



**TMC Board meeting  
10am-13.30 on 6 July 2023, Openshaw**

Present: Dame Ann Limb (Chair), Catherine Hill OBE, Philip Johnson, Justice Ellis, Rachel Curry (Principal)

In Attendance: Mark Harris (Vice Principal: Adult Curriculum) Christine Kenyon (Deputy Principal), Debbie Sanderson (Divisional Finance Director - College and Income Team), Michael Walsh (Deputy Principal: Adult Curriculum and Student Support) and Ed Lack (Group Director of Quality), Lorna Lloyd-Williams (Company Secretary & General Counsel), Michelle Fletcher (Vice Principal: Quality)

For Student Experience Item 46: Sukhjeet Rai (Student Voice Manager), Andrew Pickles (Assistant Principal- student support and foundation curriculum), Nada - English writing and media, Andy – English and psychology.

Apologies: Mark Fletcher, Jenifer Burden, Marie Stock, Barry Atkins

**DRAFT BOARD MINUTES**

**The meeting opened at 10am and was quorate with at least 3 Governors present.**

The Chair welcomed Michelle Fletcher to the meeting and congratulated her on her appointment to the post of Vice Principal Quality. The Chair also congratulated Debbie Sanderson on her appointment to the post of Vice Principal – Resources. The Board were informed that the position of Deputy Principal had been advertised but had not been recruited to. Barry Atkins had agreed to be seconded into the role for 12 months. Christine Kenyon would remain on a part-time basis for 3 days per week leading on qualification reform and other projects.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Mark Fletcher, Jenifer Burden, Marie Stock and Barry Atkins

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes of the meeting on 4 May 2023**

Subject to a minor amendment regarding job titles the minutes of the meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> May were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting and approved for signature.

#### 4. Matters arising

Link Governor roles were discussed with the Company Secretary proposing that the Group Safeguarding Governor should twice yearly attend the TMC Board to provide members with further assurance and triangulation. The Board agreed and commended this approach. In relation to the local skills agenda, it was discussed and noted the strength Board members collectively brought regarding this agenda.

#### 5. TMC Strategy

The Board were advised that this had been considered on a number of occasions and had received further scrutiny at the strategy days with a number of questions being posed to see what the views of the Group Board were and it was noted that Jenifer Burden had been in attendance and contributed. Two matters had been considered:

1. Inclusive offer- to retain the mission of inclusion and widening participation and recruit with integrity. LTE group were of view that the college should remain nonselective and were supportive of the strategy to recruit with integrity and have standards expected of students. The Group Chair who had been present at the Group strategy day commented that it had been agreed that there was a need to have students who were willing to learn with students being expected to commit to The Deal - a set of professional standards and behaviours. The Board noted that support would be given to those students who were not yet in a position to learn and there would be a careful balance and the Principal gave particulars of the enrolment process. The TMC Board were asked if they were comfortable with this principle and confirmed that they were.
2. Balance and mix of provision- balance challenges of multiple income streams where will potentially have more 16-18 years olds than will have capacity for. TMC Board were advised that the Group Board were of the view that the LTE Group should lobby for change in funding levels and additional capacity, potentially taking a more robust position if necessary. Further that the status quo should remain on the balance and mix for 2023/24, with the College's curriculum/resourcing review already necessary, in response to qualification reform and a new adult funding methodology, helping to inform future decisions.

It was noted by the Board that strategy was for 5 years and was therefore by its very nature aspirational. Governors tested a number of elements of the strategy and sought and received assurance that TMC would be able to meet the elements of the strategic themes in particular in relation to IT. The Board challenged the lack of commentary regarding prioritising wellbeing of students and it was agreed that this needed to be included. Following further discussion and debate it was

**Resolved** to circulate the amended strategy by email to the TMC Board for agreement by email for it to then be recommended to the Group Board for approval as part of the overall Group strategy.

#### 6. Adult Strategy

The Board were provided with an update on the development of a revised Adult Strategy for the College. The Board were taken through the key issues and it was explained that four key aspects had been focused on

1. The external policy landscape, 16-18 landscape and qualification reform
2. Demand – what does the LMI data tell us with it being noted that there was a need for basic skills in GM.
3. The ‘supply side’
4. Adult Tutorial and Support -Identifying and meeting support needs specific to adult students and creating a welcoming learning environment for adult students.

Members were advised that themes had emerged of the importance of industry engagement, progression and student experience. It was also explained that in the autumn TMC would be moving to the next stage of external consultation. Governors were advised that in some areas in particular staffing was a real challenge which could impact on ability to deliver. The Board were informed that a fully formed adult strategy would be presented to Board in the summer of 2024.

**Action: Deputy Principal**

Governors questioned whether there should be a strong focus on GMCA when working with external stakeholders regarding this strategy. This was agreed and the Board were given assurance that there were regular meetings and interactions with GMCA regarding the adult strategy and adult funding. It was noted that TMC had a strong working relationship with GMCA. Governors asked how the college was prepared not just for the current position but the position in two- or three-years regarding delivery and curriculum portfolio and received further particulars.

The Chair suggested that it might be worth looking at City Lit and whether there were any links with Workers Education Association (WEA). The Chair also suggested that it was worth keeping an eye on the national policy all of which was agreed. Governors asked to receive a draft update before the final strategy came for approval.

**Action: Deputy Principal**

## **QUALITY**

### **7. TMC Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)update**

The Board received an update on the College’s revised QIP document, following the second monitoring point in June 2023. Key issues were noted to be:

1. Key Afls remained around attendance (Afl 5). It was noted however that attendance rates had increased through recent work undertaken
2. Key AFI English/Maths (Afl 4) provision was improving with a very clear strategy for improvement.

It was notable that improvements in both these areas of the provision in recent months, had been in part due to the scrutiny of Governors. From deep dives it was noted that key topics such as British Values and Prevent required further improvement across the college and it was agreed that there should further scrutiny around these topics in addition to the discussions that had already occurred at Board.

**Action: For inclusion in next Board meeting agenda**

**Co Sec**

Board were advised that the self-assessment process was being pulled forward to have the SAR and QIP in place early in the autumn. Governors also asked that a report on staffing be brought to the next meeting.

**Action: Principal**

Governors asked what the intention regarding regularity of deep dives would be and were informed that these would take place at every course at every level annually, as was the current practice in Novus. Governors welcomed this.

### **8.Ofsted Preparedness**

The Board were advised of the impending work with Elaine Price and that which had already occurred with FEA as well as internal quality review measures. The Board noted and welcomed the grid being used to rate each area of the TMC curriculum. Governors were advised that the document would be further expanded to include achievement rates and learner numbers. Members questioned the challenges regarding hairdressing and were informed of leadership challenges in this area and the steps being currently taken to address this. Governors asked to what extent the change in Ofsted methodology was of assistance and it was explained that the process of deep dives was of great assistance for managers and in the long term would be beneficial. Governors challenged the leadership team as to whether TMC was being aspirational enough and this was debated and discussed with the Board being given assurance that the vision was for outstanding. The Board advised that they felt assured and understood the operational challenges. Governors asked to see the EPYP each meeting.

**Action: Group Director of Quality.**

## **CURRICULUM**

### **10.Accountability Board Statement**

The Deputy Principal provided an update on the statutory requirement for the Board to review how well the College was meeting local need. Given that local need was the intent behind the College's 'Careers not Courses' focus this was noted to already be a key part of the curriculum strategy. The Board noted that there was a formal requirement to review every 3 years as part of the Local Skills Improvement Plan process (LSIP), and within 3 months of the publication of the LSIP. The review would be undertaken early in next academic year and needed to be done in collaboration with other governing bodies. Once completed, the outcomes needed to be published on the website.

The Supporting Principles were summarised and focused on: improvement, collaborative, timely, involve stakeholders. There was no set format, but prompts were provided - e.g., how do governing bodies know that they're meeting local need? The content was outlined and the following points were made in discussion:

- Given the statutory responsibility for the review, the Board would seek assurance that the statements made were supported with a sound evidence base. It was confirmed that as part of the review a data pack would be provided to substantiate the points made
- **ACTION: It was agreed that future coverings papers for all items to be considered by the TMC Divisional Board should cover a statement associated with meeting local need**

**Principalship**

- **ACTION: A meeting of the TMC Divisional Board would be organised in the autumn term for the review to be considered.** This would ensure alignment with the published Local Skills Improvement Plan and the Adult Strategy, as well as the local contribution to skills needs considered as part of Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework.

**Company Secretary**

- **ACTION: It was agreed that a draft copy of the LSIP would be circulated to Board members**

**Company Secretary**

- Reference to level 3 onward progression should be made in answer to the standard question "Does the curriculum on offer enable learners, particularly those studying below level 3, to make sufficient progress?"
- It was confirmed that the accountability statement would be an iterative 'live' document and subject to discussion with stakeholders and amendment throughout its currency.
- No other college in the NW had yet to undertake its review and advice would be sought from other governance professionals regarding the process.

**POLICIES**

**11. Review of subcontracting arrangements including policy**

The Board were advised that the Manchester College only operated one subcontract, for a small amount of provision with the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) to deliver the Prince's Trust Teams Programme. This was noted to be an extremely long-standing arrangement which pre-dated the emergence of The Manchester College in 2008. The subcontract enables TMC to reach NEET young people who may not otherwise access mainstream college provision, and the programme focus primarily on transition to work but also provides a stepping-stone into further education and apprenticeships and therefore meets the rationale for subcontracting contained in the Subcontracting Policy. The Board noted the rationale for the use of the particular subcontractor and with Mark Fletcher having given his instructions by email which were communicated by the Company Secretary, it was

**Resolved** to approve the policy and endorse the use of the subcontractor.

**12.TMC Fees Policy**

The Board considered the TMC fees policy and noted that minimal changes were proposed from the 2022/23 policy, the dates having been updated and the option to pay by direct debit having been removed due to low take up and the majority of learners using the recurring card payment method. With Mark Fletcher providing his instructions by email which were communicated by the Company Secretary it was

**Resolved** to approve the TMC Fees policy.

### 13. PERFORMANCE REPORT

#### Industrial Relations

The Principal advised the Board that a full and final offer was made in May to the trade unions which had been rejected with the trade unions also ending negotiations in relation to Project Connect. The Board were advised that an opt in offer had now been released to staff on a voluntary basis with particulars being given regarding the pay and also the headlines in relation to terms which were noted to be viewed by the leadership team as positive for staff. Members were advised of the current level of sign up and the window for sign up. Governors asked what percentage of staff were not in a union and were informed around 70%. Members were also advised that notification of a ballot for industrial action had been received from Unison which was due to close in the next couple of day, with it being indicated that action would coincide with enrolment. The Board noted that no member of staff would be detrimentally affected by Project Connect with a large number of staff benefitting.

#### Finance

The Board were advised of the P10 headlines which were as follows:

- 16-19 income on track to achieve original budget, including the in-year growth
- AEB enrolments overall were indicating a gap to budget, measures were being taken to ensure that all curriculum areas maximised income and deliver additional qualifications focused on employability and progression during June/July 2023. The ESOL offer was also being expanded to address any remaining shortfall to ensure financial delivery of targets, with ALS now performing above original target at £3.1M.
- Main risk identified at March checkpoint was utilities. Smaller risks in some income categories; Advanced Loan Income and Full Cost, which are offset by increased High Needs income
- Pay still running favourable to budget due to vacancies and recruitment delays, an additional £0.8m saving was built into March checkpoint
- Able to cover the operational income shortfalls from pay and non-pay and it was explained that in relation to pay this was due to the difficulties in recruitment

#### Budget

The Board were taken through the draft budget and advised of some changes. Governors were advised that the college contribution would go down slightly to accommodate more pay and that the College had achieved of £17.6m in 23/24 – partly due to estates strategy savings. It was

**Resolved** to approve the draft budget

### STUDENT EXPERIENCE

#### 14. Student Voice

The Board received an update on the 2023/24 student voice strategy, which outlined the collation of student voice activities in term 3 and focused on the implementation on the student voice strategy for 2023/24. Governors asked how the impact was being measured and the Assistant Principal, explained the mechanisms being used. Governors advised that they would like to see what had changed going forward. The Assistant Principal highlighted to the Board the following:

- Student Engagement event – The Board were advised that key topics which were discussed with students were Student Leadership Teams, Student Voice brand/Communication and Enrichment with students having given approval to the new student voice brand logo. Governors were informed that students had emphasised that they wanted more face-to-face interaction and more opportunities had started to be provided with the Board being provided with examples.
- Enrichment – students had provided feedback that they wanted a timetabled approach and enrichment that would add value to them as citizens and that work had taken place to reflect this is the enrichment programme. Governors were also informed that a student conference had recently taken place.
- Student Awards – Members were advised that this had taken place on 7th June with details of the evening being provided. It was noted that over 200 people had attended the event which was presented by the Student Union President and a Performing Arts student whom Governors had recently met at a TMC Board meeting. Board noted that the evening was planned and executed by students.

The Board were also informed of the work being planned going forward regarding student voice and the roles being developed to support this. It was emphasised that the intention was to ensure that student voice was heard and acted upon and Governors were advised that a student leadership team was being developed.

Governors then had the opportunity to discuss with the students present their experience and hear from them what they had been doing prior to their studies and their next steps. Positive feedback was received regarding the staff and in particular the tutors. Positive feedback was also given regarding the pastoral support from tutors too. The students commented on how studying at TMC had helped their self-confidence. Governors probed whether there was anything that could have been done better and differently and it was noted that the library resources at Shena Simon were not good and that adult students would prefer to have specially designated space for them to study.

The formal meeting then ended and Board members had the opportunity to engage further with students during the lunch.

**The meeting closed at 13.39**