**Newcastle University Strategic Risk Register Summary**

**Background**

Since the January meeting of Council two strategic risks (SR9 & SR12) have been updated by their risk owner and reviewed by Executive Board. There has been no change to the risk scores. SR9 (financial viability in the long term) continues to be one of the highest rated risks for the University. At the January meeting of ARAC there was a detailed discussion of SR8 and SR11, the risks did not require any amendments as a result of the discussion.



**International Student Recruitment**

At the January meeting of ARAC Richard Davies, Pro Vice Chancellor Global and Sustainability provided an update on risk SR8, International Student Recruitment. Despite 23/24 International student intake being the highest intake yet the University continues to work within an extremely challenging environment when it comes to recruiting international students. Increasing global competition and government changes to immigration policy (among other factors) mean all UK universities are operating in a volatile environment in relation to this market.

**Unoccupied Buildings**

The Spring Budget on 6 March 2024 included £10 million towards a Health Innovation Zone as part of the North-East Mayoral Combined Authority Trailblazer Deal. From the University’s perspective, the funding will support the clearance of vacant buildings that will facilitate future development of a Health Innovation Neighbourhood (HIN).

**Cost Inflation**

Cost pressures continue to influence the financial outlook for the 2023/24 financial year and beyond. This is due to higher than anticipated staff costs (mainly driven by higher than anticipated NHS pay increases). Ongoing high inflation and energy costs are also a factor that will influence planning and budgeting assumptions for future years.

**Conflict in the Middle East**

As the conflict in the Middle East continues there are increased tensions on campus. The University campus has been used for two protests to-date and there was a smaller protest outside of the careers event due to the presence of an organisation which has links to the defence industry. Guidance for protests has been approved and will be rolled out to students and colleagues.

A group of colleagues including representation from, NUSU, Student Wellbeing and People Services continues to meet weekly to discuss campus issues and how to support students and colleagues. Regular meetings are also taking place between the Vice-Chancellor and representatives of impacted student societies.

**Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023**

The Code of Practice for Free Speech is being updated for the 2024/25 academic year. Further guidance from the OfS is expected following recent consultations regarding the new complaints scheme.

Dr Colin Campbell

Registrar

11 March 2024