

## Queen Mary's College Local Governing Body

Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 5.30pm  
Conference Room, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke

**Present:** Mr David O'Donnell  
Mr Roger Chung  
Mrs Liz Cooper  
Mrs Jackie Day  
Mr Mark Henderson (Principal)  
Mrs Sarah Pritchard

6/10 quorate  
(excluding students)

**In attendance:** Mr Gordon Holdcroft - Trustee  
Ms Kate Need - Deputy Principal  
Mrs Sally-Anne Spooner – Director of Human Resources – *till 6.15pm*  
Dr Toni Baldwin - Academy Secretary

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

David O'Donnell, who had been appointed by the Board of Trustees as Chair of the LGB, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new academic year and introductions were made.

The LGB welcomed to the meeting:

- Liz Cooper, Head of Inclusion College, Hook, who had been appointed to the LGB by the Trust from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.
- Roger Chung, NHEA Trustee appointed to the LGB from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024
- Gordon Holdcroft, Vice Chair of Trust
- Sally-Anne Spooner, Director of HR for the Safeguarding Report

Apologies for absence were received from, Richard Ash, Olivia Fisher-Collins, Kirsten Johnston, Dasha Kyei-Poakwah, Marcus Rutland and Agnes Wisniewska. The LGB noted that both staff governors were involved in the 'meet the tutor' event that unfortunately had clashed with this LGB meeting.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3.1 MEMBERSHIP OF LGB

The LGB noted membership as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 (paper LGB 1/24). David O'Donnell reported that Alexia Makrygianni Wilson had recently stepped down as parent governor leaving both parent governor positions vacant, however, recruitment was underway and one parent had already expressed an interest in joining the LGB.

#### 3.2 Election of Vice-Chair

The LGB noted that this position had been advertised to all members and that Sarah Pritchard had put herself forward for the role. There were no other

candidates and Sarah Pritchard was elected as Vice-Chair unanimously (Proposed David O'Donnell, Seconded Roger Chung).

### 3.3 Committee Roles for 2024/25

The LGB approved the following roles for 2024/25:

Safeguarding – Sarah Pritchard, continuing from previous years

SEND – Jackie Day, continuing from previous years

Careers – Kirsten Johnston – replacing Chris Thomas

### 3.4 Governor Training opportunities

Toni Baldwin reported on the following training opportunities for governors.

- Smartlog compliance training – there had been problems with the Smartlog system at the start of the academic year, however, these have been resolved and all governors should now complete the required training modules when prompted. Governors were asked to contact Toni Baldwin if they had any problems with any of the modules. Required training for Local Governors (not all annually): Cybersecurity, e-safety, Equality and Diversity, GDPR, Health and Safety and Safeguarding and Prevent.

**Action: check Smartlog training** TBN

- Training would be provided in November for student governors through the Wessex Group Network.

- The Trust had subscribed to the SFCA series of webinars (details circulated prior to each webinar). The first webinar, a discussion of the 2024 summer results, had taken place. Governors were reminded that the webinars were recorded for those unable to listen live.

### 4.1 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the QMC-LGB meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024 (paper LGB 2/24) were approved for signature by the Chair.

### 4.2 **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Minute 66.6: update on Vista – to be covered by Kate Need in her presentation later in the meeting.

Minute 67.2: 'out of area' students – as above

Minute 69.2: data for monitoring reports – no further suggestions received.

### 5.1 **ANNUAL CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

The LGB noted papers relating to safeguarding at QMC: The QMC Annual Safeguarding Report 2023/24 and the recently updated Child Protection, Prevent and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2024 (papers LGB 3/24 and LGB 5/24). Governors attention was specifically drawn to two parts of the policy.

- Child Protection procedures at QMC (**pg 25**)
- responsibilities of Trust/LGB (**pg 58**)

5.2 The LGB noted Keeping Children safe in Education 2024 (circulated through GovernorHub). Sally-Anne Spooner reported that that there had been very few changes to either KCSiE or 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (the multi-agency statutory guidance) resulting in very few changes to the Trust policy for 2024. The LGB noted that KCSiE was currently being reviewed in detail and significant changes were anticipated for September 2025.

5.3 Sally-Anne Spooner started her presentation by explaining that she had recently taken over as Designated Safeguarding Lead from Kate Need (Deputy Principal) and reported that, as before the change in leadership, the majority of the day-to-

day work was carried out by Lucy Poynter (Director of Foundation Learning, SEND and Wellbeing). The LGB noted members of the safeguarding team for 2024/25 including Shani Thorpe and Peter Fife-Faulkner who ran the Support Hub and Shellie Rashbrook who looked after the foundation learning students.

5.4 The LGB noted that all staff had participated in safeguarding training on the INSET day at the start of the academic year or in catch up sessions. Sally-Anne Spooner briefly summarised the data from the 2022/23 safeguarding report and then gave the LGB their annual Child Protection, Prevent and Safeguarding update using material and discussion points from the staff training focusing on:

- Online risks (content, contact, commerce and conduct) with local examples of sextortion (blackmail using online images) and cyberbullying
- Low level concerns – the importance of reporting ‘nagging doubts’ which could build a picture if they accumulate

5.5 The Governors discussed the question: **How confident do we feel in the culture of safeguarding at our college?** using the following definition:

“An effective safeguarding culture will teach children and young people what it means to be safe, how to behave appropriately towards others and how to recognise if they are at risk or experiencing harm. It will provide them with clear means to access support, knowing that their concerns will be taken seriously.”

5.6 **Staff receive regular safeguarding training what do students get?**

Kate Need reminded the LGB of the different opportunities that students had to engage such as 1-2-1s with Tutors and highlighted some of the areas covered in the personal development programme and various campaigns including those based around equality and diversity. The LGB briefly discussed the Prevent agenda as well as the issue of consent (arising from the ‘me too’ and ‘everyone’s invited’ national discussions a few years previously). The LGB heard that students had discussed both these topics at their secondary schools and so the challenge for QMC was to make the material relevant for the age group and context. For example, this year the tutorial on consent was being delivered by a nurse.

**Do students know that they can report incidents that happen off site?** Kate Need reported that this was raised in Tutorials and that, following on from previous work with the police and local schools, QMC was going to be the first 3<sup>rd</sup> party centre in the area for the reporting of hate crime.

5.7 **Comment – there are a lot of students that require support.**

**Question – are we picking up enough?**

Kate Need reported that the start of year questionnaire, which would be reported at the next meeting, included the question ‘do you feel safe at college?’ which should provide the LGB with reassurance that students are reporting their concerns.

The LGB noted that:

- Domestic Violence referrals and contacts had increased on the previous year.
- 2022/23 had been an exceptionally busy year for Student Support Services and the Counselling Service
- There had been a huge increase in contacts with children’s services – partially due to a high turnover of social workers.
- Reports of bullying had increased (cyber bullying slightly down) suggesting that more incidents are being picked up/reported.

Sally-Anne Spooner reported that the college was always looking to support different groups of staff and students in different ways, for example, HR had held an INSET day coffee group for staff with children with EHCPs.

**Action: Start of year questionnaire feedback** **KND**

- 5.8 The LGB discussed suspensions and exclusions, noting that no students were excluded in 2022/23 and there were only 7 suspensions compared to 15 the previous year. Mark Henderson reported that, in general, QMC tried to work with students and their parents to enable students to stay at college whilst setting conditions for future behaviour. More detailed data was now being collected on students who had voluntarily left QMC (122 in 2022/23).
- 5.9 The LGB recommended the Child Protection, Prevent and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures to the Board for approval. The LGB noted that the QMC Annual Safeguarding Return to the Hampshire Children's Safeguarding Board was not yet complete (on agenda as paper LGB 4/24) and needed to be submitted by the end of the month.

The LGB thanked Sally-Anne for a useful presentation and discussion on the culture of safeguarding at QMC.

**Actions: Child Protection, Prevent and Safeguarding Policy to Board** **TBN**  
**Submission of HCC Annual Safeguarding Audit** **SSR**

*Sally-Anne Spooner left the meeting*

#### 6.1 **PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE**

Mark Henderson started his presentation by looking back at the end of 2023/24 and highlighting:

- The various trips and visits at the end of the year, funded through the Turing Scheme and run through Challenge Abroad. The LGB were pleased to hear that further funding had been received for trips in 2024/25.
- The summer results day which some of the Local Governors had attended, along with some of the, very positive, press coverage.
- a summary of the results, including excellent GCSE results, along with case studies of some of the students who had done well at QMC and who were going off to a range of destinations including universities, apprenticeships and vocational careers.

In response to a question from one of the Governors, Mark Henderson reported that the Aspire group of students had outperformed the mainstream students retaking their GCSE and a number of the Aspire students had now progressed into Level 3 study.

- 6.2 The LGB noted details of student enrolments as at 18<sup>th</sup> September (paper LGB 6/24). Mark Henderson reported that enrolments had been slightly below forecast. Applications had been strong and so work was underway to understand where enrolments had dipped. The LGB briefly discussed enrolment noting that:
- Competition between colleges had increased with colleges across the county competing for a stable/declining student cohort.
  - One of the nearby colleges had improved and therefore students were less likely to travel out of area to Basingstoke.
  - QMC was advertising an updated 'high achievers' package to this year's cohort

- 6.3 **Was the change in BTEC/vocational courses having an effect?**  
Kate Need reported that there had been a decrease in students taking Health and Social Care BTEC which overlapped with the content of T levels run locally, however, it was not known if students were preferring to study T Levels.
- 6.4 **Was QMC anticipating more students moving from Private Schools?**  
Kate Need reported that the College was not expecting to pick up students moving from private schools mid-year but that there might be a few for September 2025.
- 6.5 **Was the decrease in students going onto university affecting students coming to QMC to take A Levels?**  
Mark Henderson reported that there were more vocational opportunities being set up and that fewer students were progressing to University. For example, one of the large local employers was offering increased numbers of apprenticeships at BCoT as well as a mentoring scheme with a local secondary school.
- 6.6 The LGB agreed on the continuing importance of retaining students and agreed to return to a discussion of student numbers in due course and as part of the SAR discussions.

**Action: detailed review of 2024 enrolment** MHN

- 6.7 The LGB noted the College organisational chart showing the Senior Management Teams areas of responsibility as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 (paper LGB 7/24). Mark Henderson highlighted Sally-Anne Spooner's new responsibility as DSL as discussed earlier.

7.1 **REVIEW OF OUTCOMES AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

Kate Need started by updating the LGB on the three matters arising from the last meeting:

Minute 66.6: update on Vista – the student and parent version of the QMC app had been launched. Parental engagement had been really good with most contact 1s signed up. Kate Need reported that SLT expected the app to help with student engagement including feedback and questionnaires. Governors, some of whom had been part of an initial focus group welcomed the development.

Minute 67.2: 'out of area' students – Kate Need reported that there were currently 122 students at QMC from schools with 3 or fewer enrolments, 65 in their first year. Tutors had been asked to carry out early check-in with these students and direct them towards specific enrichments to support making friends.

- 7.2 Kate Need updated the LGB on QMC's curriculum for 2024/25:
- A Level German had not recruited well and would not have a 1<sup>st</sup> year.
  - Environmental Science, new for 2024 had recruited well with 24 students.
  - Following the experience of the previous year, QMC had recruited Aspire students with slightly higher entry grades resulting in fewer Aspire students for 2024/25 (79 compared to around 120 in 2023/24).
  - The College, like other post-16 providers, continued to wait a decision on national vocational qualification reforms. A decision was expected in December 2024 for BTEC qualifications on the list to be defunded for September 2025.
- 7.3 Kate Need reported on exam results from summer 2024 using data analysis from the Six Dimensions reports produced for the SFCA and individual colleges by Nick Allen (Peter Symonds College) and presented during a recent SFAC webinar. Historical comparisons of data were still unreliable as these students had been provided with 'advance information' for their GCSEs. The results data was not yet

complete as the College was waiting on a few remarks and some coursework moderation. The LGB noted that, at this stage, the achievement rate for 2023/24 (raw results with retention calculation) was 86.5 - higher than the 2022/23 achievement, comparator group and national figure but below that for 2018/19.

7.4 The LGB noted that the College had had excellent GCSE outcomes, an A Level pass rate of 97.26% with high grades of 43.94%. Looking at the six dimensions data, QMC was well within the central 50% of comparator institutions. Kate Need reported on subjects in more detail those with achievement rates above anticipated and those with achievement rates below anticipated. The LGB noted a list of the courses that would be monitored during 2024/25 including those that required improvement, new courses and those which were using new exam boards for the first time.

#### 8.1 **REPORT FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

In the absence of both student representatives Mark Henderson reported that he had had a letter from the Student's Union asking for £1,000 funding for T-Shirts and student events. The LGB noted that the SU used to be funded through the NUS and the sale of NUS cards, however, this funding was no longer available. The LGB strongly supported the SU's request for support and asked Mark Henderson to discuss the level of financial support with the Director of Finance. Possible sources of funding suggested in the meeting included the QM Foundation or parent donations.

#### 9.1 **GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT – *standing item***

##### Statutory roles for Local Governors

See Minute 3.3 above

#### 9.2 Governor Visits

The LGB noted proposed Governor engagement for 2024/25 along with reports of two visits since the last LGB meeting (paper LGB 8/24).

The LGB agreed to continue the following in 2024/25:

- Visit mornings – in groups visiting curriculum and cross college areas – possibly Sport and Health and Social Care, and Business and Legal Studies
- Quality Improvement Monitoring – observing SARs and MYR meetings – Toni Baldwin to circulate dates and arrange.
- Monitoring of Statutory areas by representatives – safeguarding, SEND, Carers.

**Action: Governors to observe SAR Meetings**

**All**

9.3 The LGB discussed potential themes and activities for the year's visits including hearing from students (Student Voice meetings or student panel session) and the personal development programme (observing tutorials).

#### 9.4 Report of Safeguarding Visit: Sarah Pritchard 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Sarah Pritchard reported that she had met Sally-Anne Spooner earlier in the term to discuss changes in the management of safeguarding as well as Sally-Anne's new role as Designated Safeguarding Lead. The LGB noted that responsibility for safeguarding had moved from a member of SLT involved with students, teaching and learning (Kate Need – Deputy Principal) to a member of SLT primarily involved with staff, and Human Resource functions (Sally-Anne Spooner, Director of HR). Sarah Pritchard reported that she had no concerns about the management of safeguarding and would monitor the transition over the next year to ensure that

safeguarding effectiveness and the communication of safeguarding information to students has been maintained.

In response to a question from one of the Governors, Mark Henderson reported that, in the unlikely event that there would be a conflict of interest between Sally-Anne Spooner's role as DSL and Director of HR he or another member of staff would be available to step in.

#### 9.5 Report of SEND Visit: Jackie Day 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Jackie Day reported that she had taken the opportunity to attend the Foundation Learning concert at the end of the Summer term. The LGB heard that this had been a very joyful event and it had been lovely to see how the students had grown in confidence and performance skills over the year. Kate Need reminded Local Governors that they were welcome to attend College events throughout the year.

#### 10.1 **COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The LGB noted a summary of complaints received during 2023/24 (paper LGB 9/24). Toni Baldwin, who had compiled the report from information held by the Principal's PA, reported:

- Following discussion at the LGB meeting in September 2023, only formal complaints were included in the summary. This had significantly reduced the number of complaints reported, however, there had also been a general reduction in minor concerns raised during the year.
- All complaints relating to students were investigated by a member of SLT (usually Kate Need) and resolved. None were escalated during the year and there were no appeals. All three complaints involved students with additional needs and concerned levels of support or reasonable adjustments for examinations.

10.2 There were four complaints from local residents, two about students parking inconsiderately one about the noise made by a community event on site and one (unresolved) about hedging shading an adjacent garden. Mark Henderson reported that he hoped to resolve the hedging dispute soon but that with limited finances, he would rather focus resources on students rather than estates issues. No concerns were raised by the LGB and it was noted that the number of complaints in post-16 education was significantly lower than in other stages of education.

#### 11.1 **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 10/24). Toni Baldwin highlighted from the report:

- 2024/25 Internal Audits would cover Learner Numbers, QM Leisure Ltd. and Estates Management with capacity within the programme for an additional audit if required.
- The Board had approved the 2024/25 budget and financial forecasts for submission to the ESFA – details provided.

11.2 The LGB noted changes to their terms of reference, proposed by the Search and Governance Committee, to increase their focus on teaching and learning, the cycle of self-assessment and quality improvement as well as tutorials and personal development. In addition, as the Board of Trustees had responsibility for Health and Safety, Environmental policies and staffing matters these sections had been removed from the LGB terms of reference. There were no matters of concern with

the revised terms of reference and the LGB recommended them the Board for approval.

11.3 The LGB noted the revised Code of Conduct for those involved in Governance at NHEA. Toni Baldwin reported that this was based on a National Governance Association document and now included reference to the charity commission essential trustee guidelines and clarified the different purpose and role of the Trustees and Local Governors. There were no matters of concern and the LGB recommended the revised terms of reference to the Board for approval.

12.1 **GOVERNORS MONITORING INFORMATION – *standing item***

The LGB noted that the monitoring report for the first half of the autumn term would be produced for the next LGB meeting.

13.1 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

David O'Donnell asked that, going forward, if anyone had an item of AOB they were to let him, or the Academy Secretary know prior to the meeting so that it could be included on the agenda.

13.2 Toni Baldwin reminded those present that the next SFCA webinar was coming up on 25<sup>th</sup> September and would be a general update on the post-16 sector from Bill Watkin CEO of the SFCA. Details would be circulated.

13.3 One of the Governors reported that some students had expected that the gym would be free to use and were surprised that they were required to pay. Kate Need offered to clarify sports centre fees - PE students had free membership with the rest of students paying. All students were required to have a gym induction (for Health and Safety purposes).

**Action: clarify gym fees for students KND**

14. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS 2024/25**

Local Governing Body meetings

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 5.30pm  
 Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 at 5.30pm  
 Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 5.30pm  
 Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 5.30pm  
 Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 5.30pm

Governors' Visit mornings

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 – am  
 Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – am  
 Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – am (tbc – may move to before half term)

*The Chair thanked those present, the meeting ended at 7.15pm*

To be signed following approval at the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024

..... Chair to be confirmed

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	Timescale	Responsibility
<u>Minute 3.4:</u> Smartlog training	Nov 24	TBN
<u>Minute 5.7:</u> start of year questionnaire feedback	Jan 25	KND
<u>Minute 5.9:</u> Child Protection, Prevent and Safeguarding Policy to Board Submission of HCC Annual Safeguarding Audit	Oct 24	MHN



<u>Minute 16.6:</u> detailed review of recruitment	Nov 24	MHD
<u>Minute 9.2:</u> governors to observe SAR meetings	Oct 24	KND
<u>Minute 13.3:</u> clarify gym fees for students	Following meeting	KND

Toni Baldwin  
Academy Secretary, Queen Mary's College