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Paper title:	Update and profiles of potential candidates	
Author:	James Stevenson, University Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Governors	
Sponsor:	Chairman of the Board	
Further approval required?	Selected candidates will be recommended to the Appointments Committee for approval	On: TBA
Communications – who should be made aware of the decision?	N/A	

Executive summary

At its meeting of 23rd August 2012, the committee recommended that Sharon White, Bonnie Greer and Ruth Gee be invited to meet the committee. Both Sharon White and Ruth Gee declined but Bonnie Greer will be meeting the Vice Chancellor and Chair in early December 2013.

The other potential candidates considered at the meeting were Hilary McCallion and Frank Douglas. A verbal report will be given at the meeting.

Two other potential candidates are included for consideration by the committee. They are Mee Ling Ng and David Wabaso. Biographies are attached – they both are Honorary Graduates of LSBU

Mee Ling Ng



A promising scientist, she has chosen instead to dedicate her life to public service, working tirelessly to tackle inequalities, encourage investment and deliver fairer, better quality services not just here in South London but on the national and international stage. Mee Ling Ng was born in Malaysia, and lived there until she was 16 when her parents sent her to Britain to complete her education. After leaving Durham Technical College, she took a degree in biochemistry at Manchester University, followed by a masters in environmental studies at Salford. After a brief stint back in Malaysia working in a commercial laboratory, she returned to the UK and moved to London, where she has lived ever since.

She initially considered joining the Civil Service, but opted instead to start her career in a field where she could combine her interest in science with her passion for tackling inequality and discrimination. Eight years working for the Royal National Institute for the Blind saw Mee Ling rise from editorial assistant to management roles, and juggle her work commitments with another growing passion – local politics. ‘I’d been politically active for years,’ she says. ‘Reducing social injustice has always been close to my heart.’ In 1986, she successfully stood as the Labour candidate for Lewisham Borough Council, becoming the first Chinese woman councillor to be elected in Britain. Over the next 16 years, Mee Ling combined her role as councillor with her day job, chairing committees on economic development, regeneration and social inclusions, and eventually became deputy leader of the council. ‘When I look back, I’m delighted with what we achieved,’ she says. ‘We brought investment into the area, launched an integrated transport initiative, and set up a refugee forum. These are all things that made a real difference to local people’s lives.’

Although passionately committed to her south London constituents, Mee Ling’s work has not been confined to the local area. During the 80s and 90s, she co-founded and chaired a number of organisations supporting and campaigning on behalf of the Chinese community. Her involvement with the Lewisham anti-apartheid movement – a cherished cause since her student days – led directly to what she describes as possibly the most pivotal experience of her life. In 1994, she was invited to be an International Peace Monitor in South Africa, in the lead up to its first free and democratic elections. ‘It was an incredibly exciting time,’ she recalls. ‘I was working in the townships outside Durban, attending rallies and monitoring the election campaigns. I saw Nelson Mandela speak, which was fantastic. But for me the most inspiring thing was seeing people queuing in the hot sun for hours to register for the vote. It made me realise what a commitment to community and to democracy really means.’

Mee Ling left Lewisham Council in 2002 to take on her current role as non-executive chair of Southwark Primary Care Trust. The focus on health is a logical progression. 'In my time at the council, I came to believe that creating the NHS is one of the best things this country has ever done,' she says. 'Everyone has the right to quality healthcare, and I'm very proud to have played a part in raising standards and improving access here in Southwark.' Mee Ling is also a partner in a research and consultancy company working in health, social care and regeneration. In 2003, she won a Windrush Achievement Award and in 2007 she was awarded an OBE for services to the Chinese community.

David Waboso

Now Director of Engineering at London Underground and a key player in a multibillion pound investment programme which will renew the tube over the next decade, he holds one of the most high profile, challenging engineering jobs in the country.



It was a school careers master who picked up on David Waboso's love of travel and the great outdoors and suggested a career in engineering. David went on to study engineering at Coventry and Imperial College, but his first job – as a civil engineer designing the M63 and M66 – left him wondering if it was the right choice. "I was sitting in front of a drawing board working on designs and I thought 'I don't want to become a bloke with leather patches on my jacket elbows'" he said.

So in 1980, he became a maths teacher in a tough, inner London school in Stoke Newington. Today, he strongly believes that you can only rise to the top in engineering if you have good communication skills as well as technical talent – and it was in Stoke Newington where he first cut his teeth in communication. "You really have to come up with solutions when you stand up in front of kids who dislike authority and find maths uninspiring. Teaching is all about how to communicate complex principles, clearly and simply, and how to grab people's attention. You could be the best engineer in the world, but if you can't communicate ideas, concepts and instructions, you'll struggle. My loving of communicating ...has ...featured strongly in my engineering career. I've always been comfortable with the spoken word" he says.

David Waboso returned to engineering to work on the M25, and several other projects followed. Driven by a belief that engineering can bring real social change, he went to West Africa to work on water and transportation schemes in 19xx. He worked on the Kaduna water supply scheme in northern Nigeria and first came across railway engineering while investigating options to move oil products around the country. Africa also gave him his first taste of taking charge; while the boss was away, David Waboso ran the show.

By the early 1990s, David was focusing on railway engineering and developing his fascination with railway controls and systems. In 1995, his career took off when he won the prestigious UK Project Manager of the Year Award in recognition of his work re-

signalling the DLR. From then on, the projects and the challenges grew exponentially. He was a major player in the Jubilee Line extension, one of the largest construction projects in Europe, which opened to plaudits in time for the Millennium celebrations in London's Docklands. The project confirmed his reputation as a man who could produce results. Next was a stint with the Strategic Rail Authority and the delivery of an Automated Train Protection System to improve safety on the rail network in the wake of serious mainline crashes at Ladbroke Grove and Southall. His success on this project secured him the post of Executive Director, Technical at the SRA.

David Waboso took up his current role as Director of Engineering at London Underground in April 2005 and it fits perfectly with a man who relishes a challenge. Over the next decade, LU will upgrade the oldest underground rail system in the world and increase passenger capacity by a quarter. For his part, David Wasabo is determined to come up with the goods. As he explains, "...challenges don't deter engineers – they love to rise to them. Looking back through history, you can see that the best solutions and technology are developed in the face of significant challenge. When it comes to railways, it's the system that matters – getting the trains and the signalling, the stations, the passengers flows and the customer information to work. ...Engineering excellence is fantastic, but it's only when that makes a positive impact on the customers in a cost-effective way, that engineering really achieves its full potential".