

THE FORTY-NINTH ORDINARY MEETING OF CONVOCATION

HELD ON SATURDAY 3RD JUNE 2006, 11AM, HERSCHEL BUILDING

MINUTES

Present:

Professor John Anderson, Ms Joan Andrews, Mr Neal Atkinson, Dr S Beckensall, Mrs Marian Bridgewood, Dr Keith Broomfield, Dr Ann Brown, Dr Hugh Brown, Dr Phillip Brown, Mr Alan Chisholm, Mr Alan Chisholm, Mr Peter Cobbett, Mr Paul Coxon, Dr Helen Coyne, Dr Phillip Coyne, Mr Keith Crofton-Martin, Mrs M Crofton-Martin, Mr Roy Dean, Mrs Hilary Dixon, Mrs Elsie Earnshaw, Mr Desmond Fitzpatrick, Mrs Sylvia Fletcher, Mr Ian Forster, Dr Donald Gascoigne, Mrs Patsy Gascoigne, Ms Cathryn Harvey, Professor Heptinstall, Mrs Wendy Hunter, Mr Alan Jarvis, Mr Jack Jeffery (Chairman of Convocation), Mr Antony Jones, Mrs Pamela Leckie, Mr Doug Leckie, Mrs May Lewis-Meikle, Mr Donald Lloyd, Mrs Anne Lloyd, Ms Susan Lumley, Ms Rosalyn Mawson, Mr John McGregor, Professor Peter Meisner, Dr Eileen Miller, Mr Liadi Mudashiru, Emeritus Professor Pavel Novak, Mr Bill Oliver, Mr William Parker, Dr Margaret Partridge, Mr John Percy, Mrs Pat Percy, Mrs Meriol Penn, Mrs Judith Penny, Mr Dominic Pinto, Mrs Pamela Raper, Mrs Carolyn Ray, Mr Horace Regnart, Mr John Richardson, Col the Rt Hon the Viscount Ridley, Ms Lyn Ritchie, Dr Lorna Rozner, Dr Cedric Scott, Mrs Gwen Scott, Miss Jean Audrey Scott, Mr Mark Scrimshaw, Mr Colin Sherwood, Mr Robert Theaker, Mrs Adele Timlin, Professor Anothony Walton, The Rt Hon Lord Walton, Reverend Robert Wardale, Dr Alice Wynne, Mr Ernest Young, Mrs Elsie Young, Dr Rachid Zemouri, Mrs Bernadette Zemouri

In attendance:

Vice Chancellor Professor Christopher Edwards, Ms Mary Haworth(DARO), Ms Lauren Huntington (DARO), Mr James Johnston (DARO), Ms Jaine Fleetwood (DARO), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Mr Stephen Teal (DARO)

Apologies:

Dr Philip Adams, Mr Peter Alan, Reverend James Ambrose, Miss Emily Bailey, Mr David Baker, Dame Margaret Barbour, Dr Sam Bell, Dr Ursula Bell, Mr Philip Bolam, Dr Anne Boon, Miss Catherine Booth, Mr James Brown, Mr Mark Brown, Dr Christian Brown, Mrs Maria Bulfin, Miss Diane Burke, Dr Alice Burns, Professor Kenneth Calman, Sir Ralph Carr-Ellison, The Rt Hon the Lord Carrington, Dr Ian Chadwick, Sir David Chapman, Ms Joanne Clark, Mr Michael Clasper, Dr Bryan Coleby, Ms Angela Curran, Mrs Edith Curran, Mr Philip Daniels, Miss Lauren Dudley, Dr William Ellis, Mr Timothy Farron, Mr Thomas Ferry, Mr Ruairidh Finlayson, Miss Donna Fisher, Dr Julie Fitzgerald, Mr Richard J Fothergill, Mrs Jane Gamble, Mr Henry Gossman, Mrs Tanni Grey Thompson, Mrs Sarah Gromova, Mr Nicholas Horler, Dr Sarra Jamieson, Mr Simon Jefferson, Emeritus Professor Ivan Johnston, Mrs Margaret Jones, Reverend John Latham, Mrs Rosemary Marsh, Emeritus Proessor Norman McCord, Dr Christine McLean, Ms Lorna Moran, Mr Eric Nixon, Dr Peter Nixon, Mr Anthony Norfolk, Dr Keith Nutter, Mrs Alison Nutter, Mr Simon Olswang, Professor Trevor Page, Professor David Parker, Dr Arthur Penman, Mr Terence

Povey, Dr David Pulman, Ms Fiona Reynolds, Dr John Salkeld, Mr Edward Seymour, Mrs Margaret Shield, Dr Janis Smith, Ms Elma Steele, Mr Francis Sullivan, Mr Ian Symes, Dr David Talbot, Miss Lucy Taylor, Mrs Maureen Taylor, Mrs Wendy Dawley, Miss Lucy Tucker, Mrs Hazel Walkley, Mrs Diane Ward, Mr Frank Ward, Mrs Clair Weston, Mr Philip Williamson, Mrs Katherine Yip, Dr Bryan Yip

The Chairman, Mr Jack Jeffery welcomed the members of convocation to the meeting and thanked them for attending the reunion weekend which he hoped would be as enjoyable and successful as it was last year.

1. MINUTES

Received:

The minutes of the Forty-Eighth Ordinary Meeting of Convocation held on 23rd July 2005 were agreed with one correction – that Viscount Ridley's name was added incorrectly.

2. MATTERS ARISING

a) Encouraging Science and Engineering Applications

Following a question from last year's meeting, the Chairman conveyed a message from Lesley Braiden (Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment). There are now a number of initiatives in place including Master Classes, taster days run by Schools, lectures for schools and colleges, involvement of Faculties and Schools in Summer School activities, and University Visit Days. Many of these have been organised centrally through the Student Recruitment Office, however the Faculty of Sage has also been actively working on this agenda. They have established recruitment groups, developed strategies and plans, and are undertaking market research with teachers and with students who decline offers of a place. Conversion of applicants to acceptances is a high priority, and the Faculty Recruitment Officers are developing a conversion website to help to support this process.

Jack Jeffery added that he was involved in one of these programmes organised by Aidan Doyle in the Institute for Research in Environment & Sustainability.

b) Outreach Work in Schools

Following a question last year, it was reported that a number of initiatives were in place to encourage outreach work into schools, running alongside the nationally-acclaimed PARTNERS Programme. The Library ran its own outreach programme to encourage use by school children, programmes like Excellence in Cities encouraged schools to take part in projects at the University, Institutes and Schools conducted their own outreach work to encourage participation, the University Museums operated nationally-acclaimed schools programmes and field stations such as the Dove Marine Laboratory also run programmes for schools.

c) Title of the Vice-Chancellor's Speech

At the previous meeting it was suggested that the title of the Vice Chancellor's presentation be altered to reflect its content. This has been amended, however any further suggestions would also be welcome.

3. TRANSFORMING EDUCATION: THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ACADEMIC REVIEW AND FORECAST 2006

Received:

The Vice-Chancellor's Statement from the Annual Report of the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne 2004-2005.

The Vice Chancellor spoke of a number of developments which have arisen since the previous meeting of Convocation and which are all contained in the attached presentation. These included:

- A new Student Services building planned at Barras Bridge
- The Internationalisation agenda at Newcastle and its effect on student numbers and income
- Science City update
- The national pay dispute with NATFHE/AUT
- Queen's Anniversary Prize for Community Involvement (Prof Paul Younger)
- Development Council update (The VC thanked Sir Terence Harrison for his support as he stood down as Chair, and welcomed Paul Walker, CEO of SAGE who has now taken his place).

A number of questions followed:

Horace Regnart (LLB 1968) asked whether the AUT and University staff had yet responded to the VC's comments about the proposed pay award.

Vice-Chancellor responded they had not as this is a national dispute and there was no opportunity to determine the level of local support. He pointed out that the Student Unions did not support the strike action.

Judith Penney (BA Hons Geography 1967) asked, in the absence of Mr R Fothergill, what the latest news was regarding the re-branding of the University.

Vice-Chancellor responded that the University Council had accepted 'Newcastle University' as the lingua franca but the formal title would remain 'University of Newcastle upon Tyne'. A new logo would be in use across the University in the next few days, which should help to establish consistency across University publications.

Revd Christopher Wardale (BA Hons Fine Art 1969; MA App Theology 1993) asked about the other areas of the University, apart from Science and Business.

Vice-Chancellor responded that he had just chosen to focus on science and business for this particular meeting. In fact over 50% of our students are in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and the investment in the University's Cultural Quarter with Culture Lab and the Great North Museum highlights the great importance of this area, amongst others.

Ian Forster (BA Geography 1955; Dip Ed 1956) asked whether there were plans to co-operate with Northumbria University.

Vice Chancellor responded that discussions have taken place but that it should be remembered that Northumbria is a very different type of University. However, Northumbria's focus on Design (a graduate from Northumbria having designed the I-pod) will strongly complement Newcastle's science initiatives such as Science City in particular. The Universities do work together on many projects.

Jack Jeffery gave an example of this collaboration with the work on aging. The Vice-Chancellor stated that the Universities will continue to work together but will not join as one institution.

Rt Hon Lord Walton (MBBS 1945; MD 1952; DSc 1972; Hon DCL 1988) asked how much overseas investment there had been into Science at Newcastle and how much income had the University made from Science spin-outs.

Vice-Chancellor responded that the Framework 6 EU budget alone had brought €34m to Newcastle University and that Science City hoped to encourage a number of science-based industries to the North East. He commented on the current lack of multi-national companies with headquarters in the region but added that Science city was opening up this kind of dialogue, for example through Paul Walker with IBM.

Antony Jones asked whether Newcastle University students would be disadvantaged in comparison to students from other Universities by the strike action referred to earlier.

Vice Chancellor responded that all but two exams had gone ahead to date and every effort had been made to ensure that there was no irrevocable damage to final year students in particular.

Antony Jones (BA Hons Politics 1980) proposed a motion for Convocation to support the University's attempts at a quick resolution of this matter.

Laura Rozner (MBBS 1947; Dip Pub Health 1951) seconded the motion, although also indicated support for the staff being underpaid.

Mark Scrimshaw (BA Hons History 1976) supported the suggestion, although felt it was important not to show support for either side.

It was therefore suggested that Convocation "support the University in finding a quick and effective solution to the pay disputes, in order to avoid any irrevocable damage, particularly to those graduating students".

The motion was passed unanimously.

4. HONORARY DEGREES 2006

Reported:

Jack Jeffery reported that Honorary Degrees had been conferred in 2006 on the following individuals:

DMus Sting

DSc Sir David King

DCL Lord Stevens
DSc Dr Alan Reece
DSc Len Fenwick
DCL Elizabeth Hammill and Mary Briggs

5. HONORARY FELLOWSHIPS

Reported:

Jack Jeffery reported that Honorary Fellowships had been conferred in 2006 on the following individuals:

Reay Atkinson
Jack Jeffery
Florence Mary Kirkby
Derek Edward Thomas Nicholson
Brian Shefton
David Keith Wilson*

*Deceased

6. ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Received:

A verbal report from Chair of the Alumni Association, Mark Scrimshaw.

Mark welcomed new staff to the DARO office- Jane Clubley, John Connolly, Mary Haworth, Lauren Huntington, Maria Szpitun and Stephen Teal.

He highlighted the importance of the new team in bringing new ideas and developments.

Mark reported that the AGM of the ACG had brought several important developments for the future, namely the development of an Alumni Foundation and ideas for further liaison between with ACG and Convocation.

Mark then thanked the students who had worked on the Phonathon and reported that the campaign has raised a total of £215,000. A US phonathon was trialled and raised \$5,500 from 46 donors. A Spring Phonathon had raised £25,000.

Mark mentioned the importance of finding our 'Lost' alumni and asked that everyone present make sure their former classmates were still in touch with the University.

Mark then returned to 2 points from the meeting

- a) the central role of the University in the development of the city, in particular highlighting the Great North Museum Project, Science City and the Sage
- b) The World Summit on Culture and Arts – starting in Newcastle in two weeks. Significant was the fact that Newcastle won the bid over Paris and Seville.

Mark expressed a warm 'Get Well Soon' message on behalf of Convocation to ACG member Wendy Dawley who was unable to make the weekend due to illness.

Mark reminded those present that the University History book was still available for early subscription at reduced rates. Please contact DARO for further information.

John Pearcy (BSc Mining Engineering 1962) took the opportunity to remind local Alumni that the North of England Alumni newsletter was available and that Alumni in the region could join that branch for a small fee each year.

7. AOB

Jack Jeffery thanked the Vice Chancellor for his attendance at the meeting and at the Reunion Weekend event. The next date for convocation will be circulated according to the availability of the next speaker. The meeting closed at 12.40pm.