

Minutes - Board of Directors

Version: Approved
Meeting Date: Thursday 13 July 2023
Location: Teams
Time: 4.00pm

Chair:	Paul Olomolaiye (PO)	Chair of the Board
Members:	Rachel Mortlock (RMO)	Director, Vice Chair of the Board
	Adrian Coleman (ACO)	Director
	Su Coombes (SCO)	Director
	Bryony French (BF)	Director
	Deb Atack (DA)	Director
	Tim Spratt (TS)	Director
	Mark Davies (MD)	Director
	Nicky McAllister (NM)	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
	Alison Fletcher (AFL)	Director of CLF Institute
	Rachel Mylrea (RMY)	Director of HR
	Sarah Lovell (SL)	Chief Operating Officer
	Elizabeth Tincknell (ET)	Head of Governance
	Wendy Hellin (WH)	Clerk
Apologies:	Bethan Owen (BON)	Director
	Anthony Cherry (ACH)	Director
	Suzanne Carrie (SCA)	Director

Action date and no	Relates to item no	Action	Owner
22.06.23 02	9.4.4	RMY will provide a breakdown of responses by ethnicity in the next Operations Report to board. Update 13.07.23: This will be provided at the October board meeting. Ongoing	RMY
22.06.23 03	9.4.6	RMY to provide analysis on why a disproportionate number of black members of staff are leaving the trust. Update 13.07.23: This will be provided at the October board meeting. Ongoing	RMY
22.06.23 04	10.1.3	LT to confirm details of the Governance Review at the October board meeting. Update 13.07.23: LT reported that the proposals for the Governance Review have been received and NGA has been appointed to carry out the review, with the scope outlined. The review will begin in September, and an update will be provided at the October board meeting. Ongoing	LT

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions, Administration, Apologies	

1.1	PO welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Apologies are recorded above. PO thanked the Executive Team for their phenomenal support for Tewkesbury Academy last week.	
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 22 June 2023 were approved subject to the following amendment: At 8.3.2 the request was for SL to further explore the variances of supply and educational costs.	
3.2	Minutes of the meeting of 6 June 2023 were approved.	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	The action table above has been updated.	
5	Governance	
5.1	Renewal of TOO for Chairs	
5.1.1	It was proposed that the term of office for Bridget Suitters, COAC Minerva Primary Academy be extended for a further term of four years. NM endorsed the proposal. <u>Decision: the board approved the proposal.</u>	
5.2	Appointment of new Chairs	
5.2.1	Gus Grimshaw was proposed as the Chair of Brook Academy. <u>Decision: the board approved the proposal.</u>	
5.3	Agenda for Member's Review Day	
5.3.1	The agenda for Member's Review Day is included at Flag E. LT advised that invites will be sent shortly.	
5.4	Proposed CLF Meeting Schedule 2023/4	
5.4.1	The proposed CLF meeting schedule is included at Flag F.	
5.5	CLF Governance Results Review – draft programme	
5.5.1	The draft programme for the CLF Governance Results Review meeting is included at Flag G. The programme follows the structure and model from last year and will take place on Teams.	
5.6	Training and Development programme for 2023/4	
5.6.1	AFL reported that a number of conversations ongoing about the extent to which the trust might be using Governor Hub. ACTION: The training programme for next year will be confirmed and shared at the October board meeting.	AFL
5.7	Trustee and Academy Councillor vacancies	
5.7.1	LT reported that a trustee recruitment information pack has been created by the governance team and HR colleagues and it is now being shared on suitable social media platforms as well as via the NGA and Governors for Schools. The pack has been uploaded to the Board Teams folder and trustees are asked to share the information wherever they are able.	
5.7.2	LT reported that at the recent CLF conference a Governance stand was created and as a result 14 people have registered their interest to be an Academy Councillor and many flyers have been circulated.	
5.8	Policies for review	
5.8.1	Positive Handling Policy	
5.8.1.1	The Positive Handling Policy is included at Flag H for review and approval. SW advised that it has been very lightly updated following annual review. It will be reviewed again in the new academic year. <u>Decision: The board approved the policy.</u>	
5.8.2	Safeguarding Policy	
5.8.2.1	The Safeguarding Policy is included at Flag I for review and approval. SW advised that the policy is usually reviewed in October, however, due to the early update of KCSIE this year, it has been reviewed early, in readiness for the new academic year. <u>Decision: The board approved the policy.</u>	

5.8.2.2	TS asked if the Safeguarding Policy is purely for children and students and, if so, if there was a suite of policies alongside it that covered staff. ST advised that the Safeguarding Policy is a statutory policy for schools, specific to safeguarding children and young people. There are a range of other policies and procedures for staff, such as the Health and Safety Policy, Critical Incident Policy and other HR policies.	
5.8.3	Employment Manual	
5.8.3.1	RM advised that approval of the policies that make up the Employment Manual is delegated to PO and DA. Currently, HR are consulting with the unions on several policies including those for paternity, maternity, expenses and IT. Once the consultation has ended, the reviewed policies will be shared with PO and DA for approval.	
6	Finance	
6.1	SL introduced Martin Thomas, Director of Estates and Facilities and welcomed him to his first meeting.	
6.2	Budgets for 2023/24	
6.2.1	SL advised that the board were being asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the current context and financial projections; Approve the 2023/24 budget; Approve the submission of the budget forecast return to the ESFA for 2023/24 and the two outer years. 	
6.2.2	SL reported that earlier today the pending pay award for staff had been agreed between the Government and the NEU, pending a vote by union members. The pay award has been agreed at 6.5% and will be funded in part (3%) by the DfE. SL advised that the budget proposals were put together before the pay award was agreed, and that this changed the core assumptions. The result will be that the deficit originally proposed will now be a surplus.	
6.2.3	The budget setting process started in February. In April the draft budget was produced, and it showed a deficit of over £2m. This was reduced to £1.2m following a range of interventions. At the last board meeting, the deficit had further reduced to £790k and that was the budget presented recently to the Finance Executive Group. The final budget position to be presented was to have been a deficit of £311k, however, this is now showing as a surplus of £250k for next year.	
6.2.4	SL highlighted the following key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 31 individual budgets in total, including Tewkesbury, Sky, Brook and Lansdown Park. A separate growth budget is included in addition to the central budget. A new estates focused budget is also included. The Redstart schools are not yet included; approval from the board will be sought at a later date for those. 	
6.2.5	SL shared the headline numbers with the board (these do not include the variation due to the pay award). The income line will change, and subsequently staff costs will change. All other figures will remain the same: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total income budget of £116m (of which 85% is guaranteed); The central contribution will be 5% from new schools; Educational support – less has been budgeted; staff are being used to support where possible; Maintenance variance – this is due to the environment grant expenditure of £530k. Supply is £900k, compared to over £2m in 2022/23. The total SEND income has increased due to the new special and AP provisions.	
6.2.6	SL shared the individual budgets. Of the 31, 18 are reaching the 1% surplus budget, 4 are budgeted to break-even, and there are 9 deficit budgets. These will be reviewed following the pay award. The revised reserves position will be just over £5.5m.	
6.3	Next steps	

6.3.1	SL detailed next steps, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil planning – pupil numbers to be forecast for the next 3 – 5 years, with a focus on primary academies initially. Reserves Policy – the reserves policy will be refreshed and brought to the October board meeting for approval. Income streams – all income streams will be reviewed to ensure their return is maximised. CLF Institute – the sustainability of the CLF Institute will be a focus for next year. 	
6.4	Revised Position	
6.4.1	The revised budget position is a £250k surplus for 2023/24, an almost breakeven position for 2024/25 and a small deficit for 2025/26.	
6.5	Questions from trustees	
6.5.1	If there are more schools in the 2023/24 year, how is it that you are reducing educational fees by almost £800k?	
6.5.1.1	It is due to the varied profile of income and expenditure in the schools, specifically the way in which top up funding is received and spent. Some provisions recruit staff direct, and some choose to provide support through third party procurements. The budget is set based on staffing decisions made at the start of the year, but we do vire monies between staffing costs and educational fees throughout the year.	
6.5.2	Given the pay award announcement and the easing of the financial pressure, should there not be a slightly increased budget for supply, to add some contingency to any overspend in this area to avoid a large variance in 6- or 12-monthsmonths' time?	
6.2.2.1	We need to take stock of the grant and additional costs. We can allocate it to individual schools or support other areas. We could add it to the supply budget. We could also use it to reduce the variance. ACTION: SL to review the position and consider which lines to add the funding to (3% funded pay award).	SL
6.5.3	In terms of the planned growth, what insight do you have in terms of capital and infrastructure expenditure required for those sites?	
6.5.3.1	Tewkesbury is in a strong financial position. Learn@ provisions vary; we need to ensure we maximise income and control spend. For Redstart and others, there are a range of financial positions. In terms of capital, part of the due diligence process has been to commission site surveys, and MT is collating that information to get a sense of investment required over time.	
6.5.4	BF advised that she felt the trust should not be submitting a deficit amount in Year 3. BF asked SL to review the financials for the next two years to ensure that at least a breakeven position is reached for the next three financial years. ACTION: SL to review the 3-year forecast position.	SL
6.6	It is proposed that the board approve the budget for 2023/24 and a break-even position for 2024/25 2025/26. <u>Decision: The board approved the proposal.</u>	
6.7	Insurance procurement delegation request	
6.7.1	SL requested approval to delegate the procurement of the insurance provider to two Directors to allow the procurement to take place over the summer break. The value of the contract is around £1m over three to four years. TS and ACO agreed to review the contract. <u>Decision: the board delegated authority to TS and ACO to approve the procurement of the insurance provider.</u>	
6.8	Technical advisor procurement	
6.8.1	This item will be considered at the October board meeting. ACTION: SL to bring the Technical Advisor procurement to the October board meeting.	SL
7	Education Updates	
7.1	Primary results and other data	
7.1.1	DN shared the initial trust wide data for primary outcomes.	

7.1.2	<p>EYFS – 71% achieved the expected standard, or greater depth, for Good Levels of Development (GLD), compared to 65% at national.</p> <p>Phonics – 83% passed the phonics test in Year 1, compared to 75% at national.</p> <p>KS1 – 67%, 59%, 71% for reading, writing, maths compared to national of 67%, 58%, 68% reading, writing, maths.</p> <p>MTCs – average mark 21.0% against 19.8% average for national, with 33% getting full marks (25 out of 25), compared to 27% national.</p> <p>KS2 – combined 65.2% compared to 59% national. Reading 76% against 73% national. Writing 77% against 71% national. Maths 78% against 73% national.</p>	
7.1.3	<p>Disadvantage Headlines</p> <p>KS2 – Combined 49% (equivalent to 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maths 64% (1% up on last year) - Reading 62% (4% down on last year) - Writing 62% (3% up on last year) <p>Of the 511 pupils across the year 6 cohort, there are 165 disadvantaged pupils.</p>	
7.1.4	<p>DN shared the individual academy data. Eight of the ten primary academies achieved combined KS2 outcomes above the national average; the outliers are HVA at 55% and KOA at 33%. There are a number of schools that did very well for disadvantaged learners at KS2 combined including FVA at 80%, EPA at 67% and SA at 89%.</p>	
7.2	Questions from trustees	
7.3	There is no gap for reading and writing for KS2 disadvantaged. That's quite unusual. Is there a reason for this?	
7.3.1	<p>There is only a 1% gap for all students (PP and non-PP). A lot of work has been done, over time, with the subject communities with a focus on standardisation and moderation and this has brought about some dividends, as has the work on raising aspirations.</p>	
7.4	What does the data look like for white and black Caribbean students, given the recent data from Bristol for EY to Year 8?	
7.4.1	<p>There is a gap between white and black Caribbean students compared to the trust wide data. White and black Caribbean students achieved 56% (KS2 combined) compared to 65% trust wide. Some individual groups have compared well against trust averages.</p>	
7.5	KOA primary stands out at KS2, with 33% combined. Is there a lack of forensic and granular questioning at KOA in terms of the teaching and learning?	
7.5.1	<p>We are disappointed with some of the results. There is some variation in cohort and with PP and free school meals children. There is some success in individual subject areas where they have made good progress against some very low starting points. It also speaks to the provision. We will focus on ensuring there is some straightforward best practice that can be shared with the academy and that the right subject knowledge enhancement is in place.</p>	
8	Strategic Review and Reports	
8.1	CEO Report	
8.1.1	<p>ST reported that the first part of his report reflects back on the launch of the 2030 strategy, with a focus on the 7 sub-strategies, led by individual members of the Executive Team. The academies' AIPs have been looked at to identify those areas that are a close link to the core strategies of People, Partnerships and Disadvantaged. An academy top sheet has then been created. Some concrete examples from individual academies are included in the report. There is an ambition for every provision to contribute to that wider core strategy. Information on work of the Attendance Hub is also included in the report</p>	
8.1.2	<p>The report concludes with a summary on growth and provides some tangible examples of the importance of growth for the trust at this time.</p>	
8.2	Questions from trustees	
8.3	What has been the most challenging part of the strategy to deliver to date?	
8.3.1	<p>The commitment to disadvantage even over has been the easiest part of the strategy to land with staff. It is well recognised across the trust. Staff understand the focus of the work of the</p>	

	trust, the values and the key strategic priorities. Most staff understand the second strand around professional development, though some colleagues feel that this aspect of our trust's work is not yet strong or meaningful enough for them. The most challenging strand has been partnerships, as starting points vary so much across the trust. There is some progress; KOA, for example, is further ahead in its thinking. However, there is not yet a completely coherent perspective on partnerships and the value they add.	
8.4	Given the challenges in attendance nationally, and within the trust, is 94% a realistic and achievable target for attendance?	
8.4.1	Traditionally, individual academies would each have their own target, and this created a mass of tables and numbers and had the effect of inadvertently lowering the standard due to the variance in context of each setting. There is now a standard model whereby the target is set trust wide. Principals prefer this model. It is recognised that it is an ambitious target, however, when individual year groups are looked at, it can be seen that some are hitting that target, so it is achievable.	
8.5	In the report it refers to investing in CLF partnerships. However, there are no practical examples given of partnerships with local businesses. This would be helpful, particularly for secondary and AP provision where students may be leaving for the world of work.	
8.5.1	In terms of the core strategy, and the AIPs at academy level, we try to ensure they reference improvement priorities, rather than activities that would be considered business as usual. If work is already underway it may not be included in the plan. There are lots of examples of where high value partnerships already exist and DSSB is a good example of that. It is a key feature of the trust's CEIAG strategy and was the feature of a conversation with CEIAG leaders in the trust just this week.	
8.6	2022/23 Sub Strategy Update	
8.6.1	SL advised that Link trustees have met with the Executive Team member leading on each of the 7 sub-strategies two or three times over the year to review progress against the plan. The report is included at Flag M. All are on track in terms of where they should be at this point of the year. Over the next few weeks colleagues will wrap up the review process to confirm which strands are complete and which will carry over to next year.	
8.7	2023/24 Education plan	
8.7.1	DN provided an overview of the Education Plan for 2023/24, highlighting that the focus is to continue to build a strong trust, to support great schools, to meet the needs of all students. The full presentation is included at Flag N.	
8.8	Professional Services Plan	
8.8.1	SL provided an overview of the Professional Services Plan for 2023/24, highlighting the four key strands of Recruiting Well, Staying Well, Developing Well, Growing Well. The full presentation is included at Flag O.	
8.9	Questions from trustees	
8.9.1	When the plan is finalised, will there be clear targets or specific KPIs to allow the board to see if progress is being made against the plan?	
8.9.1.1	There will be targets included so that we know if we have been successful. For example, for growth, there will be some targets around how we induct academies and how quickly they are compliant. RM and SL are considering a range of targets to include for the recruitment and retention strand.	
8.10	ST noted that the request in the board paper asked the board to approve the draft plan for Year 2 of the CLF Strategy 2030. <u>Decision: The board approved the draft plan for Year 2.</u>	
9	AOB	
9.1	The draft agenda for the October 2024 board meeting is included at Flag P.	
9.2	Data Protection Policy	
9.2.1	LT reported that the DP Policy was presented to the board at the June meeting for approval, however, trustees had asked the Executive Team to relook at the policy to include	

	information about parents using Air Tags. LT advised that the follow up work was complete, and the trust's DP Officer had advised that it does not need to be included in the policy. This is because if parents use Air Tags the data belongs to them, not to the trust. SW reassured the board that associated safeguarding risks had also been reviewed and no material risks were identified. LT asked the board to approve the DP Policy. Decision: The board approved the Data Protection Policy.	
10	Close of Meeting	
10.1	The next full board meeting takes place on 12 October 2023. There is a short additional board meeting on 20 September 2023. The meeting closed at 18.55hrs.	

Actions carried forward:

Action date and no	Relates to item no	Action	Owner
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