



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday 23 March 2022 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Canteen

Present:

Mr J Everard	(JE)	Trustee, Vice-Chair of Trustees, Chair of Pay Committee
Mr M Howell	(MH)	Trustee, Chair of Audit and Strategic Development Committee
Mr E Judge	(EJ)	Trustee
Ms J Kaur	(JK)	Trustee
Mr P Nagle	(PN)	Trustee, Chair of Trustees
Ms S Scannell	(SS)	Trustee
Mr C Wakefield	(CWA)	Executive Principal
Mrs C Whitaker	(CDW)	Trustee, Chair of HR Committee

In attendance:

Mrs K Redmond	(KRE)	Governance Professional (Clerk) to Trustees
Mr R Scott	(RSC)	Director of Finance and Premises – <i>for agenda items 9 and 10</i>

Apologies:

Mr T Bailey	(TB)	Trustee, Chair of Finance & Premises Committee
Mr K Bannister	(KB)	Trustee
Mr T Baster	(TBA)	Joint Head of Academy
Mrs R Clark	(RCL)	Joint Head of Academy
Ms M Foster	(MF)	Trustee
Mr M Judd	(MJ)	Trustee
Ms L Smart	(LS)	Trustee

This group was quorate for the purpose of resolutions

Item	Topic	Minute
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were NOTED. PN welcomed the new Trustees to their first meeting.
2.	Appointments and Resignations	Trustees NOTED the appointment by the Academy Trust of Melanie Foster, Jas Kaur and Sarah Scannell as Trustees with effect from 9 February 2022.
3.	Minute of the previous meetings	The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2021 and the EGM on 16 December 2021 were AGREED.
4.	Matters arising	Trustees to advise PN if they were willing to take on the role of CPD lead for Trustees. Trustees NOTED the decision not to revalue the academy land as it was purely an accounting entry exercise.
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.	To receive the minutes of Committees	<p>Trustees RECEIVED the minutes of Committees:</p> <p>1. Admissions – 15 December 2021</p> <p>PN advised that this committee meets annually but receives a termly update due to the increasing number of mid-year and Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) admissions.</p> <p>JE queried how refugee applications were dealt with. CWA advised that whilst the Admissions Code is adhered to, there is a moral obligation to those who are from dire circumstances such as the war in Ukraine. CWA received a letter from a neighbour advising that they had applied to host a Ukraine family and there was the possibility of a student applying to the academy. CWA will seek advice from Stone King on receipt of any such application but believes the academy should admit the student straight away unless advised otherwise legally or by Trustees. This is whilst also following our own Admissions Policy and the School Admissions Code too.</p> <p>JE queried how students without English were supported. CWA advised that there have been other EAL (English as an Additional Language) students who have arrived at the academy and the academy has an excellent track record in effectively supporting them, as well ensuring they not only bed into the academy but also make good holistic progress at the same time.</p> <p>MH queried where do those applicants who were denied a place at the academy stand if a student is admitted in this way. CWA advised that there are allowances for exceptional circumstances and the academy would strongly consider this should we receive any future applications from any Ukrainian families.</p> <p>2. HR – 26 January 2022</p> <p>CDW advised that there is a large focus on mental health and mental health first aiders have been appointed. EJ had agreed to be the link for mental health/wellbeing.</p> <p>3. Finance & Premises – 2 February 2022</p> <p>NOTED.</p> <p>4. Executive – 9 February 2022</p> <p>Trustees reviewed the Self-Evaluation Form, Academy Development Plan and met separately to discuss strategic development.</p>
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8.	Chair's Action	<p>Trustees RATIFIED the following Chair's Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complaints Policy on 23 February 2022 with tightening up of wording as advised by Stone King in conjunction with CWA. 2. Peer on Peer Policy on 12 December 2022 based on the model policy provided by Essex County Council (ECC). 3. Local Government Pay Increase 2021 following email agreement by the Board of Trustees on 7 March 2022. <p>Trustees NOTED that teachers had received a token £1 salary increase to allow for Teachers' Pensions to be reviewed as there was no inflationary pay award this year. This was primarily to protect our teaching staffs' pensions moving forward as a stagnation in pay leaves them vulnerable to a number of potential policy changes.</p>
10	Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trustees RECEIVED the Management Accounts for February 2022. RSC advised that the budget is in a slightly better position as to what was predicted at the beginning of academic year. 2. Trustees NOTED the final copy of the Financial Regulations as approved at the September meeting. 3. Trustees REVIEWED the Fire Door Tender Analysis provided by Ingleton Wood. RSC advised that the project had been delayed by the pandemic and work would be carried out this Summer. A third of the planned replacement doors had been taken off to streamline costs due to the increase in the cost of materials. A tender exercise was carried out with four companies of which three responded. The recommended tender came in £67,500 under budget and will therefore, have a schedule of works with the company to put back in what was taken out on a sliding scale to ensure all the allocated funds are used. Trustees APPROVED the Fire Door Tender.
11	Policy List	Trustees NOTED the current policy list.
12	Policies for ratification following approval by committee:	<p>Trustees REVIEWED the following policies:</p> <p>HR Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Code of Conduct including Whistleblowing 2. Discipline and Dismissal 3. Mental Health and Wellbeing 4. Performance Management Support Staff 5. Sickness Absence Management 6. Staff Equality & Diversity 7. Time Off in Lieu <p>Executive Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. SEND Medical Policy

		<p>Admissions Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Admissions 2022 to 2023 10. Admissions 2023 to 2024 11. College Admissions 2022-23 12. College Admissions 2023 to 2024 <p>Trustees unanimously RATIFIED the above policies.</p>
13	Policies for Approval	<p>Trustees REVIEWED the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trips and Visits (no changes) 2. Behaviour of Parents and Carers (no major changes) 3. Uniform Policy – updated <i>with explanation letter to parents and carers</i> <p>CWA advised that the academy had reviewed cost effectiveness, most suitable items and value for money following Department for Education (DfE) guidance regarding affordability. Costs will be reviewed again next year when procurement will take place.</p> <p>EJ asked the rationale for including Nike Air Force 1 trainers in the uniform. CWA advised that there were cheaper options to provide a broad range but it was felt that these were still an affordable and durable option which was in the reach of most families and there would be, as there was prior to them being allowed/introduced, major issues with addressing appropriate shoes if these were taken out.</p> <p>JK asked if there had been any bullying incidents regarding uniform and particularly footwear. CWA confirmed that there had not been any issues that he was aware of. Quite the contrary since CWA allowed these to become part of the academy’s uniform policy some five years ago.</p> <p>JK referred to sexualisation and the wearing of shorts. CWA advised that this is managed subtly and tactfully and through the right gender aspect. As well as the students, it is also our parents/carers responsibility to ensure the uniform is correct on arrival and students are spoken to if they do not comply and their respective parents/carers contacted for them to be changed that same morning/day. Any recidivists (negligible in number) are also increasingly sanctioned if they do not comply. CWA feels it is not a major issue again, because of the fact that the vast majority comply and how we continue to subtly and respectfully manage things.</p> <p>It will not be an issue after the Easter break as students go back to the wearing of academy uniform on the days’ students have PE and Dance.</p> <p>Trustees unanimously RATIFIED the above policies.</p>

15	Residential Trip for Approval	Trustees APPROVED the residential trip for the Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition – Bronze on 23 and 24 April 2022 noting that all relevant paperwork had been completed and placed onto Evolve.
16	External Governance Review	Trustees NOTED DfE guidance on external reviews of governance based on the six features of effective governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic leadership • Accountability • People • Structures • Compliance • Evaluation Trustees AGREED to conduct an external review in the autumn term to validate governance within the academy once a suitable person and costs had been identified. KRE is awaiting a quotation via Mr Scott, Director of Finance & Premises, and will liaise with PN and CWA regarding the way forward.
17	Chair's Impact Summary for Spring Term	PN advised that he will circulate a statement covering both the Autumn and spring terms in due course.
19	Trustees' Continual Professional Development (CPD)	1. Trustees NOTED the CPD Record for 2020/21. 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.
20	Terms of Reference/ Governance Key Objectives HR example	Trustees REVIEWED the draft Governance Key Objectives for HR Committee and agreed to develop and review for each committee linking in with the Terms of Reference.
21	Committee Membership and Monitoring Links	Trustees NOTED the existing committee membership which will be reviewed in light of the appointment of three new Trustees. PN and EJ to discuss the scope of a mental health/wellbeing link role.
22	Any Other Business	Trustees AGREED that PN should write to all staff to thank them for all their hard work and efforts in supporting the academy, staff and students especially in these challenging times. PN to also communicate with parents and carers.
23	Confirmation of Confidential items	Agenda items 9, 14, 18
24	Date of next meeting	13 July 2022

Meeting closed at 7.55 pm

Actions

Date of Meeting/ Item number	Topic	Minute
08.12.21 – item 15 23.03.22 – item 17	Chair's Autumn Impact Statement	PN to circulate combined Autumn and Spring statements.
23.03.22 – item 4	CPD Trustee Lead	Trustees to advise PN if interested in taking on this role.
23.03.22 – item 9	Letter to ECC re concern on finances for expansion plans	Letter to be drafted on behalf of the Board to ECC clearly stating that the academy cannot proceed with the expansion plans unless they are properly funded. The letter to be copied to Councillor Ball, Cabinet Member for Education, John Whittingdale MP and all senior managers at ECC who have been involved in the process.
23.03.22 – item 14.2	Disadvantaged and More Able presentation	AAVPs with responsibility for the focus on Disadvantaged and More Able to present at a future meeting.
23.03.22 – item 14.2	SEF	CWA to provide Trustees with the stated updates of all the key documents prior to the next meeting.
23.03.22 – item 16	External Review of Governance	KRE to receive a quotation via Mr Scott and to then liaise with PN and CWA regarding the way forward.
23.03.22 – item 20	Governance Key Objectives	Governance Key Objectives to be developed for each committee linking to Terms of Reference
23.03.22 – item 21	Mental Health/Wellbeing Link role	PN and EJ to discuss the scope of a mental health/wellbeing link role.