



WMCC Board Wednesday 31 March 2021

Minutes

			All via MS Teams	31 March 2021
	Appointed Governors			
1	Kate	Bell		Y
2	Barbara	Byrne		Y
3	Susan	Corby		Y
4	Fran	Fahey		Y
5	Neil	Garner		Y
6	June	Jarrett		Y
7	Samata	Khatoon		Y
8	Alexi	Marmot		Y
9	Guy	Shackle	Chair of Governors	Y
10	Jon	Sibson		Y
11	Max	Silver		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	Caracciolo		Apologies
	Officers Attending			
	Martin	Jones	Vice Principal	Y
	Maria	Rosenthal	Deputy Principal	Y
	Bill	Barker	Clerk	Y

Agenda

1	<p>Welcome. Guy Shackle (GS, Chair of Governors) welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p><u>Apologies for absence</u> There were none.</p> <p><u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were none.</p>	
2	Governance:	

	<p>Board Membership: New Member /3 year renewals /extensions</p> <p>GS introduced Max Silver (MS) to the Board advising that MS was recommended for membership of the Board after interview by a panel of the Search Committee. The appointment of MS was agreed. Members of the Board welcomed that MS was a local resident and that he would be joining the Audit Committee.</p> <p><u>Election of Chair and Vice Chairs</u> Alexi Marmot proposed that GS continue as Chair for a further year: this proposal was seconded by a number of governors with none expressing a contrary view.</p> <p>GS proposed that Barbara Byrne and Jon Sibson continue as vice-chairs, noting that it was only in December that they had been first appointed to these positions. This proposal was supported by all governors.</p> <p>The Clerk recommended that the terms of office of Guy Shackle and Samata Khaton (SK) which had reached their 3 year anniversaries should be extended for a further three year term. SK's re-nomination was also proposed by Camden Council. These terms of office renewals were both agreed.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of December 2020 Meeting</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p><u>Matters arising:</u> Governors revisited the discussion about “going concern” that had arisen in the context of the (2019/20) Post-Audit Letter from Buzzacott. The Board recognised that this matter remained “live” whilst enrolment and fee income volumes were limited by lockdown, and ESFA/ GLA funding contract levels might not be achieved.</p> <p><u>Strategy Session:</u> Governors noted that it had not been possible to make arrangements for a Strategy Session during lockdown. GS advised that he was keen to have a Strategy Session in October 2021 and that this might involve consideration of curriculum changes in response to ESFA /GLA priorities and the impacts of IT /digital learning roll-outs on College provision and accommodation usage.</p>	
4	<p>Strategy</p> <p>Chair’s Introduction: (Sustainability, Diversity and Regulation). GS introduced this section advising that the immediate imperatives made necessary by the pandemic had not eroded the main aims of and issues raised by the College’s Strategic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence for All • Effective and Sustainable • Working Together <p>He advised that the College had responded well to the challenges of successful delivery of these objectives during the pandemic lockdowns citing the uninterrupted work of</p>	

curriculum teams (transition to digital learning reflected in the SAR and QIP), and of service teams (successful unqualified audit of accounts, estates refurbishment, iWork implementation).

He was particularly keen not to lose sight of the “sustainability” strand which he anticipated would be more prominent in the months before COP 21 in November. The achievement of a “net zero” economy would become increasingly challenging as timeframe for change before 2050 diminished. The College was playing its part (newly installed “zoned” BMS, double glazing, less paper, removal of single use cups etc), but its Display Energy Certificate (DEC) rating was “D”.

HH advised that the College would consider introductory courses for learners (not technical): eg. “what is sustainability about, who are the players, and how can I contribute?”

GS commented also that Diversity and Inclusion remained central underpinning elements for the successful delivery of the Strategic Plan.

JJ (June Jarrett) commented that the progress made by the FE sector in the early 2020s had not been sustained but that she hoped the BFELG (Black Further Education Leadership Group) of which she was a member might make progress in re-energising this agenda. Governors acknowledged that the WMC leadership team, Appointed and Nominated (staff and student) governors were very largely “pale”. There was discussion about how the representation from ethnic minorities could be increased, with governors expressing the view that measures to address under-representation should be promoted at every opportunity including consideration of the setting of targets. Alexi Marmot advised that the RFSA Board on which she was the WM College’s nominee had recently worked with PILAA (Pre Image Learning and Action) an organisation with which she had been impressed.

Principal’s Update:

HH thanked GS for his introduction to this Strategy Section of the meeting advising that sustainability and diversity alongside the other strategic aims had become embedded in the work of the College through the PRB / SAR / QIP cycle.

HH spoke to her paper which was divided into 3 sections:

Section 1. Strategic Plan Update

Section 2 College Redecoration

Section 3: FE White Paper (Skills for Jobs Lifelong Learning for opportunity and Growth)

Section 1. Strategic Plan - Update;

The move to on-line delivery of teaching had also encouraged learners to become “expert” in learning outside of formal teaching time, and in the development of their digital skills. The move to on-line delivery has been made possible by the underlying robustness of the IT systems, and the work of the small IT and Digital Learning teams. The iWork implementation will support further development of the Single Central Record – reducing bureaucracy and also meeting Ofsted’s best practice expectations.

Section 2 College Refurbishment, IT cabling and Redecoration

The extended lockdown had presented an opportunity to build on the environmental (background) benefits of the Heating and Ventilation Project within a shortened

timeframe. The works to advertise and showcase the improved learner experience included:

Redecoration and refit of classrooms at Level 5 (revealing original terrazzo corridor flooring) and Level 7 reconfiguration to convert a large impractically shaped classroom so as to provide 2 teaching pods and an improved classroom.

Installation of a roof on the existing external platform lift for wheelchair users (this is being discussed with LB Camden as it requires Listed Building Consent)

Redecoration and signage consistent with 2020 branding colours.

Room 303: refurbishment to achieve an office and a meeting room.

HH advised that much of this work was part funded by the ESFA / GLA with matched funding conditions considered in detail by the FPDC and reported in the minutes of the Committee's meetings.

Section 3: FE White Paper 2021 (Skills for Jobs Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth)

HH advised that the main focus of the FE White Paper (FEWP) was on young (16-19) learners, but that there were opportunities for the IALs to expand their vocational provision especially at level 3 and to define pathways for lifelong learning and contingent financial support for learners. (The National Skills Fund £2,500M includes a 2021-22 predicated £95M for adults – the Lifetime Skills Guarantee.)

The FEWP envisaged a greater role for employers in both the design and delivery patterns (planning) of provision - with Local Skills Improvement Plans developed by employers, providers and funding authorities to take the Plans forward.

The FEWP also envisaged a simplification of the funding systems, the introduction of longer term (3 year) funding agreements and the introduction of life-long learning loans - but the roll-out of loan arrangements would be some 3 years out.

The FEWP also contained proposals for a tailored FE teacher training, recruitment, development, progression and salary package that would be (part) designed by employers and address the pay disparities that now exist between the pay scales and structures available to school teachers and those available to teachers in the FE sector.

The FEWP anticipated strengthening governance and accountability frameworks with an emphasis on early support and Intervention where providers envisaged financial (cashflow) difficulties. The new arrangements would make more streamlined the separate reporting lines and boundaries ("ringfences") and incorporate an increased focus on outcomes.

The GLA has launched a London Recovery Programme (GLA LRP) – with 9 Recovery Strands. HH commented that many of these were either directly central to the delivery of the objectives of the Strategic Plan or closely related to their delivery. The GLA LRP had a clear emphasis on English, maths and digital skills as necessary precursors for learners' later success on less generic specific vocational courses.

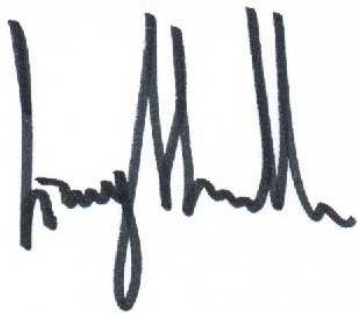
There are a number of committees and advisory boards to take forward its work in response to the Covid-19 aftermath and the developments proposed in the FEWP.

	<p>HH represents the College on the Central London Forward Board, and the IALs on the GLA wide Outcomes Advisory Group.</p> <p>Governors thanked HH for the report and expressed their support and admiration of the work of teachers and learners to maintain contact and learning in the lockdown.</p> <p>ESFA Announcement on AEB Skills Funding. The ESFA had published a threshold of 90% after which clawback of funding might be implemented. The announcement applies directly only to funding for out of London learners funded directly by ESFA- c£50k</p> <p>GLA have already been working on a 90% threshold for the whole of the academic year and are prepared to set a lower funding reconciliation target. They have stated that they will consider business case (exemption) proposals from providers who are significantly below funding allocations. HH had met with the College's GLA contact but with the election purdah now invoked it was unlikely that there would be further information until mid June.</p>	
5	<p>Finance and Estates Management Accounts to January 31 2021 (Q2 – 6 months)</p> <p>MJ (Martin Jones, Vice Principal) introduced this item drawing the attention of governors to the impact of reduced fee income (as a consequence of course cancellation and reduced –socially distanced – class sizes) on performance against budget. The YTD surplus was £156k against a budgeted surplus of £346K: this is £190k worse than forecast (surpluses at this time of year reflect the payment schedule of ESFA/GLA funding). The EoY deficit is now forecast to be £206k vs £188k budgeted. MJ advised that the College wanted to recover this £17k adverse variance over the summer term and summer school, and so achieve an outcome consistent with the budget.</p> <p>The introduction of Furlough (JRS) of staff on fee-paying courses will enable some recovery to compensate for the loss of fee income. The College expects to receive £65k in the full 2020/21 year.</p> <p>Governors asked about the possible impact of clawback for delivery below a contract delivery threshold of 90%. MJ advised that any clawback would not be confirmed until the late autumn and that the funds would be recovered in instalments. He further advised that there were now established regular monthly meetings with the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the FPDC to monitor the management accounts and cashflow – these provide additional assurance to governors that deviations from forecasts can be identified on emergence with early mitigating actions put in place.</p> <p>Maria Rosenthal (MR Deputy Principal) expressed optimism about learners returning to the College. And MK (Monica Kinasiewicz - Support Staff Governor) commented that learners new to the College were also enrolling for the summer term.</p> <p>The College had received Covid recovery funding of £165k from the GLA. 25% can be used for non-accredited learning with the remainder to be used for accredited learning.</p>	

	<p>The College anticipates that in 20/21 it will use £15k of the funding for formula elements and £35k of the community learning element. The GLA has agreed that recovery funding unused in 2020/21 (£115k) can be rolled forward to 2021/22.</p> <p>The costs of the Heating and Ventilation project had been capitalised following practical completion and the cost of the iWork HR and Payroll software had also been capitalised. In both cases a full year's depreciation is charged in 2020/21.</p> <p>BB (Chair of FPDC) advised the Board that the FPDC had registered its appreciation of the work of the Finance Team, especially for the advice given to governors about some quite detailed and technical issues.</p> <p>Governors thanked MJ for this summary of the current financial situation, and looked forward to receiving further reports in the summer and the autumn on 2020/21 performance and the 2021/22 budget.</p> <p><u>Estates:</u> MJ had commented on some developments and HH had covered the extent of the current works. There was further detail in the minutes of the FPDC.</p> <p><u>Recruitment:</u> The Head of Finance, Paul Hughes, would be leaving the College at the end of May, and the fixed term appointment of the current Director of Estates ends at the end of August. Both posts are under recruitment.</p>	
6	Reports from Committees (minutes)	
6.1	<p><u>Audit Committee:</u></p> <p>Paul Smith (PS, Chair of the Audit Committee) introduced this item advising of the receipt of the reports from the IAS and also of two awarding bodies (NCFE CACHE and AAT). He was keen to point out the very positive "significant assurance" expressed by the IAS on Budget Setting and Controls and that both reports from the awarding bodies reflected favourably on the arrangements (processes and controls) in these areas.</p> <p>He was also pleased that the College had recruited a governor (Max Silver) to join the AC, he was sad that Kate Bell was leaving the Committee and the Governing Body.</p>	
6.1b	<p><u>Appointment of Buzzacott as Financial Statements Auditors for year ending 31 July 2021 (recommendation from AC to Board).</u></p> <p>PS advised that that the AC was recommending the appointment of Buzzacott as Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors (external audit) for the 2020/21 year.</p> <p>The appointment of Buzzacott was agreed by the Board for the accounts 2020/21.</p>	
6.2	<u>CQSC:</u>	

	<p>Jon Sibson (JS, Chair of CQSC) introduced this item advising that the Committee had reviewed and approved the QIP. The Committee had also received a report about curriculum planning for the Summer term / summer school and the 2021/22 year.</p> <p>The Committee was impressed by the response of the teaching staff to the need to plan for continued hybrid (face to face and on-line) delivery which had the added advantage of freeing space for increased learner participation and curriculum development /expansion.</p> <p>The Committee had also received an important “Safeguarding” update on the measures the College was taking to keep learners safe on line and to give them advice about how to check the veracity /provenance of information on social media feeds.</p> <p>The Committee would update the Governor’s Links Programme protocols at its next meeting so as to incorporate reference to participation in the autumn PRBs.</p>	
6.3	<p><u>FPDC:</u></p> <p>BB (Barbara Byrne, Chair of the FPDC) introduced this item.</p> <p>The Committee had received an update from Graham Francis (consultant) and Claudia Forbes (MIS Manager) about the current issues in the area of Data Protection. One of the matters they brought to the attention of the Committee was the threat posed by the automatic (default settings) acceptance of “cookies”.</p> <p><u>Estates:</u></p> <p>The Committee had reviewed a summary report of all the capital works and their funding. The Committee welcomed the use of the extended lockdown to complete the redecoration and further refurbishment of the classrooms that had benefitted from the main phases of the Heating and Ventilation works.</p> <p><u>Fees Policy:</u></p> <p>The Fee Policy Framework was approved: this provided for a 3% (5% for studio practice courses) increase to fees rounded up to the next £5, and a reduction of the support for learners on Community Learning courses from 70% to 50%. The Learner Financial Support Policy incorporated the changes included in the Fees Policy Framework.</p> <p>These policies were both approved by the Committee.</p> <p><u>H&S Policy Statement</u></p> <p>The Committee had reviewed the H&S Policy. The Policy Statement which was not changed was recommended for approval. This was agreed.</p> <p>The FPDC would review the H&S Policy to include a paragraph about the arrangements for the Health and Safety Committee and staff representation.</p> <p>The Committee had also considered a proposal to re-designate the investment property at no 48 Crowndale Rd as a restricted reserve which would make available a greater proportion of the investment portfolio to be immediately available should the need arise. The FPDC agreed that this proposal should be discussed further with Buzzacott.</p>	

7	<p>Governors' Skills Audit and ETF Development Programme</p> <p>Bill Barker (BB_CL, Clerk) introduced this item commenting that the overall purpose was to align the focus of further governor recruitment and governors' development with the three major themes of the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Governors would be asked to submit a skills audit survey form.</p> <p>BB_CL introduced the governor development programme currently available via a licence from the ETF, supported by the AoC and sponsored by the DfE. This programme relied on individual study as a means of delivery. Governors were invited (as part of the skills survey) to indicate their support for a licence and in so doing their intention to participate.</p> <p>These proposals were agreed.</p>	
8	Date of next meeting 14 July	



Signed: _____

Date: 14 July 2021

Note: other dates - Summer Term 2021.

***** = changed date**

	Remuneration Committee	Wednesday 28 April	
	Audit Committee	Wednesday 26 May 17:30	
***	CQSC //change	Wednesday 23 June: 17:30	****
	FPDC	Wednesday 30 June: 17:30	
	WMCC Board	Wednesday 14 July: 17:30	

Other College Dates: Marketing and Publicity Dates:

WM College Open Day	Saturday 10 July	
WM College Learner Success Event	Friday 16 July	
London Open House / WM College	Saturday and Sunday 04 and 05 September	