



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday 19 July 2023 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Stage Hall, Fambridge Road Campus

Present:

Mr T Bailey	(TB)	Trustee, Chair of Finance & Premises Committee
Mr J Everard	(JE)	Trustee, Vice-Chair of Trustees, Chair of Pay Committee
Mrs D Gray	(DG)	Trustee
Mr M Howell	(MH)	Trustee, Chair of Audit and Strategic Development Committee
Mr E Judge	(EJ)	Trustee
Ms K Mehrtens	(KM)	Trustee
Mr P Nagle	(PN)	Trustee, Chair of Trustees
Ms L Smart	(LS)	Trustee, Chair of HR Committee
Mrs J Smith	(JS)	Trustee

In attendance:

Mr T Baster	(TBA)	Joint Head of Academy
Mrs R Clark	(RCL)	Joint Head of Academy
Mr C Wakefield	(CWA)	Executive Principal
Mrs K Redmond	(KRE)	Governance Professional (Clerk) to Trustees

Apologies:

Ms J Ellum	(JEL)	Trustee
Ms M Foster	(MF)	Trustee

This group was quorate for the purpose of resolutions

Item	Topic	Minute
1.	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were NOTED and accepted.
2.	Membership of the Board of Trustees	<p>1. Trustees NOTED the resignation of Jane Halewood with effect from 20 June 2023.</p> <p>2. Trustees NOTED the resignations of John Everard, Melanie Foster and Elliott Judge with effect from 21 July 2023.</p> <p>Trustees offered sincere thanks to JE for over twenty years of dedicated service to the school which had been very much appreciated.</p> <p>Trustees thanked EJ for his contribution to the role of Trustee and especially for his support of safeguarding within the academy.</p> <p>3. Trustees NOTED that committee membership and responsibilities will be reviewed over the summer.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action PN</p>
3.	Minute of the previous meetings	The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were AGREED unanimously.

4.	Matters arising	Trustees NOTED: Item 11.4: the safeguarding metrics had been completed. Item 11.4b: Flair - Race in the Academy Community Survey: Staff training had been carried out and a decision will be taken on whether to continue with that organisation or whether the academy could work independently without incurring any further costs. The academy will continue to educate and address any concerns as they arise. Action agreed for closure.
5.	Notification of Any Other Business	There were no matters of Any Other Business raised.
6.	Declaration of Business Interests	There were no new declarations of business interests and no Trustee recorded any conflict of interest with the items on the agenda or the receipt or giving of any gifts or hospitality since the last meeting.
7.	Chair's Actions	There were no Chair's Actions to note. Trustees NOTED that PN had been copied into two complaints raised with senior staff which had been dealt with and effectively responded to by the academy. No formal complaints to the Board of Trustees had been received since the last meeting.
8.	Minutes of Committees	Trustees RECEIVED the minutes of: 1. HR Committee: 10 May 2023 2. Finance & Premises: 14 June 2023
9	Finance	1. Budget 2022/23 Trustees NOTED: a. the updated Month 9 Management Accounts to 31 May 2023 circulated at the meeting which will be uploaded to the meeting folder for future reference b. the predicted in-year savings were not quite achieved but the academy had received additional income c. the forecast for the end of the year was a deficit of approximately £100k which will impact on reserves by reducing them to just below £300k. 2. Budget 2023/24 Trustees NOTED: a. the teachers' pay award had been confirmed at 6.5%; 3% of which was government funded and 3.5% must be found from existing school budgets. The budget had therefore been based on this announcement b. the predicted deficit of £251k can be managed by reserves but will reduce reserves at the end of 2023/24 to approximately £14k which indicated that the teachers' pay award was

		<p>unsustainable without additional government funding or further savings being found.</p> <p>c. the support staff pay award had yet to be confirmed for 2023/24.</p> <p>Trustees unanimously APPROVED the Budget 2023/24 following review by the Finance & Premises Committee for submission to the Department for Education.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED CWA's appreciation on behalf of the academy for the financial due diligence carried out by TB in his absence.</p> <p>3. Trustees NOTED the projections for the Three Year Budget Plan following review by the Finance & Premises Committee which will be scrutinised further before being submitted for approval.</p>
10	Risk Management	<p>Trustees REVIEWED the Responsible Officer report and its recommendations regarding the Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, and conclusion that the academy was generally following the Department for Education (DfE) guidance.</p> <p>TB advised that the Director of Finance & Premises will develop the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register over the summer for review by Trustees in the autumn term.</p>
11	Academy Position Paper	<p>Trustees NOTED the circulated Academy Position Paper including trips and visits and the Chair's Impact Summary for the summer term.</p> <p>a. PN referred to the Essex Children Safeguarding Board audit indicating a 99% effectiveness rate for safeguarding by the academy and queried whether there were any lessons learned.</p> <p>CWA advised that the 1% deduction arose from the academy not conducting physical restraint training as it was not what the Executive Senior Leadership Team (ESLT) believed was necessary at the current time.</p> <p>b. PN queried whether any feedback had been given back to students, parents and carers from the Year 11 and Year 13 Exit Survey Synopsis and the results shared with staff, indicating how the feedback was used for development planning.</p> <p>CWA confirmed that there was definitely scope for SLT to do more with the very detailed information provided by the surveys. RCL advised that the intention was to include the Sixth Form within the Whole Academy Strategic Plan (WASP) to determine how data could inform practices further.</p> <p>c. TB referred to a recent stabbing in a school which had caused the school to go into lockdown and queried whether SLT had reflected on that incident and with students having knives on site.</p> <p>CWA advised that the Critical Incident Plan including lockdown procedures was currently under review by TBA and RCL. There</p>

		<p>were examples of incidents in school where protocols and procedures had been followed and worked well. RCL stated that there was a clear plan in place for staff training in September including lockdown and other incidents. Professional Association Representatives had raised some valid questions which will be addressed.</p> <p>d. MH queried whether SLT had looked at net promoter scores with positives, negatives and detractors.</p> <p>RCL agreed to investigate further and for MH to provide relevant information.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action RCL/MH</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the request to highlight any subjects which they required further detail on prior to the meeting to allow staff to reflect in the next Position Paper.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action Trustees</p>
12	Annual report by Committee of key decisions during 2022-23 and any key priorities for 2023-24	<p>Trustees RECEIVED the annual report by Committee of key decisions during 2022-23 and any key priorities for 2023-24:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admissions - PN advised that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. applications had been reviewed against the published admissions criteria b. RCL had undertaken a strategic review on how to manage in-year admissions as the academy continued to be oversubscribed with many in-year applications. It had been concluded that the academy should continue with the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 295 for the national offer day and to consider any Essex County Council applications to admit over PAN c. Year 7 was currently at just over 300 for September 2023 but the number of Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) admissions had not yet been finalised. 2. Audit – MH advised that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the academy had continued with the same external auditors as they had provided an excellent and robust service over a number of years b. the Responsible Officer had a key role and robustly supported the audit process c. timings of the audit for 2022/23 will be discussed with the Director of Finance & Premises (RSC), including the auditors submitting the information in good time for approval. 3. Finance and Premises - TB advised that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Terms of Reference and governance of the committee had been reviewed at the beginning of the year and had implemented a calendar to cross-reference the various returns that RSC had to make b. the management of risk had been reviewed, and the outcome had been discussed earlier in this meeting

		<p>c. the management accounts were regularly reviewed to track efficiency plans and monitor other income streams. Tracking those accounts for the next 12 months will be even more important as a reference point for reducing reserves</p> <p>d. energy costs had not yet been fixed. RSC had been given authorisation by the committee to fix the best price during August. Prices were dropping slightly and the contract was likely to be fixed for another 12 months</p> <p>e. the expansion plan project continues and TB thanked MH for his support</p> <p>f. the boiler and pipework projects were in process for completion by December 2023.</p> <p>4. Health and Safety (H&S) – MH advised that:</p> <p>a. the committee had discussed fire alarms and fire evacuation and were making improvements where necessary</p> <p>b. a discussion had been held with architects on how to make airflow cooler as temperatures rise and drinking water was available across the site</p> <p>c. there were no RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) reportable incidents.</p> <p>PN queried what the recruitment plan was for the retiring Site Manager.</p> <p>RCL advised that the academy had recently appointed internally to the role. There was also a vacancy for a caretaker and responsibility for H&S was likely sit with that position.</p> <p>5. Pay – JE advised that:</p> <p>a. the academy continued to adhere to national agreements and pay awards</p> <p>b. JE had conducted a thorough scrutiny of the performance management data and recommendations for pay awards including the threshold for Upper Pay Scales with TBA. JE advised that it was pleasing to see that the performance management process now included greater input by staff than previously.</p> <p>The process will be adapted next year to reflect the new leadership structure i.e. another colleague will be responsible for making pay recommendations for all staff to TBA and RCL for them to make recommendations to Trustees.</p> <p>TBA stated that the cost of living was having an impact on teaching staff and their decision on whether to stay in education. This may result in applications for salary progression increases which will need to be strategically managed.</p>
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13	Policy List	Trustees NOTED the Policy List.
14	Policies for Approval	<p>1. Trustees REVIEWED the following policies following recommendation by:</p> <p>a. HR Committee – 10 May 2023</p> <p>i. Exceptional & Emergency Leave</p> <p>ii. Performance Management Support Staff</p> <p>b. Finance & Premises – 14 June 2023</p> <p>i. CCTV Policy</p>

		<p>2. Trustees REVIEWED the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Behaviour of Parents and Carers b. Food Allergy c. Remote Education d. Rewards e. Transgender – <i>approved subject to the reference to the Tavistock Clinic being removed as it was no longer in operation</i> f. Trips and Visits g. Turn Around Centre h. Careers Education, Information & Advice Guidance (CEIAG) – <i>approved subject to the reference to the CEIAG Lead Trustee being included.</i> i. CEIAG Provider Access <p>Trustees unanimously APPROVED the above policies</p>
15	Key Indicator of Performance (KIP)	<p>1. Trustees NOTED the schedule for 2022/23. Trustees were reminded to submit outstanding reports as soon as possible.</p> <p>2. Trustees REVIEWED KIP training and allocations</p> <p>3. Trustees RECEIVED the following monitoring reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Behaviour & Attitudes and Personal Development – 27 March 2023. JE advised that he had recently made a follow up visit and was impressed by how calm the school was. b. CEIAG – 31 March 2023 LS advised that during a recent visit, it had been confirmed that there had been good attendance for work experience and it had been a productive week for the students. Unifrog had helped to make the process more efficient. c. College – 14 June 2023 TB stated that there had been a record number of applicants for 2023/24 and the Year 12 induction day had been very positive. d. Finance – 14 June 2023 e. Health & Safety: minutes of the committee meeting held on 8 June 2023 f. Quality of Education – 21 June 2023 TB advised that he had been part of the recruitment for the Head of Modern Foreign Languages and was impressed by the very robust process.

		<p>g. SEND – 29 March 2023</p> <p>PN advised that there had also been a recent visit with KM and the report would follow. They had both recognised the transition required for the turnover of staff in that area which will be consolidated next year.</p> <p>RCL advised that the new Inclusion Lead had met with her and the SEND team to prepare for September and there was a strong supportive team in place. The Intervention Lead had resigned and this post will be covered internally in the short term as the academy was unable to appoint externally.</p>
16	Trustees' Continual Professional Development (CPD)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees NOTED the CPD Record for 2022/23. Trustees NOTED that the Child Protection refresher course will be a requirement for all in September. Trustees were reminded of the resources and training available on The Key The Key for School Governors (thekeysupport.com). Trustees to advise the Clerk of any training undertaken for the CPD record.
17	Board Attendance	Trustees NOTED the Board Attendance for 2022/23.
18	Any Other Business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicts of Interests <p>MH queried the Conflicts of Interest guidance and how the definition of family members applied. KR agreed to review the guidance and update Trustees.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action Clerk</p> Executive Principal <p>Trustees thanked CWA for his dedication and impact to his role as Executive Principal and for his ability to engage with all stakeholders. CWA's efforts had been very much valued and Trustees advised that he should be very proud of his achievements.</p> <p>CWA thanked Trustees for their support and especially for PN as Chair as he had been hugely appreciative for his counsel and support. CWA advised that it had been a team effort and he had been delighted, honoured and privileged to work with a team that had modelled the Nolan Principles.</p>
19	Confirmation of Confidential items	There were no confidential items.
20	Date of next meetings	Trustees NOTED the schedule for 2023/24 including a seminar/training day each term.

Meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Actions

Date of Meeting/ Item number	Topic	Minute
19.07.23 – item 2	Committee membership and responsibilities.	PN to review committee membership and responsibilities in preparation for September 2023.
19.07.23 – item 11d	Net Promotor Scores	MH to provide information relating to net promoter scores with positives, negatives and detractors and discuss with RCL.
19.07.23 – item 11	Advance notice for further detail required by staff for board reports	Trustees highlight any subjects which they required further detail on prior to the meeting to allow staff to be fully prepared.
19.07.23 – item 18.1	Conflicts of Interest	<p>Clerk to seek guidance on Conflicts of Interest and how the definition of family members should be applied.</p> <p><i>Following the meeting the Director of Finance & Business provided the following guidance:</i></p> <p><i>Spouse and children should be included as well as ‘co-habitees’. Trustees have the opportunity to declare interests at the start of every meeting and therefore if they are aware of a contract being up for renewal and a more distant family member, e.g. a cousin, was part of the tender process, it allowed the opportunity to declare an interest and the Chair could then take the decision as to whether their vote counted or not in that meeting – or they may choose to abstain based on their declaration.</i></p> <p><i>The intention was to ensure transparency and not to stop people from being related to contractors</i></p>