PRESENTATION:

The Chancellor (in the Chair), Vice-Chancellor, Councillor Joe Carlebach, Sir Peter Carr, Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Sir Michael Darrington, Professor Chris Day, Professor Richard Davies, Mr Andrew Davison, Mr Dom Fearon (President, Students’ Union), Ms Sarah Green, Mr Colin FitzPatrick, Councillor Mick Henry, Mr Jack Jeffery, Mr Mark I’Anson, Mr Antony Jones, Lord Frank Judd, Professor Eileen Kaner, Dr Mike Laker, Professor Patrick Lavery, Mr Stephen Lightley, Mr Hector MacDonald, Mr Richard Maudslay, Ms Pummi Mattu, Ms Claire Morgan, Ms Lorna Moran, Ms Fiona O’Connor, Baroness Joyce Quin, Sir George Russell, Professor Julie Sanders, Mr Mark Scrimshaw, Sir Nigel Sherlock, Professor Mark Shucksmith, Mr Nitin Shukla, Dr Robert Teoh, Ms Hannah Underwood, 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).

1. COURT MEMBERS

(a) The Chair welcomed Ms Lorna Moran to her first meeting of Court.

(b) The Chair congratulated Sarah Stewart on the award of her OBE for services to the economy in the North East.

(c) The Chair noted that the terms of office of Sir Mike Darrington and Mr Richard Maudslay were due to end on 31 July 2016. The Chair thanked them for their service to Court Steering Committee and Court.

(d) The Chair noted with regret the recent death of Lord Walton, former Honorary Member of Court.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document A]

3. REPORTS FROM COURT STEERING COMMITTEE

Considered:

(a) First Report from Court Steering Committee

(b) Second Report from Court Steering Committee

(c) Third Report from Court Steering Committee

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents B, C and D]
Resolved that:

(a) **Membership of Court Steering Committee and Nominations Committee**

   i. Claire Morgan be re-appointed to serve on Court Steering Committee for a period of 3 years with effect from 1 August 2016.

   ii. Claire Morgan be appointed Chair of Court Steering Committee for a period of 3 years with effect from 1 August 2016.

   iii. Ms Fiona O’Connor be appointed to serve on Court Steering Committee for a period of one year in the first instance (as her term of office on Court will end on 31 July 2017) with effect from 1 August 2016.

   iv. Mr Rob Williamson be appointed to serve on Court Steering Committee for a period of 3 years with effect from 1 August 2016.

   v. Ms Claire Morgan, Ms Fiona O’Connor (for one year in the first instance) and Mr Rob Williamson be appointed to serve as Court’s representatives on Nominations Committee for a period of 3 years with effect from 1 August 2016.

(b) **Lay Membership of Court**

   i. The following members be re-appointed to serve on Court from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019, subject to their willingness to continue to serve:

      Mr Andrew Davison  
      Mr Colin Fitzpatrick  
      Councillor Mick Henry  
      Mr Peter Johnson  
      Dr Mike Laker  
      Mr Hector MacDonald  
      Councillor Sue Pearson  
      Ms Kate Priestley  
      Mr Bruce Shepherd  
      Mr Nitin Shukla  
      Mr Michael Stephenson  
      Ms Hannah Underwood  
      Mr Rob Williamson

   ii. That the following be appointed to serve on Court from 1 August 2016 until 31 July 2019, subject to their willingness to serve:

      Mrs Anne Marie Cairns, President, International Markets, MasterCard Worldwide  
      Mr John Femi-Ola, Barrister/Junior Counsel, 3 Temple Gardens  
      The Right Rev Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle  
      Ms Josephine Helen McArdle CBE, Chairman, Helen McArdle Care

   iii. That in the event of one of the individuals in (b) declining on this occasion, the following be offered membership from 1 August 2016 until 31 July 2019:

      Dr David Moffatt, Chair of Alumni Consultative Group
iv. That Sir Michael Darrington, Mr Daniel Goldman and Mr Richard Maudslay be thanked for their service on Court.

v. That, the Chancellor should be asked to consider the appointment of Honorary Membership for retiring members.

(c) Honorary Fellowships of the University

Honorary Fellowships be awarded to:

Monica Doughty
Pat Ritchie

4. SCIENCE CENTRAL

Received:

A presentation on progress to date and plans for Science Central from Professor Nick Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research & Innovation. (The slides from the Presentation can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/executive/governance/court/presentations.htm)

Noted that:

Presentation

1. Science Central is a joint activity with Newcastle City Council on the old site of the Newcastle Brewery.

2. It is governed through a joint board and financed through joint investment.

3. Science Central is a new urban quarter in the centre of Newcastle which will be an exemplar of sustainable urban development. It will attract leading edge scientific and technology organizations to a mixed new community encompassing a variety of R&D, educational, business and residential uses. It will provide financial and reputational gain to the partners.

4. The designs for individual buildings and the public spaces form part of an overall masterplan for the Science Central site and the need for visual diversity is being taken into account.

5. The Business School is located close to the Science Central site, which provides opportunities for easy collaborations.

6. In addition to The Core and The Key, which are already in use, there will be an Urban Sciences Building and a Learning and Teaching Centre, the latter with lecture theatres and conference facilities with a total capacity of 2,300.

7. The University’s expertise and the desire of young people to work and in many cases live in the centre of cities, has attracted many SMEs managed by young entrepreneurs into The Core building itself. There has also been a lot of interest from larger potential corporate partners.
Discussion

8. While the University's plans for, and the design of the buildings themselves, look impressive it is important to ensure that the public spaces would add to the initiative as a whole and be well used.

9. A specialist landscape designer has been employed to ensure that the public space was not only attractive but user-friendly and specifically targeted, for example in encouraging children's play areas.

10. The site also presents an opportunity for the University to engage with local communities and schools, with the latter representing a good student recruitment opportunity. In particular, the opportunity to involve local school children in Science Central projects was considered important.

11. Once the buildings are in place open-access visit days will be arranged for the public and local schools.

12. The inclusion of childcare facilities, facilities for the elderly and commercial premises is part of the planning and it is recognised that in the current economic climate with diminishing Council resources progress may be slowed.

13. While housing has always been included in the planning for Science Central, the demise of the Regional Development Agency as one of the original funders, had necessitated phased development of the site. The University has had to prioritise initial development of the site in terms of our core activities, but housing, incorporating the University’s expertise in its design and a further opportunity to enhance our ‘civic university’ credentials, will be considered in due course.

14. Though there are many similar developments in other UK cities, Newcastle Science Central will stand out in housing two major National Centres focussing on placing the University's expertise at the disposal of industry and the public. Funding for the Centre for Energy System Integration (CESI) was secured in competition with many global giants in this area and is funded partly by the Government and Siemens, the CEO of the latter being very enthusiastic about this and the wider Science Central plans. In addition, the National Centre for Ageing Science & Innovation (NASI) will bring together in one centre, world-leading scientists to work together with industry, the NHS and the public to develop, test and bring to market products which promote healthy ageing as we grow older.

15. Reputational and financial risks to the University arising from the Science Central initiative need to be carefully monitored and it was confirmed that Executive Board and Council consider the relevant risk register on a regular basis.

Resolved that:

Professor Wright be thanked for his informative presentation, which had led to an interesting and lively discussion.
5. **VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

   To receive:

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

   [Circulated with the agenda as Document E]

   Noted that:

   **Report**

   1. The University celebrates the life and achievements of Lord Walton, as an alumnus, a professor and Dean, a mentor of many, an example to all, and a lifelong friend and supporter of the University.

   2. The University remains a participant in national pay bargaining, with UCEA negotiating on our behalf with the five trade unions recognised nationally. The University has been notified of two days discontinuous strike action on the 25th and 26th May 2016 and continuous action short of a strike (ASOS) commencing on the 25th May. The total number of UCU members voting nationally was 21,141. This is 36% of an estimated membership of 58,900. These are figures provided by UCEA (Universities and Colleges Employers Association). Of those who voted, 65% were in favour of strike action and 77% voted in favour of action short of a strike (23% and 28% respectively of the total membership).

   3. The establishment of the Newcastle Institute for Smart Data Innovation relates back to Professor Wright’s presentation on Science Central in its illustration of the University’s strength in this particular area within both the School of Computing Science and through our work on digitally enabled urban sustainability. The data generated relating to transport, pollution and flood mitigation can lead to smart decisions taken by the local Councils when drawing up their policies in these areas.

   4. The Government’s Global Challenge Research Fund marks a major shift in Government policy on research funding. In practice funding for appropriate research which makes a contribution to overseas aid will come from the International Development budget. The University will have appropriate academic areas which will generate bids.

   5. The QAA Higher Review visit, which represents the current teaching equivalent of the REF, had gone well with the University passing all of the required thresholds. In future, along with accreditation from around 50 professional bodies, HE Review is likely to be replaced by the Government’s Teaching Excellence Framework.

   6. On 13 November 1967, Newcastle University gave Dr Martin Luther King an honorary degree – the only UK University to do so during his lifetime. Remarkably, Dr King took time to visit the City to receive the award. Unusually, he then gave an acceptance speech, during which he spoke of his struggle for racial justice and the challenges in overcoming war, poverty and racism. Drawing on these themes, the Freedom City 2017 programme will aim to bring Dr King’s legacy to life through special events, talks, exhibitions, art works, and performances. The project will involve schools, artists and voluntary groups from across the city, as well as academics from Newcastle University and a host of partner organisations.
7. The University, along with the Students' Union (NUSU), is encouraging students to vote in the forthcoming EU Referendum.

Discussion

8. There were no plans to further officially commemorate Lord Walton’s contribution to the Institution as he is one of the few individuals to have received two Honorary Degrees from the University, in addition to having the Medical Library named after him.

9. While staying neutral in terms of how an individual should vote, many Schools have been hosting EU referendum awareness-raising events and NUSU have introduced polling station-type booths at key locations on campus in addition to a social media campaign reminding students that they will need to register in whatever area they will be on 23 June.

10. The reasons for NUSU’s withdrawal from the National Union of Students (NUS) had been misrepresented in many media articles. On receipt of a request supported by 300 students, NUSU had agreed to hold a referendum on disaffiliation from the NUS and a majority of the students had voted in favour. The main reasons for dissatisfaction with NUS were its perceived focus on non-core student issues and unwillingness to act on requests for reform.

11. The contradictions between a University’s duty to ‘prevent students from being drawn into radicalisation’ and its duty to maintain and promote free speech were highlighted.

6. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S QUESTIONS

Received from Nitin Shukla:

“I am keen to understand the University’s commitment to equality and diversity. How does the University ensure that in its business, it is responsive to the needs of people due to their disability, race, faith, sexuality, etc? Also how does the University ensure its workforce reflects the local community?”

Received:

An oral response from the Vice-Chancellor.

Noted that:

1. The University’s mission statement ‘Vision 2021’ has clear illustrations of the high priority given to Diversity within the Institution.

2. The University has a Diversity Committee, chaired by the Dean of Diversity, with a remit to promote equality and diversity throughout the Institution. The Diversity Committee presents an annual report for Council’s consideration.

3. Other key University fora, such as Promotions and Remuneration Committees, also take these areas into account to promote equality and diversity for staff.

4. In terms of gender equality, the University has been awarded the prestigious Athena SWAN Silver Institution Award. Athena SWAN is the Senior Women’s Academic Network and we are one of only a few universities to have achieved the Silver Award.
5. All of the relevant data, policies and further information relating to equality and diversity can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/diversity/.

7. PAST COURT PRESENTATIONS: UPDATES FOR MEMBERS

To receive an oral update on the presentation received by Court at its meeting in May 2014, delivered by the Vice-Chancellor on the Civic University.

Noted that:

Update

1. The ethos of the Civic University with the juxtaposition of excellence and purpose was introduced by the current Vice-Chancellor and it is hoped that it will continue to be at the heart of the University’s core values.

2. This places a focus on our institutional, not individual, academic work and asks two key questions: what are we good at and what are we good for?

3. The University’s Societal Challenge Themes and the work done by the relevant Institutes, came out of the Civic University initiative.

4. The success of the Ageing theme has already been alluded to in the Vice-Chancellor’s Business Report above, with the funding awarded for the National Centre for Ageing Science & Innovation (NASI).

5. The Sustainability theme is at the heart of the Science Central plans as discussed in the main presentation for this meeting.

6. The Social Renewal theme is led by Professor Mark Shucksmith who was awarded a prestigious Carnegie Fellowship, in order to lead the Carnegie Trust UK’s project ‘InterAction: How the third sector and academics can work together to influence policy and practice’.

7. The establishment of the Newcastle Institute for Smart Data Innovation.

8. The student experience offered by the University is clearly valued as evidenced by our good ratings in the NSS and other student surveys.

Discussion

9. The Civic University has been successful in reputational terms and the inspirational work in this area sets a key challenge to the Selection Panel for the new Vice-Chancellor.

8. HONORARY DEGREES

Reported that:

Honorary Degrees Committee invites nominations in writing for the following year’s Congregations. Any member of Court, Council, the Alumni Consultative Group and Academic Board may make a nomination, and support for nominees for honorary degrees should be sought only from these bodies. Where several members make a joint nomination, one should be shown as the nominator and the others as supporters.
Principles for the award of Honorary Degrees outlines the criteria for awarding honorary degrees and should be consulted before making a nomination.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document F]

The committee welcomes nominees from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Nominations for 2017 will close on 29 July 2016. To make a nomination please complete an Honorary Degree Nomination Form.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document G]

The Chair reminded members of the confidential nature of nominations which should not be discussed with the individual concerned or any other person.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sir Michael Darrington expressed his pride at his involvement with the University and his admiration for Professor Brink’s Vice-Chancellorship.

10. MEETINGS 2015-16

Reported:

(a) Meetings of Court in the forthcoming academic year will be held on:

   Tuesday 11 October 2016 at 1030
   Friday 12 May 2017 at 1030

(b) Court Steering Committee has agreed, following a request from the Chancellor, that a presentation on Philanthropic Fundraising should be the main item on the agenda for the October meeting.

(c) This year’s Honorary Fellowship Awards Dinner will be held on Monday 10 October 2016. Members are asked to note the date at this stage, with invitations to follow in due course.