

**MARY WARD SETTLEMENT
INTEGRATED BOARD
Minutes of the meeting held on
4th February 2016 at 6.15pm
Room 14, 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AQ**

Present: Diana Good (Chair)
Alison Lowton
Andrea Williams
Frances Bates
Jake Lee
John Edwards
Kate Watters
Peter Clyne
Raja Nadarajan

In Attendance: Suzanna Jackson (Warden)
Allister Duncan (Head of Finance and Resources – H of F)
Tina Neessen (Acting Head of the Legal Centre)
Sue Craggs (Head of Adult and Community Education – HACE)

Clerk: Beryl Washington

Agenda Item	Action
1.	Apologies for absence were received from Alex Horsup, Andrew Peck, Austin Hill, Alan Humphries, Helen Carty, Maureen Brewster and Nicole Kar.
2.	Declarations of interest: the Clerk and staff would leave the meeting for agenda item 13 (report on Clerk's interim appraisal).
3.	Minutes of the meeting of 15th December 2015 were approved, subject to an amendment to para 8.2 to refer to a day time drop-in session rather than an evening session (second bullet point). Minutes of the Strategy Day (awayday) held on 16th January 2016 were approved.
4.	Matters arising – in response to a question about secretariat support for the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education, the Warden advised that the original appointee had withdrawn, and new interviews had been held. It was hoped that an appointment would be announced shortly.
5.	The Chair's report: The report was received, the Board noting in particular the update on

the RFSA.

6. Warden's report:

6.1 The Warden presented her report and the review of the Operational Plan, advising trustees that as the end of Q2 had not yet been reached financial and output targets had not been updated.

6.2 Funding issues were highlighted: at MWLC a reduction of £20-40K was expected in the Capitalise contract. At the AE Centre, there had been a claw-back because of underachievement – this had been a surprise as in previous years there had been a 3% tolerance, which would have covered the under-achievement if applied this time. It was mitigated by over-achievement on the loans bursary by £8k, resulting in £22k being paid back.

6.3 A one-year contract had been won from Camden for £70k to deliver community outreach, which helped compensate for some of the £110k reduction in funding. It was hoped that the contract might be renewed in future years.

6.4 In response to questions about the Capitalise contract, it was confirmed that Toynbee, as lead partner, took the lead in negotiations with the Money Advice Service. They thought there was a greater need for face-to-face interviews, and considered £147 was sufficient funding for each interview. Whilst MWLC wanted to pull out of certain areas, it was thought to be the wrong time to pull out completely, as renegotiations were under way and some advantages in the project were becoming evident. It was noted that conditions had changed mid-year, and so negotiations for next year would be carefully considered.

6.5 The Warden reminded the Board that the service review was considering debt provision and the development of volunteer resources. She advised that the SMT would attend an 'awayday' the next day, when they would be looking at different scenarios.

6.6 The Warden further advised that she and the Acting Head of the Legal Centre had visited Lawworks to look at their client management system: they thought it would be a good, simple and adaptable alternative to the one currently in use at MWLC, which was not flexible enough for their needs.

6.7 The Board was pleased to note the number of green areas on the Operational Plan, showing where progress had been made and targets met. Some matters had been delayed pending the outcome of the service review.

6.8 The Warden agreed that in future where percentages were shown

e.g. on the front page summary of the Plan, an indication would be given as to how they related to previous figures. Some items would be subject to a written update as the year progressed. In answer to questions the Warden confirmed that the average number of courses taken by each student was 2.5. She also confirmed that the fundraising targets shown were more conservative than previously set and should be met.

6.9 The meeting with Blackfriars Settlement scheduled for Monday had been postponed. The Warden was to prepare a paper setting out MW's proposals, with a deadline for Blackfriars' response. In the meantime other possible partners would be sought.

The Warden's report and the review of the Operational Plan were received.

7. Adult and Community Education Report

Fee proposals:

7.1 The Head of Adult and Community Education explained the fee proposals, amplifying the background given in her paper for the strategy to keep fees low and favourable in comparison with fees at other London colleges. The paper concentrated on fees that produced the greatest income, not on concessionary fees. It was noted that there had been a 5% increase in fees last year, and that it was not thought appropriate to impose another increase of that size this year. It was proposed that the membership fee would remain the same.

7.2 In response to a question about class sizes, the HACE advised that these were restricted in some cases by room size. An average of 14 was expected, while there were smaller groups in community outreach classes when necessary.

7.3 The service review would identify which groups of students could be subsidised in future. The aim was for a balance between concessions for those who need them and for others to pay what they could afford.

The Board approved a 2% increase in fees, and the maintenance of the membership fee at its current rate.

Curriculum parameters:

7.4 The HACE took the meeting through the details given in her paper on curriculum planning parameters. She drew particular attention to courses subject to the Advance Learning Loans (previously known as the 24+ Learning Loans) under which it was thought there would be potential for increased provision.

The Board approved the proposals outlined for curriculum planning, and noted those areas which would be subject to consideration in the service review.

2016/17 Prospectus quotes:

The Board approved the proposal to appoint CM Print to produce the prospectus for 2016/17.

8. Legal Services – report on current activities:

The Acting Head of the Legal Centre briefly went through her written report. Trustees complimented her on the work done in closing old open files. It was noted that the number of appointments that could be offered to clients continued to produce some complaints and queries but these were being handled well.

The Board received the Legal Services report.

9 AGM arrangements:

Trustees were reminded that the AGM was scheduled to take place on 22 March: a low key event was planned, organisations that worked in partnership with Mary Ward would be invited, and there may be a musical performance by students. The AGM would be followed by a dinner, as last year, to say farewell to those trustees who were stepping down and to welcome any new appointees.

10. Student Trustee Election:

As Irene Payne was reaching the end of her term of office as a student trustee, an election would be held for her replacement. It was hoped that the new trustee would be appointed in time for the AGM. Trustees who were taking classes at the Centre were asked to spread the word among their classmates. Candidates would also be sought via the website and posters around the buildings.

11. AOB

In response to a question about the recent Government announcement of language classes for Moslem women, the Warden advised that the Centre could bid to the Home Office for funding to run such classes. Eligibility for bidding was not yet clear but a bid would be made if conditions were right. However, it was commented that there seemed to be little 'joined up thinking' by the Government about the issue, especially in light of the recent cuts in ESOL funding.

12. Confidentiality – it was agreed that item 13, the report on the Clerk's interim appraisal, should be treated as confidential.

13. The Clerk and other staff left the meeting at this point

14. Date of next meeting: 15th March 2016

*Beryl Washington
Clerk
February 2016*