

**MARY WARD SETTLEMENT  
INTEGRATED BOARD  
Minutes of the meeting held on  
19<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 6.15pm  
Room 11, 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AQ  
**Confidential item 10****

**Present:** Frances Bates (Chair)  
Alison Lowton  
Alex Horsup  
Andrew Peck  
Austin Hill  
Jim Bewsher  
John Edwards  
Kate Watters  
Nicole Kar  
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.	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> were received from Alan Humphries, Andrea Williams, Helen Carty and Maureen Brewster.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Jim Bewsher, newly elected student trustee, to his first meeting, which was also her first meeting as Chair.</p>
2.	<p><b>Declarations of interest:</b> staff trustees would leave the meeting for agenda item 10 (Warden’s Report – Service Review).</p>
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016</b> were <b>approved</b>.</p>
4.	<p><b>Matters arising</b> – in response to a request for an update on the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education, the Warden advised that a secretariat appointment had been made and that the Group’s first piece of work was concerned with gaps in adult education provision. Sue Craggs (HACE) was on the working group that would consider tenders to carry out the research. RBS would sponsor a launch event.</p>

## 5. Chair's report:

5.1 **The report was received**, the Board noting in particular the following:

- Feedback from trustees at their 1:1 meetings with the Chair and the outgoing Chair had been positive and good
- There had been little progress on negotiations with Blackfriars, and a recent meeting with them had not helped. Another meeting was planned within the next three months, but their views on the proposal were still unclear. If an agreement was reached, work on implementing it could begin immediately, but there were still issues to be considered before a decision was made.
- The law firm MacFarlanes was very keen to consider working with MWLC
- Nicole Kar was helping with research into the location and current work of former pro bono lawyers, with a view to inviting them to support MWLC in the future.
- The Chair would be attending meetings with Caro Millington (the Settlement's trustee representative on the RFSB Board) for an update and SIB (with the Warden and Helen Carty).

5.2 The Chair reminded trustees of the opportunity to vote in the RBS Skills and Opportunities Fund ballot in support of Mary Ward's application for funding.

All

## 6. Adult and Community Education Report

6.1 The HACE went through the highlights of her report and invited questions on its content. She noted that the number of enrolments was in line with targets, and that fee income was 15% up on the same time last year. The target for fees had been increased to £1176k; income now stood at £1149k, well on course to meet the new target, especially with the Summer School enrolments still to come. The change in concessionary fees for older people had not had an adverse effect on enrolment numbers. Retention figures and results were also encouraging.

6.2 The Centre had gained another contract with the Met and would run further ESOL classes for a cleaning company.

6.3 The style of the Quality Improvement Plan had been changed to better reflect quality issues and to be more accessible; it was clear where information given related to comments made in the last Ofsted report. It was noted that there was still some work to be done on the Prevent duty, and it was proposed that the agenda for the Strategy Day on 7<sup>th</sup> May would include an item on Prevent, including online training.

Clerk

6.4 There was a discussion on the level of information provided to trustees and the best way for them to receive it. Trustee responses to the self assessment questionnaire had reinforced quality queries. Some recent changes, such as the way trustees are included in the SAR process, had been welcomed and successful. It was noted that there was still a need to consider how best to monitor quality issues and whether it would be appropriate to have a mechanism outside the main Board meetings (but not a sub-committee). Appropriate KPIs were also important as was

the method of reporting on progress towards them. Trustees were aware of the need to challenge and to know relevant quality issues, but needed benchmarks to aid their judgement of those matters.

6.5 Trustees generally considered that information provided to the Board should be sufficient for them to be able to form an opinion and build their knowledge, but that too much detail would not necessarily help their understanding. In particular it was important for trustees to have information on outcomes, and to know where and when information was available.

6.6 It was agreed that an issue for Ofsted may well have been in the wording used in reporting, where reference to 'quality' may not have been clear because of omission of that word. Education reports now included regular quality items.

### **The Adult and Community Education Report was received.**

## **7. Legal Services Report**

7.1 The Interim Head of the Legal Centre supplemented her written report already circulated to the Board with the following information:

- Confirmation of funding in the Disability Welfare Benefit contract had still not been received.
- The Debt team had dealt with 42 debt relief orders resulting in £416k debt being written off. This represented very good outcomes for individuals.
- The Housing team continued to achieve good outcomes.
- Linklaters' evening sessions were going well.
- Volunteers were making a real difference, but the time that could be spent in managing them was limited and so it was unlikely that any more would be taken on now.
- As nothing had been heard from the Legal Ombudsman it was not clear that the reported complaint had actually been made.

7.2 In answer to a question about the consequences of being below target under the Welfare Benefits contract, the Warden explained that so far there had been no problem – reports were made and funding had been received. However future contract provisions were uncertain and this may change.

### **The Legal Services report was received.**

## **8. Q2 Accounts**

8.1 The Head of Finance advised the Board that the financial situation looked stable. Despite the previously reported SFA clawback, and expenditure on IT which had been agreed last year but fell into this year, the financial situation at the Adult Education Centre was holding, and fee income was expected to reach target.

8.2 The overall position at the Legal Centre was not worsening, and the loss of funding under the Capitalise contract had been taken into account in the current review of services.

8.3 Looking ahead to next year's budget, the Head of Finance considered there to be some cause for optimism.

**The Q2 accounts were received.**

**9 AOB**

There was none.

*Austin Hill (staff trustee) left the meeting at this point.*

**10. Service Review – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

**11. Confidentiality**

It was agreed that item 10 should be minuted as a confidential item.

**12. Date of next meetings:**

**Strategy Day – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016, 10am-3pm**

**Board Meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2016, 6.15pm**

***The meeting closed at 8.10pm.***

*Beryl Washington*

*Clerk*

*May 2016*