



TyneCoastCollege

Meeting of the Board

Venue: via Microsoft TEAMS

Date: Wednesday 8 July 2020

Time: 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Present: Andrew Watts (in the Chair) (AW)
David Byrne
Graeme Cruickshank
Bernard Garner
George Clark
Malcolm Grady
Gary Holmes (GH)
Martin Hottass
Mark Overton
Colin Seccombe
Donya Urwin
Andy Walton
Jacqueline Watson
Susan Wear
Lindsey Whiterod (LWh)

In Attendance: Neil Longstaff (Director of Governance)
Jane Cuthbertson (Chief Finance Officer)

ITEM NO.	ISSUES	ACTION
1.	Chair of the Board - Performance Review 2019/2020 Confidential item.	
2.	Apologies for absence AW joined the meeting. The Board received and approved an apology for absence from Sheila Alexander after having first considered the reasons for her absence. The Chair reminded governors of the protocols to be observed when holding a meeting via TEAMS.	
3.	Declarations of interests 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 and LWh.	

4.	<p>Meeting scheduled for 1 April 2020 was convened via written resolution/feedback</p> <p>Governors noted that the meeting scheduled for 1 April 2020 had been convened but owing to Covid lockdown restrictions, business was conducted via written resolution/feedback with actions required being agreed via voting on Meetingsquared.</p>	
5.	<p>Minutes of Emergency Planning Committee meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings of the Emergency Planning Committee (EPC) held on 4 and 28 April, 12 and 25 May, 9, 17 and 23 June 2020 were received and noted.</p> <p>There were no matters to raise from the minutes.</p> <p>The Chair took the opportunity to thank the members of the EPC for their work over the last few months.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether more could be done to keep those governors not on the EPC in the loop in terms of governance business between full Board meetings. Discussion on this matter was deferred to Item 7.7 (Annual Review of Governance).</p>	
6.	<p>Chair's Update</p> <p><u>Association of Colleges (AOC)</u></p> <p>It was felt that the AoC had been supportive of colleges in recent months including lobbying on behalf of Colleges and had provided a good level of information and online events. The CEO supported this view.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked the members of SEG and staff of the College for their hard work in very difficult circumstances, for ensuring the safety of the students and securing the financial viability of the College.</p>	
7.	<p>FOR APPROVAL</p> <p>7.1 Management Accounts and Commentary</p> <p>Confidential item.</p>	
	<p>7.2 2020-21 Budget and 2 Year Financial Forecast</p> <p>Confidential item.</p>	
	<p>7.3 Approval of Student Union Budget 2020/2021</p> <p>This report sought governor approval for the Students' Union budget for 2020-21.</p> <p>The Finance and Resources Committee recommended to continue to offer the Union a budget of £15,000 for activities and payment of officials and support for those officials. Funds would continue to be distributed for work undertaken by members of the union committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the budget was monitored as part of the monthly management accounts package provided by the Finance Department.</p> <p>Q. Any underspend at the end of the year to go to Dr Winterbottom fund? It was generally felt that this principle should continue to be adopted but that the student union should be</p>	

	<p>encouraged to spend their allocation and raise funds through their usually promotion practices e.g. sales of the student union discount card.</p> <p>It was commented that if the cash flow position was poor, the College might need to review this position. The Chair outlined the purpose of the Dr Winterbottom Trust but recognised that the College needed to be operational to provide support to disadvantaged students whether this be through the Dr Winterbottom Trust or student budget. The Chair of F&R Committee felt that any additional funds to support the Dr Winterbottom Fund would be appreciated particularly given that events for fundraising did not go ahead because of Covid-19.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board agree a student union budget of £15,000 for the 2020-21 academic year, as recommended by Finance and Resources Committee.</p>	
	<p>7.4 Curriculum Strategy (2019-24)</p> <p>The purpose of this report was to inform the Board of the intended Curriculum Strategy for 2019-2024 for Tyne Coast College. It was noted that this paper had been considered and accepted by the Emergency Planning Committee.</p> <p>The Key Strategic Drivers were outlined in the report.</p> <p>The CEO explained that this was a working document and it had been updated as far as possible in light of the current climate but would be reviewed in greater detail to take account of the impact of Covid-19, local plans etc.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board agree to accept this as an interim Curriculum Strategy (2019-24) and acknowledge the future work to be undertaken.</p>	
	<p>7.5 Curriculum Plan 2020-21</p> <p>The CEO stated that the budget was based on a detailed curriculum planning process and it had been a bottom-up approach with marine and apprenticeships identified as key risks.</p> <p>Known factors had been taken into account but on all other matters it had been a cautious approach.</p> <p>The Board was asked to support this approach moving forward.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged that this was an extremely challenging time for the College and being cautious was the right move particularly as the governments spend in the public sector would be tight over the next twelve months and possibly beyond.</p> <p>Resolved: That the College's position is noted and accepted.</p>	
	<p>7.6 Annual Equality and Diversity Report and Objectives 2019-2023</p> <p>This paper was to provide the members of the Board with a report on the College's commitment to equality and diversity and provide an update of progress to address the College's Equality Objectives.</p> <p>The key issues from the workforce and student data were highlighted for governors' consideration. It was noted that the full Equality Workforce Profile was available.</p> <p>The CEO reported that there were no areas of significant concern although the EPC had asked for a breakdown of BAME staff and learners numbers and the performance of the</p>	

	<p>BAME learner group compared to College overall.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board approve the report and acknowledge action taken against the objectives.</p>	
	<p>7.7 Annual Review of Governance</p> <p>The purpose of this report was to provide an update on governance arrangements for the College.</p> <p>This paper covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Structure • Instrument and Articles of Government • Standing Orders and Code of Conduct • Terms of Reference and membership for Committees including Business, Community and Stakeholder Groups • Business Planner 2020-21 <p>Governors were made aware that the EPC recommended to the Board the continuation of the current temporary governance arrangements i.e. the Emergency Planning Committee and revised quorum for the Board of Governors, until 1 September 2020 at which point a further review should be undertaken. The involvement of governors not a member of the EPC was discussed.</p> <p>The views of governors was sought on a proposal to adopt a principle whereby the person holding the post of Chair of the QA Sixth Form Committee must be a College Governor. It was recommended that AWa takes up this position (AWa sought time to consider this nomination).</p> <p>NL asked governors to consider the proposal to include the Chair of the Academy Trust Board on the Performance Review group (in a non-voting capacity) as an element of work undertaken by three of the Senior Postholders at the College now covered the Academy Trust, which was sponsored by the College.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that within the Articles of Tyne Coast Academy Trust, the sponsor body could appoint up to two trustees in addition to the appointment of Members. It was now being recommended that the Board makes formal trustee appointments and that this could be linked to positions of office held by governors or named individuals. The term of office and restrictions that applied to the term were explained. The Chair reported back on the views of the Members of the Trust. Governors felt that appointments were a better approach and in doing so, the Academies Partnership Group could be dissolved. A governor reminded the Board of the separation of responsibilities between the Corporation and the Trust.</p> <p>It was being recommended by the Queen Alex Sixth Form Committee that the Quality and Standards Committee incorporates 'Curriculum' within its title as this was a significant and key area of work undertaken.</p> <p>NL sought to undertake a formal review of the membership of the Business, Community and Stakeholder Groups in the autumn term. The Chair of the SSMS group highlighted that a number of the individuals appointed to 'employer' positions were no longer employed by the shipping company they had been representing, which potentially meant there could be several vacancies on the group. The Chair highlighted a number of companies that could be approached to rebuild membership on the BCSGs.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the Board receives the report acknowledging the information presented.</p>	<p>AWa</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. That governors approve the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The governance structure b. The Instrument & Articles of Government c. The Standing Orders and Code of Conduct d. The Terms of Reference of Committees and the proposed appointments to fill existing vacancies on committees/groups. e. The Business Planner 2020-21 iii. That the Board agree to appoint two governors to serve as Trustees (Sponsor appointments) on the Board of Tyne Coast Academy Trust and that these are to be positions of office namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair of Finance and Staffing Committee - Chair of Audit Committee (<i>subject to acceptance by SA</i>) iv. That in light of (iii) above, the Academies Partnership Group is to be dissolved. v. That the Board agree to extend the current temporary governance arrangements until 1 September 2020 i.e. the Emergency Planning Committee and revised quorum for the Board of Governors on the understanding that all governors not a member of the EPC have the option of attending meetings in a non-voting capacity. vi. That that the Quality and Standards Committee incorporates 'Curriculum' within its title as suggested by the Queen Alex Sixth Form Committee. vii. That the principle of a College Governor holding the post of Chair of the QA Sixth Form Committee be adopted and that Mr D Bavaird is appointed as Vice Chair. viii. That the Chair of the Academy Trust Board be invited to serve as a member of the Performance Appraisal and Review Group (in a non-voting capacity). ix. That Chairs of the BCSGs are asked to review their membership with the aim of the Board giving further consideration to this matter in the autumn term. 	<p style="text-align: center;">SA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chairs of BCSGs</p>
	<p>7.8 Succession Planning</p> <p>NL reminded governors of the comprehensive review undertaken of their terms of office in April 2020, which introduced a staggered approach to recruitment by extending some terms of office by one year. However, any extension to be offered was subject to a satisfactory performance review and NL reported that the EPC had carried out such a review on 3 governors whose terms were due to end (2020).</p> <p>The outcome of the review and recommendation by the EPC was that these governors should each be granted an extension to their term of office for a further year.</p> <p>In terms of planning ahead, NL had scheduled an additional Governance and Search Committee meeting in September 2020 to start an early review of current and forthcoming vacancies and the position of Chair for September 2021.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board note the performance review undertaken and endorse the extension of the terms of office for Sheila Alexander, Andrew Watts and Gary Holmes by a further year.</p> <p><i>Declarations noted by GH and AW.</i></p>	
	<p>7.9 Counter Terrorism and Prevent Plan – annual update</p> <p>This paper provided an annual review and update of the Counter Terrorism Plan and Prevent Plan.</p> <p>Minor changes had been made to reflect the downgrading of UK threat level from severe to</p>	

	<p>substantial and changes in Government training packages.</p> <p>Q. What outside organisations consider these documents? TCC was part of the Counter Terrorism Regional Group and they had been content with the College's approach to date. Advice and guidance was also received from this group.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board approves the updated Counter Terrorism Plan, Prevent Plan and Prevent, and Terrorism Risk Assessment.</p>	
	<p>7.10 Awarding of estates contracts during COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>The purpose of the report was to inform governors of difficulties that were arising in the awarding of contracts for estates works as a result of COVID-19 and to seek authorization to award contracts where the proper procurement process had been observed, but insufficient quotations received.</p> <p>The CEO highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the impact of COVID-19 difficulties were being experienced in obtaining the number of quotations required by the Financial Regulations for essential buildings works • Construction contractors were responding to invitations to tender stating that they did not have capacity to undertake works due to staff shortages or furlough. Some contractors were not responding to communications. • Only a single quotation was received to an invitation to tender for substantial roof repair works at TyneMet. • Successful delivery of the Queen Alexandra Sixth Form relocation project was dependent upon buildings works to convert rooms, re-commission science labs, and appointment of a removals company to relocate the contents of buildings. • Given the tight timescales involved timely awarding of contracts was critical to the success of the Queen Alexandra Sixth Form relocation project. <p>Q. Any risk assessment undertaken against this company in terms of viability in light of current Covid situation? The CEO indicated that this had been checked but would do so again before proceeding with any award of a contract.</p> <p>The Chair of F&R Committee stated that it would be detrimental to the College to delay, therefore supported this approach.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the Board approve the award of the contract to replace the TyneMet A Block roof to Mitie Roofing subject to a check on the business' viability and that a repayment schedule is agreed to ensure a minimum risk to the College.</p> <p>ii. That in respect of the Queen Alexandra Sixth Form relocation, where it can be demonstrated that a proper tendering process has been followed but insufficient quotations have been obtained, contracts may still be awarded to the supplier demonstrating best value for money in order to prevent delays to the project.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>JC</p>
	<p>7.11 Policies</p> <p>A number of policies were presented to the Board for approval. The CEO outlined where changes were made and responded to questions were required.</p> <p>It was noted that the College Fees policy had been deferred as information required for the policy document (HE/Marine fees) had not yet been released.</p> <p>Resolved:</p>	

	<p>i. That the following policies are approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Social Responsibility Policy • Bursary Policy • Sub-Contracting Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy • Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure Policy (TCC) • Fraud and Bribery Policy 	
<p>8.</p>	<p>FOR INFORMATION</p> <p>8.1 Chief Executive’s Report</p> <p>The purpose of this report was to provide the Board with an update of issues and actions taken during the Coronavirus situation by providing update reports from each area of the College.</p> <p>The CEO’s report highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future of Further Education – discussion document • Gateshead College – Structure and Prospects Appraisal (SPA) - confidential • Redundancy and Restructure Update - confidential • Furlough Update - confidential • Marketing Update <p><u>Future of Further Education – Discussion Document</u></p> <p>This was based on the information used in a presentation by the CEO of the AoC and was to shape future discussion on the FE sector. It was expected that the College’s strategic plan would be adjusted accordingly when further information was released at the beginning of the new academic year about funding and Covid guidance.</p> <p><u>Marketing Update</u></p> <p>Online and physical enrolment was taking place to engage as many students as possible. The CEO stated that there was uncertainty as to predicted numbers because of the current situation.</p> <p>A governor stated that it appeared all was being done to maximise numbers.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information provided.</p>	
	<p>8.2 Academy Trust Update</p> <p>The purpose of this report was to provide the Board with a regular report on key activities and issues from the Tyne Coast Academy Trust.</p> <p>The CEO provided information relating to the performance of academies within the Trust and their response in dealing with Covid-19. Key issues were the safeguarding of learners and addressing the achievement gap as students moved to online provision.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked all staff of the Trust for their efforts ensuring staff and students were safe and supported and asked that trustees and the sponsor were kept up to date with developments.</p> <p>It was noted that Monkwearmouth Academy had been successful with the CIF bid for the replacement of the heating system in 3 blocks to the sum of £700k (£850k with matched funding).</p>	

	<p>Q. Appealing CIF window bid? Yes.</p> <p>A governor asked that the Board is kept up to date around safeguarding issues and plans for reopening of schools.</p> <p>A governor offered support in terms of advice and guidance (videos etc.) that could be shared with staff/students on reopening etc.</p> <p>It was noted that the Members of TCAT received information at a recent meeting indicating that compulsory attendance would be enforced in September, however, a governor highlighted a recent article in the Times that stated 1 in 4 parents would not be allowing their children to return. It was suggested that the TCAT Board and sponsor needed to be aware of this situation.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Board agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information provided.</p>	
	<p>8.3 Quality report – overview</p> <p>This report updated the College Board on current college performance.</p> <p>The CEO drew governors attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the main all learners were engaging with remote learning • Staff were actively using TEAMS, Whats App, emails and text messaging to deliver learning and support learners. • All staff were supporting learners as there had been an increase in concern over mental health • College counsellors and managers were supporting staff. • Final qualifications were being currently submitted. Early indications were that achievement would be in line with the previous year of 90.3% across TCC. • FE On-programme survey 2019/20 (completed immediately prior to lockdown) indicated that overall there was a high level of satisfaction with no significant areas of weakness identified. • One area that required further investigation was learners feeling unsafe (5%), this would be undertaken on return to college. <p>It was noted that this paper had been reviewed by the Emergency Planning Committee.</p> <p>The Chair of Quality and Standards Committee commented that governors needed to take the long view about monitoring and quality as the College had been forced to move towards an extensive investment of online/remote learning quicker than anticipated and it was unlikely to change in the near future. It was commented that this would take the College into new areas of student/staff interaction and student learning, which then linked to a number of other matters including safeguarding and diversity. It was suggested that this be monitored closely as a governing body. This approach was endorsed by governors as there were concerns around disadvantaged students, which included access to the internet owing to unaffordable costs to some families.</p> <p>The CEO reported that a similar discussion had taken place with staff on the use of the bursary and how it could better support students. This meant targeting funds in a way that provided maximum support to the students most in need.</p> <p>A governor asked whether there was any funding routes/companies the College could approach or tap into to help complement the equipment students might need. The CEO and AWa were to look further into this.</p>	<p>CEO/AWa</p>

	<p>A governor also highlighted the restrictions and disruption to both staff and learners working/studying at home. It was noted that not all had an environment at home which was conducive to learning/working, which in turn affected the ability to work productively or study. It was felt that those students who could not work at home should be targeted for an early return to the classroom. The CEO confirmed that this analysis had been conducted and students had been identified but this would need to be scaled up for September.</p> <p>The Chair also suggested that a similar exercise should be undertaken for staff as some were struggling to balance home life with work requirements. A governor highlighted the Health and Safety at Work Act and the employers' duty of care to staff, should there be a requirement for staff to work from home.</p> <p>The Chair of Quality and Standards Committee stated that this conversation demonstrated that every aspect of the College would be affected if there were to be investment into distance learning. This included the College estate, CPD for staff, impact of learning and how this was measured, and curriculum planning. The Chair felt that the student experience needed to be factored into this discussion.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. That governors are requested to receive and acknowledge the content of the report. ii. That Emergency Planning/Future Engagement with staff/students is to be a topic at a future Governor Development event. 	LWh
	<p>8.4 Review progress against Code of Good Governance</p> <p>The purpose of the report was to provide the Board with an update on progress towards becoming fully compliant with the Code of Good Governance.</p> <p>It was reported that the Board had adopted the English Colleges Code of Good Governance. The purpose of the Code was to identify the key values, expectations, commitments and principles of good and outstanding practice. It was a 'comply-or-explain' code.</p> <p>In accordance with agreed procedures, the Director of Governance had undertaken a review of the Board's compliance against the Code. Governors were informed that following this review, the College was judged to be compliant.</p> <p>Governors were informed that the explanatory notes and guidance on the Colleges' Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code and the full mapping exercise of the AoC Code had been posted to the Knowledge area of Meetingsquared.</p> <p>This paper had been reviewed and accepted by the Emergency Planning Committee but the members of the Committee asked that the Board note the information.</p> <p>NL indicated that, on further review, an area not fully addressed was an external review of governance. However, this had been planned to be included as part of the internal audit plan 2019/20 but deferred owing to the introduction of a new governance structure and the delays faced with regard to its implementation. This was to be part of the audit plan 2020/21.</p> <p>Resolved: The Board receives and acknowledges the report.</p>	

<p>9.</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p><u>TyneMet Roof</u></p> <p>Further to Item 7.10. JC reported that risk assessments would be carried out before work commenced and financially Mitie Roofing were a viable business having viewed their accounts at Companies House.</p> <p>Q. Payment plan to minimise risk? Yes, this would be done.</p> <p>Resolved: That JC is to proceed with the works subject to a payment plan being agreed.</p>	<p>JC</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Identification of confidential items</p> <p>Resolved: That the following matters are to remain confidential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 1 – Chair’s Performance Review • Item 7.1 – Management Accounts • Item 7.2 - 2020-21 Budget and 2 Year Financial Forecast (until released) • Item 8.1 – Chief Executive’s Report re Gateshead College, Redundancy/Restructure, Furlough Update and Deputy CEO 	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Date and time of future meetings</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the schedule of meetings 2020-21 is approved, as presented and that meetings for the first term will be via Microsoft TEAMS except for Stakeholder Groups as the nature of the business to be conducted is less defined and relies on networking etc.</p> <p>ii. That the CEO is asked to consider holding a stakeholder event at each of the College groups (STC/TyneMet/SSMS) in the autumn term, to be led by the CEO and Chairs of the BCSGs to talk about the College’s strategic direction, embracing connectivity/new ways of working etc. with a view to using the BCSG to drive this forward.</p> <p>The CEO took an opportunity to thank governors for their support during challenging circumstances.</p>	<p>NL</p> <p>LWh</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Deferred items</p> <p>12.1 Annual Health and Safety Report</p> <p>12.2 Corporate KPIs Balanced Scorecard Report</p> <p>12.3 Strategic Plan 2020-23 (To cover 1 yr proposal i.e. 2020/21)</p> <p>12.4 Internal Audit Strategy 2020-23 and Audit Plan 2020/2021</p> <p>12.5 Marine Strategy (10yr plan)</p> <p>12.6 Estates Strategy</p> <p>12.7 Stakeholder engagement and Client Management</p> <p>12.8 Student Union Report</p>	

Chair:

Date: