

Minutes - Board of Directors

Version: Approved
Meeting Date: Thursday 1 February 2024
Location: Teams
Time: 4.00pm

Chair:	Paul Olomolaiye (PO)	Chair of the Board (member and Director)
Trustees:	Rachel Mortlock (RM)	Vice Chair of the Board
	Bryony French (BF)	Director
	Suzanne Carrie (SC)	Director
	Tim Spratt (TS)	Director
	Adrian Coleman (ACO)	Director
	Yvonne Beach (YB)	Director
	Orville Lynch (OL)	Director
	Mark Davies (MD)	Director
	Zarah Morwood (ZM)	Director
Attendees:	Steve Taylor (ST)	CEO
	Dan Nicholls (DN)	Executive Director of Education, Deputy CEO
	Sally Apps (SA)	Education Director
	Susie Weaver (SW)	Education Director
	Kate Richardson (KR)	Education Director
	Alison Fletcher (AFL)	Director of CLF Institute
	Rachel Mylrea (RM)	Director of HR
	Andy Ling (AL)	IT Director
	Martin Thomas (MT)	Director of Estates and Facilities
	Liz Tincknell (LT)	Head of Governance
	Sarah Lovell (SL)	Chief Operating Officer
	Wendy Hellin (WH)	Clerk
Apologies:	Ashley Milum (AM)	Director

Matters Arising

Action date and no	Relates to item no	Action	Owner	Update
12.10.23 01	7.3.14	SW to update the board on destinations data at the June board meeting.	SW	Exec and Trust CEE Lead working with partners to capture destinations data. An update will be provided in June as per the action.
14.12.23 01	2.2	SL will amend the risk register to make clear the date that each risk was last reviewed, even where there is no change to the level of risk or mitigation.	SL	Action complete.
14.12.23 02	7.4.4	AFL to share diversity data for recruitment to the SCITT programme at the summer board meeting.	AFL	Current SCITT cohort 15% 'not White British'. Fuller picture can be shared during the meeting. Action complete.

14.12.23 03	9.4.4	SL to update page 6 of the Reserves Policy to ensure it reads correctly.	SL	Action complete.
14.12.23 04	10.4.3	RMY will provide the board with an indication of teacher turnover at the next meeting.	RMY	Teacher turnover at December was about 3%. 31 permanent teachers left at the end of the year. This compares to a similar level of turnover at this point last year. Highest turnover was at Monkton Wood at almost 10% (7 teachers) and Winterstoke Hundred almost 13% (6 teachers). Action complete
14.12.23 05	11.4.1	LT to provide an update of the External Review of Governance at the next board meeting.	LT	The External Review Report has been received. LT, SL and DN have met and reviewed. LT will produce a table of recommended next steps for consideration. Due to limited capacity within the team, this piece of work is still ongoing.

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions, Administration, Apologies	
1.1	PO welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Apologies are recorded above.	
2	Declarations of Interest/Member & Director Declarations	
2.1	No verbal declarations were made.	
3	Minutes of Previous Meetings	
3.1	Minutes of the meeting of 14 December 2023 were approved.	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	The action table has been updated above.	
5	Strategic and Educational Developments	
5.1	a) CEO Briefing and Updates	
5.1.1	ST provided an overview of the CLF as of 1 February 2023 compared to 1 February 2024. The trust has grown from 20 to 35 academies with 3000 employees, 17,500 pupils and approximately 300 governance volunteers.	
5.1.2	Members of the Executive Team visited four of the new primary academies today (Woodlands, Wicklea, Waycroft and Queen Margaret) to welcome them to the trust, and to provide staff with their rainbow lanyards. The first part of the day was spent meeting the pupil council at Waycroft, and then some time was spent with Principals, staff, and pupils across the schools. It was an excellent day where relationships were strengthened. PO said the board recognised all the hard work involved in securing a smooth transition into the trust for all schools that have recently joined the trust. ST advised that feedback from the team at Queen Margaret was that they had felt very well supported by HR colleagues throughout the transition phase.	
5.2	b) CLF Institute updates - AFL	
5.2.1	The Boolean Maths Hub held its annual maths conference at Taunton Racecourse this week, with over 150 participants. Separately, the Director General for Schools visited Summerhill Academy, to understand more about a project linking maths and oracy before going on to visit the Maths Hub at the CLF Institute. In addition, the Maths Hub Forum has taken place over the last couple of days and included DfE colleagues. All of these were high profile events and were very successful.	
5.2.2	In terms of recruitment for SCITT, there has been double the numbers of applications this year, versus the same time period last year. This indicates that recruitment will be stronger for next September. The Five Counties SCITT has been extended to Priory Learning Trust and two other potential satellite provisions are in the pipeline. This will increase the overall	

	number of trainees in the system that can go on to fill future teacher vacancies. There is more diversity in both the applications and participants in the SCITT cohort than any other local or regional provider and compare fairly well nationally too.	
5.2.3	Questions from trustees	
5.2.4	What are we doing that others are not doing? Why are we so successful in terms of recruitment?	
5.2.5	The Teaching Schools Hub remit this year has been extended to include KPIs and a responsibility around trying to increase recruitment to all providers in the area. There is significantly more activity around local recruitment and the promotion of teacher training, including trying to identify untapped pools of applicants such as alumni that have gone away to university and come back home to Bristol to live. We are also exploring internships and tutoring and being swift about the turnaround from application, to interview, to offer. We open up the CLF Institute on a Friday when the trainees are in, so that visitors can see them in action and we promote that on the national Get Into Teaching website.	
5.2.6	Why do we not also start teacher training in January?	
5.2.7	We are in an advisory group that is currently discussing this as an option and it is certainly something we will explore further. We would like to have our expected Ofsted inspection first and launch in September under the new ITT criteria, and then we can look at staggered starts.	
5.3	Estates and Projects - MT	
5.3.1	The £31m new build at Winterstoke Hundred, Locking Parklands, opened in January. This has been a 2-year project in collaboration with Kier and North Somerset LA and is the first fully carbon neutral school in the country.	
5.3.2	In December, the trust began discussions with South Gloucestershire Council to explore the potential of developing the site at King's Oak Academy through a rebuild project, funding partially by the sale of some of the land on that site. The school is currently in a poor condition requiring significant investment. The recent condition survey detailed 402 defects with an estimated repair cost of between £2m - £3m. There is currently a plan to build some 3000 new homes in the area and the potential for KOA to be the school for those new estates. The trust has linked with LocatED who will do a piece of work to identify and assess any opportunities for such a development to take place.	
5.3.3	The Environment sub-strategy was relaunched in the autumn. Processes required to start to become net zero are being considered. It is a three-step approach including energy efficiency, a focus on change and the use of data to inform schools. The decarbonisation report has been received and is helpful in identifying the schools with the largest emissions. In 2022/23 schools were allocated a share of £500m to spend on energy efficiency. The trust received £500k and 8 projects have been identified across the trust as suitable investments, that will provide a reduction of 55 tonnes. Colleagues have been developing environmental data dashboards for energy, paper, waste reduction and recycling and this information is now published on pupil friendly posters around the academies. The trust is working with the Eco Committee to achieve Green Flag awards. The first Eco Conference has been planned for 28 June, with 5 children taking part from each academy.	
5.4	Special and Alternative Provisions - SA	
5.4.1	The trust now has a group of five special and alternative provisions: 3 special schools and 2 alternative provisions. Live conversations are ongoing across different local authorities around the various commissioning agreements in place; it is a challenging space to work in. There is not a lot of funding for SEND but a high level of need. The recent addition of further special and alternative provisions allows conversations to take place around alignment of processes and the opportunities that being part of a trust brings. The process of the ARM and ARVs has helped, with Principals working closely together. There are now operational Academy Councils in all settings.	

5.4.2	Lime Hills Academy is likely to have Ofsted next year. Discussions are underway about a temporary split-site school until the planned new site is built and open.	
5.5	Induction of new Somerset primary academies - KR	
5.5.1	The new joining Somerset primaries have now been part of the trust for a month. A deep piece of work was completed from due diligence to induction. A group Academy Review Meeting took place in January to meet all the new primary Principals and further introduce them to the trust's systems and networks. The same piece of work has taken place for Bristol and the same will be done for Queen Margeret Academy. From September onwards it is hoped all new joining schools will be fully integrated.	
5.6	Monkton Wood Academy - SA	
5.6.1	Monkton Wood Academy (MWA) had been working with the trust over a longer period of time before joining. In terms of education and engagement, there is very positive progress. Staff are very pleased to be involved in the CLF conference and FNN. There is good connectivity between subject leaders and their counterparts across the trust and there is lots of further induction and alignment going on. It is recognised that MWA is an inadequate school, in special measures, and is not yet ready for everything the trust has to offer. As such the support offered, and the expectation of alignment, will be paced appropriately so as not to overwhelm staff and leaders. The Academy Council is coming together and met this week. The focus is now to secure a Chair. There is some ongoing IT work and some longer-term pieces of health and safety, attendance and safeguarding to complete.	
5.7	Tewkesbury Academy - DN	
5.7.1	The ongoing induction for Tewkesbury Academy continues, with lots of curriculum alignment; KS3 is now fully aligned and parts of KS4 are also moving in line. This helps with resourcing, medium-term planning and getting involved in assessment work. An Academy Review Visit took place last week and exemplified how many different leaders are working in the academy and across the trust. The safeguarding incident in July was challenging for the school and continues to play out. The school is now fully part of the trust with lots of relationships built. Staff are attending all collaborative networks.	
5.8	Professional Services - SL	
5.8.1	The professional services teams have been working during due diligence, transition, and now during induction to consider risk and prioritisation and the implementation timeline for induction. Support continues to be allocated in relation to where schools are in their journey. Capacity and structures of the central team continue to be reviewed and built on where needed to ensure there is appropriate capacity to support all new and existing academies and to operate effectively.	
5.9	Education Sector - ST	
5.9.1	ST reported that Hannah Woodhouse has left her role as DfE Regional Director and is now Director of Children's Services for Bristol. Lucy Livings replaces her in an interim role as Regional Director.	
5.9.2	The education landscape remains busy with trusts growing and with mergers. Last week ST was asked to speak at the SW MAT Leaders meeting around growth and clusters.	
5.10	IT - AL	
5.10.1	AL shared the IT timetable from now up until summer. The aim is to get schools to the same system as quickly as possible. There are 2 key phases: data migration, which includes moving data from legacy systems to CLF systems and ensuring all staff have a CLF email account; and network builds to ensure all systems and devices in schools have CLF logos and logins to ensure all students get the same CLF experience wherever they are based.	
5.10.2	Between Christmas and the February half term, the team is completing data migration for the Somerset schools. Network builds for Queen Margaret Academy and Castle Primary Academy	

	will take place during half term. The five new Bristol primary academies will be rebuilt during the Easter break, and the remaining Somerset schools will be completed over the summer.	
5.10.3	Questions from trustees	
5.10.4	How do you ensure that you prioritise disadvantaged students?	
5.10.5	The whole team is bought into supporting disadvantage students. We talk about it a lot, and it is written into the IT handbook. We consider disadvantage when we talk about tickets, and we prioritise jobs that will impact on disadvantaged students. We also see that enacted when we go into new schools and can see the IT technicians looking at kit and recognising where it is not good enough. They then work across the trust and use levers to improve provision.	
5.10.6	If you take the IT systems, at BMA for instance, and compare the systems of schools that have come on board since October, can you make a comparison?	
5.10.7	In terms of infrastructure, such as getting on the internet, filtering etc, it will largely be the same as this was work that was completed as part of the transition. In terms of equipment and devices, the new joiners are a bit behind. Some of those new schools have not invested in the same way, over time.	
5.10.8	Has anything been recognised from the incoming schools that can be learned from and used across the trust?	
5.10.9	We look for good practice when schools are coming in and throughout the period of transition and induction. We have picked up on the use of some integration systems that we are going to explore further and if better we will have a discussion about using that further across the trust.	
5.11	Capacity and Growth - RM	
5.11.1	The Executive Team meeting took place to discuss design principles from the Executive level down and this has resulted in the creation of Education Directors. Executive Principals Tony Searle and Jon Jones have been joined by a new appointment in Tracy French, who joins from Waycroft Academy Trust as a primary Executive Principal. Further central structures needed to expand and as such several departments in the professional services team have grown. For HR, capacity was required early on ahead of some of the recent growth due to the transfer of staff into the trust, recruitment, and the increased amount of processing and casework.	
5.11.2	The structure of the leadership and school improvement model also continues to be reviewed. The idea of a Principal leading their academy remains; we do not have the permanent role of Head of School. The role of Senior Principal has been reviewed and discussions continue around the grading and size of roles within the professional services teams.	
5.12	Rise in Cases of Measles - MT	
5.12.1	Over the last few weeks awareness has been raised across schools and model letters from North Somerset public health have been sent to parents. Information and resource links have been sent to academies around how to manage infections in school. At present there is just one recognised case in the South West and that case is not in any of the five local authorities in which the trust operates. MT has been talking to UK Health about using academy sites as pop-up vaccination centres but as yet there has been no response.	
5.13	Ofsted	
5.13.1	The new Ofsted Chief Inspector is Sir Martyn Oliver. There are some helpful changes recommended, including making training materials more available and more openness. Inspectors have had mental health awareness training and have embarked on a big listen in Bristol and a range of other locations. The Ofsted framework was updated on 19 January, with an emphasis on supporting leaders and of an awareness of the emotional impact that a judgement has. A further change is that trust inspections may take place.	
5.13.2	DN reported that there have been four Ofsted inspections between September and December 2023. BPA is good, BA is good, WHA is good and HPA continues to be good following an	

	ungraded inspection. Academies due to be inspected next are WCA, KOA, MPA, TA, HVA as well as the CLF SCITT.	
5.13.3	DN shared the MAT league tables for the South West. The CLF is about average within the table, sitting at 23rd out of 62 trusts; with DSSB removed (which should be the case) it would be above average. For the performance of disadvantaged learners, the trust is 18 th out of 62 trusts. The CLF does well for disadvantaged considering attainment on entry is lower.	
5.13.4	Questions from trustees	
5.13.5	It is interesting to see where the trust is, compared to others. What is the takeaway from this?	
5.13.6	We want to improve the provision for the long term and build and create a trust that holds the performance of schools in a good space for the long term. There is some evidence of the CLF outperforming the norm. It is an indicator for us; we know quite a lot about other trusts and models so can learn from them. However, no trust is particularly similar to the CLF; it is a useful measure of the trust compared to others but provides a limited measure of the trust's own performance.	
5.13.7	In terms of progress, where in the table did the CLF sit last year?	
5.13.8	It was in a similar place. Overall disadvantaged progress dropped marginally. Year on year it is difficult to compare the tables accurately as the trusts within the table change, however, the CLF may have been 2 or 3 places higher this year, than last.	
5.14	Letter from Chairs of Academy Council	
5.14.1	PO reported that he had received a letter from Nicky McAllister (NM) on behalf of the Chairs of Academy Council concerning the responsibility of Inclusion Officers from the LA to attend permanent exclusion panels, the high number of permanent exclusions and the lack of LA support provided to schools for pupils with complex needs. PO suggested that he writes, on behalf of the board, to thank NM for escalating the matter to the board and to confirm it will be discussed at the next full board meeting in March. The board agreed with this approach. ACTION: PO to acknowledge the letter received from NM in relation to permanent exclusions. ACTION: Letter from NM on behalf of COAC in relation to permanent exclusions will be added to the March full board meeting agenda.	PO LT WH
5.15	HWA	
5.15.1	DN confirmed that Kier Starmer, MP and Damien Egan had visited HWA and met the Student Council.	
5.16	BPA – notification of unexpected child death	
5.16.1	ST and SW provided a confidential update concerning the unexpected death of a child that attended BPA. Airlie Fife, member of the CLF and interim link for safeguarding has been informed. SW is co-ordinating arrangements to understand more of what has happened. The death occurred outside of the academy. KR is supporting leaders, staff and pupils at the academy, as well as the family concerned.	
8	Finance and Operations	
8.1	Reserves Request	
8.1.1	SL reported that the current reserves position as at the end of December 2023 is a forecast £9.3m by the financial year end. Approval is sought from the board, for the spend from reserves for the following projects, as detailed in Flag C, Reserves Request: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitech Studio School Staffing Capacity Amount Requested: £120,000, one year trial. • Winterstoke Hundred Academy Staffing Capacity Amount Requested: £250,000 • Broad oak Carpet Replacement Amount Requested: £40,000 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice 21 Amount Requested: £70,000 • General Use Amount Requested: £500,000 <p>The reserves projects listed above total £980k and would reduce the CLF's reserves to an estimated £8.3m by the end of the 2023/24 financial year.</p>	
8.1.2	Questions from trustees	
8.1.3	The first couple of requests involve hiring additional people. Given the high level of agency staff being used, how confident are you that you will find the right people to undertake these roles?	
8.1.4	They are leadership and teaching roles, as well as support staff roles and we have had some recent success in recruiting to similar roles so we are reasonably confident.	
8.1.5	In coming down to the new level of reserves, of £8.3m, what does that mean in terms of percentages?	
8.1.6	It would be just under 6%.	
8.1.7	What size does a bid for reserves need to be in order to require approval by the board?	
8.1.8	ST and SL can approve spends of up to £250k. PO and BF can approve spends up to £500k. As these requests are over £500k when aggregated, full board approval is required.	
8.1.9	What is the contractual basis of the posts you hope to recruit to? Will it be a recurrent expenditure?	
8.1.10	The aim would be that if identified as required permanently, it would become part of the ongoing budget for next year.	
8.1.11	Decision: The board approved the proposed reserves spend, as detailed at 8.1.1 and in Flag C.	
8.2	Estates – Lime Hills Academy - Temporary location for 2024/25 academic year	
8.2.1	LHA is moving into its second year of operation. A permanent new location is planned but will not be delivered until September 2025. The LA is in full support and will fund the works, including conversion back to secondary provision for WHA at the end of the project.	
8.2.1	Trustees are requested to consider and approve the temporary move of LHA secondary pupils to WHA BF and the increase to 54 pupils across WHA BF and Nailsea sites, as detailed in Flag D.	
8.2.2	Questions from trustees	
8.2.3	How do we ensure the quality of provision, especially if inspected by Ofsted?	
8.2.4	There is an appetite from the LA to fund places. The way places are commissioned for special schools is different to that for alternative provisions. The commitment to funding is there; the unknown part is the level of funding. That is not guaranteed. In terms of the split site, the trust does have experience of Ofsted inspecting our provisions over multiple sites and we know how to make that work well. The solution proposed is preferable to having a greater number of students on the current site.	
8.2.5	Decision: The board approved the proposal for the temporary move of LHA secondary pupils to WHA BF and the increase to 54 pupils across WHA BF and Nailsea sites.	
8.3	Estates - Bristol Metropolitan Academy -	
8.3.1	As detailed in Flag D, it is proposed that the CLF disposes of land at Bristol Metropolitan Academy and acquire land from the adjacent local authority managed special school – Briarwood School.	
8.3.2	Questions from trustees	
8.2.3	Thinking ahead to the future, what is the likelihood of getting planning permission, if the school should choose to expand at any point in the future? Would the proposed land swop impede this?	

8.2.4	BMA has already expanded in light of the pupil bulge. With the Temple Quarter school build, it is unlikely that there will be need for further growth.	
8.2.5	<u>Decision</u> – the board approved the proposal for the swap of land as proposed in Flag D.	
8.4	Admissions Policies	
8.4.1	LT requested that the board approve the template	
8.4.2	<u>Decision:</u> The board approved the NS Admissions Policy template.	
8.4.3	LT requested that the board approve the admissions policy for Begbrook Primary Academy. A consultation has taken place with no feedback received.	
8.4.4	<u>Decision:</u> The board approved the BPA Admissions Policy.	
9	Any Other Business	
9.1	No further business was reported.	
9.2	The meeting closed at 6.08pm.	

Actions to take forward

Action date and no	Relates to item no	Action	Owner	Update
12.10.23 01	7.3.14	SW to update the board on destinations data at the June board meeting.	SW	Exec and Trust CEE Lead working with partners to capture destinations data. An update will be provided in June as per the action.
14.12.23 05	11.4.1	LT to provide an update of the External Review of Governance at the next board meeting.	LT	The External Review Report has been received. LT, SL and DN have met and reviewed. LT will produce a table of recommended next steps for consideration. Due to limited capacity within the team, this piece of work is still ongoing.
01.02.24 01	5.14.1	PO to acknowledge the letter received from NM in relation to permanent exclusions.	PO	
01.02.24 02	5.14.1	Letter from NM on behalf of COAC in relation to permanent exclusions will be added to the March full board meeting agenda.	LT WH	