

Present: Mr Bill Midgley (Chair)
Mrs Sheila Alexander (*from 6.15 pm*)
Mrs Sarah Bartlett
Mr Mick Burton
Dr Graeme Cruickshank
Prof Mary Dunning
Mr Bernard Garner
Prof Gary Holmes (*until 6.22 pm*)
Cllr Janet Hunter
Mrs Jacqueline Lackenby
Dr Adam Langman (*from 5.20 pm*)
Mr Colin Seccombe
Mr Jon Vincent (Principal)

In attendance: Mrs Rosamund Moore, Company Secretary
Mrs Ann-Marie Crozier, Deputy Principal: Finance & Corp. Development

[*The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm.*]

ACTION

1. Apologies for Absence

Mrs Shipley, Miss Jamieson, Mrs Soni, and the Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development had given their apologies plus Mr Ward due to severe delays with the trains.

The Chair of Governors explained the reason for the absence of the Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development, namely that she had been successful in becoming a part-time Ofsted Inspector and was attending methodology training over the next few days. On behalf of the Corporation Board, the Chair of Governors congratulated the Deputy Principal for this achievement. The College would be reimbursed for any time she spent inspecting colleges. Governors agreed that the College would benefit from the knowledge gained by the Deputy Principal in this role. In response to Governors, the Principal indicated that he would check the time commitment involved in being a part-time Ofsted Inspector.

JV

2. Declaration of Interest and Withdrawals

Governors and staff were asked to make any declarations of interest under this item or at any point during the meeting if they considered that there was an interest to declare.

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

For automatic declarations of interest of all Governors and staff at each meeting **see addendum.**

3. Corporation Board Minutes and Matters Arising of 16 December 2015, including confidential and restricted minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2015 were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair of Governors.

Under *Matters Arising, item 5, Verbal Report by Student Governors*, it was noted that this would be an agenda item each term, with the next report on 23 March. The Company Secretary reported on behalf of the Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development that recent cross-College Student Forum meetings had been very positive and the students had raised no equality and diversity or safeguarding issues. The Chair of Governors also indicated that there had been no such issues raised at the QA Student Council meeting that he and the Vice Chair of Governors had attended last week.

**Student
Govs.
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Under item 9, Quality Monitoring Report, the Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development indicated that she and the Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development were meeting the Lead Governor for Quality, Mrs Shipley, in March to discuss progress against the Quality Improvement Plan amongst other things.

All other actions were being, or had been, taken forward as agreed or were reported under other items on the agenda.

- 4. Outcomes of Strategic Governance Review and Determination of Way Forward**
Governors received the Company Secretary's report on the outcomes of the strategic governance review. Generally speaking, Governors were comfortable with the new governance model although, as part of a dynamic process, the majority of respondents felt there could still be some enhancements to the model, to discussion and scrutiny and to some aspects of reporting.

The Chair of Governors felt that the governance arrangements would benefit from two additional scheduled Corporation Board meetings (i.e. eight meetings) per year. This would allow greater focus on teaching and learning, finance and progress regarding collaboration with South Tyneside College as well as the forthcoming Area Review. Governors felt the governance arrangements were on the right track and that meetings should not extend beyond the current two hours. Governors welcomed the proposal to schedule two additional meetings per year, particularly as the Board was facing an additional workload in the context of the collaboration and Area Reviews. It was easier to cancel a scheduled meeting if there was no business rather than to try to add meetings mid-year.

Governors agreed that the Governance, Performance & Search Committee would consider this proposal for two additional Board meetings per year and that the Committee should bring a recommendation back to the Corporation Board in March.

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- 5. Correspondence**

Since the papers had been issued the Chair of Governors had received a letter dated 4 February 2016 from Nick Boles MP, Minister of State for Skills, and this was tabled for information.

- 6. 6.a Performance against 2014/15 Strategic Targets**

The Principal presented a report on the College's performance against the 2014/15 strategic targets for each of the three Drivers within the 2012-15 Strategic Plan. He indicated that Governors had received all the information in previous reports and this was part of good housekeeping to close off the previous Strategic Plan. The Principal highlighted areas where the College had been successful as well as areas where challenges remained or had emerged and therefore required attention going forward.

In terms of consistency of performance in respect of learner outcomes, the Principal observed that the College needed to have greater awareness of issues arising in-year where the number of learners in particular BME groups was low. The Principal also highlighted the excellent reputation for partnership working that the College now enjoyed, although this sometimes meant that the College's reputation suffered by association when a close partner was performing less well.

Dr Langman joined the meeting at 5.20 pm.

In response to one Governor's comments, the Principal concurred that the College was now able to be much more rigorous than in the past when selecting partners.

The need to focus further on learner attainment and also on Value Added was highlighted. Value Added in respect of A levels would be a particular focus of the QASFC Committee.

The Principal drew attention to areas of growth during 2014/15, particularly with regard to Engineering. Other STEM subjects were beginning to show signs of growth. Nevertheless, the College had experienced inconsistent fortunes regarding learner recruitment which had impacted on the SFA financial health grade.

Governors considered and noted the Principal's report on the College's performance against the strategic targets for 2014/15, the final year of the 2012-15 Strategic Plan.

6.b Final Operational Targets for 2015-2018 Strategic Plan

The Principal presented the final operational targets for the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan.

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors approved the targets for internal and external progression of students to higher education for Strategic Objective 2.5.

7. Chair's Action and Chair's Report, including ref. Joint Working Party with South Tyneside College

Chair's Action – none.

The Chair of Governors reported that he and the Vice Chair had attended the QA Student Council meeting last week and had been very impressed with the points raised by the group which focussed particularly on learning. Mrs Lackenby confirmed that the students had worked very hard to prepare for the meeting.

The Chair of Governors also asked those Governors who had received a letter regarding their term of office from the Company Secretary to respond prior to the March Governance, Performance & Search Committee meeting, as requested.

**Specific
Govs.**

A separate, confidential minute was taken of the Chair's Report on the work of the joint working party with South Tyneside College.

Governors noted the verbal report given by the Chair of Governors.

8. Executive Team Report

The following items were highlighted in the Executive Team Report to the Corporation Board.

Item 4, Political Environment

Item 4.1 BIS Skills Funding Letter: The Principal highlighted key features of the Adult Education Budget, funding for Apprenticeships including the new levy, advanced learner loans and the support budget. The new Adult Education Budget was fixed at £1.5 billion for the remainder of this parliament and combined the other adult skills, community learning and discretionary learning support budgets. Governors were asked to note that the £1.5b included funds from the Apprenticeship levy and from loans. With respect to the Apprenticeship levy, the College, as a large employer, would contribute 0.5% of the annual salary bill from April 2017. Learners over the age of 19 who were taking qualifications at Levels 3 to 6 would be able to access Advanced Learner Loans from 2016. The Principal also highlighted the fact that support budgets amounting to £373 million would be cut by 36% over the next four years.

Item 4.2 Education Funding Agency 16-18 Funding Letter: Governors' attention was drawn to key aspects of the EFA funding letter. These related to the national base rate, the formula protection grant and learner support funds. The national base rate for 16 and 17 year olds was fixed at £4,000 while 18 year olds were valued at £3,300 (17.5% less). With respect to the formula protection grant, schools had been given an additional six years before their funding rate was reduced to that of colleges.

Item 4.4 Area-based Reviews Update: The Principal provided an update on Area Reviews. In the NELEP sub-region this was scheduled to start in April 2016. Having actively sought an early Area Review for the NELEP sub-region, the North East Combined Authority was now asking for a delay as officials did not feel the timing would aid their aspiration for a comprehensive review and redesign of post-16 education and skills.

Item 5.1 North Tyneside Council Review of Adult Learning: The Principal reported that he had been involved in a meeting yesterday with the Council's Principal Manager for Employment and Skills and it was disappointing to report that the Council's review of the Adult Learning and Employment and Skills Service had been postponed.

Item 7 Health & Safety Executive Reportable Incidents and Accidents: The Principal drew attention to two accidents which had occurred since the last Board meeting. He felt that the College's systems were now more rigorous about capturing and reporting accidents rather than there being an increase in the number of accidents.

Item 9, Key Curriculum & Business Developments

Governors' attention was drawn to the student and staff successes outlined in this section of the report.

Item 9.10 – Leading the way for FE in Trailblazers: It was noted that the standards' framework was changing and that TyneMet was the only college in the region which was working on the new Apprenticeship Trailblazer qualifications. These related to leadership and management, project management, automotive mechatronic, food and drink production in particular.

Item 10 Quality Monitoring Report

The Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development highlighted key aspects of the Quality Monitoring Report.

Item 10.1.1 In-year retention: Overall, retention at College level was at 96% which was fractionally lower than the equivalent in-year point in 2014/15. As changes in performance measures had been introduced at the start of the academic year, it was not possible to make a direct performance comparison by qualification type based on the equivalent point last year. Two areas where retention was lower than target were 1) Construction and 2) Access to HE, Social Sciences pathway. These areas were receiving focused intervention.

Item 10.2 Key strengths and issues from this year's Teaching, Learning & Assessment Reviews (TLARs): Governors were asked to note the key strengths and issues identified in the three TLARs that had taken place to date. One further TLAR was scheduled for this academic year.

Item 10.3 Quality Review Outcomes - Attendance: Departmental reviews had been carried out in December and performance judgements made against a range of key indicators, as outlined in the report. There was a drive to increase attendance which was below target in some areas. English and Maths and GCSE resits were receiving focused attention.

Item 10.4 Key Stage 5 Performance Tables: The Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development drew Governors' attention to the 2015 outcomes (Appendix 2) which provided a comparison with other regional colleges. A level performance was strong and TyneMet equalled the highest A level points score per entry of the colleges in the region at 205.9 (2014: 197.4). Value Added, although recognised as an area for improvement, was the best performance regionally. Despite good success rates, points per entry for vocational performance had dropped to 206.2 (2014: 211.7). Focus on stretch and challenge and improving Value Added were key priorities for 2015/16.

Separate minutes were taken of the confidential items of the Executive Team Report.

Mrs Alexander joined the meeting at 6.15 pm.

15. Trainer Contract Proposal for Approval

The Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development sought Corporation Board approval to supplement the current Trainer contract in order to attract suitably qualified and experienced staff to deliver Apprenticeship provision in specific areas of provision, particularly as the College wanted to grow its portfolio at Level 5 and above.

Governors were responsible for setting the College's pay framework and it was proposed that the framework for Trainers should be amended to enable the College to offer a competitive salary via a supplement on top of the existing pay scale. This would incorporate pay points within SO2 (4 point scale: £26,912-£29070) for Trainers meeting all of the following criteria:

- Qualified Teacher Status or equivalent, e.g. PGCE
- Relevant assessment qualifications, i.e. A1 and V1
- Apprenticeship Framework delivery at Level 5 or above to a minimum cohort of 16 learners

There had been similar difficulties in attracting suitably skilled Trainers to deliver technical building service disciplines (i.e. electro-technical and plumbing only) at TMC. It was proposed that the College should have the same ability to pay a supplement within the SO2 salary range for these particular roles.

Governors agreed that the College should have the flexibility to offer a supplement to the staff roles outlined above in order to be competitive.

Governors approved the Trainer Contract Proposal as outlined above.

Item 16, Financial Reporting: Management Accounts to 31 December 2015

Prof Holmes left the meeting at 6.22 pm, part way through this item.

Governors approved the Management Accounts to 31 December 2015.

Item 17, KPI Balanced Scorecard

Governors approved the KPI Balanced Scorecard to 31 December 2015.

9. Any Other Business:

Mrs Lackenby was pleased to report that the lunch area for Access students at the QA campus was being refurbished and she felt that this would make a good impression on prospective students.

10. Any items to be designated as non-confidential or no longer restricted following this meeting and conversely any items to be designated as restricted/confidential

To remain confidential:

- All confidential/restricted minutes of meetings
- Item 6.b, Final Operational Targets for 2015-2018 Strategic Plan (Strategic Objective 2.5)
- Item 7, Confidential section of Chair's Report
- Item 8, Executive Team Report – commercially confidential sections

To be non-confidential:

- Minute related to Trainer Contract

Future meetings and events: (see also revised Schedule for 2014/15 distributed with papers)

- **Corporation Board meeting:**
 - **Wednesday, 23 March 2016 at 5.00 pm, Conference Room, Coast Road Campus (4.30 pm potential development session)**

- **Strategic Planning & Development Event, Wednesday, 9 March 2016, at 4 pm, Conference Room, Coast Road Campus**

- **FE Awards and HE Celebration, afternoon/early evening, Thursday, 30 June 2016, Whitley Bay Playhouse**

The meeting closed at 6.35 pm.

Automatic Declarations of Interest by Governors and Staff

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| Prof Gary Holmes | University of Sunderland |
| Cllr Janet Hunter | North Tyneside Council |
| Dr Adam Langman | John Spence Community High School |
| Mrs Veena Soni | Gateshead Council |
| Mr Jon Vincent | John Spence Community High School |
| Mr Karl Ward | University of York |
| Mrs Audrey Kingham | Norham High School |
| Mr Mick Burton | Norham High School |