



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES of a Virtual Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 30th March 2021

Members present:
(*Absent)

Name	Post
Ms Carolyn Keen	Chairman
* Mr Richard Frost	Vice-Chairman
Ms Arinola Edeh	Principal and Head of Service
Ms Ellie Botti	
Ms Maysie Brown	
Councillor Lorraine Dean	
Mr Deen Fahmy	
Councillor Matt Noble	
Mr Tomasz Patzer	
Mr Jordan Philips	
Dr Samer Taslaq	

5.05 pm: Meeting started.

In attendance:

For Item 3. Think! consultants James Farr and David Brennan

WAES Executive Board:

Ms Jill Jaffray - Head of Resources

Ms Alison Muggridge - Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality

Mr Howard Stamp- Assistant Principal, Business and Support Services

Ms Jane Hadsel - Clerk to the Governing Body

MINUTES

The order of business was changed to take the presentation Item 3 on the Agenda by Think! to start the meeting. The Minutes follow the order on the printed agenda.

01/21 APOLOGIES / DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

1. Chairman's welcome and introductions

1.2 Apologies for absence: Richard Frost had sent apology for absence due to another commitment in advance of the meeting: the Board accepted his apology.
The Chairman welcomed Howard Stamp to the meeting (he had joined WAES earlier this term).

1.3 Declarations of Interests to this meeting: None.

02/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

2.1 Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2020

Report Item 2.1.

The Minutes were approved.

2.2. Matters Arising not on the agenda or in reports to this meeting on 30th March 2021:

It was agreed that Actions had been completed or were on the agenda for this meeting.

This item was taken first in the meeting.

03/21 ACCOMMODATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

Leads: James Farr (JF) and David Brennan (DB) from Think!.

1. The Principal & Head of Service introduced the consultants commissioned by Westminster City Council who gave a slide presentation to the meeting. Governors have been fully aware that along with other Council services, WAES would be required to relocate from the present Lisson Grove building in the wider context of the WCC master plan for the regeneration of Church Street. The presentation by the WCC appointed consultants offered them a chance to set out their key findings to date; and ask what Governors thought about these findings and generally about the future of WAES.
2. DB summarised the four stages of the brief for WAES and the consultants' involvement:
 - Establishing the current offer and learners' needs and how these are met (the baseline).
 - Future education needs.
 - Feasibility assessment criteria.
 - Design guidance to aid development of options. The consultants' brief also was to take into account that WAES at present delivers from two other centres in the Borough. After this, an assessment of options would follow (to include a strategy identifying transition arrangements to provide business continuity and support the relocation of WAES). DB confirmed that the baseline position was set out clearly in WAES' Strategic Plan (the "three Cs: community, careers, culture"); and that in particular, WAES was strong in ESOL, English and Maths and creative industries.
3. DB shared their key findings in the presentation:
 - Labour demand continues to be substantial and local despite covid19.
 - The pandemic has had significant impact on unemployment in deprived areas of Westminster.
 - Westminster's population has a high proportion of working age adults but was expected to show an aging profile quickly (between 2018- 2028).
 - WAES has been responsive to residents' needs.
 - Implications for WAES future curriculum were various and diverse, including continuance of and new developments including ESOL, English and Maths, IT, employment focused programmes. The demand for ESOL post Brexit could point to other ESOL programmes; and the growth of over 50s in the population would offer opportunities for a larger wellbeing curriculum.
4. Governors' discussion and questions:
 - The market for the over 50s for WAES was significantly more versatile than for mostly end of career / leisure learning. WAES's offering to over 50s / over 60s has always been at a higher level than say offerings by Age Concern.
 - Brexit impact on demand for ESOL has not been clear: this year, WAES' ESOL numbers have been buoyant in the very challenging context of the pandemic.
 - WAES has seen high demand for IT courses; however, it has transpired especially this year that many learners have wanted to develop IT skills but not necessarily to take the qualifications.
 - WAES has this past year been especially innovative in new ways of leaning and teaching in the pandemic; this has already influenced the shape of the curriculum offer being formulated for next year which would include in-person learning, hybrid and 100% virtual.
 - There was also a strong demand for in-person learning, not just for particular courses but as an aspect of the nature of adult education; WAES learners have shown they identify with a feeling of belonging at WAES (Your College). For some of WAES' provision, e.g., the pottery workshop, the salon and LLD, WAES learners demonstrated that they were keen to get back on site.

- With reference to design guidance, Governors agreed they felt strongly that the aesthetics were crucial; WAES' future accommodation should be an inspirational environment.
5. The Chairman thanked the consultants for the opportunity to discuss these issues; and said the Board looked forward to hearing about the next stages. (Think! left the meeting).
 6. The Chairman asked if there were any further reflections from Governors.
A Governor commented that the findings should recognise more clearly WAES' strength in its LLD provision in planning for the future of the Service.
About the three "Cs" in the Strategic Plan, the Principal and Head of Service commented that a significant amount of learning in the creative offerings, whether badged under community or culture, has lead learners into career development.

ACTION: The Principal and Head of Service and Chair would keep Governors informed about the next steps of the future accommodation strategy.

The meeting reverted to the order on the Agenda.

04/21 REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND HEAD OF SERVICE

Report Item 4. Report Item 4.1 Adult Education Roadmap

Lead: Principal and Head of Service

1. Re-opening of centres (Report 2.2); The Principal & Head of Service added to the report that testing would be rolled out to staff and learners in the Centres from 19th April; the logistical challenges were being worked through. A Governor asked if the Council might support this; the Principal said WAES was looking into whether the Council could help.
2. Review of existing accommodation and adaptations arising from the impact of covid19 on WAES' teaching and learning environment (Report 2.4):Governors were alerted that some additional investment outside of the normal budgeting would be needed. Governors asked if the Council might assist additionally; the Principal said that they were discussing this with WCC Property Services who would need to be informed in any event; however, costs were most likely to need a drawdown from WAES' reserves.
3. GLA and ESFA funding this year outturns and next year's allocations (Report 3): the report confirmed that WAES was confident of achieving an outturn within the current funding agency 10% tolerance for this year. The ESFA allocation had not yet been confirmed. The GLA grant for 2021-22 had been allocated along similar lines as this year's; and full finding for Level 3 (within certain parameters) would continue next year along with the National Skills Fund Level 3 adult offer next year to prioritise digital skills, health and social care, childcare and accourting qualifications.
4. The Principal recommended that the Board read the Adult Education Roadmap, produced by the GLA, included on the Agenda Item 4.1.
5. WCC Strategic Review Action Plan (Report 5.) three challenges:1) Work had progressed whereby Governors would receive a draft of the proposed updates to the Instrument of Government document, to be presented to the Cabinet Member in the summer term.
2) Think! Consultants' work had been scheduled to complete by the end of April.
3) the Report updated Governors that the collaborative work between WAES and WCC had been productive, particularly with the Westminster Employment Service; however, the newly constituted Apprenticeship Board had yet to meet which would involve WAES apprenticeship offer.

6. Report 8.4 Learner Governor: The Board noted that the WAES learner engagement activities had been developed this year to the extent that from next year there would be scope for dedicated learner reps, including a Learner Governor.

05/21 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

Report Item 5.

Lead: Assistant Principal, Business Support Services

1. The Report confirmed that attendance during the lockdown had continued to be strong across the funding streams with specific issue to do with full cost provision and community learning; aspects of ESOL attendance were also being monitored. Retention continued to be strong; logging in remotely has helped.
2. The Assistant Principal asked what might Governors like to know further? Governors commented they would find useful seeing learner numbers alongside the percentages.

06/21 STAFFING UPDATE

Report Item 6.

Lead: Head of Resources

1. Received. The Report confirmed that the review of staffing scheduled for next term would be concluded for the start of the next academic year.
2. People Services through WCC through would see that Governors may have access to the Inclusive Recruitment and Unconscious Bias training which Governors had asked for. The Report said that WAES recruiting managers have completed their training.

07/21 DIGITAL STRATEGY BRIEFING

Report Item 7.

Lead: Assistant Principal, Business and Support Services

1. The Report set out a number of factors and possible parameters for the design and implementation of a digital strategy for WAES; and also flagged up particular issues e.g., the need for the WAES website to be the best possible "shopfront" for WAES and that implementation of a strategy was likely to require additional resources.
2. The Principal and head of Service suggested a Governor might like to act as the Board champion or Link for the Digital Strategy: Tomasz Patzer and Ellie Botti volunteered.

ACTION: Draft Digital Strategy to Resources Committee in the first instance for financial implications; then to July Board meeting. Lead: Assistant Principal, Business Support Services.

08/21 GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT

8.1 Updates to the Board from Link Governors and Supporting Staff Leads

The Performance Review Committee meeting held on 9th March 2021 had suggested that the Link Governors could speak about their Link activities.

1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Report Item 8.1.1

Link Governor- Jordan Philips. Supporting lead: Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality

Jordan Philips has this year taken on the role of WAES Link Governor for EDI and had attended a WAES EDI Committee meeting recently. He said he had observed that the Committee was using a wide range of data sets to analyse different aspects including, for example, the narrowing the gap project (Achievement for African learners); and this was

one of several threads of EDI which the Committee looked at, described in more detail in the report on the agenda.

2. **Health & Safety**

Link Governor- Tomasz Patzer. Supporting lead: Head of Resources

Tomasz Patzer has been the Link Governor for H&S for about two years and before that, as a member of the Resources Committee, he had taken particular interest in H&S matters reported to and raised at the Committee.

Tomasz said that he has been attending the termly H&S Committee meetings regularly. He summarised that the overall remit of the H&S Committee was to: monitor WAES' performance against Westminster City Council Health & Safety policy & procedure, ensure compliance and Service-wide understanding of our legal duty and act accordingly to protect all stakeholders.

The key personnel involved have been to date: WAES staff members of the Committee (Principal and Head of Service, Head of Resources, Facilities Manager, Health and Safety Champions, teaching staff representative); Westminster City Council Corporate Health and Safety Adviser; and Westminster City Council Facilities Management Team.

The Committee has discussed: Health and Safety issues at each of the WAES sites, updates from the Corporate Health and Safety Adviser on changes to Corporate policy and they have reviewed reported Health and Safety incidents. The Committee also has had updates from the staff Health and Safety Operational group and from the Health and Safety Champions on matters that have arisen from their regular meetings or on-site checks, and which have needed escalating.

Recent discussions at the Committee have been around service wide risk assessment and actions to ensure a safe return to the site after the covid19 lockdown, outstanding building works and ongoing issues with heat and air conditioning at both Lisson Grove and Pimlico. He has made site visits with key staff to better understand the relevant H&S issues.

3. **Safeguarding**

Link Governor - Lorraine Dean. Supporting lead: Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality

Lorraine Dean is the City of Westminster Deputy Cabinet Member for Young People and Learning and Lead Member for SEND and Adults with Learning Disabilities. This year, she has taken on the role as WAES Link Governor for Safeguarding; and had attended a WAES Safeguarding Committee meeting recently. She said that this has given her more insight into the Service-wide implementation of safeguarding policy and procedures.

8.2. **Update on Board Self-Assessment**

Report item 8.2

Leads: Chair, Clerk, Principal

Received.

ACTION: It was agreed to ask Governors to refresh their Profiles for the website; and to circulate the proposal to Governors for updating the Instrument of Government before the Principal and Head of Service would brief the Cabinet Member.

Report back to the Board self-assessment session planned for 29th June 2021. Leads: Chair / Clerk / Principal

09/21 **COMMITTEES**

1. **Draft Minutes of Resources Committee meeting held on 9th February 2021**

Report Item 9.1

Received.

RESOLUTION: Arising from the draft Resources Committee minutes, the Board agreed to delegate the approval of the WAES' budget 2021-22 to the Resources Committee's scheduled meeting on 4th May 2021.

2. Draft Minutes of Performance Review Committees held on 9th March 2021

Report Item 9.2

Received.

1. It was noted that a Term 3 Governor Engagement programme circulated shortly would include a feedback mechanism; a report back to the July Board meeting was anticipated to assist the Board in reviewing Governor engagement over the year and inform a strategy for engagement next year.

ACTION: Term 3 Governor Engagement programme. Leads: Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality, Head of Quality Improvement Clerk and Executive Board Support Officer

10/21 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

1. The Chair reminded Governors that the dates for the summer term end of year activities had been circulated. The Principal and head of Service said that they were at this point making provisional plans for in-person events as well as virtual.

11/21 BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

1. The Chair reported that this was Deen Fahmy's last Governors' meeting as he would be leaving WAES in the summer term for a new role in community development and partnerships at RBKC. The Principal and Head of Service added that WAES had greatly benefited from Deen's work since 2019 as WAES as the Head of External Partnerships, and also that he had brought valuable prior experience of working in the Council's Regeneration and Economic Team. Deen said he had enjoyed working at WAES and also being a staff Governor; he said that a lot of his work at WAES had been with the Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality.
Governors present joined in thanking him and wishing him well in his new job.

12/21 CONFIDENTIALITY of Proceedings at this meeting

The Board agreed that no confidential business was reported or discussed at this meeting.

Meeting closed: 7.05 pm