

# Minutes - Board of Directors

**Version:** Approved  
**Meeting Date:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020  
**Location:** Virtual via Teams  
**Time:** 4.00pm

<b>Chair:</b>	Paul Olomolaiye (PO)	Chair of the Board
<b>Members:</b>	Airlie Fife (AFI)	Vice Chair
	Nicky McAllister (NM)	Director
	Su Coombes (SCO)	Director
	Suzanne Carrie (SCA)	Director
	Guy Keith-Miller (GKM)	Director
	William Liew (WL)	Director
	Adrian Coleman (ACO)	Director
	Deb Atack (DA)	Director
	Anthony Cherry (ACH)	Director
	Nusrat Arshad (NA)	Director
	Bethan Owen (BON)	Director
<b>Attendees:</b>	Steve Taylor (ST)	CEO
	Dan Nicholls (DN)	Executive Director of Education
	Sally Apps (SA)	Executive Principal
	Susie Weaver (SW)	Executive Principal
	Kate Richardson (KR)	Executive Principal
	Alison Fletcher (AFL)	Director of CLF Institute
	Ian Payne (IP)	HR Director
	Bryony Green (BG)	Director of Corporate Services
	Sarah Lovell (SL)	Finance Director
	Andy Ling (AL)	Head of IT
	Peter Price (PP)	Member
	Wendy Hellin (WH)	Clerk

## Minutes

Item	Description	Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions, Administration, Apologies</b>	
1.1	Introductions were made. PO thanked the Executive Team and colleagues for their hard work and for the thorough communications that continue to be received.	
1.2	The Academy and Governance Structure chart is included for reference at Flag A*.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest/Member &amp; Director Declarations</b>	
2.1	No verbal declarations were made.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings</b>	
3.1	Minutes of the meeting of 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2020 were approved.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
4.1	6.3.4 – AFL will update the board with any developments regarding utilising NQTs (who have not secured a first position) as volunteers or for tuition work within the federation	

	over the summer. <i>AFL reported that a questionnaire has been circulated to NQTs regarding roles that could be taken up until a first position is secured. AFL is waiting for confirmation from HR that this can be put in place.</i>	
4.2	8.1.4 – Ian Payne - The board requested that where grievance data is included in the HR report, information is also provided about the size of the cohort this relates to. IP will add this to future reports. <i>IP confirmed that this data will be included in the autumn report to board.</i>	
4.3	12.4.2 - Ian Payne - The 'people' strand of the strategy will be shared with the board when it has been finalised. <i>This item is covered later on the agenda.</i>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Agenda for Members Review Day</b>	
5.1.1	The proposed agenda for the members' review day is included at Flag C. <i>The board approved the agenda.</i>	
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Proposals for new Chairs of Academy Council</b>	
5.2.1	The following three appointments are proposed:  <b>Wallscourt Farm Academy – Michael Small [MS] from September 2020</b> ST reported that he and PO have met with MS who has been an Academy Councillor for a number of years and serves on both the WFA and EPA Academy Council. The Principal and EP are very supportive of this appointment.  <b>Uphill Village Academy – Shane Hawkings [SH] from the date of conversion, anticipated 1/10/20</b> SH is the current Vice-Chair at UVA and is also the Operations Manager at HMA. ST and PO confirmed they are meeting SH this week.  <b>Winterstoke Hundred Academy – Felicity Williamson [FW] from September 2020</b> ST confirmed that he and SCO are meeting with FW next week. FW has been working at North Somerset Council for some time and is currently a Chair at a non-CLF primary school. FW is aware of the origins of WHA and is very keen to take on this role.	
<b>5.2.2</b>	<b>Questions from the board</b>	
<b>5.2.3</b>	<b>How will any potential conflicts of interest be managed in terms of ensuring independent people take part in the panels that might be required?</b>	
5.2.4	There are employees that currently sit in a governance role in academies other than their own and conflicts are declared and managed appropriately.	
<b>5.2.5</b>	<b>Is the federation considering equalities when recruiting to these leadership volunteer roles?</b>	
5.2.6	There is a concerted effort at Academy Councillor level to increase diversity across Academy Councils and in doing this, the intention is to grow colleagues who can then take on leadership governance roles including Chairs of Academy Council.	
<b>5.2.7</b>	<b>ST requested that the proposal forms be circulated to the board after all meetings have taken place and that the board considers the appointments out of the meeting cycle to ensure the new Chairs are in place for September. <i>The board approved this proposal.</i></b>	<b>WH</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Governance training programme for 2020/21</b>	
5.3.1	AFL confirmed there are 3 main routes for training and development for Directors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nimble – new modules are being introduced for Members, Directors and Councillors that are a condensed version of full staff training;</li> <li>• Professional Development Platform – this will include some things specifically for governance, including two sessions that were featured during professional development week;</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live training via Teams for subjects such as safeguarding.</li> </ul>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Strategic Review Reports (Flag F)</b>	
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Area A – Education Airlie Fife</b>	
6.1.1	AFI reported that she had met with DN and had chaired the Executive Scrutiny meeting allowing her to review progress in this area. This year there is no national data to use as a comparison and there have been no external reviews (such as Ofsted). Until August there will be no information available on grades awarded or destinations. With this lack of impact data, it is difficult to fully review progress at this stage; it will be reviewed further at the Executive Scrutiny meeting in September.	
6.1.2	Progress to date is judged as excellent. The strategic plan is far reaching. Staff have had to work on additional tasks this year that came about due to the pandemic as well as ensuring progress is made against the existing strategic plan. Some of the actions around pedagogy have been hard to progress with fewer staff working in schools, but this is countered with much progress in the development of online learning.	
6.1.3	In terms of verification there is some good evidence of progress in place; this is marked as on track due to the lack of end of year data available. AFI suggested the template review document be reviewed by the Executive Team. Assurances are also required to ensure that all directors are making judgements in a similar manner.	
<b>6.1.4</b>	<b>Questions from the Board</b>	
<b>6.1.5</b>	<b>Under the previous iteration of the strategic plan there was a strand on resilience and employability. It has been absorbed into the education strand as the work should be embedded in the curriculum. How can the board track progress in this area through the review reports?</b>	
6.1.6	We can weave information on resilience and employability into the education strand of the report and will also review the template to ensure it is still fit for purpose. We will also consider the timing of the end of year reporting to factor in end of year data. We can ensure that the Executive Scrutiny panel review how the employability agenda has had impact over the year.	
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Area B – People Guy Keith-Miller</b>	
6.2.1	The strategic review of Area B is included at Flag F2.	
<b>6.2.2</b>	<b>Questions and comments from the Board</b>	
<b>6.2.3</b>	<b>The report reads as though the work completed with BAME staff and the creation of the Racial Equalities Steering Group was done as a result of the BLM agenda, whereas a lot of this work had already started; the report should reflect the good work already started.</b>	
<b>6.3</b>	<b>Area C – Infrastructure – Adrian Coleman</b>	
6.3.1	ACO reported that the plan was very ambitious; even for a year without Covid-19. The team have delivered an incredible amount despite the challenges relating to the pandemic. The work of the Health and Safety team has been excellent throughout. There are some actions that are important but are not quite finished and these will carry over. Overall the progress made has been good. The biggest success is that the team have delivered robust plans for the safe return of pupils back into schools.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Strategic Plan updates</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Overview</b>	
7.1.1	The plan for 2020/2021 is year 3 of the 5-year Empowering Learning strategic plan. The functional objectives are now included for each of the 6 teams: Finance, HR, Corporate Services, IT, CLF Institute and Education team. In terms of governance, each strategic area is overseen by a Director while each of the functional areas report in to one of the 3 Executive Groups. ST reported that the strategic plan is live and is still being reviewed. The final version will be available at the October board meeting.	

7.2	Each of the lead officers introduced areas A, B and C of the plan. The slides are available in Teams.	
<b>7.3</b>	<b>Questions from the Board</b>	
<b>7.3.1</b>	<b>How sensitive is the plan to any disruptions? Will it still be delivered if there is a second spike in the pandemic?</b>	
7.3.2	Another crisis would be a distraction; the plan details the ambition for a year in which there is no second spike. However, if there is another spike, the federation is much better prepared to respond to it. Business continuity plans have developed over the last 3 months.	
<b>7.3.3</b>	<b>In terms of strategic objectives regarding the size of the MAT, what opportunities do the board have to feed into some of that ambition?</b>	
7.3.4	There have been many discussions with the board on the size of the MAT in the past and the five year ambition is that by 2023 there will be 30 academies in the federation. Next year there will be 20 academies, so in terms of growth, we are on track to achieve that number. Each opportunity to grow is discussed with the board and the appropriate due diligence process takes place.	
<b>7.3.5</b>	<b>Is it strategic for the maths hub to be retained in the teaching school hub?</b>	
7.3.6	There will be 10 teaching school hubs in the South West region and in each application they need to demonstrate they are partnered with a subject specialism and all age phases; the maths hub will be key. The reform of the system will increase the importance of the maths hub.	
<b>7.3.7</b>	<b>There has been talk of the CLF being a specialist in some areas such as maths and SEND. Are we moving away from that?</b>	
7.3.8	We have some ambitions around expanding our alternative provision and that of special needs. We have tried to refrain from adding anything that is considered business as usual, or functional, to the plan.	
<b>7.3.9</b>	<b>With reference to the growth plan, are there assurances that the principles agreed in the growth paper of 2018 remain?</b>	
7.3.10	Regardless of the pandemic there has been some growth in North Somerset. There may be further consolidation this year but there is no intention to take on a further 10 academies at once unless a merge with another trust was considered that fits with the federation's values. The federation needs to remain nimble to respond to opportunities as they arise.	
<b>7.3.11</b>	<b>Almost every child is going to be disadvantaged when school recommences in September. How will you begin to fill the gaps?</b>	
7.3.12	The best way to address the gaps is to have a great curriculum; it will be one of the greatest challenges faced in education. A proportion of pupils will have thrived during lockdown but many will not. There are a good proportion of pupil in primary school at present so work has already started with some of the most disadvantaged pupils. The curriculum will be rich and diverse and there will be access to grief support and other mental health initiatives for both students and staff.	
7.3.13	ST confirmed that the strategic plan will be shared with Principals at this week's leadership forum meeting. ST asked that Directors contact him with any further challenge or comments concerning the plan.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Compliance Annual Report (Flag G).</b>	
8.1	BG confirmed that the Health and Sfaety Element of this report has been deferred to October due to the current workload of the Health and Safety team due to the pandemic.	
<b>8.2</b>	<b>Questions from the Board</b>	
<b>8.2.1</b>	<b>Is there any national data for exclusions? Have Principals responded to the gender imbalance and the number of PP pupils that have been excluded?</b>	

8.2.2	The information will be included in the October board report and will also include proportionality to cohort and local settings. Ethnicity categories will also be reviewed to ensure they are correct. FTE has reduced dramatically over the first three terms of the year and there is an ongoing focus on ensuring the federation is a trust with a low number of exclusions. Exclusions have been discussed with secondary heads to ensure that they are properly considered when students return to school in September so that those students who are struggling are not unfairly disadvantaged.	KR/DN
8.2.3	<b>Are there any lessons to be learned from the SARs that have been handled over the past three years, in terms of the way data is recorded or any issues that have been identified?</b>	
8.2.4	A number of lessons have been learned and our process for responding to requests has developed. Discussions have taken place with Principals about what they write and the appropriateness of the language used, particularly in emails. CPOMs has made some of the data collation easier. Staff have been trained on how to recognise a request and how to deal with it. There is now additional capacity in the team to respond to these.	
<b>9</b>	<b>EDI</b>	
9.1	The work of the Racial Equalities Steering Group (RESG) was covered in part at item 6.2. The EDI strategy is far reaching and goes beyond the work of that group. Work in this area was in progress already, but has come into sharper focus in response to Black Lives Matter. The work of the RESG (and its impact) will be monitored across the year and the learning from that will be used to inform the agenda for broader protected characteristics. The group plays an advisory role and supports two way communication. There will be work that needs to take place that the steering group will not do – such as looking at incident reporting mechanisms for staff and students. The group will provide a report to board at the October board meeting.	SW/SA
9.2	<b>Questions from the Board</b>	
9.2.1	<b>How are you measuring success going forward in relation to the cultural change as well as staff knowledge and understanding?</b>	
9.2.2	Once the sub groups of the RESG have been refined, the next step will be to consider success criteria and how this is linked to the broader strategic plan.	
9.2.3	<b>How long is it likely to be before the RESG is merged to a broader EDI strategic committee that considers all protected characteristics?</b>	
9.2.4	We are already looking at other aspects of the EDI agenda and there are networks set up such as the LGBTQ+ network. The RESG will act as a blueprint for future steering groups but not at the expense of work already taking place across the federation for other protected characteristics.	
9.2.5	<b>There is a lack of representation at present across many levels of governance; how will you take the strategic aspirations and make them deliverable and measurable?</b>	
9.2.6	Within the RESG report to Board in October, we will ensure there is a section on actions and impact.	SW/SA
<b>10</b>	<b>Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) policy</b>	
10.1	SW reported that AFL and SCO were involved in the production of this policy alongside a team of people. It has been developed due to a change in legislation and is a 3 – 19 policy. Staff training is underway and a consultation will take place at the start of the academic year. It is proposed that the Board approve this policy so that it is ready to come into effect from September.	
10.2	<b>Questions from the Board</b>	
10.2.1	<b>Can you confirm that the authors of the policy read the Stonewall guide on enacting this policy? The policy hints at talking about same sex relationships but it is not explicit. The policy also references the age to introduce this topic at 7 years old; it could be earlier. The first interaction appears to be about bullying; which is a negative introduction to the topic.</b>	

10.2.2	The authors have worked with the Stonewall guide. Same sex families is a topic introduced at reception and is supplemented with texts. We could make that more explicit in the policy.	
<b>10.2.3</b>	<b>Will withdrawal from parents be monitored and will this be compared across schools?</b>	
10.2.4	Yes. There is a smaller proportion of the curriculum that families can choose to withdraw from but we will monitor it.	
<b>10.2.5</b>	<b>Homophobic bullying is specifically referenced in the policy; other types should also be specified. The policy refers throughout to Jigsaw and then there is a small paragraph around not using Jigsaw; this is confusing and could be reviewed.</b>	
10.2.6	Not all secondary academies have purchased Jigsaw, hence the paragraph. We will ensure the language is changed throughout to ensure it is clear that some academies are not using it.	
<b>10.2.7</b>	<b>The policy does not do justice to the work the trust has already done; it reads as though the work was reactionary rather than already being underway. The policy should be broader to show the wholeness of the strategy including online safety etc.</b>	
10.2.8	We will consider that feedback in our final review.	
<b>10.2.9</b>	<b>How will safeguarding, in particular around keeping secrets, be covered with very young children?</b>	
10.2.10	It comes through the national curriculum from the early years up and brings in online safety. We can be more specific in the policy about those links.	
10.3	The policy will be reviewed to consider feedback provided and a final version will be circulated to the board for approval.	<b>SW</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
11.1	The CLF Meeting schedule 2020/21 has been issued.	
11.2	The draft programme for the CLF Governance Results Review is included at Flag I.	
11.3	ST reported that he will be writing to the board to communicate the intentions for results day for both GCSE and A level.	
11.4	PO thanked the Executive Team for their hard work in continuing to run the academies and in their professional approach to responding to the pandemic. PO wished all colleagues and Directors a relaxing summer break. ST thanked Directors and all governance colleagues whose support is very much appreciated.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Close of Meeting</b>	
12.1	The next meeting takes place on 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2020.	
12.2	The meeting closed at 18.45hrs.	