NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

C O U R T

16 OCTOBER 2012

Present: The Chancellor (in the Chair), Chair of Council and Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Mrs Lesley Braiden, Professor Grant Burgess, Councillor Joe Carlebach, Mr Alan Clarke, Mrs Jane Clubley, Professor Eric Cross, Sir Michael Darrington, Councillor Nick Forbes, Mrs Olivia Grant, Mr Jack Jeffery, Mr Peter Johnson, Mr Antony Jones, Professor Eileen Kaner, Lord Judd of Portsea, Miss Florence Kirkby, Professor Patrick Lavery, Mr Richard Maudslay, Ms Claire Morgan, Mr Jonathan Parkinson, Ms Laura Perry, Sir George Russell, Professor Ella Ritchie, Mr Mark Scrimshaw, Mr Nigel Sherlock, Professor Tony Stevenson, Lord Walton of Detchant, Professor Michael Whitaker, Professor Nick Wright, Ms Vicky Wright and Ms Angela Woodburn.

In attendance: Mr Richard Dale, (Executive Director of Finance); Ms Jenny Hasenfuss (Engagement Support Co-ordinator, Newcastle University Business School), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Mr James Johnston (Development Manager), Ms Abi Kelly (Director of Public Relations), Professor Mark Shucksmith, (Director, Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal) and Mrs Yvonne Lee (Executive Assistant).

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2012 were approved subject to the following amendment:

Item 7, Noted point 16:

“The new members of the Russell Group had also been invited to join the Aldwych Group, comprising the Student Union Presidents of the Russell Group institutions.”

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman welcomed Mr Alan Clarke, Ms Claire Morgan, Mr Jonathan Parkinson, Ms Angela Woodburn and Ms Vicky Wright to their first meeting of Court:

Received:

(a) The membership of Court for 2012/2013.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document B]

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

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document C]

3. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

Received a report from the Vice-Chancellor.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document D – Supplement on Home Undergraduate Recruitment, Access and Overseas Student Numbers tabled at the meeting]

After noting that:
Admissions

1. Our intake of undergraduate students is slightly down on this time last year but our AAB+ numbers are up, as is the percentage of AAB+ students. A number of universities reported a drop in student numbers, and some Russell Group universities saw a drop in AAB+ students.

2. Newcastle’s performance in maintaining its overall AAB+ numbers represents a positive outcome, particularly as some Russell Group institutions have been unable to meet their aspirational AAB+ targets and some have suffered a material reduction in the number of AAB+s admitted compared to last year. This can be related to a number of factors including the fact that demographically there are fewer 18 year olds this year, that last year’s admittance was high prior to the 2012 changes, and that this year saw a decline in A-level A grades for the first time in 20 years.

3. There is tension between achieving high A-level grades and widening access. With regard to the latter, there is a need to spot potential through means other than qualifications.

4. Our PARTNERS Programme numbers were affected by higher eligibility criteria.

5. The University has introduced Promise Scholarships for high performing students from low income backgrounds. Nineteen full fee scholarships have been awarded.

6. Publication of the Milburn Report is imminent and, while we do not have specific details, it is likely to recommend that more resources are spent on working in Schools rather than scholarships and fee waivers. The University’s view is that we should have a portfolio of grants, bursaries etc alongside assessing potential in school pupils.

7. The University nurtures students from non-traditional backgrounds by using our PARTNERS programme to identify potential outside the grades system. The participants go through a process of familiarisation with the University while still school pupils and then attend summer schools. We are also encouraging them to use social networking to develop support groups among their peers before they arrive at University. There is evidence that non-traditional applicants have the same competence levels on graduation and many go on to postgraduate study.

8. Our undergraduate overseas student numbers are up by 4% on target and 5% on last year’s figures. Our main overseas recruitment market is postgraduate taught and these numbers are down by 9%, partly due to tougher student visa requirements. It is too early to give a definitive research student figure.

9. Sector-wide guidance is still awaited on what requirements should be in place to ensure compliance with UKBA attendance monitoring. All HE institutions can expect spot checks from the UKBA in future and our current preparation for this is twice weekly monitoring of international students’ attendance.

Socially Responsible Investment Policy

10. Having a Socially Responsible Investment policy was one of the contributing factors to the University’s award of a ‘first-class’ by People and Planet this year. Executive Board’s annual review had confirmed that no changes were needed and that the policy had not been invoked during 2011/12.

International Students

11. NUMed Malaysia has just celebrated its first year and that in September, NUMed had exceeded its recruitment target of 100 by admitting 118 new students.
12. The new INTO academic building is now complete and in use by international students. It has a café which is open to the public. The building behind houses the INTO student residences and there are currently 500 students living in this part of the campus.

Regional

13. The projected timetable for progress on Science Central will see the coal extracted by the Spring, after which construction of the planned buildings can start.

14. Lord Adonis will chair an Independent Economic Review commissioned by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) and will be visiting the region towards the end of October. There will be a round of meetings and consultation groups and the local universities will be discussing common issues, with particular reference to the numbers of international students recruited as an economic factor.

15. The University will also be making an individual submission focusing on our efforts in a number of areas including Science Central, offshore and subsea engineering, Changing Age for Business, Transport and the Digital Economy. Many Court members will be involved in the local consultations and it would be appreciated if they could support the University’s submission.

16. The University and the City Council are working together to build on progress already made with regard to shared services and VAT exemption. In addition, HEFCE and the British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG), want to support the Realising Opportunities programme (chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor) as a pathfinder project and use the knowledge gained as a case study for the sector.

17. The University's bid for funding from the UK Research Partnerships Investment Fund, to build a Research & Development Centre for Sub-sea and Offshore Engineering on the North Bank of the Tyne, was not successful in the first round. However, it would appear that a number of good applications were not funded in this first round, leading to the announcement at the recent Conservative Party Conference that the fund will be increased.

Fraud

18. Along with some other universities, Newcastle University has been a victim of fraud by external operators. Some funds had been frozen in a London branch of a Nigerian bank but the University has still lost a substantial sum.

19. The money must have passed through some UK banks and they should be held to account over their inability to prevent money laundering in this case. It was suggested that the University should send a formal complaint to the Secretary of State for Justice to request Government action to prevent this kind of fraud in future.

20. The University operates within the National Anti-fraud Network and perhaps the Government could be approached via a central view of the cost to institutions of such frauds and how they could be prevented in future.

Finch Report

21. The recent changes arising from the Finch Report on open access to publicly funded research meant that publishers would now receive their revenue from authors not readers. In short universities will increasingly have to pay to get the results of their research published.

22. The Finch Report has implications for copyright issues and related Freedom of Information enquiries. The latter could lead to reputational risks for institutions through early release of research data into the public arena before necessary analysis and follow-up has been carried out.
23. In addition, this data can be interpreted in different ways. For example early publication of research data relating to the sensitive areas of the relationships between alcohol/tobacco and public health could be interpreted in unhelpful ways by brewers and tobacco companies.

24. These new arrangements will affect the careers and academic development of young researchers. While some government funding has been made available to cover publishing charges, this is inadequate and including funding for this purpose in research grant applications has been banned.

25. It may be the case that the onus will be on a doctoral student's supervisor to decide whether work should be published in future.

26. Concern has been expressed in the House of Lords about this issue and the role of the Authors Lending and Collecting Society (ALCS) is being considered. This matter is still pending with a meeting in the House of Lords scheduled for the day after this meeting of Court.

27. There is a dichotomy between the REF request for proof of impact through publication and the prohibitive costs of some of the more prestigious journals.

28. Copyright should not be confused with ownership of data. If ownership of data was attached to personnel rather than institutions, this might make it more difficult for FOI requests to be successful.

**Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014**

29. We are one year away from the submission date for the Research Excellence Framework 2014. It has been confirmed that the University’s ‘Code of Practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for submission for the REF 2014’ meets the requirements and guidance published by HEFCE.

**National Student Survey**

30. The recent results of the National Student Survey (NSS) 2012 indicated some positive results for the University. Our overall satisfaction score remains static at 89% and the University is working hard to achieve an overall score of 90%.

31. This was the first year that the quality of Students’ Unions was included in the survey. Newcastle’s Union scored 76% against a Russell Group average of 68%. The Union’s long-term aim is a 90% rating, which only Sheffield and Leeds achieved in this survey.

**A-levels**

32. The Secretary of State’s request for universities to be involved in the setting and oversight of A-levels had met with a lukewarm response from the sector. While the standard of A-level applicants for places in universities is obviously important to their applicant institutions, not all A-level students want to go on to higher education and the needs of the latter still need to be considered.

**Business School**

33. The new Director of the Business School, Professor John Wilson, formerly Professor of Strategy in the Management School at Liverpool University, will take up his post on 12 November 2012.

**British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) table 2011/12**

34. The University's 10th place in the final BUCS table for 2011/12 was our best performance to date and puts us in fifth position in terms of our Russell Group comparators.
Sustainability

35. The University’s achievement of an EcoCampus Platinum award demonstrates a commitment towards reducing its environmental impact and fully integrating sustainability in all of its day to day activities and services.

University Estate

36. The potentially costly programme of works to buildings, drainage and landscaping following the recent floods is progressing. The difficulty of mitigating risks due to the freak nature of the weather conditions was emphasised.

British Science Festival

37. Planning for the 2013 British Science Festival, for which the University is lead host, is progressing well, with a high level of interest and enthusiasm being shown by local business leaders.

Fairness Commission

38. Members were encouraged to read and consider within the context of their own areas, the Fairness Commission Report, copies of which were available at the meeting, and on request from yvonne.lee@ncl.ac.uk. This is an important joint initiative with Newcastle City Council and ties in with the University’s Third Societal Challenge Theme, Social Renewal. The Vice-Chancellor’s approach as Chair was commended.

N8

39. Under the Chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor, the N8 Research Partnership has been working on a project funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), to look at the possibility of asset sharing among the partner universities. Opportunities have been identified for sharing of research equipment in addition to training and recruitment of world class research talent, new and novel research ideas, and the development of leading-edge equipment through strategic relationships with technology manufacturers and suppliers.

Resolved:

That consideration should be given to inviting Alan Milburn to a future meeting of Court to consider and discuss the outcomes of his report on social mobility.

4. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S QUESTIONS

Received from Lord Judd:

"Request for an update on access, overseas student numbers and on geothermal developments."

Received from Mr Mark Scrimshaw:

"The merger of Manchester Victoria University and UMIST in 2004 gave Manchester an enormous boost, financially and academically. What does the VC believe are the chances of a similar merger with other local institutions, perhaps city or even region-wide, and what benefits and problems does he think such a merger could bring?"

Noted:

That a response regarding access and overseas student numbers was included in Document D above and the supplement tabled at the meeting.
Received:

(a) A progress report on geothermal exploration at Science Central.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document E]

(b) An oral response from the Vice-Chancellor to Mr Scrimshaw’s question.

Noted that:

1. The existing geothermal borehole has served its purpose as an exploration hole. Initial indications suggest that there is not enough heat to generate power but it may be possible to include the cost of further exploration in the Science Central planning with a view to heating buildings.

2. Lord Judd had brought this work to the attention of Lord Marland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. Government interest in the project was confirmed and Lord Judd was thanked for bringing this matter to the Government’s attention.

3. The Manchester merger was atypical of the sector as a whole and came about due to specific factors such as close proximity and well-matched institutions.

4. Merger discussions have decreased while alliance discussions have increased.

5. This University is part of two ongoing alliances: The Angel Alliance with the University of Durham and the N8 alliance with other regional institutions.

6. Parity of esteem indicators and public perception of the reputations of similar institutions will always be key to possible future mergers.

5. LEGACY GIVING : THE WORK OF THE ARMSTRONG CIRCLE

Reported that Mr James Johnston, Development Manager, was attending the meeting and would speak to this item along with Jack Jeffery, President of the Armstrong Circle.

Received:

A report from the Development and Alumni Relations Office on the work of the Armstrong Circle.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document F]

After noting that:

1. The Armstrong Circle, named in recognition of our original benefactor and Armstrong College, was launched three and a half years ago to build on the existing benefits the University has received from charitable bequests.

2. The Vice-Chancellor and other senior members of the University have been supportive and while progress has been relatively slow there is good long-term potential to increase the number of pledges to the University.

3. Legacy giving is considered important by other Russell Group institutions, particularly those with medical schools. Past benefactions have established posts and supported undergraduate and postgraduate students.

4. Formerly members of the public and University staff have been benefactors and Press Office coverage has lead to support for future legacy giving.
5. The University has current pledges worth £5.2M. We follow correct procedures to effectively manage bequests and have benefited from the legal advice of Neil Braithwaite, lay member of Council.

6. Legacy benefactions enable the University to do important research work as with, for example, the Rhoda Lockhart Bequest to support research into Parkinson’s Disease, and have lead to success in certain areas, for example, the Robinson bequest to the Library.

7. Several members of Court are already members of the Armstrong Circle.

8. It was important to maintain an archive of important benefactions, such as that from William Leech, who was a former patient of Lord Walton. We need to acknowledge the major benefactors of the past such as Catherine Cookson and Lionel and Ruth Jacobson, alongside attracting and nurturing the benefactors of tomorrow.

9. Development Trust reports have recorded such donations in the past and the most recent gifts are stored in the Development and Alumni Relations Database.

10. Any member of Court interested in joining the Armstrong Circle could get further details from James Johnston or Jack Jeffery.

Resolved:

That Mr Jeffery and Mr Johnston be thanked for their report to Court.

6. SOCIAL RENEWAL

To report that this is the launch year for the University’s Third Societal Challenge Theme of ‘Social Renewal’.

Received:

(a) A briefing paper on the Social Renewal Societal Challenge Theme.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document G]

(b) A presentation from Professor Mark Shucksmith, Director of the Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal, on the above (the presentation slides are appended to these Minutes).

After noting that:

1. The main thrust of the Social Renewal theme is to ask the question ‘how can people, communities and societies thrive in times of rapid, transformational change?’.

2. This and the other Societal Challenge Themes all represent the University’s delivery of its promise to be a world-class civic university by putting our community of scholars at the disposal of society locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. We have a disciplined approach to this in terms of our three faculty-led themes and sub-themes.

3. Martin Luther King, on receiving his Honorary Doctorate from Newcastle University in 1967, highlighted in his speech three issues which are still relevant to Social Renewal: racism, poverty and war. At a recent memorial lecture an associate of Dr King, Dr Gerald Durley highlighted injustice as something Dr King would see as a “Big Question” facing society today.

4. An example of injustice was illustrated by a map of the Tyne and Wear Metro system showing the differences in life expectancy in different areas. The University is working with the NHS, together with the community and voluntary sectors to see how we can help to address this.
5. Similarly an EU map showing discrepancies in GDP per capita was also shown to highlight injustice. The underlying issues of class, race, gender and power contribute to the discrepancies and we have academic expertise in all of these areas.

6. In today’s financially challenged times the question of how to build prosperity while ensuring social justice can be answered through banking regulation and academics in our Business and Law Schools can address this through their teaching and research work.

7. The principles of fairness in budget setting are crucial and the previously referred to Fairness Commission links to this. The City Council sees the University’s related Social Renewal work as vital in helping with the Council’s aim to tackle inequality by providing work and decent neighbourhoods for all. This partnership between the University and the City is a potentially ground-breaking agenda with national and international implications and the knowledge and expertise of Court members from different sectors is an important resource.

8. It was confirmed that Social Renewal is core to the philosophy of the Hammersmith and Fulham Borough Council, where they are working on, for example, free schools and socially mixed housing. Information could usefully be exchanged between the Council and the Institute for Social Renewal.

9. There is a role for the creative arts in regeneration and the University again has expertise to offer in this area. The work of the Samling Foundation, which is based in Hexham, was highlighted. The charity will shortly be providing master classes to students at both Newcastle and Durham Universities.

10. The University’s continuing engagement with the local and wider community through the Great North Building project, our Public Lectures series, James Timpson’s work with the Business School on how to get young offenders involved in enterprise, were all highlighted as examples of bringing our academic rigour, experience and knowledge to bear in partnership on societal issues.

11. The next phase of the Social Renewal theme will be to focus resources to prioritise specific areas.

12. Court members can help as they play a vital role as a channel of communication between the University and the wider community.

13. The key themes of Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation should provide the focus for the work of the Institute and it was confirmed that Professor Shucksmith will be identifying theme champions to lead on the development of each area.

14. It was important to make the work of the Institute available to more than just the University community and local stakeholders. It was confirmed that in the area of Digital Creativity the University is a member of an Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Knowledge Exchange Hub, which links to the University of Lancaster and the Royal College of Arts. The Hub is developing digital projects with a large number of organisations.

15. It would be important to engage with the many high quality individuals who work in the voluntary sector and who could offer crucial collaborative input to the University’s Social Renewal agenda. Professor Shucksmith confirmed that he has already been working with the voluntary sector for some time, for example though his membership of a Steering Group on Poverty in Newcastle.

16. The importance of the “Pro-business against Greed” campaign, which focuses on business ethics, was highlighted. This issue is not debated enough in universities and it is vital to get students to consider ethics during their preparation for their future careers. An ethical module for all programmes was considered important.
17. The role of students in particular and how they engage with the societal challenge themes was considered crucial to the success of this agenda. It was confirmed that Social Renewal will be part of Learning and Teaching at the University and that students have already begun to engage through, for example, the Street Law Project, which aims to work with children and young people in the region to educate, engage and encourage participation in issues surrounding children’s law and children’s rights.

18. ‘ACTION 2012: Social Renewal’ also demonstrated the University’s view that Societal Challenge Themes were total University activities. It was open to all early career researchers (students and staff) across Newcastle University who will work collaboratively in teams to demonstrate ground-breaking ideas in engineering and physical sciences in support of social renewal.

19. It was confirmed that the Students’ Union were committed to encouraging students to engage with Societal Challenge Themes. Student Community Action Newcastle (SCAN) already did a lot of important work and should be integrated with the themes.

20. All members were encouraged to get involved with Social Renewal and the other Societal Challenge Themes, through comment, interaction and engagement.

7. **MEMBERSHIP OF COURT STEERING COMMITTEE**

Reported that:

(a) The membership of Court Steering Committee for 2012-13 is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Observers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sir Peter Carr</td>
<td>Professor E Ritchie</td>
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<td>(Chairman)</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
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<td>Mr J Jeffery</td>
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<td>Mr Richard Maudslay</td>
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<td>Professor Chris Brink</td>
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<td>Mr Mark I’Anson</td>
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8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Noted that:

1. Minutes of meetings should be circulated electronically as soon as possible after meetings.

2. Two-year degrees were an important issue on which the Russell Group should take a leading position and it would be useful to have a debate on this topic at a future meeting of Court.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Reported that:

(a) The next meeting of Court will take place at 10.30am on Friday 10 May 2013 in King’s Gate, Level 5, Room L513&15.

(b) That Court Steering Committee has agreed that a presentation on the University’s Joint Venture with INTO should be the main item on this agenda.
Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal
Engaging, Shaping and Building Momentum

How can people, communities and societies thrive in times of rapid, transformational change?

www.newcastle.ac.uk/socialrenewal
We must ask not just what the University is good at, but what it is good for.

Putting academic knowledge, creativity and expertise to work to help make a difference to real-world challenges.

Delivering benefits to society as a whole (Local, regional, national, global)

These are our 3 societal challenges:

- Changing Age
- Sustainability
- Social renewal
What are the Big Questions?

In his 1967 speech at Newcastle University, Martin Luther King spoke of his three priorities:

- Racism
- Poverty
- War

What would he see as the Big Questions facing society now?

This month in the King’s Hall, his associate, Dr Gerald Durley highlighted just one – **Injustice**.
What are the dimensions of injustice?

Healthy life expectancy?
What are the dimensions of injustice?

GDP per capita?
What are the dimensions of injustice?

Class, Race, Gender, Power?
How to build prosperity while also pursuing goals of social justice?
What principles of fairness should guide policies when budgets are tight?
How can localism be made to work in urban and rural areas?
How can our heritage help us move forward? How can the past inform the present?
How can young people thrive during and after the economic downturn?
Expertise at Newcastle University

ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

LOCAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

ARTS AND CULTURE
Expertise at Newcastle University

CITIES AND PLACEMAKING

Making Better Places
The Planning Project in the Twenty-First Century
Patsy Healey

Cities Under Siege
The New Military Urbanism
Stephen Graham

Collaborative Planning
Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies
Patsy Healey

CULTURE & HERITAGE

CITIES UNDER SIEGE

HEALTH & SOCIETY

A Sociology of FAMILY LIFE
Change and Diversity in Intimate Relations
Deborah Chambers

SOCIAL JUSTICE

social divisions
second edition
edited by geoff payne
Launch Year
Launch Year
Newcastle Fairness Commission

• Newcastle City Council set up the Fairness Commission in summer 2011.
• The Council asked how they could take fair decisions about planning and resource allocation in times of austerity, knowing that they would face cuts, but concerned about inequalities in Newcastle society.
• Chaired by Professor Chris Brink.
• Sets out a strong set of principles about how the concept of fairness can be given practical effect in Newcastle.

For details see: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/socialrenewal/fairnesscommission/
How can people, communities and societies thrive in times of rapid, transformational change?
Court’s role?

Court plays a vital role as a channel of communication between the University and the wider community. This is crucial if Newcastle University is to succeed as a ‘Civic University’.

We would welcome any suggestions of how to make the most of your expertise, experience and networks.

socialrenewal@ncl.ac.uk

www.ncl.ac.uk/socialrenewal