

**NEWCASTLE  
UNIVERSITY  
COURT  
3 May 2024**

Present: Mr Paul Walker, Chair of Council (in the Chair), Professor Chris Day, Vice-Chancellor and President, Bethany Ainsley Shah Yaseen Ali, Charlotte Carpenter, Professor Richard Davies, Hilary Florek, David Flory, Jonathan Glass, Professor Nigel Harkness, Rt Rev Helen-Ann Hartley, Ajay Khindria, Dr Jo Matthan, Richard Maudslay CBE, Henri Murison, Naomi Oosman-Watts, Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, Emeritus Professor Ian Postlethwaite, Sanjee Ratnatunga, Nick Richardson, Professor Jane Robinson, Lucy Robson, Professor Maggie Roe, Angela Russell, Professor Ruth Valentine, Dr Carys Watts, Baroness Laura Wyld.

In attendance: Dr Colin Campbell (Registrar), Justin Cole (Executive Director External Relations), Professor Justin Durham (Academic Director of Health Innovation Neighbourhood) for item 5 only, Dr Simon Meacher (Head of Executive and Governance Office), Alison Jeavons (Executive Assistant) and Heidi Shultz, (Executive and Governance Team Manager).

**MINUTES**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and noted there had been a number of apologies of absence.

The Chair welcomed Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay and Giselle Stewart OBE, to their first meeting of Court.

The Chair thanked the following members of Court, whose term of office comes to an end on 31 July 2024: Sarah Glendinning, Lorna Moran OBE and Dr Robert Teoh.

The Chair noted that thanks be recorded to Shah Yaseen Ali for his service as President of the Students' Union and member of Court 2023-24.

**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2023 were approved as a correct record.

(Circulated with the Agenda as Document A)

**2. REPORTS FROM COURT STEERING COMMITTEE**

Considered the following reports from Court Steering Committee:

(a) A report on the membership of Court Steering Committee.

(b) A report on the membership of Court.

(Circulated with the Agenda as Documents B and C)

Membership of Court Steering Committee

Noted that:

1. Hilary Florek's term of office on both Court and Court Steering Committee is due to end on 31 July 2024, at which time she will have served for six years and will

therefore be eligible for re-appointment and could continue as Chair of Court Steering Committee.

2. Sarah Glendinning has stepped down from both Court and Court Steering Committee.

Resolved that:

- i. Hilary Florek be reappointed to serve as Chair of Court Steering Committee and would continue to serve as a member of Court from 1 August 2024 until 31 July 2027.
- ii. Professor Ian Postlethwaite be recommended for membership of Court Steering Committee for from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2027.

### Membership of Court

Resolved that:

- i. The following members be re-appointed to serve on Court from 1 August 2024 until 31 July 2027, subject to their willingness to continue to serve:

Ms Bethany Ainsley  
Ms Sara Bryson  
Ms Charlotte Carpenter  
Ms Lil Collingham-Clark  
Ms Antonia Cundy  
Ms Hilary Florek  
Mr Vikas Kumar MBE  
Mr Ian Levy MP  
Ms Abigail Pogson  
Ms Sanjee Ratnatunga  
Baroness Wyld

- ii. The following have been appointed to serve on Court from 1 August 2024 until 31 July 2027, subject to their willingness to serve:

Tony Gates, Chief Executive, Northumberland National Park Authority  
Lady Jane Gibson, Commissioner of Historic England and Chair of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site Partnership Board  
Vijaya Kotur, Equality & Diversity Consultant  
\*Dianne Nelmes, Broadcasting Consultant, term as member of Council ending August 2024\* **Secretary's Note: Accepted invitation of membership June 2024**  
Nick Swales, Regional Director, Rathbones  
Paul Walker, Chairman of The Perform Group plc and of Halma plc, term as Chair of Council ending August 2024 to be replaced by Pat Ritchie

- iii. The following members were thanked for their long and valued service to Court:

Ms Lorna Moran OBE  
Dr Robert Teoh  
Ms Sarah Glendinning

### 3. **VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS**

Received a report from the Vice-Chancellor and President.

(Circulated with the agenda as Document D)

Noted that:

1. The Vice Chancellor continues to meet with sabbatical officers, student societies and members of the chaplaincy team to receive updates on the impact of the ongoing crisis in the Middle East on students and colleagues. The University's work on protecting our community from hate continues to be led by the Changing the Culture Group. Further updates on student demonstrations will be published on University channels including NU Connections and NUConnect.
2. The Higher Education Business and Community Interaction data for student start-ups for 2022-23 has been published and the Vice Chancellor was pleased to report that Newcastle University has regained first position in the North East for Employment and has remained in first position in the region for both Turnover and Investment. Furthermore, the University has placed within the top five in the sector for Turnover and Investment and is ranked within the top 10 in the sector for Employment.
3. The Vice-Chancellor reported on the developing discourse around the benefits and risks for higher education of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Senate discussed the use of generative AI in education in spring 2023 and agreed a high-level approach for teaching and assessment that has since been developed into guidance for colleagues and students.

A small task and finish group was created to assess the wider implications of generative AI beyond teaching and assessment. Key themes and recommendations were presented to Executive Board on 13 February 2024 and included the need for leadership skills and confidence to facilitate the adoption and use of AI, support for colleagues to identify new ways of utilizing AI, greater coordination of colleague guidance and prioritisation of, and investment in, automating processes.

4. The Vice-Chancellor noted that Professor Brian Walker has decided to step down from his executive role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor from 31 August 2024. Brian has done an exceptional in job building upon the University's Vision & Strategy of 2018 to shape a joined-up education and research portfolio that is fit for the coming decade, delivering this with transparent choices about our resources. Recruitment for a new Deputy Vice-Chancellor would commence in May 2024 with interviews to be conducted in early June 2024.

### 4. **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

Received a presentation from Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Global & Sustainability.

Noted that:

1. The University had seen its highest ever intake of international students in 2023-24, but increased competition in the international student market required continued focus.

2. Finding the balance between ensuring financial sustainability, values-led research and a global educational experience remains key.
3. The University's financial sustainability is directly linked to maintaining robust numbers of international students in an increasingly volatile market. The University continues to recruit primarily from the China market which remained relatively stable.
4. The UK Government's Migration Advisory Committee is reviewing the Graduate visa route and results are expected by 14 May 2024, which are likely to inform future national policy decisions.

**5. HEALTH INNOVATION NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Received a presentation from Professor Justin Durham, Academic Director of the Health Innovation Neighbourhood.

Noted that:

1. The University's aim was that the Health Innovation Neighbourhood (HIN) would be the first living test-bed for the evaluation of multidimensional, multidisciplinary innovations across public and commercial sectors, blending academic, residential, healthcare, commercial and public facilities within a neighbourhood setting.
2. Funding and development of the HIN site will be considered within the wider regional context as nearby neighbourhoods may not have similar strategic projects and funding initiatives available to them. Within the same perspective, the work done on the HIN site could positively influence funding for other areas within the region.
3. Educational provision for younger years would be included on site and colleagues with expertise in these areas were already involved in the site development discussions. Project leaders were collaborating with community groups to ensure the project remained mindful of, and viable for, a diverse population.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None to report.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Reported that:

- (a) The next meeting of Court will take place at 10:30 on 15 October 2024.
- (b) Court Steering Committee has agreed that the topic for the main presentation at the October meeting will be Water Security.
- (c) The Spring 2025 meeting of Court will be held at 10:30 on 9 May 2025.
- (a) The date of the 2025 Honorary Fellowships Ceremony will be 9th of May 2025.

Members were asked to note these dates for their diaries.