
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Virtual Meeting held on Thursday 8 October 2020, 6:30pm

TRUSTEES PRESENT:	APOLOGIES:
Siraj Mayet (Chair) (SM)	Jeremy Townend (JT)
Mandy Kennedy (MK)	Mandip Sahota (MS)
Nailah Ahmed (NA)	
Trude Feiweles (TF)	
Ellen Loughhead JP (Vice Chair) (EL)	

IN ATTENDANCE:	
Julie Haigh (Trust CEO and Co-Head at BGHS) (JCH)	Laura Bland (Clerk) (LB)
Samantha Vickers (Trust Vice CEO and Headteacher at UBHS) (SV)	Hilary Towers-Islam (Primary Expert and Headteacher at Field Lane) (HTI)
Alan Brown (Trust Finance Director) (ABr)	Dave Cooper (Co-Head at BGHS) (DC)

	Minutes	Action
1.	<u>Chair's Welcome</u>	
	<p>The Chair welcomed all to the first virtual meeting of the 2020/21 academic year. In line with guidance, meetings will continue to be virtual, until advised otherwise.</p> <p><i>To note: the meeting started at 6:45pm due to the Outcomes Sub Committee meeting overrunning. Going forward, there will be a short break in between full and sub committee meetings.</i></p>	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence, consent and declarations of interest</u>	
	<p>Apologies had been received from Mandip Sahota and Jeremy Townend, with consent.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of interests made.</p>	
3.	<u>Representation</u>	
	<p><u>Audit Sub Committee</u> LB put forward JT to sit on the audit sub committee (as per his instruction and in his absence). MK also put herself forward to sit on the committee, but noted she could not Chair given her role as Chair of the Finance and Resource Sub Committee.</p>	

	<p>After much discussion, Trustees agreed that whilst it is good practice to have an audit sub committee, the Trust is not yet at the stage for it to be compulsory and whilst Trustees had put themselves forward, it was agreed that there was a need to expand the current Board of Trustees and the audit sub committee be a focus for a/future Trustee(s). ABr noted this and it was agreed to review this over the next 12 months.</p>	
4.	<u>Minutes of the last meeting (9 July 2020 and 13 August 2020)</u>	
	It was AGREED the minutes of the previous meetings were a true and accurate record.	
5.	<u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u>	
	<p><u>July Minutes</u> ABr explained each school had received some monies back from the exam boards (£5,000), but expected additional money back. There was no indication of when this money would be received.</p> <p>SV confirmed the Trust is signed up to the Connection Coalition and the main contact name is LB.</p> <p><u>August Minutes</u> EL told all she had recently joined the Trust's DSL network meeting and discussions had highlighted the overlap with Safeguarding and Mental Health, this is particularly pertinent in the 2020 Keeping Children Safe in Education document.</p> <p>EL/MK and HTI to follow up wellbeing conversations.</p> <p>NA to follow up with JCH/SV re: how to support with PP work.</p> <p>MK to review the unconscious bias training put together by HR and then feedback to Trustees.</p> <p>LB to diarise an additional meeting before the end of the calendar year.</p>	<p>EL/MK/ HTI</p> <p>NA</p> <p>MK</p> <p>LB</p>
6.	<u>Finance Update (ABr)</u>	
	<p>ABr confirmed auditors had been in school that week and would be visiting individual schools the remainder of the week. Much work had been carried out by ABr, to ease the pressure on the other schools and the auditors had been working as remotely/virtually as possible, but some work needed to be face-to-face at each of our schools.</p> <p>ABr made Trustees aware auditors had requested Terms of Reference for the F&R sub committee. JCH to follow up with ABr.</p> <p>ABr reminded Trustees the draft 2020/21 budget had been approved and presented an updated version for approval. Overall, the position had increased and this was due, in the main, to changes in staffing costs.</p> <p>No questions were asked and Trustees approved the updated budget.</p> <p>The Chair asked ABr to look into potential options of sourcing additional funding for investment into IT facilities. This would be Trust-wide. ABr explained this may be difficult, as funding tended to be for innovative ideas and not day to day provision, but would look and</p>	<p>JCH/ABr</p> <p>ABr</p>

	<p>report back to Trustees.</p> <p>ABr to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The costs of leasing equipment, rather than outright purchases. 2. Allocating capital funds from the new SCA pot. <p>SV added UBHS had submitted a bid of £139k to the British Red Cross, but was aware that, if successful, the full amount would not be granted.</p> <p>One of the areas of focus for the auditors is around 'Going concern'. This test looks to the future and considers whether an entity can reasonably be expected to continue in its operational existence for a period of at least 12 months. They look at the Trust as a whole and as well as individual schools. Field Lane has a very small forecast carry forward and this may be raised in the audit report. HTI confirmed 6 x new PP students had been confirmed since lockdown, with an additional x 4 since the start of September which increases the funding and is linked to January's census numbers. ABr to work with HTI to look at options moving forward.</p> <p>ABr left the meeting at 7:25pm.</p>	ABr/HTI
7.	<p><u>Career Opportunities</u></p>	
	<p>The Chair explained DC would present the impact of COVID-19 on the current climate in relation to Career Opportunities for students.</p> <p>For context, DC explained, the claimant count in West Yorkshire is now at its highest level since September 1987. This means there are now 131,900 claimants in Leeds City Region and 109,400 claimants in West Yorkshire, compared with March figures of 66,800 and 57,100 respectively.</p> <p>An economy recovery plan is in place, with the following key priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prevention of Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) and youth unemployment 2. Address inequality of access to learning 3. Building a strong skills offer for the West Yorkshire labour market 4. Delivering relevant and transferable skills - improved skills utilisation in the workplace <p>The landscape is not positive for those looking for employment or further education, and it was important to note there will be many challenges ahead for students.</p> <p>In relation to the 2019/20 Y13 cohort, there were a variety of destination routes. The vast majority secured University places (some locally, some outside of region), two completing additional qualifications at BGHS and 8 joining the BGHS Aspire to Educate programme. Given the Government's decision to make a u-turn on A-Level grades, DC was very pleased to report all applicants were now placed.</p> <p>Much work continues with the LEP. The Careers Hub has been granted a third year of operations.</p> <p>There is a Trust-wide approach to Careers for the 20/21 academic year, with Careers Leads across each school coming together to identify some common approaches and share solutions</p>	

	<p>to the challenges the year will bring, such as:</p> <p><u>Challenges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of staff shortages and not being able to have visitors in school. • Students are missing out on real, live communication to inspire and motivate. • Virtual work experience is no replacement for the real thing. <p><u>Solutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a Trust Careers Fair to include Trust primary schools. • Compile HE and Employer videos to create a virtual event - this would require technological expertise • Offer students the ability to have multiple experiences with a range of different employees - complete tasks set by the employer and engage in two way interactions. <p>Q. What level of expertise would be required to support a virtual event?</p> <p>A. Someone that has been involved in a similar event and has the knowledge on how to virtually capture a wide outreach of people.</p> <p>Q. Are there any particular sectors in mind?</p> <p>A. Universities initially.</p> <p>Trustees had no further questions and thanked DC for an insightful update. Trustees asked DC to attend a future meeting to share developments on the above. JCH/LB to coordinate.</p>	<p>JCH/LB</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Outcomes Sub Committee Summary</u></p>	
	<p>The Chair of the sub committee summarised the key points from the meeting.</p> <p>Given exams had not taken place and centre assessed grades had been applied, the format of the meeting was different to usual and the focus of the meeting was for each school to update the committee on their current position with regards to remote/blended learning and their catch up plan for lost learning and expected progress.</p> <p>Although there are some school-specific issues in relation to remote/blended learning, the Chair report many issues were common across the board, these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools had received their devices from DfE with Healey to follow. However, more devices across the Trust would be desirable. • Siblings sharing devices whilst at home is still a concern. • Moving forward, the technology that is available could be of a better spec. Colleagues agreed that whilst online lessons are likely to continue for the foreseeable, the skill set of staff would improve and in turn the technology will not be able to meet the new needs of online teaching. • Remote learning/delivering online learning CPD was discussed. This led to the suggestion of a Trust 'remote learning network' to share best practice amongst leads and the Trust Operations Manager to ensure costing is considered. • Consideration for SEND students - ensuring SEND students receive the same level of support (where possible). 	

	<p>The Chair had planned to discuss each school's catch up plan, but was not able to do this in the meeting, in detail. However, the CEO will cover this as part of the Autumn Support Discussion with each Head.</p> <p>The Chair explained that until the plan for 2021 assessments have been confirmed, it is difficult for schools to know what to focus on.</p> <p>The CEO was asked if she was confident that each school could deliver high quality learning in the current climate?</p> <p>The CEO explained, yes, albeit there will be some challenges to overcome.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>CEO Report</u></p>	
	<p>The Chair thanked the CEO for the report, which, given the current demands on Senior Leaders, was incredibly detailed and thorough. The CEO therefore summarised the key points only with a particular focus on COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The health and safety of students and staff, whilst ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum has been at the centre of all decision making and due to advice and guidance ever-changing, Senior Leaders have had to respond quickly, often within very short time constraints. They continue to work tirelessly in order to achieve this. - The key challenge across the Trust has been that families have sent students back to school when there are symptoms in the family household or household bubble, some of whom are awaiting test results - this is an ongoing issue. - All schools have been working closely with the LA Emergency Planning team who have been very supportive. - The Trust is working closely with the Relationships Manager. <p>Q. When a bubble/small group is closed down, is it a result of a positive test or someone showing symptoms?</p> <p>A. Occasionally, there is a more cautious approach (when School Leaders have background information), but as a rule, a bubble/small group is only closed when there is a positive case. Generally, families have been very supportive when closures have happened.</p> <p>The CEO presented an additional document summarising numbers across the Trust. LB to circulate to all Trustees following the meeting.</p> <p>Q. Is there a Trust CEO network for JCH to share concerns and gather good practice from other Trust?</p> <p>A. Yes, there is a CEO network. Both the CEO and Vice CEO attend.</p> <p>At a recent meeting, CEO's had recently discussed 2021 assessments and how outcomes may be determined. The CEO confirmed to Trustees that the Trust would not be supportive of exams returning for 2021.</p> <p>Trust Heads' meetings will revert to 1:1 support meetings.</p> <p>Risk Assessments are in place for vulnerable staff and continue to be reviewed where necessary.</p>	<p>LB</p>

	<p>BBEST meetings have proven very useful over recent months with much good practice shared amongst schools.</p> <p>Trust schools continue to support More in Common. There will be a launch of a new national campaign - 'Winter Great Get Together' to try and bring together communities over the upcoming months in what will be very difficult times for everyone.</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing remains a priority for staff and students across the Trust. There is a larger focus on this in the 2020 KCSIE document.</p> <p>Trust monitoring visits will go ahead throughout the Autumn term - these will be supportive discussions to pull together good practice and discuss the difficulties Heads and their schools have faced over recent months.</p> <p>Growth plans for the Trust have currently been postponed. Funding sources will however be explored in the Spring term.</p> <p>The CEO directed all to the Current Challenges of the Trust, but stressed the importance of seeing beyond COVID-19.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p> <p>Trustees thanked the CEO and extended their thanks to all staff across all schools.</p> <p>DC left the meeting at 8.10pm.</p>	
10.	<u>Compliance and Governance</u>	
	<p>a) Terms of Reference - LGBs</p> <p>Trustees agreed to APPROVE the proposed document.</p> <p>b) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy</p> <p>Trustees agreed to APPROVE this policy.</p> <p>c) Equality and Diversity Policy</p> <p>Trustees agreed to APPROVE this policy.</p> <p>d) Gifts and Hospitality</p> <p>Trustees agreed to APPROVE this policy.</p> <p>e) Managing Allegations of Abuse Against Staff</p> <p>Trustees agreed to APPROVE this policy.</p> <p>f) Admissions Policy 2022/23</p>	

	For information, BGS have expressed an interest to adopt the Trust's Admission Policy from 2022/23.	
11.	<u>Safeguarding Update</u>	
	<p>EL directed all to the Safeguarding report that had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updates to the 2020 KCSIE document have been reflected in the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. - There is a big focus on mental health and safeguarding. - The Trust DSL network is working on a DSL job description to reflect the 2020 KCSIE changes. - At the last DSL meeting, concerns were raised about the process of monitoring school equipment that is being used at home potentially for 'other purposes'. This will be covered by policy, which will be put together by the Operations Manager and remote learning leads. <p>Trustees present confirmed they had read and understood their responsibilities as outlined in the 2020 KCSIE document. <i>Absent Trustees have also confirmed this via email following the meeting.</i></p>	
12.	<u>AOB</u>	
	<p>The Chair confirmed he had recently attended an Action Learning Group Meeting for MAT Chairs, hosted by the RSC which had been very positive. Trustees discussed recruitment, governance and long term planning. The Chair will provide more details at the meeting with the Vice Chair of Trustees, CEO and Vice CEO.</p> <p>The CEO thanked Trustees for their support over recent months and extended thanks to LB for her support with meeting preparation.</p> <p>Meeting close at 8:20pm.</p>	
13.	<p>Next meeting(s): 3rd December 2020, 6:30pm - Presentation of Accounts 3rd December 2020, 7:30pm - Strategy Discussion</p>	