

LTE Group Board

Minutes of the meeting of the LTE Group Board held on Tuesday 16 October 2018, in Room OP118 at 9:00am

Present: Kimoni Bell, Amina Bhodania, Jenifer Burden, Philip Johnson, Phil Lanigan, Barry Lynch, Sue Murphy CBE (Chair), Paul Pritchard, Malcolm Sugden, John Thornhill, Pauline Waterhouse OBE and Adam White.

Apologies: John Hacking, Kate Macdonald and Adrian Mills

In Attendance: Peter Cox (MD Novus), Linda Dean (MD Total People Ltd), Jennifer Foote MBE (Company Secretary & General Counsel), Gary Hughes (Group Marketing and External Relations Director), Lisa O' Loughlin (Principal, The Manchester College), Kate MacKenzie (Assistant Company Secretary & Solicitor), and Paul Taylor (Chief Operating Officer).

Lindsey Johnson (Vice Principal, Curriculum and Support) for Minute No. 60/18

Apology: Rob Cressey (Group Finance Director)

Observer: Kile Moyana

Kimoni Bell, Jenifer Burden, Philip Johnson and Cllr Sue Murphy declared an interest in item 61/18 in respect of their respective appointments and took no part in the relevant decisions therein.

Cllr Sue Murphy left the meeting at 2pm, Barry Lynch took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Part A

58/18	Part A Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 July 2018 The part A minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.
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59/18 The Manchester College & UCEN Manchester Performance Update

The Manchester College

The Board received an update on the performance of The Manchester College in respect of outcomes for learners for 2017/18 together with an update on strategic risks and challenges facing both the college and FE sector. As Chair of the GM Principals Group the Principal was closely involved with a number of stakeholder initiatives within GM, including representing GM colleges on the Employment and Skills Advisory Panel.

Achievement Rates

Data was submitted for current rates against target with a three year trend and comparison against national benchmarks for achievement, retention and pass rates by 16-18, 19+ and overall. All targets had been either exceeded or were expected to be exceeded. Moreover, the statistics for TMC were above national benchmarks for 2016/17 in all measures.

The Chair of The Manchester College Board, on behalf of the Group Board, recognised the achievement of the college senior team in driving this success. The Board reflected that the TMC senior team had taken the time to ensure that sufficient quality teaching and learning processes were thoroughly embedded in the institution in order to ensure that improvement would be both consistent and sustainable, and that this course of action was the right approach to take. The Board was further of the opinion that the pace of improvement was also now gathering momentum and that the impact of change at an institutional level was now very clearly evident.

Qualification Rates

These had been measured as a three year trend against targets and national benchmarks for entry level to L3. The statistics again demonstrated a significant achievement against both targets and benchmarks for the year in addition to a consistent improved trend on outcomes for the previous year across most levels. A rate of 90% placed The Manchester College in the top decile nationally for overall achievement.

Learner Progress (Alps and non Alps)

Alps scores for BTEC, A levels and AS levels were considered. The Board noted the rapid improvement in the majority of Alps scores but recognised that further work need to be done to ensure improvement in the A level score.

Value added scores for non Alps measured courses were presented using both TMC and Alps methodology for comparative purposes. Scrutiny of these evidenced a positive upward trend.

Attendance

The Board was pleased to note the rapid impact of the deployment of campus based student support teams in increasing the improving attendance trend yet further in 2017/18 (87.4% overall against a target of 85%). Governors recognised that the TMC Board had set an aspirational target of 90% overall attendance for 2018/19 but that it was entirely appropriate to challenge and stretch in order to deliver change and success.

English and Maths

The Board reflected that, whilst there was an exceptional degree of improvement at pace evidenced, it was also right for the Board to maintain its deep degree of challenge and scrutiny of the outcomes for English and maths resits and that success elsewhere was never an excuse for complacency in any part of college provision. Governors referenced the English and maths GCSE results which remained below national benchmark. It was accepted that the difficulty in driving the pace of change in this area was partly the result of the need to compete for English and maths teachers with schools (where the salary opportunities were greater and the Board directed that Project Connect could be used to address this if possible). The Board accepted that not only did the college deliver in an area of high deprivation but also to a large and challenging cohort. However, this was a factor not an excuse.

Governors probed further in that a discrepancy existed between actual outcomes and predicted results and moreover that this was not the first year this had been the case. The Principal was asked to explain what measures were being taken to develop an accurate understanding in staff of how to predict potential grades and what remedial action was being taken to address underlying weakness?

The Principal explained that funds received from the strategic improvement fund were being used in partnership with guidance from Leeds City College to develop training and team teaching with other institutions. Whilst staff were becoming accustomed to the new qualifications it was accepted that pockets of performance issues remained and were being dealt with.

Study Programme Expectations

The Principal articulated the core aims of the study programme expectations which would include the delivery of English and maths qualifications, work experience and citizenship development to ensure that students of the college not only benefitted from quality teaching and appropriate provision but were also ready either to progress further through education or enter the workplace.

Work Experience

Details of progress towards target for work experience were submitted together with details of key employer partners. The Board recognised that, as a large institution, TMC had made progress in ensuring that its significant student cohort had access to work experience.

Enrolment

The enrolment figure stood at 4951 as at 15 October. This represented an increase of 584 on prior year and was ahead of the three year plan target.

Ofsted Support and Challenge Visit/Self-assessment

Governors were provided with a verbal update on the outcome of the Ofsted support and challenge visits on 8 October. The Board acknowledged that whilst there was always further work to be done, TMC now had evidenced to the Board that it was able to demonstrate the necessary speed and nature of improvement in the quality of its provision which was intrinsic to a successful outcome at next inspection. The letter received as a result of the visit would be shared upon receipt.

	<p>UCEN Manchester</p> <p>The Board received an update on the performance of UCEN Manchester both for the academic year 2017/18 and in respect of enrolments for 2018/19. It was noted that duration retention, pass rate and achievement for 2017/18 had increased respectively by 8.4%, 6.5% and 12.4% on prior year. In year improvement had also evidenced a positive shift in all three measures on prior year.</p> <p>Whilst this improvement was welcomed the Board was disappointed to note the decrease in percentages in all aspects of the National Student Survey as measured against 2016/17 performance and targets for 2017/18. A reduction in participation in the survey had also been in evidence. It was explained that this was not indicative of student apathy but students had received several surveys to complete over a short timescale. A pro-active management of the survey, which would include a communication plan, would be in place for the next survey to drive both participation and completion. In addition a working group had been established to work on the action plan to improve future survey results. On behalf of the Board, John Hacking as Chair of UCEN Manchester had worked closely with the UCEN Manchester management to understand how improvement could be driven through in the future.</p> <p>An updated figure on enrolment (as at 15 October) was stated as 1374, which represented an 8% increase in enrolments against a 3% decrease in applications. This remained behind the three year plan target but significant increase in enrolments on first year courses indicated some assurance in respect of second year enrolments for next year. The Board queried whether the disappointing NSS results had contributed to the lag behind enrolment targets. It was explained that some issues with student experience were related to a few specific courses where remedial action was already in place.</p> <p>In respect of destination data, the Board queried the level of median salary against that for students from the universities in the city. It was explained that the type and scope of degrees in the different institutions (with many theatrical performance and other media related qualifications leading to self-employment) meant that median salaries on leaving were not comparable with the types and sectors of employment which contributed to the median salary of the city universities.</p>
<p>60/18</p>	<p>Safeguarding – Clarification on DBS Refresh</p> <p><i>Lyndsey Johnson attended for this item.</i></p> <p>With reference to Minute No. 35/18, the Vice Principal, Curriculum and Support submitted a revision to the Group Safeguarding Policy which articulated the clarification in respect of DBS refresh. It was understood that all members of directly employed staff required some level DBS check upon joining the organisation. The position both in respect of statutory responsibilities and regulatory requirements on how subsequent reviews were undertaken were discussed. The Board supported the intention articulated in the policy to operate best practice, with a five year refresh cycle. In response to a query it was confirmed that the organisation would be able to demonstrate compliance with this practice. It was further confirmed that a DBS refresh could be undertaken at any time if the organisation had any cause for concern.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the revision to the Safeguarding Policy in respect of the requirement to refresh DBS checks on a five year cycle, be approved.</p>

61/18 Governance Update

Barry Lynch chaired for this item.

The Board received an update on governance as at October and following consideration of current governance issues by the Governance Committee at its meeting on 19 September.

The response to the Ministerial letter in respect of s.28 designation had been shared with members and the review of the Group Operations Board was progressing in accordance with the review timescale.

1. Self assessment

Consideration was given to the analysis of the self-assessment questionnaire by the Governance Committee. The conclusion was recognised as a fair and considered assessment for the year 2017/18. It was agreed that the areas for improvement would be taken forward and monitored by the Governance Committee. The Board decided that the same shift towards continuous improvement it demanded of other parts of the organisation should also apply to its own performance and that therefore, as a move towards a more rounded performance review the assessment of governance for 2018/19 should also include a section for specific completion by members of the Executive team.

RESOLVED that, following a review of the self-assessment of governance by the Governance Committee, a self-assessed grade of 2 (good) for 2017/18 be approved.

2. Appointment for Further Terms of Office

The Board considered the recommendations of the Appointments Committee for the re-appointment of Philip Johnson and Jenifer Burden for a further term of office. Both governors had currently served one term and contributed skills and expertise to the work of the Board currently required for the oversight of the estates strategy and the strategic direction of FE and skills. In addition, as a part of its commitment to a clear and robust articulation of the learner voice at Board level, the Board also considered the extension of the term of office of the current student governor and the appointment of a student co-optee to The Manchester College Board.

RESOLVED that

- i. the appointment of Kimoni Bell as student governor be extended to the end of the academic year 2018/19;
- ii. Mathew Mail be appointed as student co-optee to The Manchester College divisional board for the academic year 2018/19;
- iii. Philip Johnson and Jenifer Burden be re-appointed for a second term of three years to run consecutively from the end of their current term of office on 8 December 2018.

3. Appointment for an Extraordinary term of office

With reference to Governance Committee Minute No 14/18, the Board considered the recommendation to allow an additional fourth term of appointment for the Group Chair when her current term of office expired. It was agreed that the institution needed the assurance of continuity of leadership at a time when several key strategic projects were at critical stages of implementation.

RESOLVED that Sue Murphy be appointed for a fourth term of office for three years to run consecutively from the end of her current term on 15 February 2019, such an appointment being a measured and appropriate response to the need for continuity of leadership of the institution at this time.

	<p>4. Governor Satisfaction Survey The results of the above, which considered how well governors and co-optees had been supported in their role, had been reviewed by the Governance Committee. Areas for improvement identified from the previous survey had been addressed and issues to resolve from the current survey would be worked on during the current year.</p> <p>5. Skills Need Analysis This had been considered in depth by the Governance Committee and it was recommended to the Board that the current vacancy should be filled by an individual with professional skills and expertise in the digital skills and technology sector. A search was currently underway and it was anticipated that an appointment would be made at the December Board.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the appointment of Kile Moyana as Assistant Company Secretary and welcomed her to the Board in her new role.</i></p>
	<p>RESOLVED that as the items to be considered are deemed commercially sensitive, the Board move into confidential session.</p>
	<p>Chair</p> <p>Date</p>

The meeting closed at 2:50 pm