

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

30 September 2019 - Crowne Plaza, Stephenson Quarter, Newcastle

CONFIRMED SUMMARY MINUTES

Contact Susan O'Donnell, susan.odonnell@northumbria.ac.uk, Secretary to the Board of Governors, with any queries about these Summary Minutes.

- Present:** Chris Sayers (Chair), Alison Alden, Craig Apsey, James Bromiley (partial), Lorraine Brown, Alasdair Corfield, Tom Harrison, Dr Graham Hillier, Emmanuel Kabengele, Sally Pelham, Nick Pope, Claudia Shaw, John Taylor, Helen Thorne, Professor Andrew Wathey, Dr Jeya Wilson.
- Apologies:** Jean Brown, Amy Rice-Thomson, Lucy Hatt
- Secretary:** Susan F O'Donnell
- In attendance:** Adam Dunlop, Jane Embley, Professor Peter Francis, Professor Steven Kyffin, Professor George Marston, Professor Glen McHale, Daniel Monnery, Simon Newitt, Lucy Winskell, Professor Jon Reast.

MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

1. **Introduction**
Chair and Independent Governor Recruitment update [BG19/01]
 The Board of Governors considered the latest position on the recruitment exercise underway for the Chair of the Board and Independent Governors. Longlist Review Panel meetings were held on 16 and 19 September 2019. A total of four Chair applicants and 21 Independent Governor applicants were identified to progress through to the initial interview stage. **The Board noted the updated position.**
2. **Strategic Discussion Items**
Vice-Chancellor's Report [BG19/02]
 The Board of Governors noted the key points in the Vice-Chancellor's Report including the continuing volatile political and economic situation and continuing uncertainty around Brexit. More positively, both the Secretary of State for Education and the Universities Minister have expressed largely positive albeit challenging messages around the government's view of the role of HE in wider policy delivery. There also appeared to be real opportunities for growth emerging from the Government's International Strategy, which could overall help balance the expected reduction in EU student numbers. Northumbria fell five places in the Times/Sunday Times, largely because of the disappointing NSS results, but improved in the THE World Rankings, driven by citations. Student recruitment for 2019/20 is on track to exceed targets for most categories of student. Recent senior staff changes were highlighted.

Student Recruitment Update 2019/20 [BG19/03]
 The Board of Governors noted the student recruitment update report as at 26 September 2019. **The Board noted the Report and commended the current out-turns in a highly competitive market, particularly results achieved via clearing.**

UK Exit from the European Union - Business Continuity [BG19/04]
 The Board of Governors noted the summary of activity in preparation for a potential No-Deal Brexit; risks to student recruitment, our supply chain and research projects are being reviewed and monitored on an ongoing basis, with all areas are being actively mitigated. Support to EU students in the UK and to Northumbria students currently in other EU countries can be delivered via normal procedures and processes; staff and student travel arrangements should be unaffected. It was confirmed that all required support will be provided to colleagues who are EU nationals. The overall message to staff, students (current and potential) and partners is that we were not changing how we operate and are doing all we reasonably can to prepare. **The Board noted the updated position.**

Monthly Financial Performance Report: Period 12 2018/19 [BG19/05]

The Board of Governors noted the University's financial position at the end of period 12 (31 July 2019). The results as at period 12 were not the finalised year end position owing to the inclusion of some non-operational pensions adjustments which will be made after the year end, and because the results remain to be audited. **The Board noted the updated position.**

National Student Survey (NSS) 2018: Results and Action Planning

The Board of Governors considered the report and presentation, which highlighted that Northumbria's overall student satisfaction score has decreased to 83.0% in 2019. The sector (all institutions) average has increased in the same period to 83.7%. Action plans and reporting arrangements up to University Executive and Board of Governors are already in place to address this disappointing result, with lessons from strongly-performing subjects being applied to those that did less well. **The Board expressed its disappointment with the results, and its concern that in some subjects we are not delivering what we promise to students during recruitment, but noted and endorsed the approach to delivering improvement.**

REF2021 Anticipatory ("Proleptic") Appointments Scheme [BG19/07]

The Board of Governors noted the report, which set out the proposed anticipatory appointments scheme to maximise our REF performance, and the associated costs. **The Board approved the REF2021 Anticipatory ("Proleptic") Appointments Scheme**

National Pay and Pensions update

The Board of Governors noted the report, which set out the current position of national pay and pension disputes, and the University's arrangements to mitigate any potential impact. **The Board noted the update.**

Estates Masterplan 2030 Development [Presentation]

The Board considered an update on the Estates Masterplan 2030 and the potential options for financing of the Estate plans. Employment and Finance Committee had considered, on 17 June 2019, an associated outline financial plan; members emphasised the need to consider a wider range of options and delivery timescales, and to give further thought to the re-provision of accommodation and prioritising financial sustainability and affordability, which was now underway. **The Board noted the updated position and the continuing work to develop the plan.**

Project Sand Update - Commercially Sensitive and Subject to a Non-Disclosure Agreement [Presentation]

The Board of Governors considered the latest position on the development of an overseas Northumbria campus, noting that Employment and Finance Committee is taking an oversight of the detailed proposals and has raised a number of queries for consideration. **The Board noted the wide range of key issues and significant uncertainty still remaining for this project, and that it was important to achieve the right deal even if this meant delaying initial recruitment to 2021/22. The Board confirmed the Chair's action taken on 09 August 2019.**

Sport Strategy Developments [Presentation]

The Board of Governors noted the presentation, the vision for the Sports Strategy and its contribution to Strategic Aims and Business Objectives. **The Board noted the update.**

3. **Performance, Projects, Policy and Regulatory Matters**

Access and Participation Plan 2020/21 Overview [Presentation]

The Board noted a summary of the revised draft Access and Participation Plan for 2020/21 – 2024/25 following OfS feedback. In line with its approach to the sector as a whole, OfS has required us to increase the levels of ambition in the APP before it can be signed off. **The Board noted the revisions following OfS review of the APP.**

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report Q4 2018/19 [BG19/09]

The Board noted the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report Q4 2018/19, particularly the difficulties with ensuring that all core staff undertake mandatory training and that reminders would be issued more frequently.

	<p><u>Strategic Risk Register Update</u> [Oral update] The Board of Governors noted that the Strategic Risk Register would now be updated for the February 2020 meeting of the Board of Governors.</p> <p><u>Students' Union President's Report – September 2019</u> [BG19/10] The Board of Governors considered the Students' Union President's Report, which highlighted issues with the availability of menstrual products on campus, work to improve employability through volunteering and placements, the development of a Women in Leadership programme and the Black Leaders project, and work to support student wellbeing particularly relating to mental health. The Board noted the report and confirmed that the University was fully supportive of initiatives to address period poverty.</p>
4.	<p><u>Constitutional Matters</u></p> <p><u>Board of Governors' Meeting: 01 July 2019</u> [BG19/11-11ii], <u>Summary Action List and Matters Arising</u> [BG19/12] and <u>Board of Governors Annual Agenda Plan 2019/20</u> [BG19/15] The Board of Governors confirmed the Executive Summary and Minutes of its Meeting on 01 July 2019 as an accurate record and noted the Summary Action List, Matters Arising and the draft Annual Agenda Plan for the 2019/20 academic year.</p> <p><u>Executive Summaries of Meetings: Audit Committee 09 September 2019; Employment and Finance Committee 16 September 2019</u> [BG19/13-14] The Board of Governors noted the Executive Summaries of the most recent meetings of Board Committees.</p>

Susan F O'Donnell
Secretary to the Board of Governors
November 2019