



K A E GOVERNORS' ADVISORY BOARD

A meeting was held on **Wednesday 18th January 2023**
at 6.30pm
in Guildhall M33

Present:

Hilda Clarke - HC (Chair)
Sam Burgess – SB
Ur-Cheng Leong – UL
Amanda Olley – AO (RA)
Lesley Searle – LS Left at 7pm
Rebecca Roberts - RR
Barry Avery- BA
Roger Weatherhead – RW (RA)
Dennis Clarke - DC
Sarah Jordan - Clerk to Governors – SJ
Scott Furlong attended for the first 40 minutes
RA denotes remote access

Apologies:

1 Apologies

N/A

2 Minutes of last meeting

Approved

3 Matters Arising and Declarations of Interest

HC introduced and welcomed the new members to the Advisory Board Amanda Olley as a Governor and Ur-Cheng Leong as the new bursar.
HC also made a presentation and thanked Lesley Searle for her many years as the staff representative on the Advisory Board.
There were no declarations of interest.

Scott Furlong discussed the current position of KAE within RBK and answered Governor Questions.

The Chief Executive Ian Thomas is leaving and will be replaced in the interim by Sarah Ireland.

The Cultural Heritage Team transformation is complete with people in their positions. There is now a focus on each element of the CHT working together to maximise community outcomes.

The financial situation is challenging within the council. The priority is to review the business model and ensure it is delivering the best value in the current climate.

RR- what are the key challenges for KAE.

SF – delivering against council priorities and getting council buy in to provide maximum support.

SB- Income generation and marketing are priorities.

RR- We have had a number of reviews. What will be different about this one?

SF – The financial challenges have changed. This is not a new review but a re look at our model with this challenge in mind.

SB - It will build on the Social Finance Review.

HC – What is the commitment of the Council to KAE? It has taken them a long time to get us teaching/office space in the Guildhall. In addition when KAE faces clawback the council has to be realistic about our position and what can be achieved financially.

SF – The situation is difficult. The service should not be burdened with unrealistic targets and should be a break even service. The current leadership team are receptive to this. It is a difficult time to be having a conversation about capital investment in premises. We need to base our model on the current situation and plan for more investment when the situation improves.

HC – There are small things the council can do that would greatly improve things for KAE and its residents such as giving KAE more rooms in the Guildhall.

AO – There are many reports on the benefits of AE to local residents. Are the council taking this into account?

SF – The benefits of AE are well understood by the council. Our task is to continue with this narrative. New council members are faced with very difficult choices and we have to help them navigate through this.

DC – How are we going to get more people into our classes after the last few difficult years?

SF – We need to steady the ship over the next 6 months. We need to make sure we are visible and make sure our capacity is being used. Once this is done we can move onto growth models.

HC – Thanked SF for attending the meeting and answering Governor Questions.

4 Report by the Principal

SB discussed the key elements of her report.

Enrolments – These are increasing. They were higher pre Covid but this is not like for like as we are no longer able to offer ceramics or upholstery. The trend is improving.

Achievement – All areas have improved on the previous year. The overall result of 88.43% is good.

AO- Congratulated KAE on having both increased enrolments and achievement rates. The national trend for enrolments is down.

Retention – Pre Covid levels were 95.82% the latest result is 94.53%. The service is very nearly at pre Covid levels.

HC- asked if retention meant the student is completing the course.

SB- confirmed that retention is a student completing a course. Good retention reflects on achievement. The high retention is a testament to the quality of teaching. Curriculum support will pick up learners who are not attending and refer to pastoral support to aid their return.

AO – discussed how retention can be between 85% and 90% in other AE institutions. The high figures achieved by KAE are a result of all the work going into supporting learners.

HC – commented how in schools the reduction in attendance figures is a concern at the moment.

SB – noted that our attendance rates are also up at 85%.

AO – asked SB if she had any learner case studies demonstrating these results.

SB – confirmed that she did.

Starters and Leavers – ESOL has seen a large increase in demand. Resources have been allocated and 7 more classes were put on in Spring.

Functional Skills maths achievements have been very low 45%. The tutors had additional support and training. At the end of the academic year all the FS maths tutors left and a completely new maths team have been recruited.

BA- Asked if it was normal to have so much staff turnover.

SB – No it is most unusual.

AO – Do the ESOL numbers include a high proportion of Ukrainian learners?

SB – Yes but also a large number of Afghans, Tamils and Hongkongers.

HC - asked is SB could give a premises update.

SB – explained how there were now 2 classrooms in operation in The Guildhall and 3 offices. Staff are also able to book a desk in the hot desk area.

RR – asked if staff were using the new space.

SB – confirmed that they were. The classrooms are fully utilised during the day.

DC – Would there be any benefit in KAE being more visible now they are in The Guildhall?

SB – Yes definitely. There is more exposure to Councillors and the job centre is next door.

BA – Should we have branding in the corridors?

SB – We are starting to do this.

Service Update – KAE is realigning its resources. The staffing budget is not changing but resources are being moved to focus on marketing, income generation and better infrastructure to support current estates and delivery models.

We are expecting Ofsted in the spring.

QIP completion rate is 69% with other items being carried forward.

All staff are on the new MIS system using registers amongst other things. Online enrolments will be in use as soon as it has been signed off by IT and workflows completed. The reports the system generates are very good.

5 Chairman's Report

HC discussed how she met with Scott Furlong in the autumn term and how positive he was about KAE.

She also spent the day with staff completing the SAR and has been involved in the Ofsted Governor training which included Safeguarding training.

AOB

Action – SJ to arrange for a new staff governor to join the Advisory Board.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm

