

Queen Mary's College Local Governing Body

Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 6.00pm Meeting held using Microsoft TEAMS due to Covid-19 pandemic

Present: Ms Julie McLatch (Chair)
Mr David Ayre (Parent Governor)
Dr Audrey Boucher
Ms Ali Foss (Principal)
Mr Simon Green (Staff Governor)
Mr Matthew Jackson
Mrs Sarah Pritchard (Parent Governor)
Mr Chris Thomas

8/12 quorate
(excluding students)

In attendance: Dr Janice de Sousa – Trustee
Mr Pete Stagg - Trustee
Mr Mark Henderson (Deputy Principal) – to 7.20pm
Ms Kate Need (Assistant Principal)
Dr Toni Baldwin (Academy Secretary)

[Clerks' Note: due to technical problems during the meeting some items were split and taken out of order. For the benefit of those not at the meeting, the minutes record the reports and discussions in the order of the agenda]

72. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Simon Barnard, Sally-Ann Hall-Jones, Satya Sookhun and John Wright.

73. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

74. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the QMC-LGB meeting held on 5th May 2021 (paper LGB 39/20) were approved for signature.

75. **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The LGB noted the following:

- Minute 58.1: Safeguarding Governor – this position remains vacant following the resignation of Islam Jalaita, however, a potential new Local Governor is being recruited who may be suitable for the role.
- Minute 69.1: Data Dashboard – Toni Baldwin reported that she had received some feedback regarding the data dashboard and that it would be reformatted with help from Kate Need for the next academic year.

76.1 **SUMMER ASSESSMENT PROCESS 2021**

Kate Need updated the LGB on assessments for summer 2021 using Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). The LGB recalled that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic disrupting teaching and learning in both 2019/20 and 2020/21 the usual summer

exams had been cancelled in favour of grades determined by teachers. Kate Need reported that the College Management Team had anticipated at the start of the 2020/21 academic year that exams would not go ahead as usual. Teaching staff had therefore held rigorous assessments throughout the year including mock examinations held under exam conditions in November 2020.

76.2 Kate Need reminded the LGB that, after a consultation process in the spring, Colleges and Schools were told formally about the requirement for TAGs in March 2021. When the DfE guidance was published, it gave institutions a level of flexibility in calculating TAGs and QMC decided not to replicate summer examinations but to use a 'basket of evidence' based on 6-8 pieces of assessment carried out across the two years. A college wide process was put in place in order to make the TAGs as fair as possible. The process included:

- Decisions as to which assessments would be included in the 'basket of evidence'
- taking into account any special exam arrangements or special considerations that a student would usually be entitled to
- training for Directors of Learning on unconscious bias and how to reduce bias in marking.
- moderation within subjects taught by multiple teachers across the College or in the case of subjects with only one teacher external moderation with other local college(s).

Once the TAGs had been produced they were moderated by the Senior Management. TAGs were checked against historical data for the College taking into consideration that this was a cohort with higher prior achievement than in previous years. This checking process also identified a few admin errors such as differing grade boundaries. Following the moderation process Ali Foss, as Principal and Head of Centre, signed off every result and the TAGs were submitted to the Exam Boards. The Exam Boards then asked for samples of evidence from certain students as part of their moderation process. Uploading the correct evidence had been another huge task for both teachers and the Exams team.

76.2 The LGB questioned Kate Need, Mark Henderson and Ali Foss on the process for setting TAGs and the outcomes.

- What did the exam boards ask for by way of quality assurance? The College provided the Exam Boards with the Centre Policy and the process for setting and moderating the grades. The College then provided spreadsheets setting out the TAGs as well as copies of some assessments, the grade boundaries used and details of the moderation process.
- Were there likely to be any surprises for students and their parents? Students and their parents had been kept informed of the process, would have seen the grades for individual assessments within the 'basket of assessments' and would also have known their 'on course for' grades. In the majority of cases TAGs were likely to be similar to 'on course for' grades, however, where they differed or had been changed during moderation, the College would have the evidence/narrative to justify the difference.

76.3 Kate Need reported that as the College did not put in place final exams teachers were able to continue teaching until half term to enable students to finish the curriculum in each of their subjects. Julie McLatch thanked Kate Need for a clear explanation of a complex process.

77.1 **MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT UPDATE**

Mark Henderson updated the LGB on marketing and recruitment activity since the last meeting. The LGB noted that the college had originally planned to hold open days and other events such as welcomefest, new parents evenings and the medics evening face-to-face. However, when government guidance changed, CMT in consultation with the Trustees had decided not to hold large face-to-face events at the College and events had moved online. Mark Henderson reported that since QMC had made the decision to move recruitment events online other colleges in the area had also cancelled their planned live events.

77.2 Mark Henderson reported that potential students had fed back that, after periods of isolation, they wanted to feel connected and were worried, less about the academic side of college work, but about issues such as travel to College and how friendly the College was.

Ali Foss reported that although the College was experienced in holding online events QMC's biggest selling point was its site and students so it was a disappointing that face-to-face events had been cancelled. However, the LGB noted that the admissions team had been running small group tours of the College for prospective students and had managed to take around 1000 potential students around the College in a Covid-safe way.

77.3 The LGB discussed upcoming marketing and recruitment activities. Kate Need reported that current students would be contributing to the online welcome day with part of the event set up in online breakout rooms so that prospective students could talk to current students. One of the Local Governors asked if, as in previous years, students were making multiple applications to different Colleges. Mark Henderson reported that understandably other Colleges were being guarded about sharing recruitment data but that he had the impression that some colleges were benefiting from the increase in demographics more than other colleges. The LGB were pleased to hear that QMC was fairly confident that with demographics going up and significantly more applications at this stage than last year, the first year intake for 2021 would be higher than in 2020.

78.1 **UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL (Ali Foss)**

Ali Foss updated the LGB on current College arrangements for the end of the 2020/21 academic year and start of 2021/22 academic year:

- In line with the majority of local colleges, enrolment at QMC had been brought forward and would be taking place face-to-face from 16-18th August shortly after students received their GCSE grades (12th August).
- This change to enrolment had impacted on the start of the autumn term, teaching would start earlier than usual and students and teaching staff would have a two week half term to break up what would otherwise be a very long term.
- The blocked timetable, initially put in place to simplify online learning and ensure the minimum number of students on site at a time during the pandemic had proved very popular with both staff and students and was being retained (with adjustments) for 2021/22. The long lunchtime had been shortened and dedicated tutor time and space for enrichment included in the timetable.

78.2 Kate Need updated the LGB on curriculum changes for 2021/22. The LGB noted that Esports was expanding with current BTEC students moving into their second year and two new 1st year classes starting in September 2021. The LGB noted that

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there were only a few minor changes to the curriculum for 2021 – mainly changes to the size of some of the applied vocational courses. However, the College was reviewing how subjects were taught and first year students would be spending the first part of 2022/22 developing skills that they might have missed out learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 78.3 Looking back on 2020/21 Kate Need updated the LGB on the outcomes of changes to the curriculum made in September 2020:
- The LGB had been updated on progress with Esports during the year and those who had attended the recent Strategy Day had been given a demonstration of the new Esports facilities on the ground floor of E Block.
 - Ten students had started on the new Childcare BTEC in 2020. The pandemic had placed significant restrictions on what had been designed to be a very practical course, however, students had taken part in virtual work experience and since March 2021 had been out in face-to-face placements in local schools and nurseries. Applications for September 2021 had been strong and QMC expected to recruit a bigger cohort this year.
 - The Foundation Diploma in Production Arts which started in September 2020 enabled students to study Production Arts (lighting, sound, set design) alongside other Performing Arts courses. Music and drama productions had been limited during 2020/21 but the College had recently been able to put on a number of performances to very small audiences and were live streaming a production of Les Miserables this weekend.
- 78.4 Ali Foss updated the LGB on HCC's Resource Provision for High Needs students which had been briefly mentioned at the last meeting. The LGB noted that HCC would be providing the Trust with around £500k part of which would be used to redevelop the Library as a learning resource centre. The development of a learning resource centre would release space on the ground floor of the Spectrum building which would then be refurbished to increase the College's capacity for students with learning difficulties. Ali Foss reported that from September 2022 QMC would be taking more students with high needs, mainly from Lyminton House a special school in Basingstoke. Once established, Ali Foss expected this partnership to result in an additional 50 HCC funded High Needs students at the College.
- 78.5 Mark Henderson reported on changes to the senior and middle management of the College from September 2021. The LGB noted that with Ali Foss retiring there would be one less member of the College Management Team and that the roles would be redistributed between the remaining members. Mark Henderson reported that the reconstructed CMT would consist of The Principal, Deputy Principal, three Assistant Principals and the Directors of Finance and HR. The LGB noted that funds released from the reorganisation of CMT were enabling a number of teaching and support staff to take on roles as cross college champions for, for example, student voice, student welfare, T Levels, EdTech and Oxbridge.
- 78.6 Ali Foss ended the report looking forward to 2021/22 by reminding the LGB that the last 5 years had been challenging for the College with the demographic dip reducing the number of students and hence funding. The College was currently around a third smaller than in 2015, however, the LGB noted that student outcomes were the best that they had ever been. Ali Foss reported that, looking forward, demographics were increasing which was likely to result in increasing student numbers. In addition, the country looked to be coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2022 the College would celebrate its 50th anniversary.

79.1 GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT

Julie McLatch reported that there had been no governor engagement since the last meeting and suggested that this was picked up again in the autumn.

80.1 REPORT FROM THE STUDENT GOVERNORS

The LGB noted that although neither of the new Student Governors were able to attend the meeting, Keshni Bhoodhoo the new SU President along with two other members of the SU had contributed to discussions at the recent Trust Strategy Day. Ali Foss reported that the College had reviewed the opportunities in place for students to communicate with College Management to ensure that the voices of students including those from all communities were able to be heard.

81.1 REVIEW OF 2020/21 AND DRAFT AGENDA PLAN FOR 2021/22

The LGB noted a review of 2020 and draft agenda plan for 2021/22 (paper LGB 40/20). Julie McLatch reported that actions and discussions from throughout the year had been collated against the Terms of Reference for the LGB and progress with the actions from the Governance SAR recorded. The LGB noted that, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings had been productive and they had been able to question members of the College Management Team on the changing situation as well as routine reports such as careers and destinations. The LGB noted a draft agenda plan for 2021/22 meetings and asked Toni Baldwin to review this with Janice de Sousa prior to the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

82.1 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN QMC-LGB AND NHEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The LGB noted a summary of Trust meetings and activities since the last LGB meeting (paper LGB 41/20 circulated with the agenda). Julie McLatch thanked those Local Governors who had been able to contribute at the recent Strategy Day. Ali Foss reported that the Strategy Day had focused on the purpose, vision and aims of the Trust and the LGB noted that the reviewed Strategy would be brought to a future meeting for discussion.

Mark Henderson left the meeting

83.1 MONITORING INFORMATION (Mark Henderson)

The LGB noted the Data Dashboard summary and monitoring information to the end of May 2021 (papers QMC-LGB 42/20 and 43/20). Ali Foss reported although this had been the smallest student cohort for many years retention had been very good. The LGB noted application numbers by school which were significantly higher than for 2020 and Ali Foss reported that as long as applications were converted to enrolments, the College was optimistic that the intake for September 2021 would be higher than in the last few years marking the beginning of a demographic increase in year 11 pupils that continued for several years.

83.2 The LGB noted the predicted grades for 2021 as set out in the Data Dashboard and one of the Local Governors asked why predicted high grades looked to be higher than in 2020. Ali Foss reported that this year's students had come to the college with much better prior achievement and were therefore expected to get more high grades than in 2020 – a similar level to cohorts from 3 or 4 years ago. The LGB noted that QMC no longer looked to be losing top students from Basingstoke to other colleges. One of those attending the meeting identified a potential anomaly in the GCSE predicted grades in the data dashboard and the LGB asked for this to be corrected for the next meeting.

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83.3 The LGB noted the Summary Management Accounts to end May 2021 (paper QMC-LGB 44/20). Ali Foss reported that this had been a challenging year financially. Ali Foss reported that other income (non ESFA income) for 2002/21 was around half of previous years with the Sports Centre being closed or working at reduced capacity for parts of the year and catering income significantly reduced. However, the Trust had received a number of grants and additional funding and had made cost savings and were expecting to end the year at break even or with a small surplus.

84. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Julie McLatch reminded those present that this was her last meeting as the Chair of the Local Governing Body. The LGB recalled that Julie McLatch had started working with Queen Mary’s College in 2001 before becoming a Sixth Form College Governor in 2015 and Chair of the LGB since QMC converted to an academy on 1st October 2017. Julie McLatch thanked the LGB for their support of the College, particularly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and reported that she was hoping to take over as Chair of the NHEA Trust when Jon Soar stepped down at the end of the summer with Janice deSousa taking over as Chair of the LGB.

On behalf of the LGB Ali Foss asked to put on record the LGB’s thanks to Julie McLatch for her all her support for the College over the years and their best wishes for her potential new role as Chair of the Trust.

Ali Foss invited members of the LGB to results day celebrations on Tuesday 10th August. The LGB noted that students leaving in 2021 had not been able to have an end of year event so it was hoped to make more of Results Day to enable students to have a better send-off.

85. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Thursday 30 September 2021 at 6pm
- Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 6pm
- Thursday 3 February 2022 at 6pm
- Wednesday 16th March 2022 at 6pm
- Thursday 12 May 2022 at 6pm
- Wednesday 22 June 2022 at 6pm

The Chair thanked those present and the meeting ended at 7.30pm

To be signed following approval at the meeting on 30th September 2021.....approved
Janice de Sousa (Chair)

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	Timescale	Responsibility
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Toni Baldwin
Academy Secretary, Queen Mary’s College