NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

SENATE

15 November 2016

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair), Professor Tony Stevenson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Professor Julie Sanders, Professor Phillip Wright, Professor Nick Wright (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Dr Phil Ansell, Professor Caroline Austin, Dr John Appleby, Professor Jane Calvert (Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Medical Sciences), Professor Paul Christensen, Professor Nicola Curtin, Mr Mike Davison, Dr Stuart Dawley, Mr Christopher Duddy (Education Officer, Students’ Union), Dr Lindsey Ferrie, Dr Emma Foster, Dr Ruth Graham, Professor Nigel Harkness, Dr Joan Harvey, Professor Peter Jorgensen, Miss Rachael Kitching (Welfare & Equality Officer, Students’ Union), Dr Sara Maioli, Professor Patrick Olivier, Dr Lindsay Pennington, Professor Jane Pollard, Professor Jackie Scully, Mr Patrick Rosichuk (Student Representative) and Mr Jack Taylor, (President, Students’ Union).

In attendance: Mrs Lesley Braiden (Academic Registrar), Professor Eric Cross (Dean of Cultural Affairs), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Mrs Louise Edwards-Holland (Acting Director of Human Resources), and Mrs Lizzie Taylor (Executive Officer, Governance).

Apologies: Mr Wayne Connolly, Mr Richard Dale, Professor Richard Davies, Professor Chris Day, Professor Klaus Schoefer, Professor Chris Seal and Dr Ruth Valentine.

Mr Simon Gerry, Chief Executive Students’ Union, attended for Minute 33.

MINUTES

23. MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that this would be the last meeting for Professor Chris Brink, Vice-Chancellor, who would be retiring from the University on 31 December 2016.

On behalf of Senate, Professor Tony Stevenson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, recorded his thanks to the Vice-Chancellor for his signification contribution to the work of the University over the past nine years.

24. MINUTES

Noted that:

1. Two members of Senate suggested that Minute 7 – Science and Engineering Excellence Project – Academic Restructuring – left an overly positive impression of the discussion of this item at the previous meeting. In particular, it was considered that the minute did not adequately reflect issues around the effectiveness of the consultation process undertaken.

2. The question had been raised at the previous meeting as to whether or not longer established members of staff had been adequately consulted. One member of Senate, who considered himself to fit that description, confirmed that, in his opinion, suitable opportunities had been provided. A consultation process had been undertaken across the Faculty in which hundreds of staff had participated.
Senate, 15 November 2016

3. Reassurance had been requested at the previous meeting that there would be no compulsory redundancies yet this information was not contained within the minutes. It was confirmed that no compulsory redundancies were envisaged.

4. With regards to Minute 11 – Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions for 2016 Entry – it was requested that point 4 should be reworded as follows:

‘As a result of its strategy, the University had been identified by the Times Higher Education Good University Guide as the easiest Russell Group university to get into to get an offer from.

Subject to the corrections and clarifications noted above, the Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 4 October 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed.

25. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Effectiveness of Senate (Minute 3.2, 04.10.16)

Date of meeting: 4 October 2016

Item: Membership of Senate Committees and Special Interest Groups

Action: Members of Senate interested in becoming a member of one of the four Committees of Senate and the two Special Interest Groups were invited to submit expressions of interest to the Registrar by 28 October 2016. In the event that more than one expression of interest was received for a committee it was agreed that Senate would decide on its representative at the meeting on 15 November 2016.

Status: To receive a paper from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, setting out the expressions of interest received.

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

Noted that:

1. More than one member of Senate had expressed an interest in becoming a member of University Research Committee and University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee and it was therefore necessary for Senate to decide on its representative on these two committees.

2. No expressions of interest had been received for the Rankings and Reputation Special Interest Group. One member of Senate had previously expressed an interest but had subsequently withdrawn. It was thought that this individual might still be interested if there was no one else who was willing. It was agreed that this would be followed up.

Resolved that:

(i) Dr Joan Harvey be appointed as a member of University Engagement Committee nem com;

(ii) Professor Nigel Harkness be appointed as a member of University Internationalisation Committee nem com;

(iii) Professor Nicola Curtin be appointed as a member of the Science City Special Interest Group nem com;
(iv) Following a ballot conducted at the meeting, the following members of Senate be appointed to University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC) and University Research Committee (URC):

- ULTSEC – Dr Phil Ansell
- URC – Professor Caroline Austin

(v) The period of appointments in all cases listed above, should match each individual’s membership of Senate.

26. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

Received the Vice-Chancellor’s report.

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

Noted:

1. Deaths

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

Senate was informed of the following additional death:

11 November 2016 Emeritus Professor Roy Storer. Professor Storer was appointed Chair of Dental Prosthetics in 1968. He then progressed to Dean of Dentistry in 1977, and continued in this role until his retirement, in 1992.

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

2. It was reported that Professor Roger Barton, Provost and CEO of NUMed, had been awarded Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Educators, and Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, the highest awards in both UK medical and academic education. Senate recorded its congratulations to Professor Barton on these significant achievements.

3. A working group was to be established to respond to a report recently published by Universities UK entitled ‘Changing the Culture’ which addressed the issue of violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students. The sabbatical officers requested that student representatives should be invited to participate in this working group and it was agreed that this could be arranged.

4. The Vice-Chancellor noted that, following the outcome of the EU Referendum, the outcome of the US election had contributed to a further increase in uncertainty in the international landscape. It was considered that Higher Education was one of the sectors where an international outlook was essential. The emerging anti-expert culture and the lack of trust in evidence-based rational argument that it suggested, was also considered to represent a challenge to the sector.

5. Reports from Committees of Senate

University Research Committee (URC) – Professor Nick Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation:
Senate, 15 November 2016

URC had met on two occasions since the previous meeting of Senate.

URC had been advised that HEFCE would be publishing recommendations regarding the shape of the post-2014 REF in November following which there would be a fourteen week consultation period for HEIs.

URC had considered Research Council UK success rates, as ranked by the *Times Higher Education*. For 2015/16 Newcastle University had been ranked 13th overall by award value and 18th by number of awards. Efforts were to be made to encourage staff to increase the number of submissions to the research councils where the success rate was high but the submission rate was low.

A number of Research Centres were approved/re-approved and these would be forwarded to Senate at its meeting on 24 January 2016.

URC had considered a bid that had been prepared for HEIF funding which it was hoped would be approved for submission in January.

At the November meeting the issue of internal quality assessment and external quality assessment had been considered and a paper on this would be prepared for presentation to Senate in due course.

The costings for the Research Support review had been considered and a working group was to be established to consider this issue further. The IT systems provided within the University were also discussed.

**University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) – Professor Eric Cross, Dean of Cultural Affairs, on behalf of Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Internationalisation and Engagement:**

A re-evaluation of the University’s institutional level partnerships had been undertaken resulting in a long list of around 17 partnerships categorised as either ‘developmental’ or ‘productive’. The final list would provide key information to help focus financial resources, time and travel. This list of international institutional partners would be re-evaluated regularly.

A multi-functional international travel calendar was now available on the internal webpages which was intended to provide a more coordinated approach for travel by faculties, Executive Board, advancement office and international recruitment and relations teams.

UIC had discussed an ambassadorial programme for staff to provide opportunities to raise the profile of the University. An update on this would be provided to a future meeting of Senate.

Following Senate’s approval of the strategy for NUIS in Singapore in November 2015, the development of new space for a range of activities including the provision of CPD, masters courses and research is to be progressed with a view to completion by mid-2017. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Internationalisation and Engagement had visited Singapore in October 2016 to view the space that the research centre would occupy.

UIC was informed of two new working groups that had been established: one that would focus on identifying steps that could be taken to improve the University’s world reputation and ranking, and a second that would re-evaluate how the University could continue to attract international students to the University. Both working groups included representation from the three faculties.
University Engagement Committee (UEC) – Professor Eric Cross, Dean of Cultural Affairs, on behalf Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Internationalisation and Engagement:

Senate was informed that the 50th anniversary celebrations for Dr King’s Honorary Degree at Newcastle University had progressed significantly in recent months. 18 projects had been confirmed as part of the University programme and all of the large cultural venues in the city were working to deliver work as part of the celebrations including Baltic, Live Theatre, Seven Stories, Northern Stage and Sage Gateshead. The project had recently been awarded £600k from Arts Council England’s Ambition for Excellence fund, this would enable a city wide engagement programme culminating in a mass participation event on the quayside and enable partners Northern Roots to deliver a three year programme to support diverse employability in the creative industries.

The Freedom City 2017 programme had been launched on 11 November 2016 to coincide with the 49th anniversary of Dr King’s visit. An invited audience of local stakeholders was treated to performances from The Crossings Band, Voices of Virtue Gospel Choir and children from Christ Church CofE Primary School. Speakers included academics from both Newcastle and Northumbria and personal reflections from Chi Onwurah MP.

In relation to business engagement, a new visual identify and toolkit had been launched which was designed to support academics when working with industry. The Policy Academy was launched on 5th October which sought to inform local, national and international policy which affects contemporary societal issues, through knowledge exchange and communication of the University’s research. The University was continuing to develop its strategy in relation to how it engaged with the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.

27. KPI SUMMARY REPORT

Received a Summary Report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Executive Board, which is submitted to Senate for review on an annual basis. [Circulated with the agenda as Document D. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

28. SUMMARY REPORT FROM COUNCIL, 31 OCTOBER 2016

Received a summary report from the meeting of Council that took place on 31 October 2016. [Circulated with the agenda as Document E. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

29. TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

Received a report from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning & Teaching, on behalf of Executive Board. [Circulated with the agenda as Document F. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The University had passed TEF Year One on the basis of its successful QAA Higher Education Review in April 2016. It was now necessary to consider whether the University should participate in TEF Two.

2. Following review of the core metrics to be used in TEF Two (as set out in Document E) it had been determined that the University was likely to be awarded at least a Silver rating. There was a possibility that a Gold might be awarded depending on the Assessors’ and TEF Panel’s evaluation of the University’s submission. It was considered likely that the majority of other Russell Group institutions would receive Silver.
3. If it was decided not to participate or performance in the TEF was poor, the University would be prevented from raising fees in line with inflation which would have a significant impact on fee income in the longer term.

4. Participating in TEF Two and achieving an outcome of Silver or Bronze, which would last for three years, would mean that it would not be necessary to participate again until 2018-19, allowing the University to make an informed choice in advance of participation in the subject level TEF in 2019-20.

5. If it was decided to participate, the University's submission would need to be completed prior to the next meeting of Senate. A steering group had been established to develop the University's response to the TEF and Senate's approval of this approach was requested. Furthermore, it was requested that the Vice-Chancellor should be granted delegated authority to approve the Provider Submission by Chair's Action, on behalf of Senate.

6. In terms of the panel of the University's TEF data (Annex 1 of Document F), it was suggested that investigations should be undertaken to determine why part time students were significantly less satisfied with the academic support they received (56.7%) compared with full time students (85.8%). The University does, though, have a very small number of part-time undergraduates.

7. It was considered that, whilst there could be negative consequences for the University if it were to perform poorly in the TEF, the consequences of not participating were thought to be even greater.

8. It was noted that the NUS was attempting to organise a student boycott of the National Student Survey but the Department for Education had confirmed that no institution would be disadvantaged in the TEF if its students did not participate in the NSS. It was noted that NUSU did not support the boycott of the NSS.

Resolved that:

(i) Senate approve the recommendation from Executive Board that the University should participate in TEF Two;

(ii) The steering group established by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching be granted authority to develop the University's response to the TEF;

(iii) The Vice-Chancellor be granted delegated authority to approve the Provider Submission by Chair's Action, on behalf of Senate.

30. SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE PROJECT UPDATE

Received a report from Professor Phillip Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Science, Agriculture and Engineering, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. Further to concerns expressed at the previous meeting, it was confirmed that there was no intention to change the name of the Faculty from Science, Agriculture and Engineering. The names of the new academic units were yet to be determined.

2. It was hoped to commence the process for recruiting the Heads of the Academic Units before the end of the week. This would involve advertising internally in the first instance
across the whole of the University. Individuals with relevant expertise both within and outside of the Faculty of SAgE would be encouraged to apply.

3. A risk register for the project had now been prepared. It was noted that the net scores for many of the risks remained high but this represented the fact that, whilst risk controls had been identified, many of them had yet to be implemented.

4. In light of the comments raised under Minute 24, Senate was invited to suggest what more could be done to improve the consultation process. In response it was suggested that it would be helpful if steps were taken to demonstrate the effectiveness of the consultation process. For example, where a specific comment or observation was made, details of the actions that had been taken in response should be provided. It would also be helpful to demonstrate how individuals with diverse opinions had been included.

5. Further detail on the process that would be used to determine where academic staff would be located was requested. In response it was noted that this was still to be determined. In tandem with this it was necessary to develop the strategy for the estate.

6. A request was made for a detailed business plan, including costings and timescales, to be submitted to Senate for approval. In response it was noted that detail of the secondary structures that were to be established would be prepared and submitted to Senate for approval.

31. DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

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

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

Noted that:

1. From April 2017 the University, along with all large employers would be required to pay an Apprenticeship Levy. For the University, the estimated cost of this levy would be £1.1m. It was necessary to determine how the University could obtain a return on this levy.

2. Consideration was being given to developing a framework approach for degree apprenticeships to be offered across the University. It was noted that involvement in degree apprenticeships could be used to highlight the University’s civic role.

3. An important next step was for the University to be added to the register of training providers and this would be progressed. Degree apprentices was an employer-led agenda and a number of individuals were involved in discussions with employers with existing links to the University. It was suggested that steps should also be taken to identify existing degrees that could be converted into degree apprenticeships.

Resolved that Senate confirm that it was content with the direction of travel proposed in relation to Degree Apprenticeships, as set out in Document H.

32. REPORT FROM HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE

Considered a report from the Honorary Degrees Committee.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents J. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

After a vote on a motion ‘that the list be approved’, which was approved nem.con,
Resolved that the nominations made by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the award of honorary degrees in July 2017 be approved.

[Note: Senators were reminded of the continued confidential classification of the report until further notice.]

33. APPOINTMENT OF A PUBLIC ORATOR

Received an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor and Dr Phil Ansell, on behalf of Honorary Degrees Committee, regarding the appointment of a Public Orator.

Noted that:

1. A sub-committee of Honorary Degree Committee had been constituted to interview three candidates who had put themselves forward to be considered for the position of Public Orator.

2. The sub-committee recommended the appointment of Professor Selina Stead, Professor of Marine Governance and Environmental Sciences, School of Marine Sciences, as the University’s third Public Orator.

Resolved that Senate approve the appointment of Professor Selina Stead as Public Orator with immediate effect until 31 July 2019.

34. STUDENTS’ UNION IMPACT REPORT

Received:

(a) The Students’ Union Impact Report 2015-16
   [Circulated with the agenda as Document K. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

(b) A PowerPoint presentation from Mr Jack Taylor, Students’ Union President, and Mr Simon Gerry, Chief Executive, Students’ Union.
   [Copy of slides filed in the Minute Book]

Noted that:

1. The sabbatical officers were thanked for the role they had played in assisting with the transition of the School Medicine, Pharmacy and Health from Durham University to Newcastle University.

2. Further information was requested about the likely impact of NUSU’s disaffiliation from the NUS. In response it was noted that whilst it might affect NUSU’s ability to lobby on national issues, students had expressed concerns about the poor culture that was currently prevailing within the NUS and they felt that their views were not being adequately represented.

Resolved that Mr Jack Taylor and Mr Simon Gerry be thanked for their succinct, clear and informative presentation.

35. PREVENT REQUIREMENTS

Received a report from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.
   [Circulated with the agenda as Document L. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:
1. At its meeting on 31 October 2016, Council had approved the Faith Space Policy that HEFCE had required the University to prepare. Council had requested that Senate should be asked to consider and endorse the policy prior to its submission to HEFCE.

2. The faith space manager for the Muslim Prayer Space was stated as the President of the Islamic Society and the appropriateness of allocating this role to a student was questioned. In response, it was noted that this had been identified as a potential issue and work was underway with the University’s Chaplaincy to identify an alternative solution.

3. It was requested that the reference to the ‘Sabbatical Events Officer’ on page 3 of the annual report should be amended to ‘Sabbatical Activities Officer’.

   Resolved that the Faith Space Policy, as set out in Appendix 2 of Document L, be endorsed for submission to HEFCE.

36. REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Received:

(a) A report from the meeting of ULTSEC held on 19 October 2016.
(b) The revised Terms of Reference for University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.
   [Circulated with the agenda as Documents M & N. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that a consultation exercise on possible changes to the University Regulations had identified a lack of differentiation between good candidates in the University’s present classification system. A suggestion had been made that the University could consider offering starred firsts but there was also considered to be a need to differentiate between high, medium and low 2:1 degrees. It was noted that this linked to previous discussions that had taken place at Senate around the need to provide degree transcripts.

   Resolved that the revised terms of reference for University, Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee as set out in Document N be approved.

37. ACADEMIC DISTINCTIONS – TITLE OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS

Reported that, in accordance with Statute 29(4), Senate may accord the title of Professor Emeritus on professors retiring from the University.

Considered a proposal from the Vice-Chancellor following consultation with the relevant faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, for the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus.
   [Circulated with the agenda as Document O. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

   Resolved that the title of Professor Emeritus be conferred on:
   
   Professor Estaban Castro with immediate effect
   Professor David (Herbie) Newell with immediate effect

38. UPDATE ON GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

Received a progress report on the implementation of the Governance Review 2015 recommendations from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.
39. **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.

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