



The Camden College

Working Men's College Corporation: Board Meeting:

Wednesday 12 December 2018, 18:00

Minutes

			Attendance
Ahsan	Akbar		Y
Kate	Bell	V-Chair	Y
Barbara	Byrne		Y
Helen	Hammond	Principal	Y
June	Jarrett		Y
Alexi	Marmot		Y
David	Offenbach		Y
Chris	Percy		Y
Guy	Shackle	Chair.	Y
Paul	Smith		Apologies
Paula	Whittle	V-Chair	Y
LB Camden Representative			
Samata	Khatoon		Y
Staff Governors			
Jean	Esnard		Y
Amanda	Blinkhorn		Y
Student Governors			
Gerry	Munnely		Y
Hortese	Allen		Y
Officers Attending			
Charlie	Coles	MIS Director	Y
Martin	Jones	Vice Principal	Y
Lisa	Potter	Assistant Principal	Y
Maria	Rosenthal	Deputy Principal	Y
Bill	Barker	Clerk	Y

1.1	<p>Chair's Introduction and Welcome</p> <p>Kate Bell (KB, Vice Chair) opened the meeting as Guy Shackle (GS, Chair) was delayed in travel from work.</p> <p>On arrival GS welcomed everyone to the meeting at first thanking Tom Schuller for all his work as Chair for the nine previous years and for his help in introducing GS to WMC. He also thanked governors and staff for their welcome and for their exceptional contributions in the recent Ofsted inspection. He commented on the continual change in FE /ACL and in particular on the local impacts of the move of Mary Ward to Stratford, and of the potential developments arising from the construction of the HS2 railway.</p> <p>The 2017/18 SAR and the Ofsted judgements demonstrated that the College was well positioned to respond to the next set of challenges which would arise from continued funding freezes, increased staff costs, funding devolution and regulation changes, and the need to safeguard learners and to enhance the physical environment. These challenges can be viewed as opportunities to "re-set the dial" and to use the five year period before the next inspection to be innovative /entrepreneurial.</p>
1.2	<p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Paul Smith.</p>
1.3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were none.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of WMC Board July 2018.</p> <p>These were agreed and approved for signature.</p> <p>Matters arising not on current agenda.</p>
2.1	<p>Martin Jones (MJ, Vice Principal) updated the Board on the Sommers Town "Big Local" Lottery funding (STBL) and WMC's service as "Local Trusted Organisation" LTO. This was proceeding as planned with the further development that the STBL will have a base at WMC.</p>
3	<p>Strategy</p>
3.1	<p>Principal's Report: Update and Ofsted</p> <p>Learner Enrolments and Learner Fees.</p> <p>Helen Hammond (HH, Principal) introduced this report which highlighted to governors that enrolments were lower than planned, that fee income was below target and that there was increasing evidence of learners' difficulty in affording fees and their reluctance to pay in advance for a full years' provision (rather than term by term). The report reminded the Board of the funding regulation changes fully in force for the first time in 2017/18 whereby funded provision was identified more rigidly as formula funded or community learning and that the flexibility previously enjoyed by the SDIs to apply automatic and "formula funded" concessions to learners on community learning was discontinued, being replaced with a clear "pound plus" /co-funding expectation. WMC had implemented a transitional and graduated plan to assist learners with course fee payments and so as to manage the impact on learners. However it was now time to re-consider the fee charges so as to maintain learner enrolments and re-</p>

enforce the College's Mission (to meet the needs of those hardest to reach/ furthest away from provision).

In summary HH referred to the section in her report (on page 7) that identified how the funding regulation changes have had a detrimental effect on the College's to achieve the strategic objective of widening participation.

HH proposed that governors discuss the report and in particular the recommendation to have a moratorium on fees increase for 2019/20 with an enhanced marketing campaign.

Governors welcomed the report as an introduction to their discussion: during which the main points raised were:

The need for analysis of the financial implications of reduced fee income

The need for analysis of the financial implications of shortfalls in enrolments on funding levels in the current year and in the future.

Consideration of a differentiated fee increase /freeze /reduction policy: however governors also recognised that this would introduce increased complexity and bureaucracy at enrolment with the possibility of learner anxiety, confusion and possibly complaint.

MJ advised that fee income was c£700k and that the freeze (not a 5% increase) would therefore be c£35,000. He also advised that clawback provisions of ESFA funding would be invoked if the College did not meet its funded target.

Maria Rosenthal (MR, Deputy Principal Curriculum) advised that the available classroom space at WMC was finite and that any decisions about additional provision to mitigate the effect of low enrolment had to be offset against non-delivery of a displaced (bumped) course.

Governors agreed that there would be a fee increase moratorium for 2019/20 and that there should also be a Strategy Day to give governors more time to consider the wider implications of the impacts of the funding regulation changes and the GLA's emerging contracting outcomes based proposals.

Ofsted Inspection November 2018.

HH advised that WMC was in receipt of the draft report which was for factual checking. The Report did not deviate from the College's expectations (Overall Effectiveness "Good") and included a strong endorsement of the role of governors in the oversight and strategy of the College. The report also commended the work with the local community whilst also expressing some concerns about patchy learner destination data and the need for improvements in outcomes for ESOL learners on some elements of provision (which is recognised in the WMC 2017/18 SAR).

HH advised that on the assumption that the current cycles remained, there would not be another inspection for five years and that this presented opportunities for WMC to be adventurous in exploring ways to develop the curriculum so as to strengthen the impact of the Mission whilst also responding to any changes required by the GLA and any other external changes.

GS commented that he would write to all staff congratulating them for their hard work. He was also conscious of the need to handle the publicity with some sensitivity as the 2013 inspection grade had been Outstanding.

Building Project and Summer 2019.Planning

	<p>HH advised that the Crowndale Rd site would be handed over to building project contractors for much of July and August 2019 and that College operations would be based at the Living Centre (part of Sommers Town Community Centre) adjacent to the Crick Centre. WMC will deliver enrolment services, course taster sessions and learner assessments from this venue.</p> <p>TES Awards:</p> <p>WMC has been shortlisted for the ACL Learning Provider of the Year: the award ceremony will be on March 22.</p>
4	<p>Quality: Approval of SAR</p> <p>Paula Whittle (PW, Chair of CQSC) introduced this item advising that the SAR was a very thorough and rigorous document, whilst also expressing concern that there were only 2 governors apart from herself who had been able to attend the curriculum SAR moderations which formed the basis for the College SAR. PW encouraged more governors to attend these sessions in forthcoming years as this would increase the rigour with which the judgements were reached and so their quality and robustness.</p> <p>During the curriculum moderation process the panel had agreed that there were 2 at grade 1, 6 at grade 2 and 1 at grade 3: the SAR for one other area was not accepted as sufficiently justified by the evidence provided, but on re-presentation citing the evidence base it was agreed to be at grade 1.</p> <p>The CQSC had then considered the College SAR considering the balance between numbers of learners who had performed well and those who had not. PW commented also on the particular positive impact of the decision to move to ungraded lesson observations which now informed further professional development. The SAR as introduced to the Committee had all areas graded as Good.</p> <p>The CQSC had changed the PDBW grade from 2 (Good) to 1 (Outstanding): this was an outcome of discussion weighing the relative impact of the positive elements against the concerns about gaps in ethnic participation and achievement.</p> <p>The SAR was adopted by the Board, with governors thanking all college staff for their contributions to its production.</p> <p>PW advised that Ofsted would be introducing a new inspection framework in the near future expressing her view of the importance that all governors are briefed on this. HH informed the Board that she was representing the ACL providers in consultations with Ofsted.</p>
5	<p>Finance:2017/18: (for approval unless indicated otherwise)</p> <p>MJ advised the Board that this part of the agenda summarised the College's financial performance and governance arrangements during 2017/18. The Members' Report and the Financial Statements present assessments of the College's performance in these areas, complementing the judgments about the quality of provision for learners in the SAR. He further advised that the surpluses and investment gains in 2017/18 strengthened the College's ability to invest in its estate and facilities so as to provide a better and attractive physical environment for learners.</p> <p>He advised the Board that there were a number of reports and documents that the Board needed to consider before moving on to the Members' Report and Financial Statements (MRFS) themselves. He also advised that Buzzacott (the College's</p>

	external auditors) would sign unqualified opinions in relation to both the accounts and their work on regularity once these documents were approved by the Board.
5.1	<p>Annual Report of Audit Committee (AC) – (for information)</p> <p>KB advised the Board that the Annual Report and Opinion of the AC was considered and endorsed at a recent meeting of the AC.</p> <p>She drew the attention of the Board to the report from post audit letter from Buzzacott on their audit of the 2017/18 accounts and to the reports from Scrutton Bland, the recently appointed internal audit service provider, on assurances in the areas of key financial controls and funding controls. She advised that in consequence the AC had confidence in the College’s control and risk management arrangements as expressed in its Opinion.</p>
5.2	<p>Annual Report on Risk Management: Risk Register /Risk Management Policy.</p> <p>MJ advised that this report on risk management and the appended risk register had been considered at the AC and were recommended by the Committee for approval by the Board. He drew the attention of governors to the re-formatting of the Risk Register, to include a column on “inherent risk” before controls, and to the addition of the main risks associated with the building improvement project.</p> <p>The Annual Report on Risk Management included arrangements being put in place with middle managers to strengthen consideration of how risk management and mitigating actions could be integrated with the Performance Review Board (PRB) assessments and aligned with the curriculum and service areas’ QIPs.</p> <p>The Risk Management Policy had also been reviewed at the AC, the only changes being associated with changes to reflect changes in College structure and managers’ responsibilities and also that overall responsibility was now the responsibility of the Vice Principal, Finance and Projects. .</p> <p>This report was welcomed by the Board which approved the Annual Report and the Risk Register, and endorsed the procedural changes noted in the Risk Management Policy.</p>
5.3	<p>Fraud Questionnaire – (for information)</p> <p>This was noted.</p> <p>Governors noted also that support for learners’ childcare expenses was available through bursary allocations and not from provisions for formula funded provision or from the WMC Discretionary Learner Support Fund for learners on ACL provision.</p>
5.4	<p>Regularity Self-Assessment.</p> <p>This was approved for signature by the Accounting Officer and the Chair.</p>
5.5	<p>Board Self-Assessment.</p> <p>This summarised the developments put in place by governors to strengthen the governance framework in 2017/18. This was endorsed as a robust basis for the assessment of Corporate Performance as “Good” included in the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control.</p>
5.6	<p>Letter of Representations</p>

5.7	<p>Governors noted that this advised the auditors of the College's controls and assurances in relation to activities and practices that they did not (and could not be expected to) cover in their audit work.</p> <p>This was agreed for signature by the Chair on behalf of all governors.</p> <p>Report and Financial Statements 31 July 2018:</p> <p>MJ advised that the Financial Statements had been considered by the FPDC and were recommended for approval: he further advised that the version now before the Board incorporated the final adjustments (for increased ESFA income of £128k and partial offsetting by posting of the untaken annual leave accrual of £31k). In consequence the surplus for the year was £856k which was greater than the budgeted surplus and was attributable to the non-utilisation of contingencies, staffing vacancies and efficiencies in addition to contribution resulting from ESFA growth funding. The Balance Sheet remains strong with net assets increasing by £1,131k to £12,512k.</p> <p>The Post Audit Report from Buzzacott advises that governors can regard the College as "ongoing concern" for one year from the date of signing the accounts: it also advises that governors should continue to receive regular financial monitoring information.</p> <p>Members' report (page 16)</p> <p>MJ advised that the outcomes of the Ofsted inspection were at page 6. Also that the cost of trade union facilities (c£5,000) time was for the first time reported at page 16. This disclosure arises from the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>The Members' Report was agreed by the Board for signature on their behalf.</p> <p>Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control: (page 24) including the Board's self-assessment of its effectiveness as "Good" page 21: This was agreed by the Board for signature on their behalf.</p> <p>Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance (page 25): This was agreed by the Board for signature on their behalf.</p> <p>Statement of the Responsibilities of the Governors of the Corporation (page 26): This was agreed by the Board for signature on their behalf.</p> <p>Balance sheet (page 34): This was agreed by the Board for signature on their behalf.</p> <p>In summary GS drew the attention of governors to the high current ratio as at 31 July 2018 and also that this would reduce as the College incurred expenditure on the building project now in progress.</p> <p>Governors confirmed that they agreed with the assessment of the College's Financial Health at 31 July 2018 as "Outstanding*."</p>
6	Finance 2018/19
6.1	Management Accounts for 3 months to 31 Oct 2018.

	<p>MJ introduced this item referring also to the earlier discussion about lower than anticipated fee income. The management accounts (MAs) show that fee income is £24k below the trajectory of £328k, and that loan fee income of £41k is also below the expected value of £60k. He advised that whilst there were opportunities in term 2 and 3 for recovery to offset the learner fee income shortfalls in term 1, this was not the case for the loan fee income because the courses for which this is available were of a full year's duration.</p> <p>The MAs show that the surplus for the year to date is 17% or c£75k greater than the forecast, however the outturn forecast had been revised downwards to reflect concerns relating to fee and loan income shortfalls and low learner enrolments on some courses. MJ emphasised that additional provision was planned for terms 2 and 3 and that this would be promoted through specific marketing in advance of the enrolment periods for this provision.</p> <p>MJ drew the attention of the Board to the cross referencing of this commentary on the MAs with the risks under the remit of the FPDC, commenting particularly on the risk associated with the failure to manage the physical condition of the College's estate so as to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment. The other risks associated with low enrolment, not achieving funded values and failure to achieve budgeted fee income levels had been raised earlier in the discussions.</p> <p>Governors thanked MJ for this report noting that the Q2 MAs for the 6 months to the end of January 2019 would provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the arrangements planned to redress shortfalls against funding allocations.</p>
7	Reports from Committees – introduced by Committee Chairs
7.1	<p>Audit Committee (AC) 11 December</p> <p>KB introduced the report from the AC advising that much had been reported earlier in the meeting through the Annual Report of the AC. She advised that the Committee had received the first reports from Scrutton Bland (SB), the IAS provider, and that governors and staff had reported positively on their clarity and the fairness of their judgments. In the new year the College would hold a tender for external audit provider and that a recommendation for appointment would be recommended to the Board in April.</p> <p>The point she wanted to highlight at this stage was that the membership of the Committee should be increased from the current 3 governors: She encouraged any of the current Board eligible for membership to put themselves forward, but recognized also that the College may well benefit from a more general recruitment campaign.</p>
7.2	<p>FPDC 27 November incl appendices: Building Project: Project Manager's and Quantity Surveyor's Reports Proposals for Estates Strategy Group / Building Project Monitoring</p> <p>Barbara Byrne (BB) introduced the minutes of the meeting to which were appended two items relating to the Building Project: the Project Manager's Report and a report from the Quantity Surveyor. The minutes and appendices clearly demonstrate that the project carries a level of risk that needs to be controlled. She reported that a major element (Boiler upgrade) of the work planned for phase 1 in the summer of 2018 had been postponed so as that the College had a functioning, though increasingly unreliable, heating system for the current heating period and that other elements had also been delayed, though planned for later in December 2018. Additional cost had also been incurred and were predicted increasing the total cost from the £2.2m agreed by the Board in April 2018 to c£2.37m plus £120k contingency. She advised that there</p>

	<p>were areas in which cost savings could be achieved, but that the FPDC was conscious of the apparent attraction of short term cost reductions that only transfer additional cost to future years.</p> <p>Governors expressed concerns about the delays and consequent volume and manageability of the work in the summer of 2019, and about the possibility of further cost increases. Alexi Marmot (AM, Chair of the Estates Strategy Group, - ESG), reminded the Board that their decision to proceed in April had been taken in recognition that the College's facilities required upgrading to meet learners' expectations: she advised that the ESG and FPDC had proceeded in a very deliberative way at each stage in the planning and commissioning of this work.</p> <p>BB further advised that the ESG would meet in early January to consider the most appropriate actions, including cost containment /value engineering, programme control, scope of future works and assessment of effectiveness of interventions in the test rooms on the 5th floor.</p> <p>David Offenbach (DO) reminded the Board of his opposition to what was in his view the disproportionate scale of this project and his continuing concerns at the cost increases. Whilst appreciating the need to replace the heating system, he wished to see a whole-scale re-evaluation of the proposed ventilation solution. He asked whether there was an option to call a halt to the ventilation elements planned for summer 2019 pending a thorough assessment of the availability of other solutions. MJ advised that there was within the contract provision to call a halt, but he stressed that this would mean that WMC would continue to offer an increasingly less attractive learning environment at a critical time when the College needed to maintain its buoyant presence as funding and planning of future provision was transferred to the GLA.</p> <p>In response to a question Governors were assured that there were sufficient skill levels available to the ESG through the tendered appointment of Fusion, the Project Managers, and a number of other specialist advisors. There were also 2 governors on the ESG who were architects in their professional lives. HH advised that the duties associated with MJ's post had been re-arranged so as to provide him with dedicated time to oversee the project.</p>
	<p>GS said that the ESG in January would assess the best way forward and that the Board would have an opportunity to consider this either at a Strategy Day planned for March or at the next meeting of the Board.</p> <p>BB advised the Board of other matters discussed at the FPDC not already considered at this meeting: she advised that in 2019 the College would tender first for HR and payroll software and then for printer and copiers.</p>
7.3	<p>CQSC 03 December</p> <p>PW introduced the minutes from the Committee to which was appended the Annual Report on Safeguarding, which included a review of the Safeguarding Policy. Apart from consideration of the SAR which was discussed earlier on the agenda of this Board meeting, she wished to draw the attention of all governors to the commendable work on Safeguarding described in the Annual Report. She wanted to remind governors of the importance and value of the Curriculum Links visits, which also extends to cover support and service areas. She encouraged all governors to establish a link area, by contacting MR, the Deputy Principal.</p>
7.4	<p>Remuneration Committee (RC). AoC Remuneration Code</p> <p>GS advised that the RC would meet in early January to consider the 2018/19 salary arrangements for the Senior Post Holders, and to make recommendations to the</p>

	<p>Board. The SC would also consider the proposed revisions to the AoC's Code for the Remuneration of Senior Staff.</p> <p>Search Committee (SC)</p> <p>GS advised that the SC would also meet in early January to put in place the recruitment of new governors.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>College History / Fellows / Dick Taylor (update)</p> <p>Bill Barker, the Clerk, (BB_CI), introduced this paper to which Tom Schuller had contributed the paragraph about Professor Taylor's progress on the book to update the College's history from 1954 to the present day.</p> <p>He also advised that the Search Committee would consider re-establishing the terms of office of the lapsed Fellows and proposals for additional Fellows.</p> <p>Governors agreed that once the book updating the College's history was published there should be a College History Day.</p> <p>Next meeting of the WMCC Board: 03 April</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>GLA Capital Grant</p> <p>MJ advised the Board that that he had received notification on 10 December that the College's stage 1 application to the Skills for Londoners Capital Fund had been successful and the College was now being invited to submit a stage 2 application with greater detail and financial information. The application would need to be submitted by 21 January 2019.</p>
	<p>The Board was reminded that the project sought to improve the facilities and support for learners and potential learners outside the taught classroom sessions. It therefore proposed creation of a new Open Learning Centre in the former hair and beauty salon with activities integrated into substantially improved facilities, resources and opportunities in the Ruskin Library and Maurice Hall in support of the Mayor of London's priorities.</p> <p>He sought the approval of the Board to proceed with an application from WMC.</p> <p>This was agreed.</p>

Signed: 

Date: 03/04/2019