

EDUCATION BOARD

Thursday, 20 May 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held virtually on
Thursday, 20 May 2021 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chairman)	Shravan Joshi
Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Nicholas Lyons
Randall Anderson	Benjamin Murphy
Tijs Broeke	Ruby Sayed
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin	Deborah Knight
Alderman Robert Howard	Mary Robey

In Attendance

Officers:

Emily Garland	- Town Clerk's Department
Kerry Nicholls	- Town Clerk's Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
James Gibson	- Chamberlain's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Emily Rimington	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Richard Chamberlain	- City Surveyor's Department
Anne Bamford	- Community and Children's Services Department
Sheila Cohring	- Community and Children's Services Department
Natasha Hanckel-Spice	- Community and Children's Services Department
Catherine McGovern	- Community and Children's Services Department
Daniel McGrady	- Community and Children's Services Department
Gerald Mehrtens	- Community and Children's Services Department

Observers:

Mark Emmerson	- City of London Academies Trust
Ann Holmes	

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, William Russell, and Rachel Bower.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**

The Town Clerk noted that there had been some minor amendments to the Board's Terms of Reference to provide greater clarity on what is meant by the 'City Family of Schools'. It was also noted that Randall Anderson remained on the Board as the Community and Children's Services Committee appointee and that Mary Robey had, since the Court Order was drafted, been appointed as a Co-Opted Member.

RESOLVED, that the Order of the Court of Common Council dated 15 April 2021, appointing the Board for the ensuing year, be received.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

An election of Chair was conducted in accordance with Standing Order 29.

Caroline Haines, being the only Member indicating a willingness to serve, was elected for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

An election of Deputy Chair was conducted in line with Standing Order 30.

Deputy Phillip Woodhouse, being the only Member indicating a willingness to serve, was elected Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

6. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

The public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

The Chair welcomed newly appointed Co-Opted Member, Mary Robey, to the Board. An expression of thanks to the outgoing Clerk to the Board, Polly Dunn, was also noted.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

Members considered a report of the Town Clerk regarding the appointment of the Education Board's sub-committees for 2021/22.

Terms of Reference

Members were first invited to approve the terms of reference of the Nominations Sub-Committee and note the terms of reference for the Education Charity Sub-Committee, as set by the Court of Common Council.

The Town Clerk verbally outlined some amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Nominations Sub-Committee to allow Co-Opted Members to serve, as an expression of interest had been received by a Co-Optee. It was clarified however that to avoid any conflict of interest, a Co-Opted Member would need to be excluded from any discussions considering their own re-appointment. In light of the decision at the last Board meeting for the Sub-Committee to undertake a review of the nominations and appointment process of external Members to the Board and reporting this to the Board for approval, the proposed amendments also accommodated for this. Both amendments were approved by Members.

Appointments

Alderman Sir Peter Estlin and Mary Robey had expressed an interest in the Nominations Sub-Committee and were duly appointed for the year ensuing.

Benjamin Murphy and Randall Anderson verbally expressed an interest in the Education Charity Sub-Committee. Both were advised by the Town Clerk that they had already both been appointed to the Sub-Committee by the Community and Children's Services Committee. The Board agreed that, with the four Members appointed by the Community and Children's Services Committee as well as the Chair and Deputy Chair serving, the quorum for a meeting would be achievable, therefore leaving two vacancies on the Sub-Committee.

The Chair and Deputy Chair would assume ex-officio roles on both Sub-Committees as per their respective Terms of Reference.

Appointment of Members to CoLAT

The Town Clerk verbally updated the Board on matters concerning the Education Board's appointments to the City of London Academies Trust's (CoLAT) Board of Trustees.

In January 2016, the Court of Common Council resolved that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Education Board would serve as Company Members/Trustees of CoLAT. Accordingly, the Chair, Caroline Haines, was appointed to these positions, effective immediately.

In October 2017, the Court resolved to amend its resolution of January 2016, to permit a representative/nominee of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Education Board to serve as Company Member/Trustee of the City of London Academies Trust, where the original candidate is not able to serve.

Previously the Deputy Chairman had asked to nominate Alderman Howard to serve as Company Member and Trustee of CoLAT on his behalf, with the Board recently endorsing this. The Deputy Chair, Deputy Phillip Woodhouse, indicated that he again wished to nominate Alderman Robert Howard in his stead. As per the Court's resolution the gift of this nomination lies with the Deputy Chair, however, as per historic practice, the Board was invited, and agreed, to endorse this nomination.

RESOLVED, that Members

- Approve the terms of reference and composition of the Nominations Sub Committee subject to the following amendments:
 - The constitution include: the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Education Board and up to two further Members of the Education Board, at least one of whom will be a Court of Common Council Member.
 - The Terms of Reference include: Review the process of advertising, reviewing and shortlisting applications from interested parties who wish to be considered as external members of the

Education Board, reporting to the Education Board in due course for approval;

- Note the terms of reference and composition of the Education Charity Sub Committee;
- Appoint Alderman Sir Peter Estlin and Mary Robey to the Nominations Sub Committee for the year ensuing;
- Leave two vacancies for the Education Charity Sub-Committee for the year ensuing;
- Note the appointment of Caroline Haines to the position of CoLAT Board Trustee and Company Member, as Chair of the Education Board, and endorse the appointment of Alderman Robert Howard as the Deputy Chair's nominee to the position of CoLAT Board Trustee and Company Member.

8. **PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members received a report of the Town Clerk regarding outstanding public actions of the Board.

The Chair informed Members that action 8/2020/P could be removed as the final planning issues had now been resolved, with opening planned for September 2021. The Chair of Governors of City of London Primary Academy Islington gave a short update on the progress of the project and thanked those Members and officers that had contributed.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

9. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Director of Community and Children's Services was heard relative to the COVID-19 update. The following points were noted:

- All schools in the City of London Family of Schools returned as usual following the Easter holiday break.
- Infection rates remained low in London, with all boroughs reporting less than 50 cases per 100,000 people. It was hoped that this would continue.
- From 17 May 2021, face coverings were no longer recommended for pupils in all schools and colleges or for staff when in classrooms. In all schools and colleges, the Government continued to recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in situations outside of classrooms and where social distancing is not possible.
- Educational visits were now able to resume however international educational visits were not permitted until after the beginning of the new academic year.
- The new Children's Commissioner for England had launched The Big Ask – the largest ever consultation with children aged 4 to 17 in England - which aimed to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future to assist with recovery from the pandemic. All schools were encouraged to support pupils to complete the survey and parents, care leavers and those working with children were invited to complete the associated adult survey.

A Member enquired about staff morale within the schools and it was confirmed that, whilst it was felt that many were pleased to be back teaching in the schools, staff were currently subject to stress resulting from the busy period before the end of the academic year, particularly in light of requirements to undertake assessments of students in place of exams. It was highlighted that efforts were being made by the schools to mitigate this wherever possible.

RESOLVED, that the update be received.

10. **TACKLING RACISM TASKFORCE EDUCATION WORKSTREAM ACTION PLAN**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding an action plan to address the Education Workstream recommendations of the Tackling Racism Taskforce (TRT).

Members heard a presentation from the Education Unit's Lead Policy Officer outlining the short, medium and long-term action plans relative to the recommendations of the Tackling Racism Taskforce's final report. It was highlighted that the action plan would continue to be regularly monitored and that actions may be updated or added to reflect any changes to the situation. Members noted that although brief verbal updates would be provided to Members at each Board meeting for the foreseeable future, Members could expect a fuller update at the December meeting.

A Member highlighted that short-term actions should have recurring elements, meaning that momentum and progress is not lost over time.

Another Member sought clarification on the outcome of the review of equalities across the academies as it appeared to be open-ended. The Chief Executive of CoLAT explained that they were already responsible for reviewing equalities across all of the academies and undertook annual reviews. Outcomes of these included gender and race pay gap audits of all staff. Members were also informed of an upcoming equality conference for staff ensuring that adequate measures were being taken to promote diversity within the schools. Finally, he added that the academies currently benefitted from high diversity, across all characteristics, but it was recognised that succession planning must be undertaken to ensure this continued.

While they recognised the merit of an alumni programme, the Member raised concerns that some of the newer schools would suffer from limited previous students and therefore felt that a cross-school alumni programme would be preferable.

The Member welcomed the TRT recommendation that the Independent School bursary programme should be communicated with the academies but raised concerns that success would be reliant on engagement from those parents of pupils who might benefit. They felt that the programme may need to consider how to actively engage with the target audience.

The Chief Executive of CoLAT expressed concern over whether there was an assumption that those who attended the academies needed bursaries to gain admission to the Independent Schools. The Deputy Chair suggested that they meet in the Autumn, along with the Head of the Freeman's School, to discuss these concerns.

A Member spoke in favour of the work-related learning initiative and enquired as to whether there was existing engagement with trade associations, the Investment Association 2020. It was confirmed that officers were already engaging with Investment Association 2020 in addition to a wide range of employers and agencies.

Reassurance was offered that all comments would be noted and reflected within the documentation.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

11. **GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding an update on Governor Appointments.

It was highlighted that a number of parent and staff vacancies remained across CoLAT and for this reason Members were being asked to approve a note to be sent to CoLAT Board recommending progression of these, to avoid risk to the quality of governance.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The decisions taken by the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) Board of Trustees in relation to CoLAT Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) at their meeting on 19 March 2021 be noted;
- In line with its role as Sponsor, the Education Board recommend that the CoLAT Board of Trustees address longstanding parent and staff vacancies on LGBs to ensure robust governance of CoLAT schools.

12. **ACADEMIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Director of Community and Children's Services was heard relative to the Academies Development Programme update. The following points were noted:

- For the two previous City co-sponsored academies, which joined CoLAT in September 2020, City of London Academy Islington had been dissolved and confirmation of this was also expected shortly for The City Academy, Hackney.
- The capital builds for both City of London Academy Highgate Hill and Newham Collegiate Sixth Form, which were previously reported to this committee, were originally expected to be considered by their respective local authority planning committees in April but were now delayed until June.
- The Delivery Service Plan planning conditions for City of London Primary Academy Islington were approved at the City's May meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee.

- The completion of City of London Academy Shoreditch Park had slipped from 24 May to 1 June, with the London Borough of Hackney and the contractor working with the academy to enable the move to take place during half term.
- City of London Primary Academy Islington remained on schedule for completion this June.

RESOLVED, that the update be received.

13. CITY OF LONDON ACADEMIES - ANNUAL CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services informing the Education Board of the annual capital allocation available to City of London sponsored academies from the Department for Education (DfE), and the process by which the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) allocated this funding to the individual academies within the trust.

It was highlighted that this was in response to an interest shown by Members at a previous meeting as to how the academies were maintained.

It was explained that money provided by the DfE was annually allocated to support maintenance of the academies based on individual bids. Members noted that this was regularly reviewed by the Trustees Board and was subject to annual financial scrutiny.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

14. REVENUE OUTTURN 2020/21

Members received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the Education Board's Revenue Outturn 2020/21.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

15. EDUCATION BOARD BUDGET UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the Education Board's Budget update for the 2021/22 Financial Year.

It was highlighted that there was a predicted overspend on salaries. Officers were looking at mitigating actions and the Board could expect an updated balance sheet in due course.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

16. MID-TERM STRATEGY REVIEW

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services outlining the main findings of the mid-term strategy review.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

Away Day

The importance of social mobility was highlighted as part of the City Corporation's core vision statements. The Chair took the opportunity to inform Members of the possibility of holding an away day later in the year, focusing on the topic of social mobility and how all areas of the strategy (Education, Cultural and Creative Learning, and Skills) supported this. Newham Collegiate Sixth Form had kindly offered to host the away day. A save the date and further information would be sent to Members in due course.

17. EDUCATION, CULTURAL AND CREATIVE LEARNING AND SKILLS UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding an update on the City's educational, cultural and creative learning, and skills activities.

An introduction was provided by a Level 3 Business and Events Apprentice, within the Education Unit, highlighting the success of the Debating Competition and thanking those involved, including the Chair who had participated as a judge. Members also noted that the Chess Tournament from March had benefitted from a positive legacy with the online platform continuing to be used by pupils, and parents and staff expressing their contentment with the outcomes.

A presentation was then provided by the Education Unit's Culture Lead informing Members of the success of the #mood project and City Schools' Music Workshops. Members saw the launch video of the #mood project and heard some samples of music expected from the upcoming 'listening event'. Members were invited to attend the virtual concert on Wednesday 26 May 2021, contacting the Education Unit to RSVP.

Members expressed support of the #mood project, with one highlighting its value in inclusive participation, particularly for SEN pupils, and promoting cohesion across the family of schools.

An outline of the recently launched Find Fusion website, including a brief demonstration, was provided by the Education Unit's Programmes and Partnerships Officer. Members were asked to share this with their network to encourage productive use of the website.

A Member enquired as to whether Find Fusion was already collaborating with the Livery Companies and Gresham College, who were delivering online webinars. It was clarified that Gresham College were involved in the project and that engagement with the Livery would be addressed in Item 18.

Another expressed support of the project, recognising its value particularly during lockdown. They enquired as to whether data was being collected and analysed to help inform the content on the website. It was confirmed that usage of the site was being tracked, with stakeholders keen to gain insight into this as usage increased. Stakeholders had also expressed an interest in gaining an

understanding of which opportunities were gaining the most traction and how best to monitor this was being considered by officers.

A Member highlighted that there had been some confusion outlined in the mid-term strategy report, in relation to the Find Fusion project, as to the definition of fusion and expressed concern that a lack of clarity may impede its success. They felt that work should be undertaken to ensure a greater understanding of the term.

RESOLVED, that Members:-

- Note the update on events and activities delivered since the last meeting;
- Note the calendar of forums and events over the 2020/21 academic year in Appendix 1.

18. **LIVERY SKILLS INITIATIVE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to progress of the Livery Skills Initiative including proposals for future actions.

The Strategic Education and Skills Director outlined the progress of the project, led by the Livery Committee and Livery Companies, over the last 18 months in assessing what could be done to help support young people to develop skills that could further their employment. Following a survey of the Livery, finding that while many opportunities already existed in individual Livery Companies there was limited collaboration between them, 93 Livery Companies met on 21 April 2021 to discuss ways forward. The major outcome of this was that there was a sense of urgency felt by all involved. It was suggested that the development of a central 'hub' where Liveries could share these opportunities would be hugely beneficial. They could additionally support small businesses to access current schemes offered by the Government.

The Deputy Chair, also Deputy Chair of the Livery Committee, signposted Members to the Livery Committee website where updates on the project would be posted and explained that a further survey was due to take place shortly to ascertain priority actions to undertake as well as identifying a dedicated Member of each Livery Company to liaise with in future engagement on this topic. The Deputy Chair then expressed the positive feedback received as a result of the meeting and thanked all those who had contributed.

Finally, the Chair took the opportunity to ask Members to encourage their school networks to sign up to the individual webinars and events taking place as part of the London Careers Festival. Spaces were limited and, with some schools yet to sign up, there was concern that they may unknowingly miss out on these opportunities.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

19. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
There were no questions.

20. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were two items of urgent business.

Thank You Letters

The Chair informed Members that she had written to the Family of Schools on behalf of the Board to express their thanks for the work of students and staff over the past year considering difficulties arising from COVID-19. Expressions of thanks had also been sent, in collaboration with the Chair of CoLAT, to all City of London Academies.

Climate Action Plan

The Strategic Education and Skills Director provided an update on the Climate Action Strategy and how this was being progressed within the schools. It was noted that the schools were keen to engage and had been discussing the strategy, particularly on how to engage the younger generation.

21. **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.
22. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.
23. **NON-PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
Members received a report of the Town Clerk regarding the Board's non-public outstanding actions.
24. **COLAT AGM UPDATE**
Members received an update providing a summary of the first AGM of CoLAT.
25. **UPDATE ON COLAT SIXTH FORM STRATEGY**
Members received an update on the CoLAT Sixth Form Strategy, noting that a more detailed written report would be expected at the July Board meeting.
26. **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT TO COLAT ACADEMIES**
The Chair requested that Item 26 and Item 27 be considered together.
27. **SAFEGUARDING SCRUTINY MEETINGS, COLAT ACADEMIES**
Members received reports of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

12.57 – Members voted to extend the meeting under Standing Order 40.

28. **FUNDING OF EDUCATION BY THE CITY OF LONDON (REPORT OF THE TOMLINSON REVIEW WORKING PARTY)**
Members considered a joint report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and the Chamberlain.
29. **GW6: COLPAS GALLEYWALL PRIMARY ACADEMY**
Members considered a Gateway 6 report of the City Surveyor regarding CoLPAS Galleywall Primary Academy.
30. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX: CITY OF LONDON ACADEMIES – ANNUAL CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS**
The non-public appendix was received in conjunction with the report of the Director of Community and Children's Services at Item 13.
31. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
There were no questions.
32. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 1.11 pm

Chair

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