



## **TMC Board meeting**

**9:30am-12:30pm on 22 November 2023, Openshaw**

Present: Dame Ann Limb (Chair), Catherine Hill OBE, Philip Johnson, Rachel Curry (Principal), Jenifer Burden, Mark Fletcher (via Teams), Garry Bridges, Mubarak Oyeboode

In Attendance: Rhona Bradley (Group Safeguarding Link Governor), Mark Harris (Vice Principal: Adult Curriculum), Debbie Sanderson (Vice Principal: Planning and Performance), Michael Walsh (Deputy Principal: Adult Curriculum and Student Support) and Ed Lack (Group Director of Quality), Barry Atkins (VP FE Curriculum), Marie Stock MBE (Vice Principal – Student Experience and Support), Michelle Fletcher (Vice Principal – TMC Quality), Orla Wood (Divisional Finance Director – College and Income Team), Lorna Lloyd-Williams (Company Secretary & General Counsel), Sherman Wu (Governance Officer)

For Safeguarding Report item 9: Andrew Pickles (Assistant Principal – Foundation Learning and Student Support), Jamie lee Tucker (Student in Openshaw), Kayden Armstrong (Student in Openshaw), Randolph Nyame (Student in City Centre Campus)

Apologies: Justice Ellis

## **DRAFT BOARD MINUTES**

**The meeting opened at 9:30am and was quorate with at least 3 Governors present.**

The Chair welcomed Mubarak Oyeboode, the new student co-opted member, to his first meeting and it was noted that Mubarak Oyeboode would be brought through the induction process.

### **1. Apologies**

Apology was received and accepted from Justice Ellis.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were received and approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **4. Matters arising**

The Board received an update that a report detailing how the employer engagement team and curriculum team worked together and the coherence of touchpoints with the employers would be integrated into the briefings being prepared for governors on aspects of the College's work.

Regarding the well-being survey, the Board was informed that the results would be available on Monday and would be included in the upcoming performance report.

Information for the Board on the materials shared with students on British Values would also be shared within the briefings being prepared for governors.

A governor inquired about the schedule of deep dives. The Board was informed that the schedule of link visits within the group was part of the governor's training plan, and the Company Secretary would notify the Board about the Deep Dive/Learning Walk schedule which members were welcome to attend.

**ACTION: Company Secretary to advise the Board the Deep Dive/Learning Walk schedule**

#### **5. TMC Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Ofsted Preparedness**

The Board was presented with key areas for improvement emerging from the 2022/23 SAR and every target would be RAG rated against its description in the table and at each QIP monitoring point to allow rapid and clear oversight of the improvement trajectory against each area for improvement. Results from those learning walks indicated that significant progress had been made against some of the personal development themes like British Values.

A governor commended the team's efforts in preparing the QIP and Ofsted preparedness report which provided an overview of various areas. During discussion, a governor asked about the monitoring update date and the anticipated impact from the action plans. The Board was informed that the 1st monitoring update would occur on 7 December 2023. A governor asked for further elaboration on some of the targets, specifically if the expected impacted could be expanded upon. Following discussion, it was agreed that impact would be expected to be evidenced in the QiP in detail at each monitoring point.

**ACTION: Group Director of Quality**

The QIP area for improvement for English and maths was discussed in detail. The increased volume of 16-18 year olds studying for a resit in English or/and maths was explored, with the reductions in high grades in Manchester schools impacting the volume of 16 year olds who were required to resit and the change to the progress model for the College. The Board acknowledged that the College had transitioned to a progress-based model for English and Mathematics.

A discussion took place regarding qualification reform and the intent to create more robust Level 2 programmes to facilitate students' smooth progression to Level 3 programmes or entry direct into the labour market from level 2 qualifications. The Principal shared that the College strategy had focused on enhancing higher technical skills and pathways to employment. A governor raised concerns about the challenges for students who did not have a high grade in

English/maths to progress to a level 3 programmes. In response, the Principal committed to update the TMC Board on the impact of qualification reform and contribution towards local skills needs.

The Board received update on Ofsted preparedness and quality improvement initiatives. These encompassed action plans for identified areas for improvement and focus, learning walks, quality team and consultant support, tutorial programme overhaul and work with employers. A governor inquired about work with curriculum leads and their backups. The Board was reassured that support had been provided to the curriculum leads and their backups, although there were staff changes within the College throughout the year. However, it was emphasized that continuous training would be offered during the ongoing Deep Dives throughout the year.

Governors recommended highlighting changes compared to the last report, providing explanations for the actual differences, and offering more details to clarify why certain areas were not marked in blue/green. The Board received assurance that the next report would incorporate these suggestions.

**ACTION: Group Director of Quality**

A governor asked about staff recruitment and the Board was informed that while in some departments such as construction recruitment remained challenging, Project Connect had slightly reduced the overall turnover rate. It was noted that the College had reviewed terms and conditions and pay ranges with other colleges as part of its Project Connect implementation in order to be provide a competitive offer.

A governor asked about employer/stakeholder work with the College. The Board was advised that the College had strategic links and extensive partnerships with employers . Nevertheless, whilst effective in much of the curriculum, there was some improvement required in others to ensure employers where informing the implementation of knowledge, skills and behaviour at the curriculum level.

A governor inquired about strategies to attract and recruit T-level students. It was explained that T level summer schools supported students interested in joining a T level programme to better understand the requirements of the course and expectations and to ensure a good match for them and for the College. The

## **6. Personal Development**

The Board was provided with an update on the 2023/24 personal development framework and actions/improvements implemented in response to the 22/23 SAR evaluation of personal development as 'requires improvement'.

It was noted that the College's Careers Strategy 2023 was in line with the DfE Careers Strategy, published in December 2017, and incorporated its themes and key priorities.. The eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Career Guidance underpin the DfE Careers Strategy and set the standards for good career guidance for all learning providers. The Board was informed that the Student Careers Service offered careers advice, information, welfare advice and guidance to potential, existing and progressing students within The Manchester College. All team members were qualified and experienced advisors. The College currently met 100% of the Gatsby Benchmarks, the national benchmarks for good careers guidance and was Matrix accredited and a member of the Careers Development Institute.

It was reported that a significant number of learning walks had taken place with the express aim of capturing early impact and outcomes of the work undertaken to improve personal development. A governor questioned how the College captured the outcomes/impact of the personal development themes and whether there was a way of supplementing some of the questions so that students could better understand and answer them. The Board in response, were provided with further details of the approach of both staff and Ofsted in relation to this issue.

## **7. Student Outcome Report (2022/23)**

The Board was briefed on the following key points:

- Improving achievement rates for 16-18 students on level 3 diplomas, through better retention of year one students on two-year diploma qualifications
- Implementation of new progress measures in GCSE English and mathematics that will focus on student progress based on their Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) score as well as high-grade achievement and the impact this will have on overall achievement and high-grade achievement in 2023/24
- The small number of departments that continue to have lower than acceptable achievement rates
- College Alps grades and high-grade achievement
- The continued success of students, teachers and managers in securing overall achievement rates well above national rates year-on-year.

It was also highlighted to the Board the key aspects where student outcomes align strongly with GM priorities. A discussion regarding key metrics for measuring success took place, particularly comparison to benchmark and the College and the Board's high aspiration for its students. The Board were advised that key measures would be drawn out of the strategic plan to used for the Board to monitor the College against.

**ACTION: TMC Board to be provided with key metrics for monitoring the achievement of the Strategic Plan.**

## **8. Performance Report**

The Board was briefed with the following key points:

- Attendance – a very positive start to 2023/24 with attendance at 86.02%, almost 8pp higher than at this point last year
- English and Maths – An increase of 11% (381 enrolments) in English and maths in 2023/24 versus last year
- No risk to in-year funding in 2023/24 for 16-18 and Adult Education Budget (AEB)
- Financial outlook – strong outturn for 2022/23 at £1.3m favourable contribution to budget
- H&S accidents/incidents - 1 RIDDOR reportable incident has been recorded
- Staff Turnover and Sickness – new reporting dashboards now available on turnover and sickness
- Performance Framework 2023/24 – The Performance Framework is under review to align Key Performance Indicators to the new Strategic Plan to 2027 and potentially rationalise the number of metrics reported

The Divisional Board were alerted to the post-16 cohort capacity challenge within Greater Manchester as the number of 16-year-olds leaving school was set to increase significantly in future years with the Group Chair setting out the context to members. There as a complex interdependency between qualification reform, the estates strategy and the funding of adult learning, together with the cohort challenge that had already created waiting lists in September. A detailed and

lengthy discussion took place around the capacity challenge and how to address this with the Board asking for an overview in February and a more detailed review in May.

**ACTION: Vice Principal Resources, Planning and Performance**

The Board then considered staff wellbeing and acknowledged that the sickness percentage for 2023/24 year to date was at 4.2% lower than 2022/23 and that back problems rather than stress account for the majority of the absence. The Principal advised that the College was currently conducting a survey to assess the wellbeing and satisfaction of the staff and positive responses had been received. The Board received assurance that the report would be presented to the board at next meeting.

**ACTION: The Principal**

The Board was informed that there was a significant improvement on attendance compared to the same point of last year. A governor expressed concern about persistent absenteeism. The Board was informed that regular meetings were conducted with each of the curriculum areas to address these concerns. From half term to Christmas, the College would take the following action:

- Close monitoring of the consistency and timeliness in application of Student Disciplinary procedure
- Increased Next Of Kin engagement: Parents' Evening.
- Monthly face to face data clinics across all areas.
- Leadership and Management: Tracking, monitoring and intervention: QBRC, Assistant Principal 1:1s, Departmental Meetings and course meetings
- Targeted intervention meetings for departments at 80% or below
- Complete exemption process within English and maths (circa 50 to resolve)
- Achievement Tutors to continue to prioritise low attendance to English and maths
- Reward and Recognition activities across departments and January trips and visits

The Board was reassured that the College had been actively collaborating with parents and the local authority to address any at risk students. The student co-opted member advised that in his view there were two reasons for students' absences. One is related to the financial burden of travelling to the College, particularly the lack of financial support for adult students. The other reason could be a lack of interest in participating in lessons. The student co-opted member suggested to have class representative to voice students' opinion. The Board was assured that Vice Principals would thoroughly investigate these issues and catch up with the student co-opted member to gather his insights and provide him the information on travel support offered by the College.

**ACTION: Vice Principals**

The Board was reported that at year end, TMC College and Resources were £1.3m favourable to budget. This was £0.7m ahead of forecast. The favourable contribution was to offset the £0.7m adverse variance for forecast contribution in UCEN. Finance Director also provided the financial updates, particularly on risks, opportunities, outlook and key actions.

The Board considered the risk register. A governor suggested to tie up the risk register so that those relevant risks could be identified. The Board received assurance that a review of the risk register would be conducted.

## 9. Safeguarding Report

*Andrew Pickles joined the meeting.*

The Board was presented with the key items arising from the Safeguarding Report, relevant implications and appendix A of the report. It was emphasised that College needed to ensure there were structures, policies and procedures in place to mitigate any risk and the Group Safeguarding Link Governor got assurance on that from regular meetings with the safeguarding lead within the College

A governor inquired what audit activity had been undertaken. The Board was advised that following a comprehensive review of safeguarding arrangements within the College, a revised structure with focused roles and responsibilities was introduced. There was also a robust internal audit to identify safeguarding alerts and provide timely referral. Additionally, an internal audit on different aspects of safeguarding from student and staff perspectives had been undertaken and the findings had been circulated to Audit and Risk Committee.

A governor asked how the student could reach out and get the support in respect of safeguarding out of College hours. In response, it was explained that the College had student hub with abundant information available to the students together with the support from external supplier, particularly 24-hours advice support.

It was noted that the Board received the safeguarding update provided by the Principal prior to the meeting.

A governor proposed delivering a shorter version of safeguarding training to all LTE group members. The Board was informed that safeguarding training for LTE group members is scheduled for March 2024.

## 10. Student Voice

*Jamie lee Tucker (Student in Openshaw), Kayden Armstrong (Student in Openshaw) and Randolph Nyame (Student in City Centre Campus) joined the meeting.*

The Board received an update on the 2023/24 student voice strategy and analysis of activity in the first half term of this academic year. The Board was reported that induction survey had been undertaken and full analysis on it would be included at the next board meeting.

The Board received information that different activities had been held to get students involved internally and externally and the Principalship team had scheduled lunches at every campus each term to get direct feedback. The Principal would deliver a summary of the findings or insights gathered from these meetings at the end of the cycle of lunches.

### **ACTION: The Principal**

A governor inquired whether the College obtained sufficient adult voice feedback. The Board was advised that feedback from evening part-time students was an area for focus. In respect of quality, it was noted that adult voice was obtained through learning walks and deep dives and a high response had been received from adult learners. The Principal expressed the intention for adult students to attend a future board meeting.

Governors then had the opportunity to discuss with the students present their experience and hear from them what they had been doing and their next steps. Positive feedback was received regarding the staff and the tutors. Positive feedback was also given regarding the pastoral support from tutors too. Governors asked whether there was anything that could have been done better and differently and it was noted that students sometimes encountered systems problems. A student also shared an experience of not receiving respect in the classroom. It was noted that student hub had addressed this issue at the time. The Principalship team would also reach out to this student for further follow-up.

The students also commented that there were links to industry and business in their programmes and suggested incorporating more physical activities, which they believed would make a positive impact.

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

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**Chair**

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**Date**

**The meeting closed at 12.50pm**