

EDUCATION BOARD

Thursday, 15 January 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor
West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 15 January 2015 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Chairman)	Alderman Peter Estlin
Henry Colthurst (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Jeffrey Evans
Deputy John Bennett	Virginia Rounding
Roy Blackwell	David Taylor
Nigel Challis	Philip Woodhouse

In Attendance

Mark Boleat

Officers:

Peter Lisley	Assistant Town Clerk
Alistair MacLellan	Town Clerk's Department
Liz Skelcher	Assistant Director, Town Clerk's Department
Laura Donegani	Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	Chamberlain's Department
Richard Jeffrey	Assistant City Solicitor, Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Tarjinder Phull	Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Ade Adetosoye	Director of Community & Children's Services
Joshua Burton	Community & Children's Services
John Conway	Community & Children's Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jude Chin, Reverend Dr Martin Dudley, Stuart Fraser, Alderman William Russell and Ian Seaton.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The following standing declarations were made relating to the other bodies which Members of the Education Board served on.

Deputy John Bennett

Board of Governors City of London Freeman's School
Board of Governors of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama

Nigel Challis

Board of Governors of the City of London School for Girls
Board of Governors The City Academy, Hackney
Castle Baynard Educational Foundation & Alderman Samuel Wilson Fund
Chartered Institute of Securities and Investment Educational Foundation
Oxford University Council Integrity Committee

Henry Colthurst

Board of Governors, Mossbourne Community Academy
Board of Mossbourne Federation
Member of Court of the Worshipful Company of Grocers

Alderman Peter Estlin

Treasurer, Bridewell Royal Hospital - King Edward's School, Witley

Alderman Jeffrey Evans

Board of Governors City of London Academy – Islington
St Paul's Chorister Trust
Council of Almoners, Christ's Hospital

Deputy Catherine McGuinness

Board of Governors The City Academy, Hackney
Castle Baynard Educational Foundation & Alderman Samuel Wilson Fund
United Westminster Schools Foundation
Board of School Governors and Council of Almoners, Christ's Hospital
Barbican Centre Board
Guildhall School Development Fund

Virginia Rounding

Board of Governors City of London School for Girls
Board of Governors The City Academy – Hackney
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee

Philip Woodhouse

Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School
Board of Mossbourne Federation
Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy, Hackney
Chairman of Governors of Wellesley House School
Member of the Court of Worshipful Company of Grocers

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December be approved as a correct record, subject to 'Principal' being spelled correctly under item 6.

3.1 **Chairman of Policy and Resources**

The Chairman welcomed the Chairman of Policy and Resources to the meeting and invited him to deliver some comments. The Chairman of Policy and Resources addressed the Board and made several points:

- His personal strategy as Policy Chairman included the desire to substantially increase the City Corporation's contribution to dealing with London issues, particularly education, employment and cultural opportunities.
- He had instituted a review of the City Corporation's approach to education as he felt there was potential to improve the City Corporation's

role as academy sponsor; improve cooperation between the City's independent schools and the City Academies; improve the City Corporation's approach to appointing governors; explore the potential for collaboration with the Livery on matters of education; ensure the City's support for its independent schools was in line with the City Corporation's wider strategic priorities, and that the schools were in turn supporting the work for the City Corporation.

- He was satisfied that the Education Strategy Working Party had examined these issues, and with the Working Party's outcomes, namely the Education Strategy and the Education Board.
- As Policy Chairman, he was committed to working with colleagues on the Court of Common Council, London Councils as well as the Mayor of London on a range of initiatives to improve the lives of all Londoners, through employment programmes, infrastructure initiatives, sharing costs and the work of the City Bridge Trust.
- By delivering on education, the City Corporation would be able to demonstrate some of the substance of its wider contribution to London, with its members making best use of the resources that their predecessors had bequeathed.
- He wanted to do more on education through the family of City Schools and through outreach. He wanted the current outreach programme to be bigger. He wanted the City Corporation to be a leader in fostering social mobility.
- He emphasised the importance of the potential City Corporation offer on education, comparing the implications of a scenario where both the City of London School and the City Academy Hackney did not exist. Arguably current pupils at City of London School would not be inconvenienced by simply attending comparable schools instead, whereas current pupils of the City Academy Hackney would not enjoy a comparable choice and would be prevented from accessing the excellent educational offer currently provided by the academy.

The Chairman thanked the Policy Chairman for his comments and underlined the positive impact of the City Academies, noting that they were operating in complex socio-economic contexts. She took the opportunity to express disappointment that the briefing issued to Court of Common Council members ahead of the London Local Government Dinner had not featured more material on the City's contribution to education, both through the family of schools and the considerable outreach programme – it was important that the City Corporation got its internal message on education clear to enable it to be communicated effectively to others.

Members of the Education Board then noted the following points.

- It was important not to lose sight of the responsibility the City Corporation had to the educational bodies that it had established
- In relation to the fourth strand of the Education Strategy, education to employment, it was important to engage with business given the massive reach they had on education to employment programmes. The Policy Chairman responded that EDO was doing a large amount on

employability, not all of which is linked to education, but he agreed we need to join these up where possible. He was not sure that large businesses (many of whom have excellent programmes) needed City Corporation support for their programmes, but a large number of them work together through Heart of the City, who do a great job, to help businesses do more.

- It was important to move away from using the Court of Common Council as the only pool for City-appointed governors and be open to appointing members from other sectors such as business and the Livery. The Education Board should use its events programme to engage with business.
- The City Corporation could have a positive impact on social mobility by establishing and supporting a pupil referral unit. The Policy Chairman agreed that this idea had potential, but that it was important to embed the Education Strategy first before embarking on more ambitious proposals.
- The City Corporation could do more to ensure its Family of City Schools was combatting political extremism. The Chairman agreed and noted that a paper to on this issue would be useful. The Assistant Town Clerk noted that schools were covered by guidance on the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill, which sought to make the application of PREVENT consistent in areas of the country where extremism was of most concern.
- More should be done to raise awareness in the City over what the City Corporation was seeking to do on education. The Policy Chairman agreed and noted the Heart of the City was doing good work in this respect.
- The City Academies should be given certainty over their funding from the City Corporation in the longer term. The Policy Chairmen suggested that one option would be to offer a three-year funding commitment on the understanding that the offer be reviewed after two years.
- Sixth-formers from the Family of City Schools should be invited to City Corporation events. The Policy Chairman agreed, noting that he was keen to do more events both at Guildhall and with the Family of City Schools.

4. **EDUCATION STRATEGY UPDATE REPORT**

The Director of Community and Children's Services introduced an update report on recent Education Strategy implementation activity. He noted that officers had received positive feedback from the Education Funding Agency on the City Corporation's two applications for free schools in Islington and Southwark and that interviews for both applications were scheduled for 5 February 2015.

The Chairman noted that the Department for Education had recently been in touch with Redriff Primary School to notify it of its Pupil Premium Award, and separately to thank the City Corporation for its commitment as an academy sponsor to raising standards and improving the education of students in London.

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5. **DISCLOSURE AND BARRING CHECKS IN THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

The Assistant City Solicitor introduced a report on the City of London's obligations in relation to disclosure and barring requirements for chairmen and governors on the Board of Governors of the City's independent schools. He noted that there was little flexibility in the application of the DBS requirements and that both chairmen and governors were required to register with the disclosure and barring service (DBS). Moreover, it was the responsibility of the chairman of each school to ensure that each governor was registered with the DBS. He concluded by noting that DBS requirements were the same for both academy and free school governors as they were for the independent schools. He concluded by noting the requirements were more relaxed in the maintained sector, where under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 only governors engaged in regulated activity were obliged to register with the DBS.

During discussion of the report the following points were made.

- The Assistant Town Clerk noted that members using the DBS would be registered with the DBS Update Service, allowing them to use their DBS clearance on more than one Board of Governors.
- The Education Strategy Advisor noted that in the maintained sector, where only governors engaged in regulated activity with children were required to register with the DBS, there was nevertheless some ambiguity over what 'regulated activity' was and therefore DBS checks for all governors was considered best practice.
- The Assistant Town Clerk noted that the City Corporation currently appointed over 70 governors to Boards of the City's independent schools, City Academies, other schools such as Prior Weston Primary School, but only 2 governors to the Sir John Cass Primary School, a maintained school. Given the vast majority of City Governors were required to register with the DBS, there was an option to make it City Corporation policy to require all City Corporation appointed governors obliged to register with the DBS.
- The Policy Chairman noted that where the City appointed governors to another Board of Governors such as Prior Weston Primary School, the City Corporation should pay the associated administrative costs of the DBS check.
- The Policy Chairman further noted that any City Corporation DBS policy should not lead to an overemphasis on process – instead the DBS check should be accompanied by a wider consideration on whether the individual was the right candidate for the governor vacancy. The Director of Community and Children's Services agreed that the DBS check was not an end in itself and that it would be accompanied by a wider assessment.
- The Assistant Town Clerk noted that the City Corporation's Human Resources Department would support members engaged in registering with the DBS.

RESOLVED, that:

- The report be received.
- Registering with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) be recommended as a requirement of all City Corporation-appointed governors, including those appointed to Board of Governors in the maintained sector.

6. DRAFT BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR 2015/16

The Head of Finance introduced a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Education Board's draft budget allocation for 2015/16. During discussion of the report the following points were made.

- The Director of Community and Children's Services noted that the City Academies would be required to submit proposals to the Education Board for consideration before funding was agreed. Members concurred with this point and made clear that a defined budget was not an authority to spend – therefore proposals for spending had to be fully justified.
- The Chairman emphasised the report outlined budget allocations in draft form only, and that there remained flexibility. For example it was unlikely that the livery initiative would require the full [£50,000] allocated. Members also queried why the Learning and Engagement Forum (LEF) would require a research fund.
- The Chairman went on to note that it was important to give the City Academies certainty over their level of funding, particularly in light of the financial assistance afforded to the City's independent schools.
- In response to a member's query over how much planning had been undertaken on the proposed Headteachers' Conference, the Chairman noted that this was a matter for the LEF rather than the Education Board.
- In light of the Board's desire to commit to longer term funding proposals for the City Academies, the Assistant Town Clerk and the Director of Community and Children's Services noted that the City Corporation had two open applications for free schools in Islington and Southwark, and that it was advisable for flexibility in the academy schools allocation to be maintained for future years. The Deputy Chairman suggested therefore that the draft allocation for 2015/16 be agreed with the understanding that longer term funding for the City Academies be revisited in the next financial year.
- A member emphasised that spending should be explicitly linked to the objectives of the Education Strategy.
- The Chairman took the opportunity to note that both City Academy Hackney and the City of London Academy Southwark were both building sixth form extensions and that it was likely they would require loans or other sources of finance.

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7. **EDUCATION BOARD - ACTIVITY IN 2014 AND PRIORITIES FOR 2015**

The Town Clerk noted that this report had been withdrawn.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**

There were no questions.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no items of urgent business.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act as follows:-

Item(s)	Paragraph
11-14	3

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2014 were approved as a correct record.

12. **OVERVIEW OF THE CITY'S SPENDING ON EDUCATION RELATED ACTIVITIES**

The Board received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Director of Community and Children's Services.

13. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**

There were no questions.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

Nominations Working Group Meeting - 15 January 2015

The Board considered one item of urgent business regarding the meeting of the Nominations Working Group held on 15 January 2015.

The meeting ended at 5.53 pm

Chairman

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