



WM College Board July 2020 Minutes (virtual / MS Teams Platform)

				Board 15 July 2020
Appointed Governors				
1	Kate	Bell		Y
2	Barbara	Byrne		Y
3	Susan	Corby		Y
4	Fran	Fahey		Y
5	Neil	Garner		Apologies
6	June	Jarrett		Y
7	Samata	Khatoon		Apologies
8	Alexi	Marmot		Y
9	Chris	Percy		Apologies
10	Guy	Shackle		Y
11	Jon	Sibson		Y
12	Paul	Smith		Y
	Helen	Hammond	Principal: ex officio	Y
Staff Governors				
	Amanda	Blinkhorn	Teaching Staff	Y
	Monica	Kinasiwicz	Support Staff	Y
Student Governors				
	Romy	Brandeis		Y
	Arianna	Cariacciolo		Apologies
Officers Attending				
	Martin	Jones		Vice Principal
	Maria	Rosenthal		Deputy Principal
	Bill	Barker		Clerk

1	<p>Chair's Welcome</p> <p>Guy Shackle (GS, Chair of WMC Corporation) welcomed everyone to the meeting reminding governors that the meeting due to have taken place on April 01 had been cancelled as a consequence of the Covid-19 lockdown. He was pleased that the summer term cycle of had taken place on the MS Teams platform per the planned schedule.</p> <p>GS had convened a 'Chairs Group' comprising himself, the Vice Chair and the committee chairs to provide an immediate 'sounding' board to guide the college through the initial period of lockdown and the move to teaching online (see also Item 4)</p> <p>GS welcomed especially the proposal to be considered at item 2 that two new members of the Board should be appointed.</p>
1.1	<p>Apologies for Absence Chris Percy, Samata Khatoon, Romy Brandeis, Arianna Caracciolo (also Neil Garner)</p>
1.2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were none.</p>
2	<p><u>Membership:</u> New members and extensions of Terms of Office: the Board considered the recommendations of the Search Committee as set out in the note from the Clerk.</p> <p>New Appointments: Susan Corby Neil Garner</p> <p>Business Deferred from Spring Meeting: Re-Appointment of: Barbara Byrne - 3rd term Alexi Marmot - 3rd term Appointment of Jon Sibson as Chair of CQSC</p> <p>Re-Appointments currently due: June Jarrett – 2nd term Paul Smith – 2nd term</p> <p>Note: Ahsan Akbar has resigned from the Board with effect from 17 June.</p> <p>Student Governors: Terms of office extended until 01 April 2021.</p> <p>Chair and Vice-Chair elections</p> <p>The Clerk advised that there was a single nomination for each post:</p> <p>Guy Shackle proposed as Chair by Barbara Byrne.</p>

	<p>Kate Bell proposed as Vice-Chair by June Jarrett. The Clerk asked whether there were any further nominations: there were none. The proposals were seconded by governors and the proposals adopted.</p> <p>All the recommendations of the Search Committee were approved. GS thanked Kate Bell and Paula Whittle (in absentia) for their work as Committee Chairs: he also reminded the Board how work towards an Estates Strategy and on intermediate improvements had been envisaged and overseen by Alexi Marmot and the Estates Group /FPDC.</p> <p>RFSA trusteeship.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that with the resignation of Ahsan Akbar from the WM College Board there was a vacancy for the WMC on the Board of the RSFA, (post meeting note: Alexi Marmot has expressed an interest in undertaking this role).</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of Board meeting – December 2019.</p> <p>These were approved as a correct record.</p> <p>Matters arising.</p> <p>There were no matters arising that had not either been progressed by the Committees or not on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.</p>	
4	<p>Strategy</p>	
4.1	<p>Chair’s introduction: GS introduced this section referring to the Principal’s Update and the Budget to be considered: he also advised that the Strategy Session in October would provide an opportunity for governors to consider other College and sector (FE /IAL) matters:</p> <p>WM College Digital Strategy (progress in Principal’s report) WM College Estates Strategy to be revisited and developed post Covid Sector and WM College’s positioning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College of Future, • Climate Action, • Dame Mary Ney Review <p>He advised the Board that the major works on improving the Heating and Ventilation were now coming to an end with final commissioning and snagging works being undertaken in late spring and summer this year.</p> <p>He referred to a note prepared by the Clerk about the formation and role of the Chairs’ Advisory Group, and of his view that this should be kept in place into the next year. This was agreed.</p>	
4.2	<p>Principal’s Update - Strategic Plan</p>	

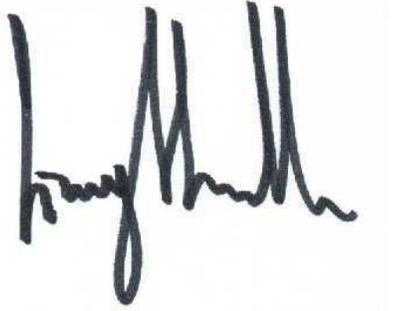
	<p>Helen Hammond (HH, Principal) introduced this item which looked back over the current year and anticipated developments in the next year.</p> <p>The current 2019/20 year had been one of almost 2 normal positive and productive terms followed by a third lockdown term with significant impacts. She stressed however, that not all of these were negative and emphasized in particular the response of teaching and learner support staff to the need to move activities on-line rather than face-to-face on-site.</p> <p>There were never the less significant financial impacts on both the current (2019/20) and next year's (2020/21) loss of fee income for two reasons: fewer enrolments and an increase in the proportion of enrolments that attract fee remission because of the type of provision or learners' low income.</p> <p>The report on 2019/20 progress in the achievement of the strategic aims identified in the Strategic Plan reflected the year of two parts with work on some elements stalled at the end of March despite some significant achievements in the earlier part of the year.</p> <p><u>The Update also advised the Board:</u></p> <p>The College had received a GLA Covid-19 Fund allocation to of #50k The MIS Team was working well with new two new, but experienced and qualified, members of staff, and that the new Learner Services Manager had very recently taken up his post.</p> <p>Governors questioned how the College was positioned to respond to the need for an adult re-skilling programme post Covid and post Brexit. HH advised that the work of the College would continue to be to support the earlier steps of adults' return to learning and that other providers were better placed to offer higher level more sectoral specific skills and apprenticeships. In this respect she reminded governors that there remained a digital divide (broadband service, and IT machine) affecting some communities. The College would continue and develop its basic IT /digital skills programme in response to need and would make available advice and guidance about progression routes at either WM College or at partner /IAL providers where appropriate.</p> <p>GS thanked HH for this update and reminded governors that in the summer of 2021 there would be the (postponed) London Mayoral election which could introduce further changes to the environment in which WM College operates.</p> <p>The Principal's Update was welcomed and endorsed by the Board.</p>	
4.3	<p>Finance: <u>Management Accounts Q3 2019/20</u></p> <p>Martin Jones (MJ, Vice Principal) introduced this item, advising that the FPDC had recently reviewed the accounts marking in particular that it was in the latter (lockdown) months that the financial performance was anticipated to deteriorate, and that prior to that time the performance was in line with the year to date forecast. At the end of April and so after</p>	

	<p>about five weeks of lockdown the College budget was in balance against the budgeted year to date surplus of £60k.</p> <p>The year-end outturn on operations was anticipated to be c£470k - greater than the budget set in July 2019 by c£390k.</p> <p>In addition the year-end loss on the investment portfolio was presented as the figure at the end of April (an in year loss of £614k) though this might change by 31 July.</p> <p>Governors welcomed these accounts and the commentary.</p>
<p>4.4</p>	<p><u>Budget 2020/21</u></p> <p>MJ introduced this item advising that the budget was presented for approval by the Board and by inviting Barbara Byrne (BB, Chair of the FPDC) to provide some introductory comments.</p> <p>BB informed the Board that the FPDC had spent some considerable time at its last meeting in late June discussing the budget for 2020/21. This discussion had interrogated some of the assumptions and recommended that additional sensitivity analyses and information about prior year's surpluses should accompany the commentary for the Board. These were both included in the commentary for consideration.</p> <p>BB emphasized that that although the FPDC was recommending this budget, no members of the Committee were overly pleased to do so as it was for another second year of deficit. However inclusion of outturn information of surpluses from three prior years lent support to the view that the basic business model of the College was sound and sustainable.</p> <p>MJ proceeded to introduce the budget for 2020/21. He outlined that the basic planning assumptions were for a mainly normal year though without year end reconciliation of performance against GLA adult skills budget. He advised that there remained considerable uncertainties about levels of enrolment and levels of fee income and that there was as yet no certainty about the continuation of the ESFA supplement to support the continuing 2019 increased employers' cost of teachers' pensions.</p> <p>MJ then went through the main points of the budget paper reminding governors that the budget was income driven and that was increased by £57k from 2019/20 mainly as a result of an increased funding rate for GCSEs.</p> <p>Fee income was assumed at £600k which was c#100K than lower than might have been budgeted but for Covid-19.</p> <p>Investment (dividend) income was reduced from c£140k to £80k.</p> <p>The budget is proposed at a deficit of £192k on operations before consideration of any loss or gain in the value of the investments at BNY Mellon.</p> <p><u>2020/21 Full Year Cashflow:</u></p> <p>MJ advised that despite the budgeted deficit the budget was cash generative, and the sensitivity analyses, even at worst case, could be absorbed in the immediate term, but that</p>

	<p>reductions would be needed to the cost base for future years if the external environment remained unstable and the College was not able to return to pre-pandemic volumes of activity. The summary cashflow showed that at July 31 2021 cash balances would increase by £46k from £618k to £664k: this level of cash provided the assurance that even the “worst case” combination of sensitivity scenarios resulting in a net cash decrease of £435k could be withstood in the short term.</p> <p>There was a lengthy discussion which questioned the College’s ability to respond to adverse conditions in year. MJ referred to the sensitivity analyses in the budget paper and drew the attention of the Board to the predominance of sessional teachers employed for variable amounts of time in a year. He emphasized that the contracts of employment for these members of staff could withstand variability in teaching hours whilst the underlying contract of employment remained in force.</p> <p>In discussion governors considered the different sensitivity scenarios questioning the effects of reductions in learner numbers on both Community Learning and Adult Education revenue funding streams. The Community Learning funding of £2.6M was effectively a “block grant” in distinction to the AE funding of £1.8M which was formula driven with the consequence that a reduction in learner numbers would have the potential to impact not only on fee income but on funding “earned”. The impact on funding earned would be removed if the GLA was able to guarantee funding without year-end reconciliation, but such an announcement had not yet been made for 2020/21 and would require confirmation from the ESFA and Treasury.</p> <p>Governors noted that the budget assumed full year funding of £149k for the increase in employers’ contributions to Teachers’ Pensions, and that the College would be able to take advantage of additional grant money (£60k) available from the GLA for post Covid recovery.</p> <p>Governors wanted to be provided with timely information about enrolment levels and financial performance during the autumn and early spring months so that corrective action could be taken if required. HH advised that circumstances might change greatly from term to term and that some caution should be exercised in expecting the outcomes of term one to be rolled forward into terms 2 and 3. GS welcomed this advice referring to the College’s mission and recognizing that if too much was taken out of the cost base as an overly cautious approach, then it could be difficult to rebuild at a later stage.</p> <p>Governors approved the budget noting the £192k deficit and agreeing that 2020/21 monitoring would be against this baseline.</p> <p>BB expressed thanks on behalf of the FPDC to MJ for his work on the papers for the meeting recognizing that a key member of the Finance Team was absent for a planned hospital operation.</p>	
5	<p>Re-Opening</p>	
	<p><u>Planning, Risks and Mitigation</u></p> <p>MJ introduced this short paper and the associated risk now added to the Risk Register.</p>	

	<p>He advised that a limited return to work on site was now operating so as to allow enrolment, advice and guidance, pre-course assessment and limited course end practical assessments.</p> <p>The site was prepared as a PHE (Public Health England) Covid-19 compliant area with one way systems and partition screening and sanitizer and face mask protocols in place.</p> <p>The risk now added to the Risk Register was owned by all Committees and the Board and so presented here. MJ advised that even with the mitigation actions in place, and the return to site risk assessment the level of risk remained high – mainly because of the external factors out of the control or influence of the College.</p> <p>MJ advised that the return to these partial opening activities and staffing levels had been the subject of consultation with the staff trade unions which had been constructive.</p> <p>Governors welcomed the reassurance that these measures provided to make all possible arrangements for a safe return to limited on-site face to face activity.</p> <p>Governors welcomed the opportunity to review the new risk on the register and the return to work risk assessment.</p>	
6	<p>Reports and Minutes from Committees:</p> <p>GS advised that the Committee Chairs would highlight the main considerations at the recent cycle of meetings whilst also commenting on matters from the spring cycle which had yet to be reported to the Board.</p>	
6.1	<p>CQSC – Curriculum:</p> <p>Jon Sibson (JS, Chair of the CQSC) advised that Committee had heard much about how the curriculum delivery model and content was being adjusted for on-line delivery and the extent to which the feasibility of such delivery would or could be developed to become an established part of future provision.</p> <p>The Committee recognized that a digital only offer might make it less likely that learners would benefit from the wider social elements arising from participation in learning.</p> <p>At the meeting in the Spring the Committee had considered and approved both the QIP and the revised Safeguarding Policy</p>	
6.2	<p>Audit Committee:</p> <p>Paul Smith (PS, Chair of Audit Committee) introduced this item commenting that much of the business had focused around the extent of the work that the IAS would be able to deliver in 2019/20, adjustments to future arrangements and the 2020/21 IAS Assignment Plan. The IAS Plan for 2020/21 was appended to the minutes.</p> <p><u>Financial Statements Auditors:</u></p>	

	<p>The item brought forward from the April meeting of the Board was the proposal to appoint Buzzacott as Financial Statements Auditors for the 2019/20 accounts: this would be for the second year after a full re-tendering process.</p> <p>The proposal was agreed.</p> <p>AC Membership: The Board noted that the Committee might benefit from the skills brought by a co-opted member. The Clerk GS and PS would consider how best to achieve this.</p>	
6.3	<p>FPDC – Finance</p> <p>Barbara Byrne (BB, Chair of the FPDC) introduced this item commenting that most of the financial elements of the Committee’s work had informed earlier discussions about the Management Accounts to April 30 for 2019/20 and the Budget for 2020/21.</p> <p>In addition to the financial work the Committee had considered an approved a revised Data Protection Policy which had been written with the help of the College’s retained consultant.</p> <p>BB advised that the cleaning contract was to be re-tendered at the end of 2019 and that whilst cleaning operatives had been furloughed some anomalies had arisen about the hourly rate of pay received by operatives. This should have been at London Living Wage throughout, but the Company (Lewis and Graves) had not applied recent increases. This had now been rectified, with back pay applied.</p> <p>The Committee had at its meeting in May considered the Health and Safety Policy and then an annual report on H&S at the June meeting. The Policy had been approved and the report endorsed: the Health and Safety Policy Statement was attached with the FPDC minutes and was recommended for approval and signature by the Chair and Principal.</p> <p>This was agreed with the Board noting also the particular contemporaneous arrangements for the health and safety of learners and staff returning to limited activity at Crowndale Rd.</p>	
7	<p>Dates of Meetings Autumn 2020 and Spring 2021</p> <p>The Clerk presented a schedule of dates for the first 2 terms of the next year.</p> <p>This included a Strategy Session on 14 October, and the Learner Success Evening on Friday 13 November at 15:00.</p> <p>He drew the attention of governors to a standardization of meeting days and times: All meetings: Wednesdays 17:30</p>	

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Henry Hill', written on a white rectangular background.

Signed: _____

____Date: 16 December 2020