

Board of Directors

Minutes: 15 July 2019
20/2019

Present: Isabel Cherrett (in the chair)
Peter Bethel
Nicola Dunford
Roy Gillard
Cheryl Mathieson
Fiona Walters

In attendance: Sue Howard as Clerk
Matt Matthew – Trust Business Manager

On behalf of the Board, the Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Academy Trust Improvement Lead Sarah Clarke presented to the Board on her new role and plans for School Improvement for 2019-20.

Apologies were accepted from: Michael Fisher and Jason Hayward-Jones

Declaration of Interest: There were no declarations of interest made

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting – 18/2019**

The Minutes of the meeting, Parts I and II, held on 20 May 2019 were approved and signed as an accurate record.

2. **Matters arising**

2.1 **Trust Data Protection Officer role**

The CEO reported to the Board on the importance of the Data Protection Officer (DPO) to ensure compliance for the Trust and had further investigated the responsibilities of the role. She had approached a current member of staff who is willing to move into the role and undertake the necessary training. Further discussions are to take place regarding hours needed for the role and these will be reviewed after an initial trial period. The Board approved this appointment and requested that the CEO update the Board following her work with the DPO. **Action CEO**

2.2 **Item 6 – CEO Report**

The Board noted that the Head Teacher Board met on 12 June 2019 and approved the Trust's submission for the Raleigh Federation (Drakes and Otterton) and Broadhempston; conversion for the three schools will be on 1 October 2019.

2.3 **MAT Review 2019**

The Board was asked to note the letter confirming the discussion with representatives of the Regional Schools Commissioner on 2 May 2019. This included a summary of the Trust's priorities to consolidate the good outcomes already being achieved, to manage the further growth of the Trust and to complete the recruitment to the Trust's Local Boards to ensure oversight of the proposed new joining converters.

2.4 **Risk Register**

• **Academies Causing Concern**

The CEO had prepared a template to support an overall assessment of a single academy where there is a cumulative set of issues that are causing or may cause concern. These will be completed whenever issues are highlighted and will be brought to the attention of the Board at future meetings.

- Catering

A section on the Risk Register relating to Catering being brought in-house has been added by the Chair. The Trust Business Manager (TBM) will complete the section.

3. **Audit Committee**

The Committee had not met since 20 May 2019. The TBM reported that preparation for the External Audit will begin in August. The Trust's external auditors, Bishop Fleming, had been invited to attend the Audit meeting scheduled for 12 November 2019 to present the draft Governance and Financial Statements. The Statements would also be considered by the F&GP Committee prior to presentation to the Board.

4. **Finance and General Purposes Committee**

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2019 – 3/2019

The Chair of F&GP reported to the Board and summarised the key discussions from the meeting held on 5 July 2019. Draft minutes to the Directors will be made available shortly. **Action Clerk**

4.2 Structural Survey of the temporary classroom at Bearnas

The TBM reported that the structural survey came back to report that the temporary classroom is safe for continued use.

5. **Remuneration Committee**

The Committee met on 5 July 2019; preparations are in hand for the review of salary changes which will be discussed at the next meeting in September.

6. **Standards and Curriculum Committee**

The Committee had not met since 20 May 2019. The CEO reported that the Local Boards' Working Party have met with very positive feedback feeling valued. She added that the Local Board meeting dates for 2019-20 have been scheduled to feed into the Standards and Curriculum Committee cycle.

7. **Financial Position as at the end of the third quarter 2018-2019**

The Chair reported that we are on track to achieve a budgeted surplus for the financial year 2018-19.

8. **Budget 2019-20**

The TBM presented the draft budget for 2019-20 including financial forecasts for the following four years, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 and summarised.

It was noted that whilst there are good reserves, the Board has a responsibility to hold these for 'exceptional items' and not to support the day-to-day operation of the individual academies. The TBM is overseeing the development of an Estates plan for all the schools and it is important to show an intention to spend these reserves in a way which benefits the pupils of those schools.

The Board was asked to note the key assumptions required by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This included the increase in Teachers' Pension Employers' Contributions from 16.48 pc to 23.68 pc from 2019-20; whilst this is to be funded for the 2019-20 year, there is no guarantee of funding for future years. Further assumptions included a 2pc year on year salary increase for teaching and support staff and an increase in Employers' Contributions for support staff in 2019-20.

The Board of Directors accepted the assumptions used in the preparation of the draft budget and financial forecasts to 2023-24 and **approved** the budget for 2019-20 which forecast a cumulative Trust surplus of £41,899. In respect of the Trust's nine schools, the Board further approved the submission of the Budget and financial forecasts to 2022-23 to the ESFA as the Budget Forecast Return 3 Year (BFR3Y) by the deadline of 30 July 2019 following review and

checks by the Trust's external auditors, Bishop Fleming. The Board further agreed to convene a discussion during the autumn to consider options to increase income to offset the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) which had not been increased and insufficient funding for the level of Teaching Assistant support which some pupils needed.

9. **CEO Report**

The CEO had produced a detailed report and this was available to the Board prior to the meeting. The Board congratulated those schools noted in Devon School Attendance Tables. The CEO had also produced a paper on the 2019 Headline results following SATS results and the Board gave thanks to Andy Keay for collating all the figures.

The Board have requested more information on the new Ofsted Framework for the October Meeting. **Action CEO**

10. **Governance**

10.1 **Resignations**

The Board formally noted that Miss Tracey Cleverly and Mr Simon Niles had resigned as Foundation Directors. The Chair had thanked both for the contributions to the Trust.

10.2 **Future Board Membership and new Appointment**

The Chair presented to the Board a paper regarding the future board membership outlining terms of office. The Chair and F&GP Chair had met with Jane Collins and supported the proposal that she should join the Trust as a Director with strength in Governance. Following discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to accept her appointment as a Foundation Director. This will be presented to the Members for approval followed by the Diocese.

The Chair declared her intention that she will not be looking to enter into a second term (March 2020). She then discussed her succession planning, but following further discussions, she agreed to extend her term of office to December 2020 in order to allow more time for the Board to choose a suitable replacement. The CEO emphasised the importance of this role and the need for strong governance going forward.

F&GP Chair advised the Board that he may also be looking to not enter a second term, so succession planning would be key to the future success of the Trust.

Committee Membership

Mrs Walters had agreed to join the Audit Committee on a temporary basis until vacancies were filled. She agreed to continue this for the Autumn term but agreed to step down from the F&GP Committee. She would now join the Standards & Curriculum Committee which would enable her to ensure that Christian Distinctiveness was considered as part of the S&C remit.

The CEO added that she is developing portfolio roles for Directors. Examples included Ms Mathieson (HR), Mr Hayward-Jones (Data).

11. **Local Boards**

The minutes of recent meetings of the local boards had not been available; the following would be to be presented at the first meeting in October 2019:

Woodleigh (22 May 2019); Newton & Teign (18 June 2019) and Totnes (20 June 2019)

12. **Safeguarding**

The Chair commented that safeguarding continues to be a challenge at Bearnese, but the CEO reassured the Board that staff are managing the issue very well.

13. **Policies for approval**

Following review by the relevant committees, the following policies were approved by the Board:

- Disclosure and Barring Service
- Professional Development Policy – Directors agreed this would be linked closely with the CPD Policy
- Travel and Expenses Policy

14. **Dates for 2019-20**

21/2019 Annual General Meeting 2019 – Monday 22 July 2019 at 6.00 pm

22/2019 Monday 7 October 2019

23/2019 Monday 9 December 2019

24/2020 Monday 10 February 2020

25/2020 Monday 18 May 2020

26/2020 Monday 13 July 2020

27/2020 Monday 20 July 2020 – Annual General Meeting

Meetings to commence at 4.00 pm

Issued:

IJC/BA

Signed as Approved Copy

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Mrs Isabel Cherrett

Date: 07.10.2019