



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of  
The City Literary Institute held on 19 May 2020, 1-2pm  
Via Zoom video (Covid-19)**

**Governors Present:**

Penny Allen  
Tim Bolderson  
Edward Breen (Staff Governor)  
Jane Cooper (Deputy Chair)  
Jon Gamble  
Moirra Gibb (Chair)  
Eric Hadley

Colin Jones  
Mark Malcomson (Principal)  
Raj Parkash  
Michael Simmonds  
Paula Smith  
Jill Westerman

**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**

**20/41          Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence received.

**20/42          Declarations of Interest**

No new interests were declared.

**20/43          Minutes of the Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 were approved. The additional meetings, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, held on the 17 March and 4 April 2020 were also approved. All minutes would be signed when it was physically possible to do so.

**20/44          Matters Arising Not Appearing Elsewhere**

There were no matters arising not appearing elsewhere.

**20/45          College and Principal's Update**

The College Update from March-May 2020 and the Principal's oral update items were taken together and noted by the Board. The Principal highlighted that the Board had been kept closely informed of activity throughout this period outside of the regular Board and Committee meetings during the ongoing pandemic, and the Board commended the engagement work that had been undertaken with the College's stakeholders and staff during this time. The College had been clear to follow the formal guidance provided by the Government regarding Covid-19 'Maintaining education and skills training provision,' and Management now awaited further guidance on their recovery strategy. He expressed that staff had responded well to the challenge of online.

Governors discussed that the College was moving into the next phase of strategically planning for the reopening and looking at when and what comes back, it was envisaged that there would be a phased return to the building in order to return safely for City Lit's staff and students. Management would review guidance from Government and Public Health England, when received, and also work with the JCNC (unions). The College did need to make money and it was thought that courses, such as Visual Arts, where many of the classes had not been practically able to deliver online – would be brought back in to the College first. Management was currently planning that Term 1 2020/21 would be the transition term of bringing back those limited courses into the building, and January 2021 would be the start of the 'new normal.' The reopening plans would be brought to Committees and the Board appropriately.

The Board enquired about furloughed staff and the current reported cases of Covid-19. Julie Gilbert confirmed that 425 staff had been furloughed now. Updated Government guidance was such that the scheme could be accessed until October 2020; but Julie and her HR team would review this guidance and how this would affect City Lit staff, whilst also consulting with JCNC. Currently there were no members of staff off sick with Covid-19, but HR were working with staff who had suffered bereavements on their return to work.

## **Reports**

### **20/46 Governance & People's Committee Chair's Key Points 27 April** **- Membership**

The Board noted the Key Points from the 27 April Governance & People Committee which included an update from the Principal regarding the impact of the virus on the College; it was acknowledged by members that there was impressive work taking place in order to deliver the courses online.

The Committee had considered succession planning and how best to ensure the Board had robust governance structures in place to cope for the medium term ramifications of the pandemic. To that end, it was recommended that Jon Gamble's second term of office be returned to its original four year term, ending December 2022; and that Penny Allen's term as a governor - rather than the pre-Covid-19 decision that Penny become a co-opted member of the Quality Committee - be extended for a year, ending May 2022. The Governing Body **agreed** these two membership proposals.

The Committee would consider again, at its June meeting, how and when to begin again with external 'virtual' recruitment to find an educationalist and a financially qualified governor, and continue with the Chair recruitment process.

The Clerk had emailed the legal advice note to governors on 7 May 2020 which gave clarification of the Board's position regarding liability during the unprecedented Covid-19 crisis. This advice from Eversheds Sutherland LLP had also been reviewed by the Governance & People and Finance & Commercial Committees. Members expressed that the advice was clear and gave comfort that the College was taking the appropriate steps, and it was in the best interests of the College's creditors for the College to continue in order to secure funding with its Bank and/or the ESFA. The Committees had agreed that even closer scrutiny of the finances was essential during this period in order to have oversight of the immediate and longer term cash need. The Finance & Commercial Committee was doing this but the Governance & People Committee asked that that, additionally, the CFO check in weekly with the Chair of the Finance & Commercial Committee with the numbers and cash flow projections. Subsequently, if the Finance & Commercial Committee Chair felt it necessary to convene a Finance & Commercial Committee meeting urgently then he could do so. The Principal added that continual conversations were also taking place with the bank and ESFA.

**- Quality update: progress & priorities in response to Covid-19**

The Board received the Chair's Key Points from the 7 May Zoom Quality Committee which reflected the priorities of the Covid-19 crisis. The Committee acknowledged the significant efforts made by Management and their staff in responding to the challenges of the current crisis and, in particular, in migrating so many courses online. He highlighted that there had been a substantial and focused effort across the College to transition as many courses as possible to online mode - the College had moved from having a handful of blended learning courses to over 900 courses planned to run exclusively online this term; there were now over 5000 students enrolled so far for Term 3. The Committee had also discussed in detail the new challenges and opportunities raised by moving to the online environment.

The Governing Body also discussed Wendy McKaig's Quality update paper which reported on Term 3 and the online curriculum; Learning and Teaching circle meetings; training and support for tutors and students for online delivery; acting on feedback from students' experience of online delivery in Term 2; monitoring quality and standards of online provision and student experience; and an update on 2019/20 accredited programmes. Governors enquired if investment was needed in the online platforms that the College was using and Wendy expressed that currently Google Classroom and Zoom were being used so, at this point, a substantial investment was not required. Governors commented that they supported Management's focus regarding online and City Lit continuing to fulfil its Purpose of 'Bringing people together' albeit virtually at the moment; thought would need to be given to how the College could help society as a result of the pandemic, and this would be talked about further in the Governors' Away Day session following on from this meeting.

The Board stated that much had been accomplished in a short space of time and that it would be a continuous process of learning and adaptation, but governors were assured by the level of thought and enthusiasm in managing the transition and encouraged Management to continue their innovative efforts in exploring as many ways as possible to address the challenges.

**20/48 Cancelled agenda items**

The Governing Body noted the cancelled agenda items list which would be revisited when appropriate.

**20/49 Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was 7 May 2020 but the Board had agreed, at its last meeting, that it should convene regularly - when appropriate - either for updates or when there were decisions to be made.

Chair.....

Date.....