

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS' MEETING

5 December 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, Helen Fairfoul, Dr Stuart Fancey, Sophie Haagensen, Katherine Fawcett, Peter Judge, Hassan Kajee, Professor Andy Long, Professor James McLaughlin, Professor Libby Orme, Sally Pelham [from BG22/33], Amy Rice-Thomson [to BG22/37], Helen Thorne, Simon Yellowley.

Apologies: Professor Louise Bracken, Emma Collier, Adam Dunlop, Simon Newitt.

Observer: John Taylor

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

In attendance: Jane Embley [to BG22/42], Professor Tom Lawson, Professor George Marston, Dan Monnery, Professor Jon Reast, Rachael Savidis [BG22/42], Professor Graham Wynn [to BG22/36].

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

#### Introduction [Oral Report]

On behalf of the Board, the Chair commended the University's success in being named University of the Year at the Times Higher Education awards ceremony held on 17 November.

#### Vice-Chancellor's Report [BG22/31]

The Board of Governors considered an update on international, national, regional and local sector and policy developments and their implications for Northumbria. The University had been allocated further QR funding in addition to the previous uplift and had been awarded £5.8m funding from OfS to support the development of CHASE. The new Secretary of State for Education, Gillian Keegan, was thought likely to focus on the skills agenda. Robert Halfon had been appointed to Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education and had been invited to visit Northumbria, and George Freeman had been reappointed as Minister for Science, Research and Innovation and already had connections to the University. Following Athena Swan bronze awards for the departments of Mathematics, Physics and Electrical Engineering and Humanities, all departments now had bronze awards and work towards silver status would begin. **The Board noted the report.**

#### University Strategy 2024-30: Initial Thinking [BG22/32 and Presentation]

The Board of Governors considered the outputs of a University Senior Management Group Strategy awayday and discussed in groups the themes that the Strategy should cover and the challenges and opportunities for the University in relation to those themes. There was already broad agreement in place on the general direction of travel as a research-intensive modern university driving social mobility. **The Board provided feedback on the themes, opportunities and challenges that would be used to inform an extended leadership team discussion on 14 December and the Board Strategy Workshop on 28 February 2023 prior to wider staff engagement.**

#### University Strategy 2018 – 2024: Update and Performance Report [BG22/33]

The Board considered the performance of the University Strategy as at Period 3 (October) 2022/23. Five KPIs were at green, two at amber and four at red. **The Board noted the report.**

#### Student Recruitment 2022/23 and 2023/24 [BG22/34 and Presentation]

**The Board noted the position on student recruitment for 2022/23 and 2023/24.**

### **Degree Outcomes Statement** [BG22/35]

The Board of Governors considered the Degree Outcomes Statement for 2021/22. The 2021/22 Statement focused particularly on the impact of the pandemic, and a summary of actions taken by the University in response; 2021/22 results were broadly in-line with the pre-pandemic position in 2018/19. Most awarding (previously called attainment) gaps were generally closing, with the exceptions being investigated. **The Board approved the Degree Outcomes Statement for 2021/22.**

### **Compliance with OfS Registration Conditions** [BG22/36 and presentation]

The Board of Governors considered the University's obligations in relation to its OfS registration as a higher education provider and the University's ongoing compliance with registration conditions; it was the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the University continued to satisfy the ongoing conditions of registration. The University remained fully compliant against all conditions and was above the thresholds for the conditions covering quality, reliable standards and positive outcomes for all students. **The Board noted the report.**

### **Modern Slavery Statement 2021/22** [BG22/37]

The Board of Governors considered the 2021/22 Statement on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: publication of a "slavery and human trafficking statement" within six months of financial year end was a requirement of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 for organisations with a minimum turnover of £36 million per annum. Existing and potential future measures to address social and environmental risks, including modern slavery, across the University's supply chains continued to be reviewed and built into the category plans where risks were thought to be most significant. **The Board noted that all new service contracts included a requirement for suppliers to comply with the Act either via Northumbria's terms and conditions or their own policy, and approved the 2021/22 Statement on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking for subsequent publication on the University's website.**

### **Students' Union Report** [BG22/38]

The Board of Governors considered the Students' Union Report. Focus had been on cost of living issues, housing problems and visa issues for international students and their dependents. **The Board of Governors commended how the report balanced showcasing success with highlighting concerns.**

### **Monthly Finance Report Period 3 2022/23** [BG22/39]

The Board of Governors considered the University's financial position and performance at Period 3 (31 October 2022). **The Board noted the report and that the position for 2022/23 was favourable to budget.**

### **Apprenticeship Compliance: Ofsted Inspection Outcome and ESFA Audit** [BG22/40]

The Board of Governors considered updates on the outcome of the October Ofsted Inspection of the University's apprenticeship programmes and status of the ongoing ESFA Audit. Ofsted judged the University to be making "reasonable progress" in the three assessed areas of leadership and management; teaching quality and safeguarding and reasonable progress overall. The ESFA audit was apprenticeship records-focused, assessing whether funding claims complied with the complex ESFA rules. **The Board noted the report and expressed its thanks to the teams involved in supporting the inspection and audit processes.**

### **Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021/22** [BG22/41]

The Board of Governors considered the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021/22 following endorsement by Employment and Finance Committee on 7 November 2022. EDI work was now strategically aligned to the University's aspirations and there were four priority areas of inclusion, Disability, Gender, LGBTQ+ and Race. During the reporting period, ten departments held a Bronze Athena Swan Award, and all remaining departments were awaiting outcome of applications which were subsequently successful, see BG22/31 above. The University's gender pay gap had reduced since 2020 and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic appointments had increased significantly since 2019. **The Board approved the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021/22.**

### **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report Q1 2022/23** [BG22/42]

The Board of Governors considered the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report August to October 2022 following consideration by Audit Committee and Employment and Finance Committee. **The Board noted the report.**

### **Chair's Report - Academic Board: 27 October 2022** [BG22/43]

**The Board noted that at its 27 October 2022 meetings Academic Board had considered the Degree Outcomes Statement reported to this meeting of the Board of Governors, a range of issues relating**

to the academic staff base and the conclusions of the Applied Sciences step change review.

**Chair's Report - Employment and Finance Committee: 7 November 2022** [BG22/44]

The Board noted that at its 7 November 2022 meeting the Committee had considered the EDI implications of the recent academic promotion round including the impact of the new process. It had endorsed the ARFS and OfS Five-Year Forecast for consideration by Board on 28 November. It had approved spending against the £5.8m OfS funding for CHASE, the budget for the expansion of OSCE provision at NMC's request and the commercial model for the new catering contract with Chartwells. Approval in principle had been given to a proposal to develop the Centre for Writing (CfW) and the creation of a joint venture with the New Writing North (NWN) to secure a sustainable future for high-quality education and research in English at Northumbria.

**Chair's Report - Audit Committee: Items Circulated 6 October 2022 and 14 November 2022** [BG22/45]

The Board noted that by circulation on 6 October 2022 the Committee had considered external and internal audit progress and draft versions of year-end items. At its 14 November 2022 meeting the Committee had endorsed the ARFS and external audit report for consideration by Board on 28 November, noted the annual opinion of internal audit, approved its annual report for submission to Board on 28 November and endorsed the Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report for consideration by Board on 28 November.

**Chair's Report - Strategic Performance Committee: 16 November 2022** [BG22/46]

The Board noted that at its 16 November 2022 meeting the Committee had provided guidance on the Strategy Development discussion held at the Board meeting (see BG22/32 above), considered developments relating to TEF and the OfS B Conditions noted at BG22/36 above and considered a range of developments relating to the student experience and learning outcomes, which would be reported to Board via the Annual Quality and Standards Report at the 27 February meeting.

Georgina Bailes  
Secretary to the Board of Governors  
December 2022