

Present: Prof Mary Dunning (Committee Chair)
Mrs Beverley Atkinson, Governor Norham
Mr David Bavaird, Governor Norham
Mr Jim Coltman, Governor John Spence
Mr Fran Done, Governor Marden
Mr Ian Gordon, Governor John Spence
Mr Neil Richards, Governor Marden
Mr Karl Ward, Governor TyneMet (until 6.50 pm)
Mr David Baldwin, Executive Headteacher Norham
Mr Jim Stephenson, Headteacher John Spence
Mr Jon Vincent, Principal TyneMet
Mr Tim Downing, Associate Member
Ms Erin Hollinshead, Associate Member
Mr Peter Smith, Associate Member
Ms Lydia Wysocki, Associate Member

In attendance: Mrs Rosamund Moore, Company Secretary
Mrs Ann-Marie Crozier, Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development
Mrs Audrey Kingham, Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development
Mr Lee Patterson, Head of Queen Alexandra Sixth Form College
Mr David Bell, Teacher in Media & Film
Ms Georgina Donnelly, QA Sixth Form Student
Ms Charlotte Timney, QA Sixth Form Student

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm]

ACTION**1. Welcome and introductions**

Committee Chair Professor Dunning welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made for the benefit of new Committee members.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Helen Bower and Mr Steve Watts.

3. Declarations of interest and possible resolutions

Prof Dunning and Mr Done in item 4.

4. Confirmation/Appointment of Committee Chair and Vice Chair and Committee Membership

The Company Secretary reported that TyneMet's Corporation Board had agreed to appoint Prof Dunning as Committee Chair for the current academic year and that Mr Fran Done had put himself forward to be the Vice Chair for 2015/16.

In addition, two new members were joining the Committee this evening: Ms Beverley Atkinson, Governor of Norham High School, and Ms Erin Hollinshead who had been nominated by the QA Student Council as the Student Associate Member for 2015/16.

The Committee endorsed the above appointments.

5. Presentation: Student Work supporting North East Charity Conference, Down's Syndrome North East

Mr Bell, Ms Donnelly and Ms Timney introduced themselves and explained that

Down's Syndrome North East (DNSE) had invited the College to contribute to their recent conference. The students' project had involved filming a married couple, both with Down's Syndrome, in their home environment.

The short film depicted the couple's lives and their feelings for each other and had been well-received by DSNE at its 'Our Lives' conference held in Durham in October. The students described their approach to making the film and what they had learned from the experience both in helping them better understand Down's Syndrome as well as helping them gain technical skills related to the studies.

On behalf of the Committee Prof Dunning thanked Mr Bell and the two students for attending the meeting and for their excellent film and presentation.

Mr Bell, Ms Donnelly and Ms Timney left the meeting at 5.55 pm.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising of the Meeting of 23 June 2015

The minutes were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Committee Chair.

Under Matters Arising, item 4, Holocaust Memorial Presentation, it was explained that the member of staff who had written the song following a visit to Auschwitz had since left the College and therefore there had not been an opportunity to perform the song at a College event. Nevertheless, the song could be heard on YouTube.

Under Matters Arising, item 5, Report from Head of Sixth Form, it was noted that a presentation/report on progression pathways would be considered as part of this year's programme of meetings.

**AK / LP
Agenda**

Under Matters Arising, item 6, Presentation on Development of TyneMet 2015-18 Strategic Plan, Mr Vincent confirmed that TyneMet's Corporation Board had approved the plan.

All matters had been, or were being, taken forward as agreed.

5. Report from Head of Sixth Form

Mr Patterson presented his report which summarised the overall performance of the Sixth Form since June 2015.

The report focussed on the August "A" level results, highlighted, improvements, student destinations and enrolment in August 2015, with a breakdown by partner school. It covered the drive for excellence in teaching and learning across the sixth form provision and initiatives to develop and improve the partnership between the QA Sixth Form and its partner schools.

At headline level there was a further improvement in overall AS and A2 level results and achievement, retention, success rates and high grades were above the national figures for AS and A2 levels. Mr Patterson highlighted the increase from 38% to 41% for high grade achievement against a national rate which had declined (now 29.1%) and provided a breakdown by individual subject.

He indicated that the core of the Quality Improvement Plan was focused on intervention and support for the AS subjects that had performed below national averages and confirmed that no A2 subjects had fallen below the national average.

On behalf of the Committee, Prof Dunning asked Mr Patterson to pass on to the staff the Committee members' congratulations for these excellent results.
Value Added: A discussion followed regarding Value Added and Mr Patterson indicated that Mr Holbrook (North Tyneside Post-16 Advisor) continued to be very helpful in supporting the QA Sixth Form in improving in this area.

LP

In response to one Committee member's question, Mr Patterson confirmed that the College did drill down in order to undertake an in-depth analysis of Value Added performance. He indicated that this showed some fantastic performance, but that there was a lack of consistency. His aim was to be able to encourage potential students to come to the QA Sixth Form by showing the College could add value to their results. The Committee felt it would be helpful to have more detail, in part to enable the QA partners to celebrate the College's successes. **It was agreed that a more detailed report on Value Added would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.**

LP
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Progression: Mr Patterson drew attention to some specific students from the QA partner schools whose success at A level had enabled them to progress to university. In response to a Committee members' question, he confirmed that the QA partner schools had received details about the results of their former students.

In terms of progression from AS to A2, a significant number of learners had used AS qualifications as a stepping stone into employment, apprenticeships or vocational courses. In all 122 students had progressed to A2 level.

Prof Dunning felt it might be helpful for this information to be given out with papers in future.

LP

Enrolment: The Committee considered enrolment data which were slightly below the figures for last year. The conversion of applications to enrolments was also lower than the previous year and Mr Patterson indicated that this would be a key focus of the Partnership Development Group (formerly Curriculum Development Group). In response to one Committee member, Mr Patterson confirmed that the students were broadly from the same catchment areas as in the previous year although there had been an increase in students from Astley Community High School and St Thomas More Academy.

Towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment: Mr Patterson gave assurance about reinforcing the basics of an academic culture by setting and maintaining expectations. He considered that a focus on attendance, punctuality and homework would have impact at no additional financial cost. A fourth strand was to achieve outstanding teaching, for example by using technology to make learning more engaging and enjoyable. In response to a question, Mrs Kingham explained that Wambiz was an internal social media platform which had just been introduced at the College and was proving to be effective. She indicated that TyneMet's Board would receive a presentation on this at the December meeting.

Mr Patterson explained how the College was monitoring if homework was set regularly and returned in a timely manner and if the feedback was helpful to the students. A follow-up session was planned with staff tomorrow to reinforce standards and expectations regarding homework. Mrs Kingham also indicated that this was routinely verified in the Quality Improvement Reviews. Ms Hollinshead also confirmed that she had not had to wait longer than three days for her homework to be returned.

Partnership Development Group (formerly Curriculum Development Group): Mr Patterson explained the focus of the new Partnership Development Group which had met for the first time on 30 September to discuss how to move the partnership

forward. There were three key strands: 1) Progression of learners from partner schools to the QA Sixth Form; 2) Shared staffing; and 3) Opportunities for collaboration at a curriculum level. He had visited the schools for one-to-one meetings with the three Headteachers and expressed his thanks for their support and that of one of the Deputy Heads.

With respect to shared staffing, the logistics of timetabling across organisations was problematic, although there was currently an attempt to hold joint tutorials. In response to one Committee member, it was confirmed that there had previously been joint appointments, but those staff had moved on and it was more about capitalising on a suitable and timely opportunity rather than following a rigid approach. Responding to another Committee member's question about how timetabling issues could be overcome, Mr Patterson indicated that consideration was being given to supporting twilight and holiday sessions. Committee members felt that it was really important for the QA partner schools to teach in the Sixth Form where possible so that they recognised the QA Sixth Form as the natural progression route for their pupils. The Committee Chair requested more information on shared staffing for the next meeting.

LP
15 March

Mr Patterson outlined a number of initiatives from his report which the Partnership Development Group had agreed to take forward, highlighting the fact that an invitation had been extended to year 11 pupils to attend the recent 'College Rocks' event and that the QA Newspaper and QA Teaching and Learning Bulletin were being shared.

The College's School Liaison Officer continued to coordinate progression activities for year 11 students. The Partnership Development Group had also agreed that it would be helpful to invite two representatives from each of the QA partner schools to attend the monthly QA Student Council. This would allow the year 11 students progressing to the Sixth Form to help shape the Student Council. In response to Committee members' questions about the importance of the College's Student Council setting its own direction, it was agreed that there would need to be an appropriate level of interaction with the schools. Ms Hollinshead indicated that the meetings took place on Wednesday lunchtimes, but there could be flexibility on the timing of the meeting.

Other developments this academic year:

Mr Patterson's report highlighted the following developments: 1) Broadening the curriculum offer; 2) Tutorial model; 3) Staffing changes; 4) Enrichment offer; 5) Quiet study areas; and 6) Amigos.

Particular attention was drawn to discussions around offering applied A levels in some subjects (GCE Applied Law and GCE Applied Business) in response to the impact of linear A levels on some Sixth Form students. This year, 12 students had enrolled on the BTEC in Science which was equivalent to an A level. Mr Patterson clarified that students studying an 'applied' subject were likely not to have gained higher than a grade C in a particular subject at GCSE level which made the 'applied' subjects more suitable for them. These students were likely to be studying other A levels and they would be able to progress to university depending on their UCAS points.

A discussion followed about the challenges around offering Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) and that this might be a barrier to some students enrolling at the QA Sixth Form. It was noted, however, that a collaborative model was already in place, with German and French offered previously and this year German and Spanish, but students were not taking up the offer. Mrs Kingham confirmed that there was a real push to ensure MFL remained part of the QA Sixth Form curriculum and relatively small groups would be considered in support of this. Mr

Baldwin, as Headteacher of Churchill Community College, declared an interest at this point in respect of Spanish being delivered collaboratively with the QA Sixth Form. He queried what information was being communicated to potential students and Mr Vincent indicated that he would check this matter and report back to the next meeting.

JV
15 March

On behalf of the Committee, Prof Dunning thanked Mr Patterson for his report as Head of the QA Sixth Form.

8. Partnership Engagement

Mr Vincent introduced this item by observing that some of the developments that were being pursued by the QA partners this year were summed up in the Partnership Development Group section of Mr Patterson's report.

The collaborative arrangements included a QA Executive Committee whose membership comprised the three Headteachers, Mrs Kingham, Mrs Crozier, himself and the Head of the QA Sixth Form, formerly Mrs Bolton. In recognition of the fact that interim senior management arrangements were operating in two of the QA partner schools, discussions had taken place about moving away from QA Executive meetings. Instead Mr Patterson had started going into the schools and meeting directly with the Headteachers and the activity of the Partnership Development Group had been broadened.

Mrs Kingham commented that the QA Sixth Form was in its fifth year of operation and it was important to recognise the need for the collaboration to evolve and change. She indicated that she had sought advice from Mr Stephenson in the first instance and had also discussed the developments with Mr Baldwin in his role of Executive Headteacher of Norham High School and Ms Jackson from Marden High School. It was proposed that the QA partner Headteachers would be invited to visit the Sixth Form on learning walks, perhaps twice a year, in order to see how their former students were progressing. The Headteachers could ask for items to be added to the QASFC Committee agenda. She observed that there were a considerable number of meetings beside this Committee meeting where the College's senior staff and the Headteachers came together, thereby ensuring many opportunities for dialogue. In essence, the QA Executive would not disappear; rather it would be a 'virtual' Executive.

Prof Dunning stated that these changes would need to be put in writing and considered further as they were in effect altering the formal QA Sixth Form Statement of Collaboration which all the governing bodies had approved. Mr Vincent suggested that this should be seen as a pilot with a report back to the March Committee meeting and a final proposal to the June meeting with a request for constitutional change if the new approach was working well.

Mr Ward left the meeting at 5.50 pm.

One Committee member also emphasised the importance of knowledge about, and support for, the QA Sixth Form filtering further down into the schools.

The Company Secretary observed that this discussion had sown the seed of change for the QA Sixth Form collaboration and the Committee minutes would be a useful starting point for the governing bodies to discuss the proposed evolution of the collaboration. The Company Secretary was asked to email the minutes to the schools' Clerks so that they could be added to the respective governing body agendas. This would ensure that the proposed changes could be considered in an open and transparent manner.

RMM

Committee members agreed that the Company Secretary would email the minutes to the schools' Clerks so that this matter could be discussed at their respective governing body meetings and that a written proposal should be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

**RMM
QA Exec
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9. Any Other Business

Mr Baldwin commented that this was his first experience of this particular Committee meeting and he wanted to place on record his huge thanks to Mr Patterson, his team and the students. He indicated that Mr Patterson had ensured an excellent response to the school's (Norham) requests. He emphasised the importance of engagement with the students as early as year 7, with which Mr Patterson whole-heartedly concurred.

Mr Bavaird raised two points of Any Other Business.

Firstly, he had been in contact with a mature gentleman who had had very little formal education but who was now enrolled at the QA campus and had asked Mr Bavaird to pass on his thanks to the staff for their support. Mrs Kingham indicated that the gentleman had most probably enrolled on an Access course which was the route into higher education for mature students and which came within Mr Patterson's remit.

Secondly, Mr Bavaird reported that the Beacon Centre, North Shields, which had received £3/4m of funding for its redevelopment, now had 16 pieces of artwork by students studying at the Creative Studios, QA campus. Again, Mr Bavaird had been asked to thank the College and the staff on behalf of the Beacon Centre.

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

None.

Next meeting: Tuesday, 15 March 2016, 5:30pm

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.