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BOARD OF GOVERNORS' MEETING – 27 September 2018: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The complete version of the unconfirmed minutes [Non-confidential and Confidential] is available to all governors on request, recognising that these are subject to formal confirmation as an accurate record by the Committee at its next meeting. Contact Dr Adam Dawkins, adam.dawkins@northumbria.ac.uk Secretary to the Board of Governors, for any queries about this Executive Summary.

MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

Chair's Opening Remarks [Oral Report] The Chair commended the visit ahead of the Board meeting to the London Campus, and the examples of innovation and flexibility in design and programme delivery achieved through the partnership with QAHE, an approach to which could be applied to the Newcastle operations; congratulated all staff and students involved in Clearing and Confirmation 2018, for an excellent outcome.

Nominations Committee: Board and Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2018/19 Update

[Oral Report] The Board noted that the terms of reference and membership of Board committees for 2018/19 were currently being reviewed through the cycle of committees, and succession planning for key governors reaching the end of their terms of office in 2020 and 2021 would be discussed, and would be presented via Nominations Committee and up to 19 November 2018 Board meeting,

Vice-Chancellor's Report [BG18/02]

The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive reported that the Minister for Higher Education's Speech at the UUK Conference on 05 September 2018 in Sheffield provided a positive view of UK HE. The outcome of the work of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as to whether student debt should be classified as public finances was ongoing. The University Strategy 2018- external launch plan, including the House of Lords event in November 2018, were being developed, to which governors would be invited.

Pensions Update [BG18/02a]

The Board of Governors considered a late circulated paper, not included on the Agenda, in relation to the proposed approach to the UUK consultation on USS and developments in relation to the Teachers Pension Scheme, including significant employer contribution increases during 2019, by up to 7.2% (from 16.48% to 23.68%) from 1 September 2019. The Board confirmed its response to UUK consultation questions:

1. Would your institution support the JEP recommendations regarding the 2017 valuation, in overall terms, subject to the acceptance of such a position by the USS Trustee (and TPR as appropriate)? *Yes.*
2. What further information would you need to provide a final view for question 1? *Confirmation that there will be a sector-wide review of the provision of pensions, over a longer time period and*
3. *Employers currently pay 18% towards the USS scheme, and the mandate agreed immediately following the Acas discussions was 19.3%. If the recommendations of the JEP were accepted in full by all parties, the outcome would be that existing benefits – minus the employer match of 1% – could be provided at an indicative contribution of 20.1% of salary (with a member of contribution of 9.1%).*
 - a) Would you accept employer contributions at that level? *Yes.*
 - b) If not, what balance of additional risk, higher contributions and/or benefit change would you prefer to see as an outcome? *N/A.*

Student Recruitment and Enrolment 2018/19 and Widening Participation and Access Performance

[BG18/03] The Board of Governors considered a paper on the recruitment position for 2018/19 Semester 1 entry, targets for UK/EU PGT and International (UG and PGT) students and information on the University's obligations, activity and investment in widening access and participation. The Board commended the Confirmation and Clearing session as seamless and professional based not just on the enquiry-handling measures, but first hand observation by the Chair of the Board and Tom Harrison. The University's innovative approaches to, and positive outcomes as a result of, access and participation, should be more fully publicised and built into thought leadership and policy. Whilst saying this, recruitment had to be an area of continuous improvement and innovation in the context of competition.

Financial Performance Q4 2017/18 [BG18/04]

The Board noted the period 12 monthly financial report for 2017/18. The operating surplus for the year ending 31 July 18 of £5.9m is £5.9m ahead of budget (period 11 £4.6m ahead).

National Student Survey (NSS) 2018: Results and Action Planning [BG18/05]

The Board of Governors considered the National Student Survey (NSS) 2018 results and action plan. Whilst Northumbria's NSS overall satisfaction score has marginally declined in 2018, compared with 2017, 2018 performance had improved relative to the sector with the positive variance on Overall Satisfaction increasing. On this basis we remain in the top 50 for overall satisfaction. However, the sensitivity of individual programme performance should not be under-estimated and eight high volume subjects which under-performed had a disproportionately adverse impact on overall performance, in representing 41% of total respondents. Embedding improvements across all measures in programmes was a mid to long-term activity.

Organisational Culture and People Plan 2018-23 [BG18/06]

The Board of Governors noted the context, challenges and strategic ambitions for People. The presentation discussed the positive foundations in relation to People Development in the Corporate Strategy 2013-18. The headline Values focussed on Academic Excellence, Innovation, Inclusivity, Collaboration and Ambition would help deliver the Strategic Outcome of 'Exceptional people empowered to achieve shared ambitions'. The Board noted that the focus on academic staff groups in the progress to date was positive, whilst ensuring an appropriate focus on the contributions of all staff; it was not clear whether Academic Excellence sufficiently and explicitly acknowledged teaching as well as research; the next Staff Survey in November and developed in consultation with colleagues and trades unions and would provide a good indication of progress in relation to People Development.

Recent and future Sports Strategy Developments [BG18/07]

The Board of Governors noted the paper outlining the recent and future sports strategy developments, and that whilst the principles and basis for a decision in July 2018 to re-balance the sports portfolio were sound, but agreed that consultation on the changes with the Students' Union, those directly affected, the trades unions and external stakeholders had not been effective.

Northumbria University Amsterdam Update [Presentation]

The Board of Governors considered the update on the Northumbria University, Amsterdam project. The first phase of the project had been delivered to time and under budget. The enrolment profile was strong on the MSc Business with International Management and the MSc Project Management.

Health and Safety and Wellbeing Quarterly Report June-August 2018 [BG18/08]

The Board of Governors noted the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report for Q4 2017/18, and that whilst 92% of staff had completed the Health, Safety and Wellbeing training, this was still not an acceptable level of compliance with a mandatory requirement.

Revised Bank Mandates [BG18/09]

The Board of Governors approved the revise the bank mandates for Barclays Bank plc and The Bank of Scotland, Svenska Handelsbank, Nationwide and Santander UK plc where the University holds deposit accounts.

Board of Governors' Meeting: 02 July 2018 Executive Summary [BG18/10] and **Confidential Minutes** [BG18/10i]; **Reserved Business Minutes** [BG18/10ii]; **Summary Action List/Matters Arising** [BG18/11]

The Board of Governors confirmed the Executive Summary, Confidential Minutes and Reserved Business Minutes of the Meeting on 02 July 2018 as an accurate record.

Students' Union President's Report [BG18/12]

The Board of Governors noted the Students' Union President's Report.

Academic Board: 04 July 2018 [BG18/13]

The Board of Governors noted the Executive Summary of the meeting on 05 July 2018.

Audit Committee: 17 September 2018 [BG18/14]

The Board of Governors noted the Executive Summary of the meeting on 17 September 2018.

Board and Committee Dates and Board Annual Plan of Business 2018/19 [BG18/15]

The Board of Governors noted the draft annual plan of business for 2018/19.

Dr Adam Dawkins, Secretary to the Board of Governors, October 2018
