



Minutes of the Meeting of the **Governing Body** of
The City Literary Institute held on **14 May 2019, 5pm**
at City Lit, Keeley Street, London WC2B 4BA

Governors Present:

Penny Allen	Keith Moffitt
Tim Bolderson	Wendy Moss
Jane Cooper (Deputy Chair)	Sophie Neary
Jon Gamble	Raj Parkash
Moira Gibb (Chair)	Paula Smith
Eric Hadley (Student governor)	Michael Simmonds
Colin Jones	Jill Westerman
Mark Malcomson (Principal)	

In Attendance: Phil Chamberlain (Executive Director, External Engagement); Paul Evans (Chief Financial Officer/Co-Managing Director); Julie Gilbert (Executive Director, People); Rachel Johnson (Assistant Principal – Communities); Wendy McKaig (Vice Principal/Co-Managing Director).

Clerk: Katrina O'Sullivan.

STANDING ITEMS

19/18 Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence received from Anita Bennett.

19/19 Declarations of Interest

There was a declaration of interest made by Tim Bolderson regarding item 19/26. It was agreed that Tim and members of the Executive team, bar the Principal, would leave during that item.

19/20 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 March 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2019 were **approved** and signed by the Chair.

19/21 Matters Arising Not Appearing Elsewhere

There were no matters arising not appearing elsewhere.

19/22 Principal's Report – *oral report*

The Principal gave his oral report to the Governing Body and confirmed that the College, as previously agreed by the Board, had now signed the contract with International House for the use of 10 classrooms during the evening at City Lit's former Stukeley Street building – rooms had been allocated to Humanities, Languages and Performing Arts. Governors gave a challenge to Management to ensure that students maintained the excellent student experience offsite at the Stukeley Street building, ensuring the values and brand would be upheld there.

The Principal announced that City Lit had, very recently, been offered the opportunity to take on a lease for additional space in Kean Street from September 2019, adjacent to the photography studio. This space would give the College the opportunity to expand its ceramics offer, where

there was proven demand. The Management team was in the process of developing a business case to explore this option further.

Governors discussed the impressive and inspiring events/stakeholder activities, listed in the College Update report, that had/or were going to take place, and enquired whether Management had considered using the College's wealth of knowledgeable tutors to deliver some of the Perspective talks and showcase the skills of City Lit's teaching. The Principal replied that Management had been concentrating on asking the well-known names in order to raise City Lit's profile; but agreed that it was a good observation and, at some point in the future, could consider this. He added that if governors had any contacts regarding iconic venues or partnerships to let him know.

The Board asked the Principal what his current concerns for City Lit were. The Principal answered that it was the hard start to the term, due to Easter being very late this year. It was difficult to predict how Term 3 would perform, but Paul had included a summary of the latest figures for the term in the management accounts – and there had been a sharp focus on the sales for Term 3.

19/23 College update: March-May 2019

This item was taken in conjunction with *item 19/22 - oral update from the Principal*.

19/24 Political landscape update

Phil Chamberlain gave the Board an update on the current political landscape for its information and context, and members discussed City Lit and the IALs place within this. The Board requested that the draft response be circulated to governors and the link to the presentation would be made available also.

STRATEGY

19/25 Draft strategy

The Principal presented the Strategy document for the Board to discuss and agree. He explained that the final document would be for public consumption and published on City Lit's website and elsewhere; therefore it would be supplemented internally with the Operating Plan of how the Strategy would be achieved and the first few pages of context could be removed when being presented to staff and key stakeholders.

The Board discussed and confirmed that the main focus of the new Strategy was: the Purpose remained the same; previous Goals One and Two have been merged into the new Goal One which encompassed all City Lit students; new Goal Two focused on growth and also broadening the diversity of the College's student population; new Goal Three puts the College in the forefront of the intellectual leadership of adult learning and its place in society for the next 100 years. The New Strategy would also reflect City Lit's new Values, brand work and integrate the work done over the last three years. The Principal reiterated that the Operating Plan and KPIs would be worked on once the overarching strategy was agreed at the May Board meeting.

A lengthy and robust debate ensued regarding the draft Strategy document. The outcome of the discussion was that the Board requested Management to consider the priorities and further clarity around the Key Deliverables, including a drill down of what could be undertaken in Years 1 – 3, and what needed to be achieved in order for these to happen. This work needed to take place before the final version of the Strategy, Operational Plan and KPIs be approved at the July Board meeting.

[Specific comments from that discussion would be sent in a link for governors' information.]

ITEMS FROM COMMITTEES

19/26 Governance & People Committee Chair's Key Points – 17/4/19

The Board noted the Key Points from the Committee which included succession planning, the report on the gender pay gap of which City Lit reported a 4.94% gap, work on the College strategy.

[T Bolderson and the Executive left for this item]

Penny Allen had expressed that she wished to stand down from the role of Quality Chair - whilst remaining a member of the Board and of the Quality Committee itself. To that end, the Committee recommended that the Governing Body appoint Tim Bolderson to Chair the Quality Committee from the next academic year. Penny has agreed to continue to carry out the role of nominated governor for Ofsted. The Board **approved** this recommendation.

The Chair added that the Principal had discussed with the Committee changes to the top team, and advised the Board that Nick Doran, Executive member and Assistant Principal, would be leaving the College for personal health reasons. A new member of the Executive team would be starting on 19 June, Ben Hicks, who previously worked for the Guardian Foundation, and would be responsible for partnerships.

19/27 Quality Committee Chair's Key Points – 25/4/19

The Board discussed and noted the contents of the Quality Chair's Key Points from the 25 April 2019 meeting. The Quality Chair highlighted that the Committee had received presentations and reports from the new Head of Quality & Tutor Development and the new Director of Student Services, Experience & Support regarding their priorities and observations, and had been impressed with the speed and number of actions which they had implemented already. Performance targets and more robust structures were being put in place to support students. The Committee was assured that the quality of student experience and learning were at the centre of all the College did and aspired to. The Chair added that some interesting partnership work was being developed within Goal 2, but considerable funding for pilots and research would be needed. The Committee suggested that, in the first place, a scoping and business plan be produced for the appropriate Committees to consider.

19/28 Finance & Commercial Chair's Key Points – 16/4/19

The FCC Chair presented the Key Points from the 16 April 2019 Committee meeting, and these were discussed and noted by the Board. In particular, the FCC Chair drew the Board's attention to the College's cash position being tighter than anticipated as costs come in for the refurbishment of the Ground Floor Lobby, which was expected to impact the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) financial health score for 2019.

At the Committee's request, the Finance Team had put together an excellent review of non-pay costs over the last five years. This showed that overall non-pay costs had fallen by 10% over the period (17% when depreciation costs are stripped out) while spending on key areas – such as IT and HR – had increased to reflect a welcome focus on the experience of those who work and study at the college. Although the Committee did not feel that a formal report be given to the Board, the paper would be circulated, for interest, by the Clerk.

19/29

Management accounts and ESFA Financial Health Ratio

Paul Evans provided the Governing Body with details of the management accounts to 28 February 2019 and an update on sales performance to date, as discussed at the 16 April Finance & Commercial Committee. Included with the report was the ESFA's Financial Health Ratio letter and dashboard; Paul explained that the ESFA had reviewed City Lit's Financial Statements and sent a letter to the Chair of Governors and Principal confirming the College's financial health grade as 'good'. However, Paul added that due to the anticipated fall in the College's level of cash reserves he expected the ESFA financial health score to fall back to Satisfactory, and the Board discussed the implications of this.

The Board enquired further about the two key risks of 1) not meeting the financial target for the year and 2) the College not having enough cash to fund the capital projects that had been committed to, and questioned what the mitigating actions were. Management confirmed it was reviewing and monitoring management accounts with budget holders; rescheduling smaller capital projects until later in the financial year; monitoring cash on a weekly basis and updating cash flow forecasts each month; informing senior staff that they would need to control their costs over the next couple of months; scrutinising all budget requests for additional costs in the 2019/20 budget meetings that were underway; and non-essential requests would be deferred until cash reserves had been built up again. The Board enquired when Paul anticipated this would be and he answered that it was projected to return to current levels by July 2020.

Compliance Matters

19/30

Equality and Diversity Duty

Wendy McKaig presented the Equality & Diversity Duty review document which covered the academic year 2017/18. She explained that, as part of the Equality Act 2010, City Lit was required to publish annually its compliance with the Equality Duty established by the Act, specifically the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Board discussed the Duty and **approved** its publishing in compliance with the Equality Duty.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

19/31

Confirmed as **Tuesday 9 July 2019, 5pm** (4:30pm departmental presentation)

Chair.....

Date.....