



Community First
Academy Trust

Company no. 08359889

COMMUNITY FIRST ACADEMY TRUST (“The Company”)

Minutes

Of a meeting of the Trustees of the Company held at Platt Bridge Community School,
Rivington Avenue, Wigan, Lancs, United Kingdom on

Tuesday 11th July 2017 at 5.30pm

Present: Mr J Pugh, Mrs S Darbyshire, Mr N Bailey, Mrs D Wood, Mr M Rowlands,
Mr P Harmer, Mr G Ashton

Apologies: Mr C Sweeney, Mr J Boyers, Mr T Healy

In attendance: Mrs M Frost, Mr C Holden, Mrs M Foster (Clerk to the Trust)

1. APOLOGIES

- a. To receive apologies for absence
Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Sweeney, Mr J Boyers and Mr T Healy.
- b. To accept apologies for absence
The apologies were accepted.
- c. To note Trustees not in attendance
All Trustee were either present or had tendered apologies for absence.

2. URGENT ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Pugh requested two items of correspondence to be included under any other business.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL OR PECUNIARY INTEREST

Directors were invited to declare whether they had any direct or indirect personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any matter forming part of the agenda for this meeting or likely to be discussed at this meeting. The following interests were declared:

Mr Ashton Kingsbridge EIP SCITT Operating Officer/Consultant
Northern Schools MAT
Department for Education Consultant
Baker Dearing Educational Trust Senior Education Consultant
Wigan Youth Zone Board Member
ASCL, Institute of Directors (MINSTD)
FRSA
Director and Trustee of GM UTC, Oldham

Mrs Darbyshire Kingsbridge EIP SCITT Director
Wigan Road Management Company Director
FASNA

Mrs Wood Kingsbridge EIP SCITT Director
Ofsted Inspector

4. MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING HELD ON 28TH MARCH 2017

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2017 were agreed and signed as a true and correct record by the Chairperson.
- b. The following matters arising were considered:
 - Item 8, ISS cleaning contract: Mr Holden advised that discussions are taking place in respect of IR35 and the TUPE commitment with ISS.
 - Mrs Wood advised that training for LABs in respect of ASP (the new RAISE online) is being organised in the autumn term.
 - Trustees were informed that the DBS policy has been adopted and the Single Central Record has been updated.

5. HEADTEACHER/HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORTS

Reports had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting for information. Trustees noted in particular:

Platt Bridge:

Mrs Darbyshire shared the data analysis for Year 2 and Year 6 with Trustees for information. Trustees noted that a presentation had been given to LAB members by the KS1 and KS2 leads. A comparison is included in the Central Team's report to Trustees.

It was noted that KS2 has gone up in all areas except for reading, but this is mainly due to grade boundary changes. Trustees were informed that had grade boundaries remained the same as last year, the data would have showed 92% at ARE. Writing was externally moderated. All other areas are above national and above floor at KS2. Mrs Darbyshire advised that this is a very positive picture but there are still actions for improvement, for example greater depth.

Progress measures were included in the analysis and were very positive.

Q: The data shows that girls do really well, but is there still work to do with the boys?

A: In Early Years and Reception the gap is significant between boys and girls, but in Year 2, this has been a cohort specific issue this year with a number of behavioural problems, and a group of boys at working towards.

Trustees thanked all involved for their contribution to the improvement in results this year. Mrs Darbyshire said that a strategy put in place in February had a huge impact on attainment. This will be continued into next year. However next year's Year 6 is a challenging cohort, with 5 children with EHCPs and a number of mid-year admissions. Mrs Darbyshire will provide two sets of data for Trustees and the LAB.

Rose Bridge:

Trustees advised that results will not be available until August but noted the following:

- There are a high number of EHCPs in school (29) which does have an impact.
- Attendance is improved on last year.
- There will be 15 CLA in school from September.
- Rose Bridge were the National winners of the Pupil Premium Plus Award for CLA.

Trustees congratulated Mrs Wood on the Award and discussion took place about the work being done with CLA.

- A high number of mid-year admissions this year (approximately 40) which have been very challenging and will have an impact.

Q: Where are the mid-year admissions coming from and what is the ability profile?

A: This varies, some students are new to the area, some are EAL/asylum seekers moving into the area. The ability profile is variable.

Q: Who operates the Fair Access Panel?

A: It's an LA panel but is made up of a variety of people. If the particular student is from the Three Towers, the panel is made up of headteachers. It is a complicated process and there are certain legal requirements that need to be met. Mrs Darbyshire advised that consideration has been given to dealing with admissions in-house but have chosen to stay with the LA.

- Maths and English exams are the new style exams and grade boundaries are not yet known.
- Progress 8 is unable to be predicted accurately.

Q: How do you acknowledge success for those pupils who don't achieve good results?

A: It is difficult, because for some students it is about getting employment or training at the end of Year 11. We do track all our students, but particularly the CLA, and regularly check up on them during their transition to college. It is difficult to measure this type of success and it is not reflected in performance tables.

- RBA also attended the Wigan Education Awards and won sporting achievement of the year award, and young scientist of the year award.

Q: Mr Ashton asked about risk assessments for the Year 10 student who travelled abroad alone to Arizona for the NASA programme.

A: This was not done through school; the student organised this on her own.

6. DATA UPDATES

Discussed above.

7. CENTRAL TEAM REPORT

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and Mrs Darbyshire raised the following points in particular:

International Work:

Some work has taken place already, continuing over the next 12 months. All courses have been advertised and will be cancelled if insufficient take-up. Karen Ardley Associates are organising.

There are currently 10 practitioners from Shanghai and 5 from Tianjin. There is the possibility of 30 practitioners next academic year which will bring in a substantial amount of income for the same number of visits. They are also opening a new school.

A pilot has taken place this year with a school in Cairo with teachers visiting Rose Bridge, Shevington High and Winstanley College. There will be 3 trainees next year.

Q: Have we considered moving this work in to a trading arm?

A: This is being considered and will be brought for discussion at the next meeting.

Kingsbridge/Westbridge:

Discussion took place about where to accommodate Kingsbridge during the RBA building works. Information is being obtained regarding a modular build on the edge of the football pitch at Platt Bridge which could be used for Kingsbridge for two days per week and three days per week for the Teaching School.

It was agreed to proceed with exploring the options for review at the next board meeting.

Expansion/Merger:

Nothing further to report.

Q: Is the RSC happy with this proposal?

A: Yes, but we also want to work with the LA as a courtesy.

NASBM and FASNA:

Mrs Darbyshire shared information about a possible merger.

8. FINANCE UPDATE

Mrs Frost shared the budget reports for both schools and the Trust. It was noted that the funding received from the regional academy growth fund must be spent within 12 months.

Mrs Darbyshire advised that Sheelagh Potter is being commissioned to undertake a transition project for Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 (to include other primary schools). The Central Team with Sheelagh are also reviewing options of bringing core back office service and people together to achieve economies of scale and efficiencies. Mr Holden and Mrs Frost have been tasked with undertaking this research. Further information will be brought to the Board when available.

SLA buy backs:

Trustees were asked to consider the Governor Services SLA which covers training for governors and advice and support. It was agreed to buy this back from the trust top slice.

Mr Holden provided an update about ISS/bringing cleaning in house. Due diligence has been carried out and a consultation will take place over the summer with a view to transferring across from 1.11.17 when the current contract comes to an end.

Mrs Frost advised that a new contract has been negotiated with Simply Health for all CFAT employees which has generated some savings.

Risk Management:

Mrs Frost reminded Trustees that the review of risk registers has been delegated to the Central Team. These will be updated and brought to the next meeting to reflect current tragedies.

Q: Re. the risk assessment submitted to the DfE, have we had any feedback?

A: No.

Advice from the LA has been received stating that the cladding in school meets the regulations that were in place at the time of building, with the top level of fire retardance.

The lockdown procedure is in the process of being updated.

IT security is being reviewed on behalf of the Trust.

Q: In light of the NHS hacking issue, have we got a robust system in place to alleviate any IT security issues?

A: Mr Holden advised that we do, as of now, but technology evolves very quickly so this is being constantly reviewed. An EU Directive is being introduced in May 2018 so we will need to re-visit again then.

Mrs Frost advised that a decision was taken not to take Platt Bridge children to London in September; they will be visiting York instead (PB). This was discussed.

Legal Issues – Trading Arm:

Mr Holden advised that he has been exploring the option to establish a trading arm and papers were shared and explained the process. The proposal would be to set up as a general purpose trading company to mitigate any legal risk or challenge to the trust. ISS colleagues would be transferred into the new trading arm with the academies within the Trust continuing to pay a SLA to give more flexibility around managing/mitigating any risk to the Trust.

Two quotes for the legal work had been received. The Board were asked to consider which company to go with. Mr Ashton withdrew from the discussions as he knows one of the partners at Stone King. After discussion, it was agreed to use Stone King and to follow their advice.

Partnership Agreement with Karen Ardley Associates:

Mr Holden proposed that an agreement be also established with Karen Ardley Associates and tabled a draft document. Mr Pugh had already seen the document and has requested it be amended to make it explicit that it is a one-year agreement. After discussion, it was agreed to accept the agreement with the proposed amendment for one year and from 1st January 2018.

Childcare:

Mrs Frost explained that Platt Bridge Community Childcare is a separate company with 4 directors (Lavern Shelford, Gill Rowlands, Steve Clerk and Michelle Frost). Although it is a separate company (and a separate entity for Ofsted and accounting purposes), the running of it is integrated with our nursery on a day to day basis. Mrs Shelford's resignation will result in one resignation from the Board and one other Director has also indicated an intention to resign, Mrs Frost has also considering resigning due to a potential conflict of interest. A meeting has taken place with the LA to discuss the options moving forward. The LA's preferred option would be for the Trust to take on the provision by extending the age range of the school from 3-11 to 2-11 and for staff to TUPE across. Other options were shared with Directors.

Mrs Frost and Mr Rowlands both declared an interest in this item and did not take part in discussions or decision making.

A detailed discussion took place and it has been recorded as a confidential item.

Kingsbridge:

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Internal Security and Controls:

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting. Mr Holden was requested to send a copy to Kingsbridge.

It was noted that Mr Holden is working with individuals who are currently self-employed to re-contract or offer PAYE contract and where not appropriate enter into new one-year agreements on a self-employed basis.

Investment:

Nothing additional to report.

Marketing/branding:

Nothing additional to report.

Buildings:

The Central Team have commissioned a condition improvement survey at Rose Bridge to support any future condition improvement fund bids. This will be carried out over the summer and will be shared with Trustees in the autumn term. The annual funding round normally opens in Mid-November to Mid-December. The CIF Funding Criteria is not published until the Autumn Term so further information / updates would be shared with trustee at the next meeting.

RBA expansion proposal:

Information was shared with Trustees including feedback from consultation meetings. Mrs Wood asked for the Board's agreement to contact the Regional Schools Commissioner to change the funding agreement to 180. This was agreed.

Q: What is happening with the AstroTurf?

A: The PE department are looking at potential bids.

Kingsbridge:

It was noted that Kingsbridge numbers are still fluid and will be until the end of August.

Mrs Darbyshire advised that there is a proposal for Winstanley Sixth Form College to become an associate partner with Kingsbridge, with the potential to become a full partner in the future.

Charge Card limits:

Trustees were asked to agree an increase in the limits due to increased activity overseas. Trustees asked the Central Team to contact the ESFA to ask about use of charge cards, and also to look at implementing a charge card use policy. Concerns were raised about two relatively junior members of staffing having cards although it was noted that these members of staff undertake work overseas. It was agreed to obtain this information and circulate to Trustees for agreement via e-mail.

Budget forecast 2017/18:

Information was shared and noted.

Budget allocations:

Information was shared and noted.

Mr Pugh thanked the Finance Teams for their hard work in producing budget information.

9. LAB RECOMMENDATIONS/ACTIONS:

Platt Bridge:

Mr Farrell, the new parent governor was settling in well.

Discussion took place about the vacancy for the Chair of the LAB. It was agreed that, due to the relative inexperience of the LAB, Mr Pugh would take on this role for the next academic year. Mr Pugh will mentor another governor to take on the role in September 2018.

The staff governor vacancies have been successfully filled.

The Board were asked to approve retaining the current admission procedures. This was approved.

Rose Bridge:

Two new parent governors have been elected, one with estates/premises management experience.

Mr Harmer and Mrs J Wood have been nominated for Chair and Vice Chair of the LAB. The Board agreed to these appointments.

The Board were asked to approve retaining the current admission procedures. This was approved.

City Year Project: Mrs Wood shared information with the Board and explained the proposal to utilise this project for CLA in school. The cost of £52,500 will be funded from Pupil Premium but will bring significant additional capacity to school. After discussion, the spend was approved.

It was noted that the Central Team will be reviewing the Scheme of Delegation in readiness for September and bring for approval at the next meeting.

Mr Ashton suggested taking advice from the DfE and RSC around governance and/or the two LABs to ensure that they are strong and have the correct personnel. Mrs Darbyshire advised that the RSC has been informed. In respect of governance, the next steps will be the addition of Committees at Board level.

School holiday pattern:

Both LABs put forward a recommendation to the Board to follow the Wigan pattern. This was approved. It was agreed that the January inset day be joint across the Trust, with the first day after October half term (29th) to be third inset day. The Central Team will organise the join inset event.

10. HR UPDATE

This was covered in the Central Team report.

11. GOVERNANCE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. To receive minutes and reports from Local Academy Boards
Trustees noted that these are available on the GVO once approved.
- b. Matters arising from Local Academy Board minutes and reports
Discussed previously.
- c. Board of Directors membership
Mr Pugh circulated information about the new appointments to the Board.
- d. Local Academy Board membership
Discussed previously.
- e. Trustee reports
There was nothing to report for this item.
- f. Trustee training update
RAISE online replacement will be organised for the autumn term.
A CFAT conference in autumn term was proposed (in advance of the joint inset day in January).
Safeguarding/PREVENT training – to include the Board, LAB members and SLT.
- g. Performance Management of the CEO for 2017/18
This was agreed for 9.30am on 25th September at Platt Bridge. The Committee was agreed as Mr Rowlands, Mr Pugh and Mr Ashton. Mrs Ardley was approved as External Adviser.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr Pugh read out a letter from Mrs Lewis who had resigned from the Board with effect from 6th June 2017. It was agreed that Mr Pugh would write a letter of thanks to Mrs Lewis on behalf of the Trust.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no items to be recorded under confidential minutes.

15. DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The 2017/18 schedule of meeting was circulated. It was agreed to add the AGM and the Account to the December meeting.

JP thanked all members of the Board, the CEO, the Central Team and the Headteachers for their contributions this year.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50pm.