



**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

|                                | Name                     | Post                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Members present:<br>(* Absent) | Ms Carolyn Keen          | Chairman                      |
|                                | * Mr Richard Frost       | Vice-Chairman                 |
|                                | Ms Arinola Edeh          | Principal and Head of Service |
|                                | Ms Edelweiss Arnold      |                               |
|                                | Ms Ellie Botti           |                               |
|                                | Ms Maysie Brown          |                               |
|                                | Councillor Lorraine Dean |                               |
|                                | Councillor Matt Noble    |                               |
|                                | Mr Tomasz Patzer         |                               |
|                                | Dr Samer Taslaq          |                               |

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

5.00 pm: Meeting started.

**MINUTES**

**27/21 APOLOGIES / DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

1. Apology for absence received from Richard Frost. Lorraine Dean had advised in advance that she would need to leave the meeting to attend a Ward meeting at 6.20 pm.
2. Declarations of Interests: None.

**28/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

- 2.1 Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021  
Report Item 2.1.  
Approved.
- 2.2. Matters Arising not on the agenda or in reports to this meeting: None.  
Actions in the Minutes had been completed.

**29/21 REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND HEAD OF SERVICE**

Report Item 3.

Lead: Principal and Head of Service

1. The Report reminded the Board of the seven key priorities they had endorsed at the outset of this academic year, which were to be monitored termly by the Board and through the work of the Committees. The Report reflected on progress in respect to: Supporting recovery through the curriculum, Supporting staff to deliver excellence for learners, Improving learners' outcomes, Accommodation, Financial resilience, Strengthening partnerships and Preparation for Ofsted.

2. WAES' current Strategic Plan was due to conclude in July 2022. Given that the curriculum would underpin the Plan and especially in view of the challenges that had been posed by Covid, the review to identify potential areas for change had started this term.

Discussion and questions about developing the Strategic Plan and other topics in the Report:

3. A Governor asked whether, in the view of the EB, WAES tells our story as well as possible. This was also considered in the discussion about the draft Annual Impact Report later on the agenda for this meeting.
2. Aside from the challenges posed by Covid last year and this term and taking forward some of the positive benefits of WAES' hybrid working model, a Governor asked were there other factors which would influence how to support staff to deliver excellence. The Principal responded that WAES has in some areas very small teams; and this means there was little flexibility should a member of say a team of three become ill.
3. Accommodation- A Governor asked whether WAES was using the three centres as effectively as had been envisaged when the first phase of improvements was planned at the end of the last academic year. The Principal said that WAES was using the centres differently and as planned; and that the changes to make brighter open plan working and learning environments seemed to have been well received.
4. It was noted that the process for future accommodation planning had slightly stalled. Governors repeated their willingness to support discussions with WCC at any level which might be useful. The Principal referred to the Resources Committee's offer of specific support from the Committee Chair and the Councillor member of that Committee. The Principal said that discussions with the Exec Dir GPH and relevant Senior Officers were progressing; and an update would be reported as soon as there was progress to report.
5. GLA and the "Adult Education Roadmap" consultation: The Principal added that WAES had taken part in the consultation and although the title was somewhat vague, she said that the aim was set out clearly in that the Roadmap was to be informed by the overarching principles of making adult education throughout London more "locally relevant, impactful and accessible".
6. A Governor asked if it was known what the GLA would do to publicise their implementation plan. The Principal said that the GLA had sent a short survey to participants to find out what ACL providers in London most needed in terms of advertising. Governors said that developing the Roadmap and its implementation plan could offer a useful further connection with the Council in linking up WAES' website and WCC's website.
7. It was noted that the ACE Digest, produced by HOLEX, was a useful resource of information about the sector (link in the Report).
8. The Chairman called the Board's attention to the latest WAES Update by the Principal to the Cabinet Member (this had been sent to Governors apart from the papers for this meeting) which summarised WAES' SAR report, flagged up the forthcoming Impact Report as well as a number of seasonal WAES events, our Artist in residence and the recent Progression and Lifelong Learning Week with a view to enrolment for the January 2022 term. Governors agreed they wanted to be kept informed of this line of communication between WAES and the Exec Dir GPH and the Cabinet. The Principal said that the Briefings to the Cabinet Member would continue to be sent to Governors as and when produced through the academic year.

### **30/21 IMPACT REPORT 2021**

Report Item 4.

Lead: Assistant Principal, Business and Support Services

1. Presentation to the meeting: This Report would be in effect, an annual report. The Assistant Principal gave an overview of the draft Report's content, format and appearance.
- Discussion and questions about topics and themes in the draft Report:
2. How the theme of inclusivity was expressed, a focus on Westminster learners while still being welcoming to learners from elsewhere, a focus on skills for employment, community learning opportunities, empowering staff to deliver and learners to achieve and providing a resilient learning environment.
3. Governors commented favourably on the strong visuals, colours and graphics. The Assistant Principal said that while they had used an external designer, the content and detail was by WAES staff.
4. Governors asked how would the Report be launched and publicised, especially with a view to the Council and Councillors. The Principal said that a physical launch was not planned (there was continuing uncertainty at this time about Covid). It was due to be completed in January and would be virtually launched and distributed to various WAES' contacts and uploaded on WAES' website. Governors suggested flagging it up formally at the Council meeting(s) as well.

**ACTION:** Complete Impact Report, send to Governors, publish and publicise.

**Leads:** Assistant Principal Business Support Services and Principal.

### **31/21 DASHBOARD**

Report Item 5.

Report

Lead: Assistant Principal Business Support Services

1. The Report gave an in-year after one term update on core KPIs for Attendance, Retention and Enrolments, as well as three-year trend comparisons where possible.
- Key points of discussion:
2. Attendance and retention were noted as being positive this year to date; staffing resource had been enhanced by new posts in Career and Learner Development to further support attendance.  
At this point there was not a full understanding about attendance in Community Learning.
3. A positive return in full cost enrolments was encouraging; the provision had been planned with some reduction in mind due to a decrease in the pandemic. While it was too early to judge how much demand there might be this year, there were encouraging signs that demand was increasing and the Executive Board might look at some new in-year provision.
4. Governors had already been made aware (at the October '21 Resources Committee meeting) of staffing absence within the MIS team; and; as a consequence, there had been delay in receiving timely data. The Report said that the Executive Board was monitoring the situation with a view to bringing in some additional resource, if the situation warranted this.

### **32/21 STAFFING UPDATE**

Report Items 6. and 6.1.

Lead: Head of Resources

1. The Report recommended some amendments to Pay Policy and Pay Award (Report para 4) where WAES has the authority to determine these matters.
2. In respect to Course Leaders, the pay policy change would be to bring their pay award in line with the rest of staff for the Local Government Pay Award; this would ensure parity for all staff.

**RESOLUTION:** The Board approved the changes outlined in the Report (para 4).

3. Our Voice staff survey was part of WCC staff survey for the second year. The Board concurred with the suggestions in para 7.4 to review areas of concern flagged in the survey, many of which were to do with how WAES staff reported they did not feel a strong sense of connection with the Council. The Head of Resources added that it was planned to provide access for WAES to the WCC website for relevant staffing pages from particular computers on site.

### **33/21 SAFEGUARDING POLICY- ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21; POLICY Documents 2021-22**

Report Items 7. Annual Report and 7.1. Policy Documents

Lead: Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality

1. Annual Report 2020-21: Governors commented that there had appeared to be a high level of support to deal with issues and cases, as illustrated in para 5, "What has worked in the Service this academic year 202-21 and the impact seen". Governors added that had also observed a lot of safeguarding support for learners in the reporting in the staff e-newsletters; and that they also recognised the additional onus on staff.
2. A brief cover paper described the lengthy contents of the Policy Documents and how the policies interact with one another: Safeguarding Policy, Prevent Risk Register and E-Safety Policy.

**RESOLUTION:** The Board approved the Policy Documents; and, as advised by the Assistant Principal, these should be reviewed and approved on an annual basis.

Lorraine Dean left the meeting 6.20 pm.

3. Governors noted that safeguarding principles lay a range of responsibilities on staff for ensuring standards were met in arrangements to rent out rooms (e.g. to community groups), liaising with employers who work with WAES learners at employers' premises, and generally also for emergency evacuation procedures. In connection with the latter, the Principal said they were asking a WCC specialist adviser to come to WAES.

### **34/21 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY and INCLUSION**

Reports items 8. and 8.1.

Lead: Assistant Principal, Business and Support Services

- 1 The report said that the EDI Action Plan for the current year had been drawn up and was active, monitored by the approximately six weekly meetings of the EDI Committee which was looking at: Learner demographics, Communications between learners and staff, On-going Preventing the Gap monitoring, Bringing EDI into business as usual reporting and

staff team meetings, Sharing good practice with WAES community partners (which form a large part of EDI enrolments) and Learner outcomes.

2. The Report said that there had been an encouraging uptake in staff taking up CPD opportunities; and EDI metrics were being applied to identify where some staff who might be encouraged.

### **35/21 GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT**

Oral Update by the Chairman to the meeting

1. The Chairman invited Governors' feedback from this term's activities and suggestions going forward. Last year there had been a good participation by Governors in a range of activities, many of which were virtual during the pandemic. The offer this term had not been as well attended as last year.
2. Governors' discussion included comments that a more flexible approach might be more attractive; or Governors might instead offer a date in advance when they were available and then observe whatever activity which was available on that day.  
Overall, the Governors affirmed their commitment to governor engagement in learning more about the Service.

**ACTION:** Report back to the Board with suggestions for Governor Engagement.

**Lead:** Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality.

### **36/21 COMMITTEES**

1. Draft Minutes of Resources Committee meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
Report Item 10.1.  
Lead: Committee Chair  
Received.
2. Draft Minutes of Board SAR Review and Performance Review Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Report Item 10.2.  
Lead: Committee Chair  
Received. It was noted that the SAR 2020-21 had been approved, subject to final data and presentation.

**37/21 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS:** None.

### **38/21 BOARD COMMUNICATIONS**

*To agree any specific communications from this meeting.*

Leads: Chair and Principal

The Board asked that staff be commended and thanked in the end of term staff e-news for their professionalism and support in working with WAES' learners during last year and this year to date; and for their resilience and creativity in the extraordinary challenges posed by Covid, as evidenced especially in the Impact Report

**39/21 CONFIDENTIALITY of reports and proceedings:** None.

Meeting closed 6.50 pm.