

Present: Mr Bill Midgley (Chair)
Mrs Sheila Alexander
Mrs Sarah Bartlett (*until 7.50 pm*)
Mr Mick Burton (*until 7.50 pm*)
Dr Graeme Cruickshank (*from 6.02 pm*)
Prof Mary Dunning
Mr Bernard Garner
Ms Charlotte Hamilton (*until 7.50 pm*)
Ms Beverly Held (*until 7.50 pm*)
Prof Gary Holmes
Cllr Janet Hunter
Dr Adam Langman (*until 7.55 pm*)
Mr Colin Seccombe
Mrs Vivien Shipley

In attendance: Mrs Rosamund Moore, Company Secretary
Mrs Ann-Marie Crozier, Deputy Principal: Finance & Corp. Development (*until 7.57 pm*)
Mrs Audrey Kingham, Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development (*until 7.57 pm*)
Ms Pat Blyth, Head of Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement (*until 6.32 pm*)
Ms Andrea Cochrane, Head of Preparation for Life & Work, Service Industries (*until 6.32 pm*)
Mr Jonny Rees, Quality Curriculum Lead (*until 6.32 pm*)

[The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm.]

ACTION

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

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.

The Deputy Principals declared an interest in item 6.f and would need to withdraw for this item and item 8. The Staff and Student Governors would also withdraw for these items.

There were no other declarations of interest made at the meeting.

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

3. Departmental Presentations on Impact of Improvement Work to Date

Mr Rees, in his capacity as Quality Curriculum Lead, introduced himself and his two colleagues, Ms Blyth and Ms Cochrane and explained the purpose of the presentation.

Dr Cruickshank joined the meeting at 6.02 pm.

Firstly, Ms Cochrane outlined the changes made in ESOL, Hair & Beauty and the Adult Skills Centre to bring about improvements in learner performance. The changes, which were fully supported by staff included a new delivery model for ESOL students, more robust Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG), a consistently applied systematic approach to monitoring attendance to identify learners at risk of dropping out and weekly reviews of English and maths. Across all three areas attendance and retention to date had improved significantly.

Ms Blyth highlighted new processes to support attendance and retention. More robust recruitment and induction programmes had been introduced, with both employers and apprentices much more aware of the commitment required. Apprentices undertook a full English and maths diagnostic test and, where necessary, were directed to a Functional Skills programme before embarking on an Apprenticeship. Each trainer's caseload was reviewed fortnightly and weekly professional development for trainers had been implemented with positive feedback. Trainers had also embraced peer observations and were sharing good practice with each other. It was evident that these measures were having a positive effect on the observation profile, with 100% of trainers achieving an observation grade of good or better in 2016/17.

In response to one Governor's question, Ms Blyth explained the 'best case' scenario in the 'Impact to Date' table. She highlighted the fact that 55.4% of apprentices had already achieved their qualification which compared very favourably with the previous year (although it should be noted that this was a broad brush indicator as recruitment patterns varied from year to year with Apprenticeships).

Ms Blyth indicated that the only disappointing thing was recruitment and this was a levy issue. As a high proportion of the College's apprentices came from levy payers and this was where the College was putting its focus going forward in order to boost recruitment.

Mr Rees indicated he had a split role, working part time as a teacher in Sport and part time as the Quality Curriculum Lead (QCL). In the QCL role his responsibility was to provide timely, accurate and relevant information to the Heads of Department to support intervention. Up until Christmas, the focus had been on work scrutiny, i.e. what had not gone well last year and how this might be improved. Between January and March, the emphasis was on retention. He was involved in regular meetings with Heads of Department to identify issues and support improvement with a focus on attendance, Value Added / progress, withdrawal patterns and retention. Heads of Department were very positive about the new role which was seen as a means of improving the culture and sharing good practice.

Mr Rees provided statistical information to show improvements in attendance overall and in English and maths, as well as regarding in-year retention. The key thing to note was that managers and staff were fully aware of the data about their own curriculum area.

Governors welcomed the report and the evidence of team collaboration to bring about improvements. Mr Rees indicated that the national data was due to be issued next week and the Chair of Governors requested that this benchmarking data be made available to Governors at the next meeting.

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One Governor expressed some doubt about employers immediately accessing the levy as soon as it became available and taking on apprentices, given the uncertainty around the levy. It was not clear how levy-paying employers could reclaim the levy to fund apprenticeships and felt that employers would hold back from taking on apprentices in light of this lack of clarity. Ms Blyth indicated that she would be holding an event for employers in March to explain the levy to employers.

On behalf of the Corporation Board, the Chair of Governors thanked the three members of staff for their informative presentation.

Ms Cochrane, Ms Blyth and Mr Rees left the meeting at 6.32 pm.

4. Corporation Board Minutes and Matters Arising of 14 December 2016, including confidential and restricted minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14 December 2016 were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair of Governors.

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

5. Chair's Action and Chair's Report

Chair's Action: Supplementary External Audit Fee: The Chair of Governors reported that he had taken Chair's Action to approve a supplementary fee for the External Auditors following a written request by the Chair of the Audit Committee who proceeded to outline the reason for the request and the ongoing discussions taking place with the Assurance Leader in the Newcastle office.

Governors endorsed the Chair's Action taken to authorise a supplementary external audit fee.

Chair's Action: Public Consultation Document, item 6.b: The Chair of Governors referred to item 6.b where Chair's Action had been authorised at the previous Corporation Board meeting.

Governors endorsed the Chair's Action taken to sign off the public Consultation document (see confidential minutes of item 6.b for details).

Chair's Action: Sign-off of Senior Post Holder Job Descriptions for merged College, item 6.f: Restricted minute taken of this item.

Chair's Report: Area Review: The Chair of Governors reported that all the recommendations made to the fifth and final North East Area Review Steering Group meeting this afternoon had been agreed en bloc. He provided confidential details about this afternoon's final meeting, together with the FE Commissioner's feedback to Steering Group members. Governors were concerned that the very time-consuming Area Review process had resulted in only one significant proposal, i.e. TyneMet and South Tyneside College's merger proposal. It was noted that the Area Review process could not force colleges, as independent corporations, to act. The FE Commissioner could only intervene (using processes which pre-dated Area Reviews) where, for example, a college's financial health deteriorated.

With regard to Ofsted, clarification was needed about whether Ofsted grades would be suspended for colleges that merged. The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development commented that there was no process in place to suspend grades, but it was likely that a merged college would be subject to an Ofsted monitoring visit with a focus on leadership and management in the first instance.

The Chair of Governors was concerned that the process had not supported strategic thinking in terms of current and future regional skills and training needs, although a strategic forum was being formed to monitor progress and provide oversight of the implementation of the review's recommendations and to ensure continued dialogue between colleges, local authorities and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership.

Governors noted that the Area Review recommendation supported the proposed merger of TyneMet and South Tyneside Colleges and confirmed it was their intention to progress this recommendation.

6. Developments with South Tyneside College Update (Approved Minutes of Merger Committee Meeting of 9 January 2017 and Verbal Report of Meeting of 30 January 2017 (confidential))

Separate, confidential minutes were taken of this item.

Governors wished to acknowledge the hard work of the three senior post holders in continuing to fulfil their normal responsibilities in addition to taking forward the proposed merger and to place on record their appreciation for their continued commitment.

7. Executive Team Report

The Executive Team Report to the Corporation Board included the following items.

Item 6, Health & Safety Executive Reportable Incidents and Accidents: The report confirmed that there had been no reportable health and safety incidents or accidents since the incident of 7 March 2016 which had been reported to the Board on 23 March 2016.

Item 7, Prevent: The report confirmed that there had been no incidents requiring the convening of a multi-agency meeting in accordance with the College's statutory responsibilities since that which had been reported to the Board in October 2015.

Item 8, Key Curriculum & Business Developments:

8.1 Engineering, Construction and IT:

8.1.2 Scantime Engineering: TyneMet Engineering staff were developing e-learning strategies to make learning more accessible and local company Scantime Engineering had agreed to allow TyneMet to distribute automation and PLC control engineering training via its innovative e-learning platform and offered support and feedback via qualified trainers.

8.1.5 Website: The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development reported that a dedicated Engineering website was now operational to support recruitment.

8.1.6 TMC: TMC had been awarded a project by the FIS (Fitted Interiors Sector) with funding from the Construction Industry Training Board to work with North Tyneside JobCentre Plus (JCP) to deliver an upskilling programme for JCP clients. Work was underway with JCP to recruit candidates for the programme.

8.2 Queen Alexandra Sixth Form, Creative and Access:

8.2.1 QA Sixth Form: Mock exams had taken place in January, followed by progress reports to parents and parents' evenings were currently underway. The mock exams helped students to understand the level of work required for them to successfully complete their A level programme. Governors had received a copy of the QA Sixth Form's student newspaper *Purple Milk* for information (Appendix 2). All QASFC applicants would receive a copy as part of the College's 'keeping warm' activities. There had been significant contribution from Marden High School's year 11 Creative Writing group.

8.2.4 Creative Studios: The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development highlighted the exhibition of HND / Foundation Degree art to be held at Low Lights Art Centre in North Shields (see Appendix 2).

8.4 Strategic Partnership with North Tyneside Council:

8.4.1 Adult Training: The Deputy Principal drew attention to the long established partnership with North Tyneside Council's Adult Learning Alliance to promote adult training programmes to the residents of North Tyneside through a joint offer and prospectus. The two organisations were now exploring the development of greater opportunities around apprenticeships. The Chair of Governors indicated that he had a meeting with Councillor Ian Grayson on Friday and asked for a briefing note for this meeting. The Deputy Principal made reference to a meeting taking place with Council officers and Councillor Hunter indicated that Councillors were in favour of joint working.

8.5 Higher Education:

8.5.1 Higher Education Teaching Excellence Framework: The required documentation had been submitted ahead of the deadline.

Item 9, Quality Improvement Plan Update January 2017 (Appendix 3):

Governors also monitored the latest update on the College's overarching Quality Improvement Plan. The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development drew attention to the presentational changes to the Quality Improvement Plan, with the actions within each issue being sub-divided to show progress against each individual action.

The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development indicated that a number of items had already been covered in the presentation given by colleagues earlier in the meeting. At this point in the year, attendance and retention were showing improvement over last year's position and would continue to be a priority focus.

9.1.3 English and mathematics continued to receive close attention on a weekly basis. She commented that huge strides had been made with regard to attendance and English and maths were subject to an increased level of scrutiny. A taskforce comprising the Director of Learning Development and the Quality Curriculum Lead working with Heads of Department was meeting every two weeks to ensure at risk learners were identified and there were clear actions in place to retain them. The Deputy Principal drew attention to the November GCSE resits results. With regard to English there was 100% achievement with 19.35% A*-C grades, and in respect of maths there was 92% achievement with 19% A*-C grades. Where students had not yet achieved a grade C, there was evidence of progress within the grade boundaries.

9.1.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Appendix 4): The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business development reported good progress regarding teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) in 2016/17 to date. The appendix outlined overall strengths and areas for development, as well as the differentiated approach for each department and individual members of staff and strategies for delivery of English and maths.

9.1.5 External Scrutiny - Summary Report (Appendix 5): Information was provided about a one-day event led by education consultant Deborah McVey which was designed to support Heads of Department with their improvement strategies.

Item 10, Quality Monitoring Report:

10.1 In-year Learner Performance: The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development drew attention to the tables in Appendix 6 relating to retention and attendance with comparisons to the previous year. The data was used for monitoring performance with Heads and Deputy Heads of Department and with staff.

Item 11, Key Stage 5 Performance Tables (Appendix 7):

11.1 2016 Key Stage 5 (16-19) Performance Tables: Governors reviewed the Performance tables which showed TyneMet's position in comparison with other colleges within the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP). TyneMet was ranked top of all the colleges in the region for the second year in a row for A level Value Added.

Mrs Shipley, Lead Quality Governor, commented that the Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development and she had discussed the presentation in preparation for tonight's meeting and she hoped that Governors had found this helpful.

The Deputy Principal emphasised the fact that learner performance was top of her priority list and felt sure that the actions in place would result in improvements.

Item 12, Subcontracting in 2016/17 (Appendix 8):

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors considered subcontract performance for 2016/17 to date and approved the subcontract proposals as set out in the Executive Team Report.

Item 13, Cleaning Contract Extension:

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors approved the cleaning contract extension as outlined by the Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development.

Item 14, Financial Reporting:

14.1 Early Intervention by Skills Funding Agency (Appendix 9):

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors considered the letter from the Skills Funding Agency of 25 January 2017.

14.2 Bad Debt Write Off (Appendix 10):

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors approved the write-off of debts as outlined by the Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development.

14.3 Management Accounts to 30 June 2016 (Appendix 11):

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors noted the Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development's report and approved the Management Accounts to 31 December 2016.

14.4 KPI Balanced Scorecard (Appendix 12):

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Governors approved the KPI Balanced Scorecard as at December 2016.

Governors considered and noted the Executive Team Report given by the two Deputy Principals.

The Staff and Student Governors left the meeting at 7.50 pm.

6. **Restricted item taken out of order** – report by Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development:

A separate, confidential minute was taken of this item.

Dr Langman left the meeting at 7.55 pm.

The Deputy Principals left the meeting at 7.57 pm.

6. f. *Senior Post Holder Job Descriptions for merged College:*

A separate, confidential/restricted minute was taken of this item.

8. **Chair of Governors' Restricted item of Business**

A separate, confidential/restricted minute was taken of this item.

9. **Any Other Business:**

None.

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, Developments with South Tyneside College, other than Fees Policy 2017/18 and Public Consultation Document
- Item 7, Executive Team Report – confidential sections
- Item 8, Chair's Restricted item of Business

Future meetings and events:

- **Corporation Board meeting:**
 - **Wednesday, 22 March 2017 at 5.00 pm, Conference Room, Coast Road Campus (4.30 pm potential briefing session)**

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Automatic Declarations of Interest by Governors and Staff

Mr Bill Midgley	Thunder Rugby Ltd.
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
Mrs Audrey Kingham	Norham High School
Mr Mick Burton	Norham High School