

EDUCATION BOARD

Friday, 3 December 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held in Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Guildhall and virtually on Friday, 3 December 2021 at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)	Alderman & Sheriff Nicholas Lyons
Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Deputy Chairman)	Benjamin Murphy
Randall Anderson	Ruby Sayed
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin	Rachel Bower
Shravan Joshi	Tim Campbell

In Attendance

Officers:

Emily Garland	- Town Clerk's Department
Kerry Nicholls	- Town Clerk's Department
Andrew Buckingham	- Town Clerk's Department
Emma Cunningham	- Town Clerk's Department
Anne Bamford	- Community and Children's Services Department
Catherine McGovern	- Community and Children's Services Department
Gerald Mehrtens	- Community and Children's Services Department
Vasima Patel	- Community and Children's Services Department
Andrew Russell	- Community and Children's Services Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Emily Rimington	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
James Gibson	- Chief Operating Officer's Department
Jack Joslin	- The City Bridge Trust
Caroline Hawley	- Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Graeme Hood	- Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and Drama

Guests:

Mark Emmerson	- City of London Academies Trust
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1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Tijs Broeke, Alderman Robert Howard and Alderman William Russell. Advance notice was given that Ruby Sayed would be arriving to the meeting late, and that Tim Campbell needed to depart the meeting early.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

The public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 were approved as a correct record.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

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

The Chair highlighted that a report on environmental updates was expected later in the agenda and therefore action 7/2021/P could be marked as completed.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

5. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Director of Community and Children's Services was heard relative to the COVID-19 and return to school update. Members were advised that the Prime Minister had announced new temporary measures following the emergence of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 in the UK as follows:

- Schools had been asked to set up asymptomatic test sites on secondary school sites in the first week of January. Tests, PPE, and funding to support the workforce would be provided.
- Ofsted had confirmed that secondary schools would not be inspected, unless there were urgent concerns, during the first week of schools' return in January.
- Face coverings were to be worn in communal areas in all settings for staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above, unless exempt, and pupils or students (in year 7 or above) were to continue to wear face coverings on public and dedicated school transport unless exempt.
- All eligible staff and students aged 12 and over were to be encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters.
- The control measures set out in the guidance, and health and safety legislation applied equally to state and independent schools.
- Ofqual confirmed contingency arrangements to support students in the event that exams in England cannot go ahead next year due to the pandemic. The government intended for exams to take place next summer but if they were not able to continue safely or fairly, due to the pandemic, contingency arrangements would be in place to ensure that schools and colleges were well prepared to enable students to achieve their qualifications. Following a consultation, the Department for Education and Ofqual, the qualifications regulator, had confirmed that students would receive teacher assessed grades based on a range of their work, similar to this summer. Ofqual had published guidance for teachers on how they should collect evidence of students' work during the academic year.

RESOLVED, that the update be received.

6. YOUTH LED ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATES

The Director of Community and Children's Services invited pupils from the City of London Academy Highbury Grove and City of London School to present to the Board their recent involvement in environmental initiatives.

Two Year 12 students from the City of London Academy Highbury Grove (CoLAHG) began by presenting to the Board a report they had written reflecting on a weekend trip to Wytham Woods in July 2021, as part of the Leadership in Global Change Climate and Nature summer school. They recounted their environmental and nature discoveries during their visit to the University of Oxford's research woods at Wytham as well as highlighting a variety of lectures and experiences they had the opportunity to partake in, led by expert researchers.

This was followed by a presentation from two pupils (Year 6 and 8) from the City of London School (CLS) informing the Board of the work of the School's Eco-Schools Committee, a group of 30 pupils (led by the faculty Eco-Schools Coordinator) who met weekly to increase awareness of environmental issues and reduce the negative environmental impact of the school. The group were aiming to gain the Green Flag Award for their efforts across ten areas: biodiversity, energy, global citizenship, healthy living, litter, marine, school grounds, transport, waste and water. Members heard about their 2021-22 initiatives so far including leading educational assemblies, writing informational articles in the School's paper, holding a pupil-led mock COP conference, providing updates on social media, completing an environmental review of the School to measure its current environmental impact, and partaking in the Lord Mayor's Show with an environmental focused float. Future plans included tree planting at the School's sports ground, repurposing plants from the Lord Mayor's Show on the School site and holding discussions with architects.

A Member asked the pupils of CLS what the most upsetting or surprising findings of their environmental review of the School were, to which it was confirmed that the pupils found that the School was currently unable to produce its own energy which prompted them to make this one of their goals.

The Deputy Chair suggested that their presentations and updates be uploaded to the Livery Committee website in the hope that this may prompt greater Livery support of their initiatives. It was agreed that this would be arranged outside of the meeting.

The Chair asked the students of CoLHG if, before attending the summer school, they were aware of the potential damage that animals themselves could have on their environment, of which it was clarified that they were surprised to learn this.

Students of CoLHG were asked by officers whether they had had the opportunity to discuss their experiences with other students and if so, whether they thought there was further interest amongst the student body. The students

explained that the report had been shared on the school website and that they had informally shared their thoughts with others. They highlighted that the Academy had a pupil-led climate change focused group 'Footprint' and that they felt several of these pupils would be interested in becoming involved in future opportunities.

The Deputy Chair enquired as to how the pupils of CoLHG found out about the opportunity to attend the summer school. It was confirmed that their teacher had been alerted to its existence due to the Academy's previous work in environmental initiatives and applied for funding from the City for five students to attend. The Deputy Chair enquired as to how further opportunities could be arranged, to which officers confirmed that it was initially planned to trial these initiatives in the schools and, depending on their success, expand these to others within the Family of Schools in due course.

The Eco-Schools Coordinator of CLS added that the City's partnership forum was very helpful in allowing these opportunities to be shared with teachers who were then able to look at implementation.

RESOLVED, that the presentations be received.

7. STRATEGIC AWAY DAY REPORT

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing a summary of outcomes from the Board's Away Day held on 11 October 2021 and focusing on the theme of social mobility.

The Chair reminded the Board of a recent email circulation which contained a video showcasing Newham Collegiate Sixth Form, which had been the venue for the away day, in relation to social mobility. Members also noted that the upcoming Education Board dinner, also focusing on social mobility, would take place on 9 May 2022 and feature Lord Woolley as principal guest.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

8. EDUCATION, CULTURAL & 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 related activities.

The Chair took the opportunity to congratulate the Education Unit's Business Administration and Events Apprentice on her final assessment grade and achievement of the City's Apprentice of the Year.

Members were reminded to contact the Education Unit if they wished to attend any of the upcoming events listed in the report.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

9. CORPORATE PARENTING AND VIRTUAL SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Members received a presentation of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the virtual school and corporate parenting.

The Virtual School Head gave a presentation providing an overview of their contribution to the Corporation's Afghan Education Project, spanning four weeks and accommodating over 250 young migrants from Afghanistan. The project was deemed a success and resulted in all young people being enrolled into City schools. The Board congratulated and thanked officers for their hard work and commitment to the project.

A Member highlighted an issue that one of the academies had experienced with specialist support for the Afghan students. There had been issues with the originally provided staff having stopped attending the school, resulting in parents having to offer volunteer support and a general lack of sufficient trauma and language support. Officers thanked the Member for bringing this to their attention - they confirmed that short-term support should be being provided and agreed to look into this outside of the meeting.

The Chief Executive of CoLAT added that other academy staff also felt that there was limited support available although it was clarified that this was largely due to funding not being able to be adjusted to accommodate the new children until the new year.

Another Member highlighted that, in their experience within the academies, it appeared that translation support would be most beneficial to staff, noting that there were currently long waiting lists of over 12 months for such support.

The Board also noted that following the success of the Virtual School, officers were now in process of finding school places for Afghan children aged 16-17 and going forward would shift focus to adult education.

RESOLVED, that the presentation be noted.

10. **GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS UPDATE**

The Chair requested that Item 10 and Item 11 be considered together.

11. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN: GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding an update on Governor appointments and a report of the Town Clerk regarding a Governor appointment that was ratified under urgency procedures.

The Strategic Education and Skills Director began by highlighting the importance of timely succession planning for Governor appointments due to the Local Governing Bodies' (LGB) vital role in education. It was also noted that information on the academies' websites was not always accurate. As there were several current and upcoming vacancies, a reminder was offered to Clerks of these bodies to ensure that the appointment process was being completed in a timely and accurate fashion.

The Chair asked that Members of the Board be on the lookout for potential suitable candidates for these appointments so that they may be approached to apply.

A Member asked if a document outlining the requirements and expectations of a LGB Governor existed and whether it could be shared with Board Members. The Chief Executive of CoLAT confirmed that a Governor handbook existed, and officers agreed to ensure that this was circulated.

Another Member also highlighted the importance of identifying skills gaps within the LGB Memberships and the Chief Executive of CoLAT confirmed that skills audits were regularly undertaken by the LGBs and that currently there appeared to be a gap in the area of HR and property expertise. The Member offered to provide contacts for those working in the HR industry and suggested that other City contacts were utilised to source those with the appropriate knowledge and experience. The Chief Executive of CoLAT confirmed that a Governance dedicated officer would be joining the CoLAT team in the new year to assist with this process.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

12. 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.

Members noted that the previously reported predicted overspend had been successfully minimised by officers and that efforts would continue to bring this to a balanced budget.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

13. 2022/23 BUDGET ESTIMATE

Members received a joint report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and the Chamberlain regarding the provisional revenue budget for 2022/23.

RESOLVED, that:

- The provisional 2022/23 revenue budget be approved for submission to the Finance Committee;
- The Chamberlain be authorised to revise these budgets to allow for further implications arising from the agreement by this Committee of specific allocations of funding to Academies and Central Support Services; and
- Minor amendments for 2021/22 and 2022/23 budgets arising during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain.

14. CITY PREMIUM GRANT PROPOSED ALLOCATION MODEL

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services outlining a proposed model for allocation of the City Premium Grant from April 2022 onwards.

The Strategic Education and Skills Director outlined the model and how it would be divided into three separate funding streams: disadvantaged pupils grant, partnerships grant and strategic grant.

The Chair clarified that anything within the strategic grant division would be subject to high-quality data monitoring the need, and likely focus on social mobility. Should this be approved by the Board and Policy & Resources subsequently, the Education Unit would inform all schools of the change.

RESOLVED, that the Board approve:

- The proposed changes to the allocation, management and accountability of the City Schools Premium grants; and
- Moving to a more streamlined online system for project proposals, monitoring, evaluation and for tracking the impact of the projects funded.

15. **ACADEMIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the Academies Development Programme update.

The following points were noted:

- Since 2013 the City had increased the number of academies it sponsored from three disparate academies to ten with the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) being established in 2016. Together they had a total capital investment in excess of £96 million and, when operating at full capacity, enabled over 9,000 students to be educated by the City.
- The support of the Chief Executives and chief officers of the four local authorities in which these academies were located had been essential, and well received, in making the decisions required to reach this point.
- On a recent tour of the City of London Primary Academy Islington site with the Chair of Policy and Resources they had reflected on the decision to take on a poorly performing school in our neighbouring borough, and the decision to close a Catholic girls' school to open a non-denomination co-ed academy on the same site. Both had raised concerns politically and organisationally at the time but had resulted in success.
- In terms of challenges going forward, the report provided details of the two remaining capital builds that remained in progress, detailing risks on delays for completion, budget to match costs of design, and therefore potential for compromises in the completed capital builds should value engineering need to be undertaken to bring builds within budget, and the board will wish to consider how progress on these remaining capital builds are regularly monitored and reported on to this board. It was recognised that there were difficulties here due to the Department for Education leading the build and the need to balance remaining in budget and achieving outstanding educational facilities.

- And finally, there remained a broader issue of reducing demand for school places in future years, as reported on 1 July 2021. Appendix 1 displayed the present occupancy of the City Academies. Some of these numbers showed impressive change, such as the City of London Academy Highgate Hill application numbers previously being around 50 but now improved to having more applications than places, whereas some Academies were still struggling to fill places.

The Chair took the opportunity to highlight that this would be the Academy Development Director's last Education Board meeting before leaving the Corporation and expressed the Board's thanks for his support to the Board and the academies over the previous years.

The Chief Executive of CoLAT affirmed that these decisions had proven challenging over the years but that the Director's support in achieving this had been invaluable. Future challenges would continue to be tackled by the CoLAT team including discussions currently taking place surrounding the issue of pupil places and occupancy.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

16. **CREATIVE COLLABORATIVES AND ARTS UPDATES**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on the Creative Collaborative initiative.

Members noted that the Education Unit had not been successful in their application for a grant from Arts Council to support this initiative, but that all those involved were keen to continue with the original plans through other means. In particular, the initiative would include a focus on oracy.

A Member offered their support in providing connections between the Education Unit and Speakers Trust, an organisation that had previously expressed an interest in working with the City to improve oracy across the Family of Schools.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

17. **REVIEW OF FUNDING TO THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DRAMA FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**

Members considered a report of the Principal of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama (GSMD) regarding a review of funding to the Guildhall School Trust for Scholarships for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The Board noted the emphasis on reference to these as scholarships rather than bursaries given that they were awarded on merit rather than any means-tested requirement; the GSMD website outlined the differences in these and how to apply for each.

It was clarified that the confidential watermark on Appendix 1 had been included in error, and that the information included was in fact able to be shared

publicly. The Chair thanked the Guildhall School of Music & Drama for fulfilling the Board's request to implement anonymous reporting.

A Member however felt that individuals were still able to be identified from the information included in the Appendix and suggested it be reclassified as non-public. The Town Clerk, alongside officers at GSMD, agreed to review this.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The School's impact report on the use of the £30,000 grant in 21/22 be approved as satisfactory; and
- Continuation of the grant to 2022/23 and 2023/24, to be approved by Policy & Resources, be endorsed.

18. STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES UPDATE - LIVERY SKILLS INITIATIVE

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on the Livery Skills Initiative.

The Board noted that a European Social Fund grant had been received to assist with the Connecting Communities project that aimed at helping those over 18 and not currently in education or employment to enter a suitable pathway. This was due to commence in January 2022. Members were asked to signpost the project to any suitable candidates.

The Chair thanked officers for their efforts in getting the project resourced so swiftly.

A Member enquired as to the marketing plan for ensuring this was advertised more widely. It was confirmed that there had been unforeseen delays in beginning their work on marketing due to the requirements of sourcing funding and staffing resource but that it was planned for it to be advertised as widely as possible. One method of achieving this was to be sharing on the Livery Link website.

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 was one item of urgent business.

Outreach Programme

The Chair asked a Member if there was an update on St Anne's College, Oxford trial of a new higher education outreach programme at the City of London Academy Southwark, which they had informed the Board about at the previous meeting. It was confirmed that there had been no progress to date, as other more pressing issues had taken priority, but that it would be a focus in the new year.

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 9 September 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.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

24. **COLAT UPDATE**

The Chair invited the Chief Executive of CoLAT to address the Board, providing an update on the Trust and its progress since the last meeting.

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

25. **CITY OF LONDON PRIMARY ACADEMY ISLINGTON - CAPITAL FUNDING AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION COSTS**

This item had been withdrawn.

26. **CITY PREMIUM GRANT EVALUATIONS 2020/21**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the City Premium Grant Evaluations 2020/21.

27. **STANDARDS SCRUTINY MEETINGS OF CITY SPONSORED ACADEMIES**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding standards scrutiny meetings of the City of London Corporation's sponsored academies held in November 2021.

28. **EDUCATION CHARITIES REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members considered a report of the Managing Director of Bridge House Estates and Chief Charities Officer regarding recommendations resulting from the Charities Review of the City Educational Trust Fund and the City of London Corporation Combined Education Charity.

29. **TARGET OPERATING MODEL AND GOVERNANCE REVIEW: CITY OF LONDON INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

Members received a joint report of the Town Clerk and the Heads of the City of London School, City of London School for Girls and City of London Freeman's School regarding proposals resulting from the Governance Review and Target Operating Model implementation.

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

There were no questions.

31. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was one item of urgent non-public business.

Outgoing Clerk

The Chair took the opportunity to express hers and the Board's thanks to the outgoing Clerk for her support over the previous year and wished her well in her new role within the Corporation.

32. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 were approved as a correct record.

33. **TARGET OPERATING MODEL UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing updates on implementation of the Target Operating Model.

The meeting ended at 12.29 pm.

Chair

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