

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS' MEETING

3 October 2022 – in room 209, Sutherland Building, City Campus West and via Microsoft Teams including videolink

### CONFIRMED SUMMARY MINUTES

Contact Georgina Bailes, [georgina.bailes@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:georgina.bailes@northumbria.ac.uk), Secretary to the Board of Governors, with any queries about these Summary Minutes.

Present: Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods (Chair), Craig Apsey, Dr Birju Bartoli, Liv Bird, James Bromiley, Dr Laura Brown, Emma Collier, Helen Fairfoul, Dr Stuart Fancey, Katherine Fawcett, Peter Judge, Hassan Kajee, Professor Andy Long, Professor James McLaughlin, Libby Orme, Sally Pelham, Helen Thorne.

Apologies: Sophie Haagensen, Amy Rice-Thomson, John Taylor, Simon Yellowley, Professor George Marston, Dan Monnery.

Secretary: Georgina Bailes, Richard Elliott (Assistant Secretary).

In attendance: Professor Louise Bracken, Adam Dunlop [BG22/07], Jane Embley, Professor Steven Kyffin, Professor Tom Lawson, Simon Newitt, Emrys Pritchard [BG22/12], Professor Jon Reast, Rachael Savidis [BG22/12], Jack Taylor [BG22/11], Professor Graham Wynn.

### MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

#### Introduction [Oral Report]

The Chair welcomed Dr Birju Bartoli and Hassan Kajee, Independent Governors, Dr Laura Brown, Academic Staff Governor, Professor James McLaughlin, Co-opted Governor and Professor Andy Long, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive to their first meeting of the Board.

#### Vice-Chancellor's Report [BG22/03]

The Board of Governors considered an update on international, national, regional and local sector and policy developments and their implications for Northumbria. Ministerial responsibilities for HE and (subsequent to the meeting) Science had been confirmed; reform timelines including funding for foundation years remained unclear but it was expected that the Freedom of Speech Bill would progress. Proposals for helping staff and students with the cost of living issue were in development and the impact of inflation on Northumbria's finances was being modelled and mitigated wherever possible. For the first time, Northumbria was in the top 50 of all three main UK league tables. **The Board noted the report and that the University was well-placed to address the new quality thresholds introduced to OfS condition of registration B3.**

#### NSS Results 2022 [BG22/04]

The Board of Governors considered a summary of the NSS 2022 outcomes, including Northumbria's performance relative to the sector and Office for Students benchmark. Northumbria's Overall Satisfaction (OS) improved year on year and relative to Times providers, and the University improved in rank and absolute score on all NSS categories against the 130 Times providers. Northumbria had upper quartile performance on OS in twice as many subjects as in 2021. Departmental responses to NSS, including action planning, would take place via the CPPR process during September-October, with plans to be signed off via Faculty Education Committees and endorsed by Education Committee. **The Board noted the report.**

#### University Strategy Development Plan [BG22/05]

The Board of Governors considered the process for developing the University Strategy 2024-2030 by January 2024 following consideration by Strategic Performance Committee on 22 September 2022. The timescale would bring forward the end of the current Strategy by six months, enabling earlier articulation of Northumbria as a research intensive, modern university. The Board and its members would play a key role: approving this plan; inputting into the development of the Strategy; reviewing the feedback from engagement sessions; commenting on a full draft of the Strategy; approving the final version. A wide and broad degree of engagement to develop the Strategy was expected to improve the end-product and support buy-in to the Strategy, as it did with the University Strategy 2018-24. Planning and resource allocations in the 2023/24

would be aligned to enable implementation of the new Strategy from January 2024. **The Board commended the emphasis on engagement and consultation, noted that risk appetite considerations and the integration of strategic risk management with the development of the Strategy would be vital, noted that the new Strategy would be supported by a new performance framework and approved the process and timescale for developing the University Strategy 2024-2030 by January 2024.**

**University Strategy 2018 – 2024: 2021/22 Annual Performance Report** [BG22/06]

The Board considered the performance of the University Strategy as at the end of 2021/22. Six KPIs were at green, one at amber and four at red. **The Board noted the report.**

**Student Recruitment 2022/23** [BG22/07 and Presentation]

**The Board noted the position on student recruitment for 2022/23.**

**Students' Union Report** [BG22/108]

The Board of Governors considered the Students' Union Report. The summer period and the start of the year had been very positive with a full Sabbatical Team – Welcome Week had seen large numbers of new and existing students engaged in a wide range of activities; the Union had been working closely with the University to determine what direct support and advice could be provided to students during the cost of living crisis. **The Board of Governors noted the report.**

**Monthly Finance Report Period 12 2021/22** [BG22/09]

The Board of Governors considered the University's financial position and performance at Period 12 (31 July 2022). **The Board noted the report and that the position for 2021/22 was favourable to budget.**

**Apprenticeship Compliance: OFSTED Inspection Preparation** [BG22/10]

The Board of Governors considered the outcome of the apprenticeship audit and the resulting action plan, in preparation for an OFSTED inspection. Consultants had carried out a review and walkthrough of Northumbria's portfolio and arrangements – the assessment was largely positive and the majority of areas of concern had already been addressed. **The Board commended the work put into the preparation process by staff across the University.**

**Strategic Risk Register** [BG22/11]

The Board of Governors considered revisions to the University's Strategic Risk Register and an update on the risk strategy following consideration by Audit Committee on 23 September 2022. All control actions and issues identified by Audit Committee at its May 2022 meeting had been reviewed and updated and risk ratings had been adjusted in line with the updated controls, and some further amendments had been made following the 23 September meeting; risk likelihood ratings had been re-calibrated to be more realistic. Longer-term targets reflecting the risk appetite for each risk area would be developed as the next phase of the register. Development of Faculty and Service risk registers was ongoing and would be reported to the 14 November 2022 Audit Committee meeting. **The Board noted that the register would be subject to full review as part of the new strategy development process and requested that consideration be given to a workshop or specific session to address this, and approved the proposed revisions to the University's strategic risk register and risk scoring matrix.**

**Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report Q4 and Annual Summary 2021/22** [BG22/12]

The Board of Governors considered the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report May to July 2022 and the Annual Summary 2021/22 following scrutiny by Audit Committee and Employment and Finance Committee. The Q4 mandatory training completion rates had increased by 2% on the previous quarter but some departments remained lower than others. The University was below sector average for reportable incidents with the exception of RIDDOR, but absolute numbers were very low. The University had achieved the international standard for Health and Safety, ISO45001. Wellbeing initiatives now included a focus on financial wellbeing. **The Board noted the report.**

**Chair's Report - Employment and Finance Committee: 12 September 2022** [BG22/13]

**The Board noted that at its 12 September 2022 meetings the Committee had considered the completion of the Values and Behaviours framework and the timing of the next staff survey; had provided feedback on the University's proposed approach to improving terms and conditions for lower-paid staff; had approved the business case for the Cloud and IT infrastructure transformation programme and a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for Coach Lane East.**

**Chair's Report - Audit Committee: 23 September 2022** [BG22/14]

**The Board noted that at its 23 September 2022 meeting the Committee had received assurance that the annual audit of London Campus accounts was on track and that the accounting judgements**

within the 2021/22 annual report were reasonable and endorsed them for consideration by Board on 28 November. It had endorsed the Strategic Risk Register for submission to Board (see BG22/11 above).

**Chair's Report - Strategic Performance Committee: 22 September 2022** [BG22/15]

The Board noted that at its 22 September 2022 meeting the Committee had considered the NSS Results, Strategy Development Programme and Strategy Performance Report also considered by Board, and had considered the approach being taken to learning from REF2021 and steps to improve quality in outlier departments as part of the initial preparation for REF2028.

**Governor Terms of Office** [BG22/20]

The Board of Governors considered issues arising from the end of Governor terms of office during 2022/23 and 2023/24 following consideration by Nominations Committee on 12 September. Recruitment exercise would be mobilised to address the vacancies that would arise in the next 15 months. **The Board noted with regret that Simon Yellowley had decided to stand down from the Board at the end of his current term of office on 31 December 2022, and approved the offer of second terms of office to Helen Fairfoul, Dr Stuart Fancey, Sophie Haagensen and Peter Judge.**

Georgina Bailes  
Secretary to the Board of Governors  
October 2022