

EDUCATION BOARD

Monday, 2 December 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held at Committee Room 1 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 2 December 2024 at 10.30 am

Present

Members:

John Griffiths (Deputy Chairman)
Caroline Haines
Steve Goodman OBE
Alderman Robert Howard
Deputy Shравan Joshi MBE
Ruby Sayed

Alderman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP
Helen Fentimen OBE JP
James Adeleke
Jane Hindle
Floyd Steadman OBE

Guest:

Catherine McGuinness CBE

Officers:

Deborah Bell	- Community & Children's Services Department
Scott Caizley	- Community & Children's Services Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Caitlin McMillan	- Community & Children Services Department
Torriano Stewart	- Community & Children's Services Department
Jayne Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Kevin Colville	- Comptroller and City Solicitors
Mark Emmerson	- City of London Academies Trust - CEO
Barbara Hamilton	- Community and Children's Services Department
Kaye Saxton-Lea	- People & HR
Melody Thornton	- People & HR
Simon Lightman	- King Edward's School Witley

Item 9 only:

John Atkinson - ImpactEd
Owen Carter - ImpactEd

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Naresh Sonpar and Joanna Abeyie.

The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Chairman John Griffiths.

The Board welcomed the recently appointed external Member Jane Hindle to her first meeting.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That the public minutes of the meeting of 09 October 2024 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

4. **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025/26**

The Committee considered the report of The Chamberlain and the Executive Director of Community & Children's Services setting out the annual submission of the revenue budgets overseen by the Education Board, noting that the proposed budget for 2025/26 has been prepared within the resource envelope allocated to each Director by the Corporation's Resource Allocation Sub Committee.

Members noted that the provisional nature of the revenue budgets recognises that further revisions may arise from the necessary realignment of funds resulting from decisions at the Corporation's Policy & Resources Committee and the final allocations of the school funding model, and that the provisional 2025/26 Original Budget, presented in the report, does not account for the increased rate of employer National Insurance (NI) contributions that will take effect from April 2025, at which point the budget will be revised during the financial year to incorporate these changes.

Members noted that the 2025/26 provisional revenue budget totals £3.161m, an increase of £70,000 when compared with the Original Budget for 2024/25 and that the main reasons for the increase are:

- 2025/26 local risk budgets include a 2% inflation uplift amounting to £17,000; and
- 2025/26 support services budget was increased by £53,000 due to a new basis of apportionment for all recharges.

Members commented that it would be beneficial to receive an overview of the contribution made by the Corporation to the education spend that could inform decisions on the direction of travel around education generally, noting the complexity of the wide range of funding sources.

A Member asked for further information on the spend allocated in 2024 to City of London Academy Islington and for clarification on the ownership of the building. The meeting heard that the school building as a distinct separate entity is owned by the Trust (while the residential part is owned by the City of London Corporation), that there is a 125-year lease on the land, and that the project was undertaken by surveyors with input from the Corporation and the CoLAT. In response to a question on whether the lease specifically identifies elements held in common (such as perimeter boundaries) the meeting heard that there is no overlap though there are perimeter issues and that a joint-use agreement exists for some areas.

A Member asked that a clear delineation of the financial responsibilities around the matter be provided or circulated (see action point)

RESOLVED, That the Board

- Agree that the provisional 2025/26 revenue budget reflects the Committee's objectives;
- Approve the budget for submission to the Finance Committee;
- Authorise the Chamberlain to revise these budgets to allow for further implications arising from the agreement by the Education Board of specific allocations of funding to individual Academies after finalisation of the schools funding model; and
- Agree that minor amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising during budget setting be delegated to The Chamberlain.

5. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community & Children's Services and the Strategic Director for Education and Skills that included information on the recently introduced Supported Employment Programme that is grant funded by the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP).

Members noted that the Supported Employment Programme will work with a wide range of local partners and will be one of the first local developmental initiatives to enable local areas to jointly implement firm plans to address economic inactivity and identify employment opportunities, with a particular focus on participants outside the workforce, especially those experiencing disadvantages when applying for work.

The Board noted that the report is submitted to the Board for information purposes given the Board's oversight of Adult Skills, and that the responsibility for the programme sits with Central London Forward (CLF) at which the Corporation is represented by the Policy Chairman. The Board also noted that there is no statutory requirement to provide the programme. In response to a query on whether the information would be submitted to the Corporation's Community and Children's Services Committee for information given its scope, the Board heard that the information may be submitted to that Committee in line with an analysis on the participants in the programme.

A Member asked whether the programme was linked to any care-leaver initiatives. The meeting heard that it is linked to people "with a disadvantage" with a focus on health disadvantages, but also encompasses those with other kinds of disadvantage including people who have not been successful in securing employment for other reasons, citing in particular section 27 of the report.

A Member commented that previous DWP programmes appeared to be compromised by boundary issues and asked whether those issues have been addressed. The meeting noted that there are currently no postcode restrictions and that delivery is London-wide, working with Local Authorities across London.

A Member sought confirmation that no duplication or double-counting was taking place given the other Adult Skills programmes under way. The meeting noted that the offering focussed on progression routes and that individuals could engage with different programmes at different times.

Referencing in particular sections 2,7, 13 and 15 of the report, a Member asked for clarity on what constituted a “local” partnership. The meeting heard that these refer to partnerships with Local Authorities outside the scope of CLF and included a range of other providers including care-leaver and health organisations.

6. UPDATE ON WORK EXPERIENCE

The Board heard an update on work experience.

The Board heard that around 65 work experience requests have been received since early 2024 and that work is ongoing to standardise and centralise the collation and allocation process focussing in particular on the needs of the young people taking into account resources, equipment and safeguarding.

The following comments were made:

- A certification step would be useful and motivating;
- Flexibility around work experience time spans and time slots would be welcome;
- All schools within the Family of Schools would benefit from CoLC work experience opportunities;
- CoLC contractors offering Social Value commitments would benefit from being involved in work experience;
- There should be an emphasis on co-ordinating the fragmented work experience opportunities and services in the City to minimise any duplication or wastage that could be encapsulated within a City-wide offering based on the proposed Youth Guarantee.

Members noted the publication on 26 November 2024 of the ‘Get Britain Working White Paper’ produced by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Secretary of State for Education that included a commitment to an “expansion of work experience” and a Youth Guarantee. Members asked that further information be brought to the next Education Board on progress, with numbers of work experience opportunities offered, taken up and successfully concluded alongside targets as the programme rolls out.

7. FUTURE PROFESSIONALS SUMMER SCHOOL IMPACT REPORT FOR 2023/24

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community & Children’s Services and The Chamberlain that outlined the success of the City Corporation-funded Widening Participation programme in collaboration with St George’s, University of London and the Lord Mayor.

A Member asked for information on the total budget for the programme. The meeting heard that the total amount allocated to the programme will be confirmed to the Board (see action point).

A Member requested further information on City St George's and asked for further information (see action point), noting the benefits of the work.

A Member commented that more detailed information on the impacts (tangible and less tangible) of the programme would be welcome, noting that long-term tracking is planned and noting also that it is not necessarily feasible or meaningful to directly track impacts.

The meeting also noted that City St George's University will continue to work with the schools that participated in the programme and offer guaranteed places on their Year 11 and Post-16 programmes to these schools, aiming to provide repeat engagements with the Future Professionals students.

8. **LCF UPDATE**

The Board received an update on the upcoming 7th London Careers Festival running in February 2025 that is expected to include workshops, information sessions and on-location business experiences designed to inspire young Londoners and mobilise City businesses and organisations.

9. **CITY PREMIUM GRANT 2023/24 UPDATE**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services setting out a summary of outcomes and learnings relating to projects funded by City Premium Grant (CPG) in the 2023/24 academic year, noting that 2023-24 was the final year of the previous Education Strategies. Members noted in particular these points:

- key statistics from the 117 CPG funded projects that ran in 2023/24;
- highlights of popular themes and areas of focus across projects;
- developments in the process's second year of operation; and
- key learnings and intended improvements.

In response to a question on alignment with the Education Strategy, Members noted that future reports will be mapped against priority areas set out in the Education Strategy.

The Board heard from ImpactEd on their evaluation of the CPG (Appendix 3).

A Member sought clarification on whether the programmes are being centrally curated at CoLAT, and the Board noted that a newly-appointed partnership lead is co-ordinating bids at strategic level and ensuring that the additionality is having the desired outcome.

A Member sought clarification on negative outcomes associated with a small number of the programmes, and the Board noted that the outcomes could be measuring confidence levels, assessment variations, or could indicate a need to adjust the programme.

In response to a question on schools' evaluations and how they were delivered, the Board noted that an incentive mechanism exists to ensure that schools provide an evaluation ahead of securing future bids.

A Member asked whether the primary/secondary CPG applications were in line with expectations, the meeting heard that the proportions were in line with expectations.

The meeting heard from two students at City of London Academy Highgate Hill and one student at Islington Collegiate Sixth Form who shared their account of their transformative experiences made possible by CPG funding.

10. **UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROJECTS**

Members noted that, following the electronic circulation of details of the proposed research projects via email in October 2024, a majority of Members who responded agreed that these two projects be pursued:

3. Exploring Parental Perspectives on Music Education: Understanding the Role of Parents in Shaping the Future of Music Education in Schools

4. Navigating the ITTECF: Lived Experiences of Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and the Impact on Supporting Pupils with SEND
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Members heard updates on the projects:

- The Education Strategy Unit is working with the Guildhall School of Music and Drama on project 3; and
- The Education Strategy Unit is working with The City Academy Hackney on project 4.

11. **CULTURAL & CREATIVE LEARNING FUND 2023/24 EVALUATION REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services setting out key information relating to the first year of the City's Cultural and Creative Learning (CCL) funding model, noting also that 12 projects were awarded money from the CCL budget to the combined cost of £184,315, and that funding from one project was returned as the project was not completed leading to an actual spend of £170,115. Members noted that 3,220 participants took part across the completed projects.

Members also noted the summary of findings from the evaluations returned by partners at the end of project delivery together with an overview of the projects.

In response to a question on what learnings, of any, were being applied to the current year, the meeting heard that the evaluation model is to be adjusted, and that visuals will be gathered from every project.

A Member commented that the words 'racism' and 'slavery' featured on the word cloud shown on page 2 of Appendix 2 and asked for further information on that, noting that it might benefit students more to learn poetry for its own sake rather than through any kind of misleading lens. The meeting noted that the organisation Poetry VS Colonialism was involved in some of the projects which will have accounted for those terms.

12. CITY YOUTH ENVIRONMENT BOARD

The Board heard an update on the Youth Natural Environment Board, delivered by Simon Lightman at King Edward's School Witley.

The Board noted that its aims are to act as a point of youth advocacy on environmental issues, and to act as a point of collaboration with a range of partners.

The Board thanked the school for its dedication and commitment and congratulated the school on achieving Eco-Schools Green Flag accreditation status, commenting on the salience of ensuring the youth voice continues to be heard.

13. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no questions.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items of urgent business.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for subsequent 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.

The meeting ended at 12.40 pm

Chairman

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