NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL
11 June 2018

Present: Mr Paul Walker (Chair of Council), Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Caroline Austin, Mr Neil Braithwaite, Professor Nicola Curtin, Mr Mike Davison, Dr Jonathan Galloway, Mr Jonathan Glass, Ms Teresa Graham, Mr Stephen Lightley, Ms Adrienne McFarland, Mr Jeff McIntosh, Dr Sara Maioli, Ms Claire Morgan, Mrs Heidi Mottram (Vice-Chair of Council), Ms Dianne Nelmes, Mr Ronnie Reid (President, Students’ Union), Professor Julie Sanders (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Mr Rowan South (Education Officer, Students’ Union), and Ms Vicky Wright.

In attendance: Dr Colin Campbell (Items 117 and 118), Professor Suzanne Cholerton (Item 119), Professor Richard Davies (Items 117 and 118), Dr Richard Harrison (Item 119), Mr Richard Dale (Executive Director of Finance), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Ms Abi Kelly (Executive Director Corporate Affairs), Mrs Judith Whittaker (Executive Director of Human Resources), and Dr Simon Meacher (Executive Officer (Governance)).

Apologies: Professor Paul Christensen and Sir Michael Rawlins

M I N U T E S

110. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

111. MINUTES

Noted that:

The minutes of the meetings of Council held on 16 April, and the joint meeting of Council and Senate held on 16 April, were approved as a correct record, and signed.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents A and B. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

112. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Gender Pay Gap (Minute 78, 19.02.18)

Noted that:

1. At its meeting on 18 April 2018, Merit Awards Committee had considered pay award recommendations for 120 professors and 8 senior managers. As a result, 26 professors would progress to a higher band (13 female, 13 male). 51.4% of women professors compared with 23.8% of male professors would receive an award.

2. These increases would take effect from August 2018 and would improve the University’s professorial gender pay gap figures. The ultimate size of the gap would depend on a combination of factors, including turnover, recruitment practice, and the national pay award and promotions outcomes. The impact of this year’s Merit Awards Committee review was likely to have a minimal effect on the overall gender pay gap as it affected a relatively small, if significant, group of staff at the top end of the salary range.
3. Significant work had been done on raising awareness of the pay awards process. All Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Faculty Executive Boards, who were responsible for making pay recommendations, had undergone unconscious bias training. Equality analyses had also been provided for the Merit Awards Committee in advance of its deliberations.

4. The University’s Pay Equality Task and Finish Group would report to Executive Board in July with recommendations for further action to maintain progress.

113. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Executive Director of Human Resources gave an oral report on current health and safety issues affecting the University, including performance measures and actions taken.

Noted that:

The University’s Health and Safety five-year strategic plan would be considered at the next meeting of Council.

114. **CHAIR’S BUSINESS**

Noted that:

1. The Chair of Council had attended the Spring 2018 plenary meeting of the Committee of University Chairs, where discussion had taken place on PR and external engagement.

2. Members of Council would be consulted about introducing alternate start times for future meetings.

3. Council expressed its thanks and good wishes to Mr Ronnie Reid and Mr Rowan South who were attending their final meeting of Council before stepping down as President and Education Officer of the Newcastle University Students’ Union.

115. **VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT’S BUSINESS**

Received the Vice-Chancellor and President’s report. Highlights of this report are discussed below.  

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

Noted that:

1. **Universities Superannuation Scheme**

   Talks were continuing nationally to address the USS valuation and benefit proposals. The Joint Expert Panel established to review the 2017 USS valuation was due to report in September 2018.

2. **QS World University Rankings**

   The University had moved up 20 places in the latest QS World University Rankings into the top 150, to 141st from 161st. Newcastle was also placed 119th out of 1,011 institutions for graduating the best students.

3. **Staff Successes**
Professor Muzz Haniffa (Institute of Cellular Medicine) had been awarded a Cell Atlas Award from the Welcome Trust with a total value of £7m, of which £2m would come to Newcastle.

Professor Tracy Palmer, who would join the University’s Faculty of Medical Sciences this summer, had been named as a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) - the world's oldest and most prestigious scientific academy in continuous existence.

4. **Intensive Industrial Innovation Programme**

The Intensive Industrial Innovation Programme (IIIP) would see Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria and Teesside universities work directly with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to develop new services and products for the market. The three-year programme has been funded by £2.2m from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), with additional funding of £1.7m coming from the four partner universities. A total of up to 48 SMEs will each be supported by a dedicated PhD research student, as well as access to senior academic researchers and university research facilities. The project was targeted at priority sectors identified in the economic plans of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and Tees Valley Combined Authority. Sectors include creative, digital, software and technology-based services; healthcare and health innovation; energy; manufacturing and logistics.

5. **Northern Health Science Alliance**

The Northern Health Science Alliance (NHSA) has appointed Professor David Burn, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, Newcastle University, as its new Chair-elect. The NHSA is an alliance of the top Northern research universities, research-intensive NHS teaching hospitals and four Academic Health Science Networks.

6. **Archive Service Accreditation**

Newcastle’s Special Collections and Archives service had been awarded Archive Service Accreditation. The UK-wide quality standard award gives the University's Special Collections and Archives service national recognition for the standard of service it provides and places it amongst other accredited archival services including the Natural History Museum and National Portrait Gallery.

7. **Henderson New Hall Demolition**

A £550k budget was agreed to commence the enabling works and carry out demolition of Henderson New Hall, however now tenders have been returned which take into account the quantity and complexity of the asbestos removal required, costs have increased to £1,496k. Financial Monitoring and Budget Scrutiny Group has requested that Council be notified of the increased costs involved in the demolition.

8. **Queen’s Birthday Honours**

A CBE had been awarded to Emeritus Vice-Chancellor Professor Chris Brink for services to Higher Education, to Visiting Professor Colin Herron for services to Business and to the Renewable Energy Sector, and to alumnus and honorary graduate Kate Adie, for services to media. OBEs had been awarded to Professor James Law for services to Speech and Language Therapy and to Public Orator, Professor Dave Jones for services to Liver Disease and Training.

Congratulations were offered to Vice-Chair of Council, Heidi Mottram, who had been awarded a CBE for services to the water industry and business community.
Noted that:

1. It was suggested that it would be advantageous for the University’s alumni network to be actively involved in the Intensive Industrial Innovation Programme.

2. The University was seeking to enhance the diversity of nominations that went forward for honours and awards and welcomed help and advice from interested parties.

116. RISK MANAGEMENT

Received a summary strategic risk register and summary report from Dr John Hogan, Registrar, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. The risk score for SR5C Failure to accurately create, securely manage, securely store data and protect against cyber risks had been amended to include the new General Data Protection Requirements which had replaced the Data Protection Act. Documented policies and procedures to ensure compliance with GDPR including data retention were part of an ongoing project. Mandatory training had been set for all staff to cover this important topic. This represented a big step change for the University and depending upon the success of this trial further mandatory topics for high risk areas (e.g. Information Security) would be considered.

2. The risk score for SR5G Improper conduct of business had been increased to reflect work required on policies following a recent audit report. Compliance with the declarations of interest policy was weak and needed to be improved.

3. The risk score for SR5H Failure to meet home student recruitment targets had again been increased to reflect continued lower than anticipated application numbers. Although there were no clear answers for this, it appeared that the University’s approach to securing home student applications were not as effective as those of its competitors. A working group, including the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Learning and Teaching and Engagement and Internationalisation, as well as staff from recruitment and marketing, was identifying quick fixes for the September 2018 intake. A coherent plan for 2019 recruitment was also being developed.

4. The University had decided against issuing unconditional offers to applicants in an attempt to increase recruitment. It was unclear whether or not there was a correlation between the issuing of unconditional offers and recruitment at competitor institutions which had superior home recruitment figures.

5. Work had commenced on reviewing the University strategic risk register to ensure that it remained relevant to the new strategic vision and objectives.

6. There was concern about the monitoring and level of compliance with University policies. This had been addressed in an Internal Audit report which would be considered by Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee in due course.

117. VISION AND STRATEGY

Received a report from the Vice-Chancellor and President, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document F. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
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Noted that:

1. In the process of developing a supporting strategy for Place, it had become clear that there was significant overlap between the aspirations and priorities in the sections relating to Engagement and Place. This was reflected in discussions at the joint meeting of Senate and Council on 16 April 2018, and was also reflected within faculty planning documents. It was therefore recommended at Executive Board on 24 April 2018 that the Vision and Strategy should be amended to merge the sections on Engagement and Place.

2. Each of the four supporting strategies would be overseen by a committee of Senate, and revised committee names would be recommended for approval by Senate at its meeting on 26 June 2018.

3. The report stated incorrectly that the Vision and Strategy had already been approved. 

Resolved that Council approve the updated Vision and Strategy.

118. ENGAGEMENT AND PLACE

Received a presentation from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Internationalisation, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Executive Board.

Noted that:

1. Through the process of engagement the University sought to address global challenges that society faced through its research and education. It would pay particular attention to the challenges that were being faced in the places in which it operated (e.g. the economy, health and social wellbeing).

2. Place had been central to the University’s mission since the beginnings of the institution as the School of Medicine and Surgery in 1834. The emerging Engagement and Place Strategy would emphasise the role of the University in:
   - Working closely with regional industries and businesses to address their needs.
   - Being an effective partner for local government, the NHS, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and cultural organisations.
   - Improving the social mobility of people from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds by ensuring our education is as widely accessible as possible.
   - Using its global reach to increase the international connectivity of our region and contribute to the vibrancy and cultural richness of our region.
   - Equipping academic and professional staff with the skills to address some of the policy challenges facing local, national and international governments.

3. In terms of widening participation and further increasing the recruitment of local and regionally-based students, the University would be increasing its focus on highlighting its portfolio of education that would be attractive to mature students, supporting the retention and achievement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students, and promoting digital delivery and degree apprenticeships.

4. It was suggested that the University required a small number of signature initiatives to support achievement of its priorities for Engagement and Place that were distinctive. Wellbeing was suggested as a potential overarching theme.

5. The University requires a clear and coherent line on what, as an institution, it does for the city of Newcastle and how it contributes to the economy of the North-East.
6. As a globally inclusive institution, Newcastle aims to empower students to be global in their outlook.

7. It was suggested that the University might consider using alternatives to A levels as entry criteria for local widening participation students, as a means of positively influencing the local qualified workforce. The development of foundation years and involvement in primary education could be vehicles for this.

8. Consideration was being given internally to how to engage staff within the organisation to support delivery of the overall Vision and Strategy, as well as to the brand narrative.

119. EDUCATION STRATEGY

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

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

Noted that:

1. The Education Strategy would be the means through which the education element of the University’s new Vision and Strategy would be implemented. The Strategy was deliberately short in order for it to gain currency and to provide a clear reference point for strategic decision making. No reference was made to external measures as these were highly likely to evolve or change during the lifetime of the Strategy.

2. The Strategy focused on four key themes: research-education links; student engagement with their learning; holistic student development; and technology-enhanced learning. These four key themes had emerged through the extensive consultation undertaken since September 2016 and aim to give the Strategy its distinctiveness. Senate endorsed the Education Strategy at its meeting held on 1 May 2018 and recommended that it be approved by Council.

3. The term education would replace the current phrase ‘learning, teaching and student experience’. This reflected ‘education’ being one of the fundamental purposes of the University as set out in the University’s Statutes. It was also based on education being a broad term that encompassed both the opportunities provided through all academic programmes and those available through extra- and co-curricular provision. As a consequence, the title of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for this portfolio needed to change to Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education.

4. A number of key projects and developments would be undertaken as institution-wide initiatives, in order to promote and facilitate the development of the quality and nature of a Newcastle University education set out in the University Education Strategy. Progress had already been made with a number of these projects, including the Graduate Attributes Framework.

5. Student representatives were supportive of the new Strategy and welcomed its emphasis on student wellbeing. It would be important to maintain low Student: Staff Ratios and continue to improve the physical infrastructure of the University in order to support students in feeling that staff were accessible.

6. Most progress was needed on delivering the University’s commitments to students set out in its Student Employability and Enterprise Strategy, in particular increasing student uptake of the opportunity to undertake a work placement.
7. The success of the Strategy would be judged by improvements in student recruitment and reputation and ranking in terms of teaching quality and student experience.

8. An integrated approach to the health and wellbeing of both students and staff, involving a combined approach from Human Resources and Student Services was important.

Resolved that:

1. **Council approve the Education Strategy.**
2. **Council approve the change of title from Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching to Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education.**

120. **CLAREMONT DAYSH REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT BUSINESS CASE**

Received a report from the Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document H. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Received a PowerPoint presentation from Mr Richard Dale, Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board.
[Copies of PowerPoint slides filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The Claremont/Daysh complex, comprising the Claremont Tower, Claremont Bridge and Daysh Building were now fifty years old and in very poor condition. The buildings were long overdue for refurbishment. Although the building super-structure was sound, the cladding and much of the mechanical and electrical infrastructure was life expired. Thermal efficiency was very poor, and teaching areas were badly designed and had limited social space.

2. Major work had been delayed until the relocation of the School of Computing to the Urban Sciences Building had been completed, and completion of a permanent new home (Black Horse House) for NUIT, as the decant implications would have been unmanageable. However, it was now opportune to start building work and this was seen as the most critical element of the HaSS Faculty estates programme.

3. The preferred option for the project would see Claremont Tower and Claremont Bridge redeveloped in 2018-19 and Daysh Building redeveloped in 2019-20. This had been chosen as the option least detrimental to the student experience. It was envisaged that the redevelopment would extend the life of the building by a minimum of 30 years.

4. The main aims of the project were to:
   - Provide a high quality and innovative teaching and learning environment to support research-led teaching and an outstanding student experience for students in HaSS and from across the University;
   - Deliver a single building which was coherent, navigable and welcoming;
   - Provide stimulating and motivating working environments;
   - Create readily recognisable disciplinary home zones to create collective identity for staff and students and to foster scholarly community;
   - Deliver flexible, engaging office, social and circulation spaces, providing the contact areas required to foster collaborative, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research;
   - Ensure all areas were appropriately digitally enabled;
   - Put sustainability at the heart of the project, improving the energy efficiency of the building in line with the values of the Faculty and the wider University;
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- Ensure that the University’s equality and diversity obligations were achieved, including full accessibility and the provision of gender neutral toilets.

5. The design for the redevelopment included brick re-cladding of the building, replacement of windows and installation of energy efficient systems. Horizontal and vertical connections would be improved to achieve the effect of one building. The removal of asbestos from the building would be a considerable undertaking for which a significant project contingency would be retained.

6. One aspect of the decant would involve structural remedial works in Windsor Terrace to allow the building to be occupied by Sociology for the duration of the project. In common with much of the expenditure on the decant, this work would be of enduring value for the University as it was on a long-term site.

7. A comprehensive risk management strategy for the project had been implemented and would be reported to Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

8. It was suggested that a programme of internal communications should be implemented to keep staff and students updated on progress and implications of the redevelopment.

Resolved that:

1. Council approve capital expenditure of £59.0m and associated non-recurrent other operating costs of £1.7m for the redevelopment of the Claremont/Daysh complex.
2. Council delegate authority to the Executive Director of Finance and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to execute any contracts required to implement the project.

121. BUDGET 2018-19

Received a report from the Executive Director of Finance, on behalf of Executive Board. [Circulated with the agenda as Document J. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The budget for 2018-19 had been built against a backdrop of headwinds impacting the sector and a number of specific issues which needed to be addressed by the University. This included the launch of the new Vision and Strategy which sets the University’s direction of travel for the next decade, a clear aspiration to increase research income per academic FTE to the median for the Russell Group, concerns about student recruitment, and additional cash expenditure to cover increasing contributions and deficit recovery for the Universities Superannuation Scheme.

2. The budget for 2018-19 was based on net income of £562.5m, total expenditure of £533.2m, and a surplus of £32.2m (EBITDA £36.3m). In light of the identified risks, Executive Board had concluded that the contingency for 2018-19 should be increased from 1.0% of income (£5.7m) to 1.5% of income (£8.4m).

3. In the longer term, USS and future fees and funding arrangements for the sector presented significant uncertainty which needed to be balanced against the need to avoid “planning blight” as the University embarked on delivering its new strategy. The various sensitivities would be explored in greater depth in the medium term forecast which would be presented to Council for approval in July 2018.

4. It was suggested that it would be useful for members of Council to be provided with a roadmap of the University’s budget setting process, to support their understanding of the decision-making process on the allocation of financial resources. Information about
institutional budget-setting should also be provided as part of the induction process for members of Council.

Resolved that:

2. Council approve the proposed subvention to the Students’ Union in 2018-19.

122. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Finance Committee held on 4 June 2018.

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

Noted that:

1. Operational performance was good and ahead of budget. Overall, budget holders recorded a surplus of £24.3m compared to a budget of £16.0m with a full year forecast of £24.4m, £10.2m better than budget.

2. The University's buildings insurance policy would increase in 2018-19 due to additional buildings coming on line, such as the Learning and Teaching Centre and Park View Student Village.

3. Council welcomed the approval by Finance Committee of University investment in ethical funds.

123. REPORT FROM AUDIT, RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee held on 25 April 2018.

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

Noted that:

1. Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee had this year been taking a close interest in cybersecurity. One of the lay members of the Committee had recently met with the University’s Chief Information Officer and had reported to the Chair with assurance that the University’s approach to cybersecurity was appropriate.

2. Council wished to have a discussion about cybersecurity in the near future.

Resolved that Council approve the external audit fee for the 2018 year end of £83,746 (including overseas audit fees).

124. REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Received a report from the meeting of Nominations Committee held on 21 May 2018.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document M. Copy filed in the Minutes Book.]

Noted that:

1. If appointed as a member of Council, Mrs Linda Conlon MBE, currently Chief Executive of the Centre for Life, but due to step down from this role in 2019, would have a conflict of interest for the period that she would hold the two roles.
Resolved that:

1. **Council approve the re-appointment of the following as members of Council from 1 August 2018 until 31 July 2021:**

   Mrs Teresa Graham  
   Ms Dianne Nelmes

2. **Council approve the appointment of the following as members of Council from 1 August 2018 until 31 July 2021:**

   Mrs Linda Conlon MBE  
   Ms Angela Woodburn

3. **Council approve the following appointments/re-appointments:**

   - Dr Ruth Graham to be appointed as a Council-appointed member of the Appeals Panel for Promotions Review of Academic Staff from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Mr David Bird to be appointed as a Council-appointed member of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Mr David Carroll to be appointed as a Council-appointed member of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Ms Angela Woodburn to be re-appointed as a member of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Mr Mike Davison to be re-appointed as a member of Ethics Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Dr Vanessa Hammond to be re-appointed as a member of Ethics Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Professor Robert Wilkinson to be re-appointed as a member of Ethics Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.
   - Ms Claire Morgan to be appointed as a Council-appointed member of Honorary Degrees Committee from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.

125. **REPORT FROM REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

   Received a report from the meeting of Remuneration Committee held on 21 May 2018.  
   [Circulated with the agenda as Document N. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

   Noted that:

   1. The Committee of University Chairs had updated its Code on Remuneration Governance. The Code clearly identified the responsibility of University Councils in providing a governance framework for remuneration in a university. Members of Council therefore needed to be familiar with content of the Code.

   2. The Office for Students had signalled its intent to require more extensive disclosure of higher pay in the sector, and particularly the identification of all individuals paid over £150,000 as a basic salary. This would currently result in disclosure by the University of the remuneration of 6 individuals, in addition to the Vice-Chancellor and President, who earned over £150,000 basic salary per annum. The University would be developing its existing approach to reporting on its remuneration policies and practice outcomes in order to meet the increased disclosure requirements.
3. Remuneration Committee would revise its terms of reference in order that it provide additional oversight of policy and practice in relation to those paid over £150,000 per annum.

126. SUMMARY REPORT FROM MEETING OF SENATE, 1 MAY 2018

Received a summary report from the meeting of Senate that took place on 1 May 2018.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document O. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

127. UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Received the University’s Health and Safety Management System.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document P. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that Council approve the University’s Health and Safety Management System.

128. 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.]

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

Council recorded its deep regret and sympathy for the relatives concerned.