chamber which is part of the University's Tyne Subsea facility is now in place and it is hoped that the facility will be in use by November.

17. Professor Nick Wright is the current Chair of the N8 Research Partnership. N8 recently launched its Economic Impact Report which sets out how the N8 institutions, as major economic enterprises, generate revenue and economic activity in the North of England, as well as creating jobs and attracting investment to the region.

18. The latest INTO Newcastle University project has transformed the former Line East building into a state-of-the-art teaching and learning facility which welcomed its first students in Summer 2016.

19. The Urban Sciences Building has received an innovation credit from the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) for its experimental electricity storage unit. The award is testament to the building’s industry-leading sustainability.

20. The University has supported the 600 EU staff and around 1200 students during the period of uncertainty which followed the Brexit vote. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Tony Stevenson, is chairing a European project management group, which has already held Drop-in Sessions for those concerned and which will report to Executive Board, Senate and Council as the outcomes of Brexit become clear. In addition the University has introduced an interest-free loan scheme to support all University employees to secure their legal right to reside in the UK. The University and the City continue to make international students welcome, as evidenced by the flag-raising Ceremony, which marked the start of a 25 day-long welcome to Newcastle’s new and returning students from overseas.

21. The Vice-Chancellor expressed his thanks to Court members for their support during his tenure and confirmed that he had found Court and its work a very valuable part of the University.

Discussion

1. The Chancellor expressed on behalf of members, Court’s congratulations to the Vice-Chancellor on the City Council’s vote to award him the Freedom of the City.

2. The work of the Centre for Rural Economy would make a good topic for a future presentation to Court.

3. The stimulating report was an articulation of the Vice-Chancellor’s strategy and vision during his time at the University.

4. That one Medical School for the region was an excellent outcome of the negotiations with Durham. The University was currently considering the numbers of students to be recruited in the context of the Government’s desire to increase Medical student numbers nationally.

5. The transfer of the Durham University’s School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health and the good working relationship with Durham were a tribute to the Vice-Chancellor.

6. It was important in such reports not just to tell Court members what is happening in the University but to listen to and value the points made by Court during discussion.
7. The idea of School sponsorship would be an extra burden on a sector which is already overburdened with responsibilities.

8. The international facing nature of the University and the response to the challenges thrown up by Brexit were a good example of a University’s need to be passionate about diversity.

9. International students are not only important in terms of the economic impact they can have on a city but also in the context of the kind of society we wish to live in. The University’s powerful outward looking voice was to be commended.

10. We need to be mindful despite the natural focus on Brexit implications, that the University also has many non-EU students and staff and that the Institution needs to continue to be outward looking and welcoming to all non-UK students and staff.

6. PAST COURT PRESENTATIONS: UPDATES FOR MEMBERS

Received an update on the presentation received by Court at its meeting in October 2014, delivered by Professors Nick Wright and Sir Doug Turnbull, on University Research Institutes and the work of the Mitochondrial Research Group.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document F]

Noted that:

1. Research in the University has strengthened since the initial presentation in October 2014.

2. The new National Institute for Smart Data Innovation (NISDI) will bring together industry, the public sector and world-leading academics and will be located on the Science Central site.

3. Faculty research institutes nurture significant areas of cross-disciplinary activity in addition to their own subject focussed work.

4. The Societal Challenge Themes and their focus on the profound challenges which confront societies in the UK and throughout the world, have brought an enhanced sense of purpose and focus to research at Newcastle University.

5. Sir Doug Turnbull is a tremendous example of a scientist and leader whose work is at the forefront of world science and influencing UK policy.

7. MEMBERSHIP OF COURT STEERING COMMITTEE

Noted that:

The membership of Court Steering Committee for 2016-17 is as follows:

Members
Ms Claire Morgan (Chair)
Ms Fiona O’Connor
Mr Rob Williamson
Professor Chris Brink*
Mr Mark I’Anson

Observers
Professor Richard Davies
Registrar
*Professor Chris Day will take over with effect from 1 January 2017.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

In addition to the gratitude and warm wishes expressed at this his last meeting, the Vice-Chancellor was presented with a book of tributes from Lay Members of Court.

9. **MEETINGS 2016-17**

Reported that:

(a) The next meeting of Court will take place at 10.30am on Friday 12 May 2017 in the Keeton Lomas Lecture Theatre, Armstrong Building.

(b) That Court Steering Committee has agreed that a presentation on the University’s Widening Participation activities should be the main item on the agenda.