



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES of Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 29th March 2022

Members present:
(*Absent)

	Name	Post
	Ms Carolyn Keen	Chairman / WCC nominee
	Mr Richard Frost	Vice-Chairman / WC nominee
	Ms Arinola Edeh	Principal and Head of Service
*	Ms Edelweiss Arnold	Staff Governor
	Ms Ellie Botti	Co-opted
	Ms Maysie Brown	Staff Governor
*	Councillor Lorraine Dean	WCC nominee
	Mr Andrew Mederick	Co-opted
	Councillor Matt Noble	WCC nominee
	Mr Tomasz Patzer	WCC nominee

In attendance:
Ms Jill Jaffray - Head of Resources
Ms Alison Muggridge - Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality
Mr Howard Stamp- Assistant Principal, Business Support Services
Ms Jane Hadsel - Clerk to the Governing Body

Meeting started: 5:05 pm.

MINUTES

03/22 APOLOGIES / DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

1. Apology for absences had been received in advance from Lorraine Dean and Edelweiss Arnold, which were accepted.
2. Declarations of Interests: None.
3. Chairman’s Update to the Board was agreed to be confidential to the Board and the Executive Board in attendance on the basis of possible commercial sensitivity.

Confidential
03/22.3

[Redacted]

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End of Confidential Minute.

It was agreed to rearrange the order of business and to take next the three Reports produced by the Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality: Items 4, 6.2 and 8 on the agenda so that that the Assistant

Principal may then leave the meeting. The Minutes follow the order of the printed agenda.

04/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

1. Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2022 and of the Special Meeting held on 25th January 2022.
Reports Items 2.1 and Item 2.2
The Minutes were approved.
2. To Receive the Notes of Board discussion held on 22nd February 2022.
Report Item 2.3
Received.
3. Matters Arising not on the agenda or in reports to this meeting on 29th March 2022: None.

05/22 REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND HEAD OF SERVICE

Report Item 3

Lead: Principal and Head of Service

1. The report updated the Board about drawing up the new Strategic Plan with a view to a launch for the next academic year. The Principal & HoS said that the turn-out for the two consultation events had been good, especially the virtual event along with a staff session and consultation via the learner forums. Emerging themes included 'digital' and partnerships.
2. The Chairman commented she had observed that the learners who attended the in-person consultation had been articulate advocates for WAES' community reach.
3. Future accommodation feasibility study and options appraisal: The Principal & HoS had been asked to report to an informal Cabinet meeting scheduled for 28th March but that meeting had been postponed until after the May Council elections.
4. Governors re-iterated concerns that they would like further clarification about how WAES might fit in (i.e. the physical space) and operate in the proposed Hub.
5. The Principal & HoS confirmed that for the first time, the Council would fund WAES for the cost of living award for all WCC staff, whereas before WAES used to have to absorb this from its own income lines. She reported that the Council would continue to fund this element going forward.
6. The Principal orally added to her report that HOLEX had been active with the Centre for Social Justice in seeking to raise the profile of ACL nationally; WAES was involved in this effort through HOLEX.

06/22 CURRICULUM PLAN 2022/23

Reports Items 4 and Item 4.1

Lead: Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality

1. The Performance Review Committee had suggested this summary report for the Board for information at their discussion of the Curriculum Plan at its last meeting. This report summarised the comprehensive review of curriculum undertaken this year and how that had informed the curriculum offer for next year. This was done by reviewing the offer in each of the Subject Sector Areas (in the context of looking at the wider London skills recovery priorities) compared in detail to WAES' offer last year and this year to shape the curriculum offer next year.
2. Governors asked the Assistant Principal's opinion about why Health and Social Care had

not recruited well over the past few years, noting that WAES had made various drives to address this. The Assistant Principal said that notwithstanding a general need, other London providers had a more tailored approach which WAES was not equipped to match or to better.

3. Developing the science and maths at Level 3 was seen as opening up more pathways for learners. In response to a Governor's question about whether WAES might need to install physical laboratories to support this, the Assistant Principal said that these would not be needed, as WAES' programme would support developing relevant 'softer' skills.

07/22 DIGITAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Report Item 5

Lead: Assistant Principal, Business Support Services

The Board welcomed the update. Governors' questions and discussion:

1. What was "Agile Working" consisting of; and was the re-arrangement of staff work areas completed last summer working well. The Assistant Principal said that for staff who could work productively from home / off site, this meant generally three days on site, two days off site. He said that staff had responded well to the new layouts; some aspects needed refining (e.g. the furniture in the video conference room was work in progress).
2. With an increasing number of WAES' IT devices being used off site and more regularly, was there a satisfactory plan in place for keeping track of such devices; and might there be some additional insurance needs. The Assistant Principal said he would look into these aspects.
3. Was there progress for WAES staff to get access to the WCC network on any scale other than by a laptops for a few staff. The Assistant Principal said this was not yet possible for WAES staff generally; he confirmed that conversations with WCC IT were on-going.
4. Were there data breeches; and if so, were these significant problems. The Assistant Principal said that such data breeches as there had been were neither numerous nor significant.

08/22 PERFORMANCE REPORTS

1. Service KPIs

Report Item 6.1

Lead: Assistant Principal Business Support Services

1. The Board welcomed the report that the overall position of Attendance had remained strong at least to the end of Term 2 across all funded provision types; and noted that the strategy of monitoring and ensuring early actions to support attendance issues appeared to be working well.
2. A Governor asked for clarification about why WAES would use subcontracting, as mentioned in paragraph 5 on ESFA AEB funding, which was primarily long distance provision. The Assistant Principal responded that in this instance, the disadvantage of subcontracting seemed to be outweighed by the likely advantage in securing achievements in this area; it would not be setting a precedent for WAES.

2. Learner Destinations

Reports Items 6.2

Lead: Assistant Principal Curriculum & Quality

1. The Assistant Principal said that this was the first such WAES report which focused on the primary destination to include a useful range equality and diversity data; and that this

format should provide a baseline for future years' reports on learner destinations.

2. Governors agreed to include this report for the Board in Term 2 in the annual cycle of business going forward because "what do our learners do when they leave WAES" is a key measure of WAES' success and was essential for monitoring improvement and the effectiveness of the Curriculum Plan. Performance Review Committee had discussed Learner Voice and other learner surveys at its last meeting.
3. The report acknowledged that while there were positive responses from learners about employment and continuation of studies, almost a quarter of the target number could not be contacted, even with a several staged approach to contact learners. However, the exercise had been very useful as it had informed a range of specific actions to take forward for next year's survey (page 10 in the report).
4. A Governor asked if any external agencies might be interested in such a report. The Assistant Principal said that it would likely be of interest to Ofsted. The Principal said that the report might be of interest, in parts, to some funders; and that there was an increasing likelihood that future funding might be tied to learner destinations.

09/22 STAFFING UPDATE

Report Items 7

Lead: Head of Resources

1. Governors noted both that some twenty-four new staff appointments had been made since January 2022 and also that recruitment was on-going for about a dozen support staff positions and for about half a dozen tutor positions. A Governor asked if the SMT had a view whether WAES was offering competitive enough salaries by London standards and were there relevant salary comparisons. The Principal said that it was not the SMT's view that staff turnover was largely due to higher salaries on offer elsewhere in London; but also relevant evidence was scant because WAES is smaller than FE providers in the main.
2. The proposed retention pay award (paragraph 4.2 in report) was discussed for hard to recruit or retain Course Leaders. The Head of Resources confirmed that WAES had about twenty Course Leaders in total at present. Governors asked for examples of hard to recruit or retain areas; the Principal suggested possible areas might be in Digital or Accountancy or other areas where commercial salaries were demonstrably higher. Governors raised a concern that the process for such a payment should be transparent to other staff beyond having discussed it with the relevant staff side (Union).

RESOLUTION: The Board approved the proposal in paragraph 4.2; and asked that there be a report back on implementation and measure of its efficacy.

6:45 pm: Andrew Mederick left the meeting, having notified the Chair in advance that he had another obligation.

10/22 GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT

Report Item 8

Leads: Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality for the Head of Quality Improvement

1. The Assistant Principal commented that Governors had done well in taking up a variety of virtual engagement activities in 2020-21, the year of the greatest impact on the Service by Covid-19. In 2022-23, as learning returned to in-person albeit with some disruption from Covid-19, participation by Governors in engagement activities had not been as successful as the year before. This paper to the Board offered some points for Governors' reflection.
2. A Governor commented that in considering the Proposal in the Report for Governors to align themselves with a curriculum area when she had attended the National Apprentice

Awards ceremony, she had observed there might be some non-curriculum aspects useful to include in the Proposal's six specific curriculum areas (page 2 of the report), e.g. how the courses in that area were marketed. The Assistant Principal said that marketing and also how learner development was tracked would be included in the engagement process.

3. The Board agreed to retain the three Link Governor positions: a. Health & Safety Committee attendance (Tomasz Patzer), b. Safeguarding (Carolyn Keen for the remainder of this academic year) and c. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Lorraine Dean).

ACTION: The Board agreed they would review which Governors for Links at the July Board meeting in the context of Committees' memberships for next year; and that they would individually respond to the Assistant Principal to align with curriculum areas (also keeping the Chairman informed).

11/22 COMMITTEES

1. Draft Minutes of Resources Committee meeting held 8th February 2022

Report Item 9.1

Lead: Committee Chair

1. The Committee Chairman called attention to the recommendation to delegate approval of the Budget to the Resources Committee meeting to be held on 3rd May 2022.

ACTION: The Board delegated approval of the budget 2022-23 to Resources Committee.

2. He drew the Board's attention that the Committee had approved the Fees Policy for the 2022-23 academic year.

2. Draft Minutes of Performance Review Committee held on 8th March 2022

Report Item 9.2

Lead: Chair of the Board / Committee Chair

Received.

12/22 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

13/22 BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

1. End-of-year events and Governors:

ACTION: The Principal said that details of the end of year celebration events would be confirmed shortly; Marketing would be in touch with Governors to co-ordinate.

2. The Chairman suggested that the staff e-news briefly inform staff of the Board's discussion of the new strategic plan, which staff have been involved with; and to continue with the Governors' Profiles in the e-news.

ACTION: Strategic plan and Governors' Profiles in staff e-news. Leads: Principal and Marketing.

14/22 CONFIDENTIALITY: Minute 03/22.3 for the reasons stated.

Meeting closed: 7:05 pm.