



# TyneCoastCollege

## Meeting of the Board

<b><u>Venue:</u></b>	via Microsoft TEAMS
<b><u>Date:</u></b>	Wednesday 16 December 2020
<b><u>Time:</u></b>	4.00pm – 5.55pm
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	Andrew Watts (in the Chair) (AW) Sheila Alexander Graeme Cruickshank George Clark Malcolm Grady Gary Holmes Ian Pippin Colin Seccombe Donya Urwin Andy Walton Jacqueline Watson Lindsey Whiterod (LWh)
<b><u>Apologies:</u></b>	David Byrne Mark Overton
<b><u>In Attendance:</u></b>	Neil Longstaff (Director of Governance) Jane Cuthbertson (Chief Finance Officer)

ITEM NO.	ISSUES	ACTION
1.	<b>Senior Post Holders Performance Review feedback</b>  With the agreement of governors, the order of business was changed to allow this matter to be considered first on the agenda. No staff were present during this item.  Confidential (restricted) item.	
2.	<b>Apologies for absence</b>  The Board received and approved apologies for absence from those identified above after having first considered the reasons for their absence and agreeing to Mr Overton's request for a short sabbatical from his role as governor owing to ill health.	
3.	<b>Declarations of interests</b>  The Chair reminded members to declare any conflicts of interest as they arose on the agenda.  There were standing declarations for links to Tyne Coast Academy Trust for the following: AW, GH, CS, SA, GC, MG and LWh.	

<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of the Board held 14 October 2020 were approved and were to be signed by the Chair.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda</b></p> <p><u>3.1 Tyne Coast Academy Trust</u> The CEO confirmed that she had conveyed the Board’s thanks to the staff within the Trust for their work during the pandemic.</p> <p><u>3.2 Governance update</u> NL confirmed that all governance actions had been either completed or addressed in the governance paper for this meeting.</p> <p>At this stage in the proceedings, the Chair formally welcomed Ian Pippin (Staff Governor) to his first meeting of the Board.</p> <p><u>3.3 Strategic Priorities/Discussion</u> The CEO confirmed that a paper had been presented to a recent meeting of the Business Development Committee for a first discussion around priorities, which would be further discussed at the next Development Event.</p> <p><u>3.4 Management Accounts</u> JC confirmed that the level of depreciation was now shown in the management accounts and at the beginning of the statutory accounts.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Chair’s Update</b></p> <p>The Chair took the opportunity to thank all governors and members of the executive team for their work and support during a difficult year.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Chief Executive’s Report</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report was to provide the Board with a regular report on key activities and issues from the Chief Executive.</p> <p>The CEO drew the attention of governors to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autumn Term Covid Update</li> <li>• Student Numbers Update</li> <li>• Update from David Hughes AoC</li> <li>• IT Strategy 2020-2030</li> <li>• Opportunity North East (ONE)</li> <li>• Commission on the College of the Future</li> <li>• Publication of FE Commissioners Annual Report for 2019/20</li> <li>• Comprehensive Spending Review – Implication for FE</li> <li>• Internet Issues</li> <li>• National Leaders of FE Update</li> <li>• MAT Update</li> </ul> <p><u>Update on Covid</u> The offer of rapid testing in schools and colleges had recently been announced. Staff were currently examining the implications of facilitating this including returners to the halls of residence. Advice was being sought from Newcastle College, which was part of a pilot scheme.</p>	

The offer of a test to students and staff was to be once a week in an organised time slot. Staff were to be offered self-testing and students to be tested by a trained person. If a student tested positive then those in close contact would be offered daily testing with the aim of keeping as many students on site as possible.

It was noted that a similar arrangement was being applied to the Academy Trust's secondary schools.

The CEO summarised by stating that this was about identifying a place to conduct testing, the process involved and staff training. The government had indicated that the College would be reimbursed 'reasonable' costs for this.

#### IT Strategy

Difficulties encountered at STC site particularly marine students working offline, were shared with governors. The issue had now been identified and addressed.

The IT Strategy Group, led by the CFO, was reviewing the IT Strategy which was to focus on three key areas:

- Annual IT plan
- Ten year IT strategy
- Three year Digital delivery plan

Q. Roll out of financial implications of the strategy? First review by April 2021 at which point current and future finance needs would be considered taking into account the College's estates strategy.

Q. To be shown in 2021-22 budget? Yes.

#### End of Term

The College was required to remain open up until Christmas eve for 'track and trace' as a point of contact would be needed should a student have a positive test.

#### On site events

The College was aiming to move to more on site events next term such as recruitment but would retain social distancing. This was to try and encourage student to attend college. It was noted that all aspects of the College would also be offered virtually.

#### Long Service Award

LWh reminded governors that this would normally be announced and a presentation given at the annual Christmas dinner. As this could not happen, the staff concerned were to be sent a gift voucher and a letter of thanks. The staff were Maria Crutwell, Andrew Hogg, Jaqueline Francis and Conrad Bays.

Q. Are more voluntary redundancies to be sought? None expected.

Q. Furlough position? 53 staff furloughed in December.

A governor highlighted areas of significance within the report that would require further examination e.g. Digital strategy, College of the Future (potential development event) and comprehensive spending review. LWh confirmed that a deep dive on each of these areas would need to be undertaken at the appropriate time. The Chair agreed that this could be taken forward either through a Task and Finish Group or Development event.

**Resolved: That the Board agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information provided.**

## 7. Governance update

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on governance arrangements for the College.

This paper covered the following areas:

- Composition and membership of the College Board and its committees – re-appointment of governors and an update on existing and forthcoming vacancies.
- Appointment arrangements for the Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of the Board.
- To receive the latest Governance Position Paper, which had been endorsed by the Governance and Search Committee.
- Governor attendance 2019-20 (Annual review)
- To provide feedback on the performance review of the Board during 2019-20.
- Recent DfE guidance on Board meetings and visits to schools.

### Appointment of Chair of the Board

The Chair of the Board stated that he had kept Governance and Search Committee up to date with discussions he had held with governors with regard to the future Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board positions. It was reported that two governors had expressed an interest and the next step was to understand the key priorities for the College over the next two years which would then dictate as to which governor had the right skills set to lead the College forward i.e. whether financial or curriculum. The Chair revealed that the governors concerned were Malcolm Grady and George Clark. Both wanted to understand how they could support in these roles and it was felt that discussion at the Development Event in January should identify the College priorities and further discussion could be held with the two governors concerned.

The Chair also stated that given the new governance structure and the need to have direct support for the Chair, it was in the interests of the Board and good governance to reinstate a formal Vice-Chair role in place of the existing arrangements.

### Composition and membership of the College Board and committees

Governors were asked to approve the re-appointment of the following governors following an initial term of office of one year:

- Jacqueline Watson
- Donya Urwin

This matter was to be revisited later in the meeting to allow both governors to withdraw from the meeting.

Governors were reminded that there were currently 2 governor vacancies; 1 College Governor (resignation of Mr Bernard Garner) and 1 Student Governor (election to be held).

The Governance and Search Committee had identified potential governors to fill current and forthcoming vacancies on the main Board. Meetings were to be arranged for applicants to meet with the Governance and Search Committee in the spring term. Names of potential new governors, in priority order, were shared with the Board.

It was noted that one potential applicant had withdrawn his interest due to personal circumstances but had asked that his name be kept on file for consideration in the future.

NL sought volunteers to serve on the Governance and Search Committee and the Audit Committee as they were operating at minimum membership. It was noted that it was hoped that Mark Overton would return to his governor role in the spring and would re-join the G&S Committee.

Further progress needed on the Business, Community and Stakeholder Groups was raised and noted.

### Governance position paper

This position paper was maintained in preparation for an Ofsted Inspection or an audit involving governance and had been reviewed by the Governance and Search Committee and updated where required.

The overall judgement of 'Good' remained for the governance of the College.

### Attendance 2019-20

Targets for attendance at Board and Committees meetings and for each individual governor had been set at 75%.

It was reported that College governors' average attendance was 81%, which was an increase on the previous year (79%). Individual attendance fell below the required 75% in some cases. National surveys undertaken through the Clerks Network covering the past 3 years had been provided for benchmarking purposes.

The Chair thanked governors for their contribution over the year.

### Board Performance Review

As part of the College's Self-Assessment, the performance of the Board was assessed annually. Members of the Board had been asked to complete an online survey to review the Board's performance during 2019-20. Results were discussed with areas of strong performance and those areas that could be strengthened further highlighted. NL reported that score levels had increased therefore the bar had been raised but the same two issues identified as requiring further improvement in the previous year had also scored least in the current results, albeit with an improved rating.

It was noted that the Chair of the Board had met with individual governors to discuss and assess their individual performance during 2019-20. The outcomes of this process would assist in identifying future Board succession and individual development and training needs.

The Chair indicated that he would need to work with the Chairs of the Stakeholder Groups alongside the CEO and Principals to determine how to address the areas in need of improvement, as these directly related to the work required by the Stakeholder Groups.

Governors felt that there needed to a greater understanding of engagement with stakeholders and aggregated labour market intelligence (employment and skills trends in different sectors). LWh indicated that this information was collated for curriculum planning and could be used to in reports for governors for future meetings.

Q. CEO's view of scoring? LWh stated that the outcomes of the survey and governor comments were fair and the two lowest scoring questions needed to be reflected more systematically in her reports to the Board/Committees.

Responding to a question the LWh felt that she received a great level on input and scrutiny from governors.

### Access to Board Papers

NL informed governors that he had created folders within the TEAMS areas and placed PDF versions of the papers for meetings for governors in these folders in addition to Meetingsquared. NL asked governors to attempt to access TEAMS areas to determine whether they had any access issues.

### Governing and trust boards meetings and visits

Governors were asked to review its decision to hold meetings remotely taking into consideration

	<p>recent guidance that has been issued to schools/colleges.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. That the Board receives the report acknowledging the information presented.</li> <li>ii. That the Chair is to continue to have discussions with MG and GC regarding the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair.</li> <li>iii. That the Board agree to have one Vice-Chair position from 1 August 2021.</li> <li>iv. That Gary Holmes and Andy Walton are appointed to the Governance and Search Committee (AW role to continue until the return of MO. CS to Chair G&amp;S until return of MO).</li> <li>v. That GC is appointed to TyneMet Stakeholder Group.</li> <li>vi. That meetings of the Board and its committees are to continue to be held remotely and a further review is to take place at the next meeting.</li> </ul>	<b>AW</b>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Student Union Report</b></p> <p>NL reported that the Head of Student Services had informed him that owing to the Covid situation, there had been little progress with the establishment of the Student Executive Team but it was hoped that this could be revisited in the spring term.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Papers recommended by Committee</b></p> <p><b>9.1 College Self-Assessment Reports 2019-20 and QIP 2020-21</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report was to provide the Board with the Tyne Coast College SAR 2019-20 and Tyne Coast College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2020-21.</p> <p>LWh explained that the self-assessment process for Tyne Coast College (TCC) was structured in line with the new Education Inspection Framework 2019 and the Further Education and Skills inspection handbook July 2019. It was felt that the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for the College was robust and provided the opportunity for continual reflection and evaluation of in-scope provision at South Tyneside College, South Shields Marine School and TyneMet College. LW explained why there was a separate SAR for HE.</p> <p>Judgement grades for the College were shared with governors i.e. good in all areas of provision except apprenticeships which was deemed 'Requires improvement'.</p> <p>Q. Content with progress in apprenticeships? LWh stated that further work was needed as this area had been negatively impacted due to Covid but there was a similar picture across the country. This was being addressed by staff.</p> <p>A governor felt that the SAR was helpful in showing the areas for improvement and providing a blueprint to follow, which needed to be addressed by the Board.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. That the information is received and progress acknowledged.</li> <li>ii. That governors agree the Self-Assessment Report 2019-20 and QIP 2020/21.</li> </ul> <p><b>9.1a Higher Education Self-Evaluation Report 2019/2020</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report was to confirm the decision of the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee and the HE SAR Working Group by endorsing the College Self-Evaluation report for its Higher Education provision. Governors were reminded that the College was required to undertake Governor / Board review of the HE provision and to confirm this strategic oversight to the Office for Students as part of the Annual Provider Review Process (APR).</p>	

	<p>A governor stated that HE was a significant part of the College's delivery and if the College sought degree awarding status it would enhance the College's reputation in the north east.</p> <p>It was commented that this in-depth report had been well received by the QCS Committee. A governor reported that this SAR had been scrutinised at length by the Working Group and Committee and it had been felt that the presentation of information was much improved.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board approves the review undertaken by the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee and the HE SAR Working Group and endorses the HE Self-Evaluation Report, authorising the Chief Executive to submit confirmation to the Office for Students for the Tyne Coast College provision.</b></p>	<b>LWh</b>
	<p><b>9.2 Management Accounts and Commentary</b></p> <p>Confidential item</p>	
	<p><b>9.3 Student Union Accounts 2019-20</b></p> <p>This report was to provide governors with details of the Student Union accounts results for 2019/20 and an overview of activity in the year.</p> <p>JC reported that, following the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee, the paper now showed an actual Net Expenditure £15,000 (£9k allocation donated to Dr Winterbottom Trust) against a budget of £15,000.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the information is received and acknowledged.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.4 Annual Health and Safety Report incorporating policy update</b></p> <p>This paper updated the Board on accident/incident data and significant Health and Safety developments during 2019/20 academic year at Tyne Coast College (TCC).</p> <p>It was noted that this paper had received scrutiny by the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the information is received and acknowledged.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.5 Annual report on Safeguarding</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report was to provide the Board with an annual report on Safeguarding. This report had been endorsed by Senior Executive Group and the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee.</p> <p>The safeguarding report provided information on progress against 2019/20 actions, safeguarding referrals, multi-agency working and statutory guidance and actions for 2020-21.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information presented.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.6 HE Strategy</b></p> <p>This report asked the Board to review the proposed revision to the Higher Education Strategy, which would guide the College's HE over the next five years.</p>	

	<p>It was explained that the marketplace for Higher Education was evolving. The introduction of the Office for Students had put greater focus on the value of the student voice. The HE offer at Tyne Coast College was more comprehensive post-merger and the College had over 1000 FTE's placing it as one of the larger providers of 'HE in FE' in the country.</p> <p>It was stressed that the need for higher level technical skills to meet regional and national demand must be at the forefront of the College's strategy and for this reason the College had incorporated growth of Higher and Degree Level Apprenticeships in its strategy.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b>  <b>i. That the Board agree to receive the report and approve the strategic priorities.</b>  <b>ii. That the proposed Higher Education Strategy 2020-2025 is approved, as recommended by the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.7 Marine Strategy update</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report was to update the Board on current position of the Marine Strategy.</p> <p>The key issues raised were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus Growth of rebuilding and reinvigorating current clients and sponsors.</li> <li>• COVID-19 had forced a re-focus of the marine strategy</li> <li>• Development and expansion of alternative delivery methods</li> </ul> <p>Governors noted that this document had been scrutinised by the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee.</p> <p>It was suggested that further time needed to be spent on this strategy to give governors a greater understanding of the way forward. LWh stated that it was intended to review this strategy as part of the Development Event in January (Simon Ashton presenting) with Mo Dixon giving a presentation on FE and HE strategies and JC focussing on financial strategies.</p> <p>A governor stated that the Marine School needed to review the way it was charging for consultancy i.e. should be determined by what it was worth not what it costed, as it was felt that they were not achieving value for the work being undertaken.</p> <p>The Chair of QCS stated that this paper had been a realistic assessment of where the College was and had been welcomed by the Committee.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board agree to receive and approve this report.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.8 Quality Strategy</b></p> <p>This report provided the Board with a new 3-year Quality Strategy (FE).</p> <p>LWh reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy responded to the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) September 2019</li> <li>• The strategy was based on continuous improvement.</li> <li>• The strategy illustrated quality improvement was the responsibility of all staff.</li> <li>• There was a focus on raising aspirations for staff and students.</li> </ul> <p>A governor stressed the importance of this document as it outlined what the College needed to address and the seven points raised should be the focus of the Board's</p>	



	<p>attention over the next few years.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board agrees the strategy as recommended by the Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.9 Annual Pay award</b></p> <p>Due to the impact of COVID-19, the 1% pay award built into the 19/20 budget was not released to staff. As part of the 2020/21 budget setting process a 2% pay award was built into the budget.</p> <p>Governors felt that the report's recommendation was prudent in light of the current Covid-19 lockdown situation and the potential impact on the College's finances.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the salary increase for 2020/21 is to be retained within the forecast and not released, leaving a decision pending to later in the year.</b></p>	
	<p><b>9.10 UKVI report</b></p> <p>This report was to update governors on the College's UKVI and Immigration sponsor status.</p> <p>LWh highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification of Change in College's UKVI Officers</li> <li>• Successful Compliance Audit</li> <li>• Successful Licence Renewal</li> </ul> <p>Q. Brexit issues? No, as students were mainly international rather than European.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board agree to receive this report.</b></p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Policy - External Speakers</b></p> <p>A revised policy was presented for approval.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the External Speakers is approved, as presented.</b></p>	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Committees of the Board</b></p> <p>The following minutes were presented for information:</p> <p>11.1 Audit Committee - 6 October 2020  11.2 Business Development - 21 October 2020  11.3 Governance and Search - 25 November 2020  11.4 Quality and Standards - 26 November 2020  11.5 Finance &amp; Resources Committee - 1 December 2020</p>	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p><u>12.1 Staff Laptops Tender</u></p> <p>Confidential item</p> <p><u>12.2 Governor Re-appointments</u></p> <p>At this stage in the proceedings JW and DU left the meeting.</p> <p>Governors were recommended by Governance and Search Committee to reappoint both JW</p>	

	and DU for a further term of office.  <b>Resolved: That JW and DU are each appointed for a further term of office in line with the succession plan (3 years).</b>	NL
13.	<b>Identification of confidential items</b>  <b>Resolved: That the following matters are to remain confidential:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Item 1 - Performance Review Feedback (Restricted)</li> <li>• Item 7 – Governance update (names of potential governors)</li> <li>• Item 9.2 – Management Accounts</li> <li>• Item 12.1 – Staff Laptops Tender</li> </ul>	
14.	<b>Date and time of future meetings</b>  <b>Resolved: That the next meeting of the Board is to take place on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 1.00pm (Development Event at 1.30pm) via TEAMS.</b>	

Chair: ..... Date: .....