

Minutes - Board of Directors

Version: Approved
Meeting Date: Thursday 3rd February 2022
Location: Microsoft Teams
Time: 4.00pm

Chair:	Paul Olomolaiye (PO)	Chair of the Board
Members:	Bethan Owen (BON)	Vice Chair of the Board
	Mark Davies (MD)	Director
	Nicky McAllister (NM)	Director
	Adrian Coleman (ACO)	Director
	Su Coombes (SCO)	Director
	Bryony French (BF) [part]	Director
	Debbie Attack (DA)	Director
	Nusrat Arshad (NA)	Director
	Suzanne Carrie (SCA)	Director
	Rachel Mortlock (RM)	Director
	Anthony Cherry (ACH)	Director
Attendees:	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
	Rachel Mylrea (RM)	HR Director
	Bryony Green (BG)	Director of Corporate Services
	Sarah Lovell (SL)	Chief Operating Officer
	Andy Ling (AL)	Director of IT
	Gareth Jones (GJ) [part]	Member
	Wendy Hellin (WH)	Clerk
Apologies:	Alison Fletcher (AFL)	Director of CLF Institute

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions, Administration, Apologies	
1.1	PO welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Rachel Mylrea, HR Director, to her first board meeting.	
2	Declarations of Interest/Member & Director Declarations	
2.1	None	
3	Minutes of Previous Meetings	
3.1	Minutes of the meeting of 9 December 2021 were approved.	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	4.3 BG and NA to discuss partial delegations outside the board meeting. BG reported that NA has confirmed she does not wish to continue to have this delegation. BG has approached	

	other Directors looking to secure one further Director for a delegation for H & S and will report to Board when this is fulfilled.	
4.2	5.1.2 EPs to gather feedback on the scrutiny meetings from Principals that have attended. DN reported that some feedback has been collated. This item is ongoing.	
4.3	5.3 AFL will provide a breakdown of recruitment including ethnic minority targets for leadership programmes in the next report CLF Institute Report to board. This item will be included at the next meeting.	AFL
5	Strategic and Educational Developments – CEO Updates with questions from the board	
5.1	Support for King Solomon IBS - ST	
5.1.1	Following an approach from the DfE, Lis Jolley is now supporting an inadequate school in Birmingham. In addition, Alison Fletcher is working from the school to provide additional support. The DfE is in the process of re-brokering the school to a new trust (Falcon) and the CLF will likely support until the end of this academic year.	
5.2	Closures due to Covid, and how schools are managing – DN/SW/SA	
5.2.1	National Covid rates have remained high and there has been some increase this week. SV and DSSB have both been able to remain fully open. With the larger secondary schools, the tipping point varies according to whether the absences are largely for teaching staff or professional services staff. Some pragmatic decisions have to be made where teaching staff absences are high. Last week there were 3 secondary year groups out across the trust. It is rare that a year group is at home for more than a day or two.	
5.2.2	The picture across primary academies is not dissimilar; with some closures but also some creative solutions to keep classrooms open and children safe in school, and also where staff need to isolate at home but are well and able to teach online.	
5.2.3	It is extremely hard to secure supply staff at present, due to the high demand for cover across the region.	
	Questions from the board	
5.2.4	Is the trust doing any work across other MATs or local schools to share teaching resources to keep children in schools?	
5.2.5	Not beyond the trust. Within the trust we share resources where we can but at present all schools are short staffed to some extent and so need to rely on supply staff to fill those gaps. We do talk to other MATs who are generally in the same position as us.	
5.2.6	If the academy safeguarding teams are hit by staff shortages, does this put extra pressure on the Executive Team to provide support to schools?	
5.2.7	Where classes or year groups are closed we still invite vulnerable students into school. Over the last few years, we have invested heavily in ensuring all leadership teams are qualified in safeguarding to enable them to make decisions. The safeguarding teams within and across the trust draw on each other. If teams are diminished we are confident that the systems and processes are in place that would mean the academy could draw on expertise from the leadership team and from the central team. For instance, at CAB the current Principal has worked hard to increase the capacity in the safeguarding team and there are now between 12 to 16 trained members of staff, whereas before there were only 3.	
5.3	Plans for Raising Aspirations	
5.3.1	The Raising Aspirations event is part of the careers strategy across the trust aimed at the Year 9 cohort. Previous to Covid it was held at UWE with over 1000 attendees. This year it will take place virtually with a range of events and activities planned across the day, locally in each academy. There are 2 key-note speeches planned, including one from Junior Saunders. There will be an employability zone, education zone and further activities.	
	Questions from the board	
5.3.2	I haven't heard you mention our sponsors. Are you able to invite UWE to join on the day?	
5.3.3	Yes, we will link with UWE and Rolls Royce.	SW

5.4	Media Interest in Mental Health and Wellbeing in schools - KR	
5.4.1	Children's' mental health week takes place next week and there has been some media attention from Schools West and TV West Country about what we are doing across the trust to support this agenda. The mental health network has been talking about the theme of 'growing'. Various activities, assemblies and themed resources are planned.	
5.5	Attendance	
5.5.1	Attendance data will be shared in depth at the next report to board. The CLF Attendance Policy was approved at the December board meeting and is being rolled out carefully. We have held a briefing and some drop-in sessions to help staff familiarise themselves with the content.	
5.6	Media Interest in the 'Levelling up' agenda in education	
5.6.1	Following the release of the White Paper, SA has done an interview for television about disadvantaged student. It is not yet known if there will be any additional resource for the disadvantaged agenda and if so, where it will come from.	
5.7	Recovery and Trauma - SA	
5.7.1	SA reported that this week has seen Snowdon Village celebrating being awarded the trauma informed school status and they were joined by Alison Hurley. The recent FNN highlighted that colleagues from Snowdon Village have so much to offer on the subject of trauma. The trust has seen more of the effect of trauma since lockdown; some students have experienced some delay in those effects showing themselves. This has led to a rise in safeguarding concerns as well as some escalated behaviours.	
5.8	RAL developments ahead of upcoming mocks / PPEs - DN	
5.8.1	DN reported that it is very likely that external exams and assessments will take place across all year groups this year. On 7 February the exam boards will pre-release some information around the content of the higher tariff questions to assist students in their revision planning.	
5.8.2	Year 6 mocks have recently taken place as has a performance review of trust wide data. The Year 11 and Year 13 mocks are due to take place next and will mimic the summer exams. Schools are obliged to collate evidence to use in the TAG process just in case there is a need to revert to this method of assessment.	
	Questions from the board	
5.8.3	Given the attendance data, particularly of disadvantaged groups, is there any early indication of the expected impact of that on attainment?	
5.8.4	The trust wide strategy is to focus on disadvantaged students even over others, so we consider the performance of this cohort of students first. The gap has widened due to the pandemic and we are concerned about the performance of PP students and have a lot of support planned ahead of the summer; the spirit of equity is definitely there.	
5.8.5	Students have not had exams in 2 years and now have mocks. How are you supporting students with this?	
5.8.6	In terms of assessments, it has been a normal academic year where students have completed all planned assessments and mocks.	
5.9	Ofsted updates	
5.9.1	ST shared a letter received from Hannah Woodhouse congratulating Lis Jolley and colleagues on the Ofsted outcome at DSSB.	
5.9.2	WFA had a Section 8 visit before Christmas and the report has been shared; the middle letter in the good category was received. It is understood that it is very difficult to get the upper letter.	
5.9.3	The draft report for the FVA inspection has been received. The full report will be shared with the board once published.	
	Questions from the board	
5.9.4	Is it likely that this would lead to a MATSE (Multi-Academy Trust Summary Evaluation)?	

5.9.5	No, we have had a conversation with our link Senior HMI who has confirmed it is not part of a MATSE.	
5.10	Upcoming recruitment to key roles	
5.10.1	RM provided the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel McGilloway has been appointed to BA and will take up role at Easter; • Adverts have been placed for a Principal at WFA and a Deputy Director of the CLF Institute; • Further adverts are being prepared for 4 VP posts and a couple of AP posts. 	
	Questions from the board	
5.10.2	How are we accelerating the EDI agenda through recruitment to ensure we get a more diverse range of applications coming through? Where we are recruiting key roles such as Principals, do we advertise nationally?	
5.10.3	Both in the HR team and the Communications Team are looking at where we advertise and where we can promote the roles better. We are also looking to ensure we make good use of our social media channels and on our website landing pages. All adverts that go into ETeach are nationally advertised.	
5.10.4	Are we achieving our diversity targets?	
5.10.5	I need to get the data and look at the recruitment statistics to check that. We have started a dashboard and will add that to the next education paper to the board. ST reported that the leadership shadowing that took place last year has been extended. This year there will be 5 or 6 colleagues on that programme.	RM
5.11	DfE computers and donations update	
5.11.1	AL provided an update on the tracking of status and location of devices across the trust. There had been some inconsistencies in information due to the varying methods of tracking in each academy. There is now a bespoke application all teams must use to track devices. There are 1953 devices on the log. Of these, around 1100 are assigned to pupils and 220 have been allocated to academies for use during the school day. There are 63 devices recorded as broken and a further 45 that are lost. A further 200 devices are on standby across academies to support students with online learning should classes or year groups become disrupted due to Covid.	
5.11.2	CLF Net is the network that connects the academies together and provides access to the internet. A project is underway to upgrade this in all academies to increase the connection speed. There are currently 13 on the new network, 3 pending and a further 4 due to be completed by September.	
5.12	Discussion with ministers re White Paper	
5.12.1	AL advised that he and ST met with the Minister for Schools, Robin Walker recently, who had organised a round table to discuss the effective use of digital technology in schools, in order that he could better understand the opportunities and challenges in the area. The discussion included how the government can support schools, the history of education technology, the opportunities presented by the pandemic, the end of life for Windows 11, the greater autonomy for MATs to invest in funding in digital transformation, the availability of laptops and devices and the impact on disadvantaged students. The challenges of cyber security for smaller trusts was discussed, as well as the fact that larger trusts are at more risk of being targeted.	
5.12.2	ST reported that he and SL had met with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Schools System, Baroness Barran, at an event with representatives from 10 other MATs present. We were requested to provide, in advance of the meeting, an analysis of central spending and where the trust had invested over time with the aim of understanding the characteristics of what made a MAT strong. This will be used to inform a future white paper. They were unable to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data collected as all	

	MATs take a different approach, however they identified that there are four key pillars to a strong MAT: education, governance and finance, workforce and added value.	
5.13	Update on Key Projects	
5.13.1	<p>BG provided updates on 3 key projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHA Satellite site – contractors are now on site. The turf cutting ceremony took place last week attended by ST and ACH. • Tower Road – this project remains on pause. BG has been in contact with the DfE and South Glos LA and is currently waiting for a proposal regarding playing field land. Further data has been provided to the department partly due to the timing and complexity of the development of the site and also to test that the expected number of pupils requiring a place was still as expected. • KOA Canteen – this project is progressing, and a contractor is about to be appointed. <p>In addition, there are 2 pieces of work progressing at EPA and BPA where the academies have taken a Salix loan to complete some energy saving measures.</p>	
	Questions from the board	
5.13.2	Is there any update on the fire station proposal for Post 16?	
5.13.3	It remains the ambition of the trust and talks with the Council to secure further funding are ongoing.	
5.14	Finance Update and Pupil numbers for 2022	
5.14.1	<p>SL advised that the key focus areas for the finance team are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management accounts for period 5 are being produced; the trust is on track to meet the forecast budget; • Progressing the procurement of the new finance system; • Starting the budget setting process for 2022-2023. 	
5.14.2	<p>Income</p> <p>SL shared the per pupil funding figures for each of the Local Authorities. Given the projected pupil numbers, the pupil funding and the grant funding for increases to NI and utilities, this will result in increased income for next year.</p>	
5.14.3	<p>Expenditure</p> <p>There is a request from government that teacher starting salaries are raised to £30k per annum in 2 years' time. The professional services pay award is to be determined for April 2022. The local government pay award of 2021/22 of 1.75% had still not be approved by unions, CLF proceeded with 1% in April 2021. Combined with increases in costs for utilities and pension contributions, as well as inflation, this means increased expenditure for next year.</p>	
5.14.4	<p>Pupil Numbers</p> <p>SL shared a slide showing the number of first, second and third choices for secondary academies across the trust. Generally, the information shows an increase in the popularity of Bristol Schools and a slight dip in numbers for some South Gloucestershire schools. In North Somerset, numbers are strong with the exception of Broadoak Academy with just 44% of families making it their first choice. Primary school data will be available in the next few months.</p>	
	Questions from the board	
5.14.5	How will the increasing utility costs, combined with inflation, affect the trust's finances?	
5.14.6	We have one single contract for gas and electric and the contractor has been helpful in updating us with regard to expected increased costs. We will have the supplementary schools grant to assist with energy and NI costs.	
5.15	Growth developments and external support work	
5.15.1	There is some overlap between our work supporting the DfE's Trust Improvement programme and possible options for future growth. ST reported that due to his NLE status	

	he has been asked of the trust will provide support to a number of other MATs, including Futura, Venturer's Trust, Palladian, and some individual schools. The CLF has also had some direct approaches from Endeavour and Redstart.	
5.16	Faith Schools	
5.16.1	ST thanked the sub-group for their work on mixed MATs. BG reported that she had met with ST this week to plan how to progress the conversation and has arranged a meeting with VWV to further discuss next week.	
5.17	COO role and changes in leadership of Professional Services	
5.17.1	SL provided an update as at her 5 th week in post as COO. A key focus has been how to raise the profile of Professional Services. A Professional Services executive meeting now takes place fortnightly and is working well. Colleagues have been discussing what it means to be professional services and working on a vision.	
5.17.2	SL reported that she is working with Rachel Mylrea to ensure she has a good induction in her new role as HR Director. BG is leading on the professional development of professional service staff. Work continues on the new finance system and SL is working with AL with regard to the digital technology project. SL is also leading some work around 'voices' and is looking at the use of surveys for pupils, parents and staff over the next few weeks.	
6	Finance	
6.1	This item has been covered under 5.14.	
7	Other Operational Issues	
7.1	Admissions Policies	
7.1.1	BG requested approval to determine the admissions policies for five academies following the formal consultation period: WHA, SA, KOA, HMA and Post 16. The board approved the policies.	
8	Any Other Business	
8.1	PO thanked the Executive Team and trust staff on behalf of the board for their continued hard work and dedication.	
8.2	The meeting closed at 17.45hrs.	