



Trust Board - Minutes

Minutes of the Board of Trustees held on Thursday 21st March at 9:30am at Academy House.

Trustees: Mrs A Firth (Chair), Mr J Dunn (Vice Chair), Dr J Blunden (Chief Executive), Mrs A George, Mr C Waldie, Mr M Tucker, Mr J Green, Mr A Milliner, Mr D Austin, Ms Anne-Marie Sim

Also Present: Mr S Davis (Chief Financial Officer), Mrs B Couch (Head of Corporate Governance), Mrs J Harvey (item 4), Mrs H Andrew (item 5), Mr C Pickles (item 6), Mrs E Burley (Minute Taking)

Apologies: Ms A Hutchinson, Mrs A Bull, Mrs S Flack

Item	Decision	Action
1.	Governance Business	
1.1	Apologies Apologies were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Ms A Hutchinson, Mrs A Bull and Mrs S Flack.	
1.2	Declaration of business and pecuniary interests and approval of register Trustees APPROVED the previously circulated register of interests and confirmed there were no additional declarations.	
1.3	Public and confidential minutes of the meeting of 30th January 2024 The public and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 30 th January 2024 were ACCEPTED as a true and accurate record of proceedings.	
1.4	Matters arising (not otherwise covered in the agenda) Trustees were INFORMED that following the recruitment for a Trust Procurement Lead an appointment has been made.	
1.5	Chair's Business None.	
1.6	Corporate Governance report Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report. Trustees NOTED that as part of the Trustee Strategy Day, the local governance role is to be reviewed with recommendations which will further clarify the role at local governance level. Trustees NOTED that the SoDA currently states the recommending of budgets to the Trust board sits with the local governing boards, however this does not align with the	

	<p>3. Director of Education report to include behaviour</p> <p>The Chair of Trustees SHARED that she was disappointed that there had not been a written report from the Director of Education for this meeting.</p> <p><u>Behaviour Policy</u> Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated Behaviour Policy.</p> <p>Trustees were INFORMED that the policy had been put together by the Behaviour Lead to provide consistency across the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees QUESTIONED how the schools own procedures would fit into the policy and were INFORMED that there is a certain amount of adaption that schools are able to do to ensure the policy is fit for purpose.</p> <p>There was a DISCUSSION around mobile phone use in schools and which policy this falls under. Trustees were INFORMED that this is covered under the safeguarding and acceptable use policies which run alongside the behaviour policy.</p> <p>Trustees REQUESTED that clear reference is made to the use of mobile phones in the acceptable use policy and that the referencing of different policies is looked at.</p> <p>A Trustee pointed out an error for correction in wording in paragraph 9 of the policy which requires clarity.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the behaviour policy (to include the minor amendments) from September 2024 with a review in the summer term 2025.</p> <p>Trustees THANKED the behaviour lead for the work in putting together the policy.</p>	<p>Referencing of policies and paragraph 9 of Behaviour policy to be looked at.</p>
	<p>4. Safeguarding Lead report</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the RAG rated strategic outcomes to date.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that there are two remaining schools to transfer to CPOMS after the Easter holidays, once these have transferred consistent reporting will be ready to roll out over the summer term.</p> <p>Trustees were INFORMED that a pupil survey for all pupils across the Trust is to be rolled out in the Summer term which will help identify areas of focus.</p> <p>Trustees THANKED the Safeguarding lead for her ongoing hard work.</p>	
	<p>5. Director of People and Strategy report</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report.</p> <p>Trustees were INFORMED that following the last meeting where an employee benefit scheme had been discussed the HR team have been gathering school feedback from Headteachers and staff. The main feedback is that the majority feel that they would like support with health and finance. These areas are now being researched and a report will be available for the next Board meeting.</p>	

	<p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report and NOTED the data gathered on the age profile of staff across the Trust.</p> <p><i>Mr M Tucker left the meeting at 12:20pm.</i></p> <p>Trustees NOTED that the Trust have been informed by the JNC that the first aid allowance has increased nationally by 3.88%. Trustees NOTED that there are 45 employees in receipt of the allowance across the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the implementation of the new increased first aid allowance back dated to 1st April 2023.</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated LGPS employer discretions policy.</p> <p>A Trustee QUESTIONED the early retirement on the grounds of redundancy point on page 3 of the policy which could incur a large cost to the Trust and felt that it needs to be clear that it would be on a case by case basis.</p> <p>A Trustee QUESTIONED the point ‘whether to waive any actuarial reduction on pre and/or post April 2014 benefits paid early on compassionate grounds’ on page 4 of the policy requesting that further clarity is included.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the policy with the above amendments.</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED and APPROVED the wellbeing and workload charter.</p>	<p>Amendments to the LGPS employer discretions policy</p> <p>Director of People and Strategy</p> <p>To circulate wellbeing and workload charter</p>
6.	Chief Finance Officer’s report	
6.1	<p>Management accounts, balance sheet, Cashflow and KPI’s as at 31st January 2024</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated reports and NOTED the overall position for the Trust for the period ending 31st January 2024 – taking into account the balance sheet, cashflow and KPIs.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the mixture of pressures throughout schools in particularly with SEN staffing and supply pressures continuing.</p>	
6.2	<p>Reserves Policy</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated reserves policy, and NOTED the proposal that the Trust as a whole should maintain a reserve with a view to achieve a level of at least the value of 5% of the Trusts total annual income and that the deployment of non-school reserves is considered only in the Trust-wide context.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the updated reserves policy.</p>	<p>Circulate approved reserves policy.</p>
6.3	<p>Forward Budget Assumptions 2024 – 2027</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report.</p> <p>Trustees were INFORMED that the forward budget assumptions are as accurate as currently possible however there are still unknowns such as inflation and teacher pay awards.</p> <p>Trustees were INFORMED that the management accountants have been working hard with schools and currently a 2 million pound saving has been made which is a promising start.</p>	

	<p>A Trustee QUESTIONED if there was enough HR capacity to support where savings were being made with redundancies and was ASSURED that HR have been supporting schools with any redundancies and decisions.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the school funding position for 2024/25 and the pupil numbers upon which the figures are based.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the assumptions to be used in setting school budgets for financial years 2024/25 through to 2026/27.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the approach to determine MAT Central Budgets for 2024/25.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the approach to reviewing centralisation principles and top-slice calculation.</p>	
<p>6.4</p>	<p>Investment Policy</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report and proposed Investment policy.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that the Trust ended the Financial Year 2022/23 with a Cash Balance of c£10.7m having earned c£52k in bank interest on Cash Balances in year. Analysis by Bishop Flemming Chartered Accountants flagged the current process for review.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that other MAT's within the Queens Street Group have indicated they are currently achieving returns in excess of 5% per annum on placed deposits through active cash management via a cash investment platform.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the Trusts proposal to move to the same model and DISCUSSED the two options.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that the risk and audit committee would have overall responsibility of the cash investment platform with the day to day responsibility falling with the CFO.</p> <p>Trustees REQUESTED the following addition to be added to the policy for clarity; The deposit limitation will not be applied to the institution which acts as the Trust's primary bank.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the implementation of an appropriate cash management platform.</p> <p>Trustee APPROVED the Investment policy with the adjustment stated above.</p>	<p>Amendment to Investment policy and circulate</p>
<p>6.5</p>	<p>School Resource Management self-assessment</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report and SRMA toolkit checklist.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED and APPROVED the 2023 submission of the school resource management self-assessment tool checklist.</p>	
<p>6.6</p>	<p>Advantage Phase 2 Update</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that following phase 2 of the Advantage Program rollout the Trust have been advised by the supplier that the 9th Generation iPad is highly likely to be discontinued. This accelerates the necessity to lock in purchases and a time limited opportunity to secure iPad requirement for September 2024.</p>	

	<p>Trustees NOTED and DISCUSSED the two main purchasing options available to the Trust, Lease or Buy, with the outcome that economically the 4 Year Capital proposal appears better value in cash terms than the equivalent Leasing option.</p> <p>Trustees QUESTIONED how the Trust would access manufacturing parts for repairs for the discontinuing devices and were INFORMED that Apple keep a number of devices for repair and maintenance. Trustees were INFORMED that there would also be a Trust set of devices as spares to support schools where needed.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the uplift of purchased devices for this phase by 446.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the purchase on a capital basis, at a cost of c£797,000, noting that c£335,000 will be committed in 23/24 and c£462,000 will be committed in 24/25.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the immediate impact of this decision on the Trust's underlying Reserves position.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the interaction of this decision with the 24/25+ budget setting process.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the procurement position.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the centralised approach to resilience.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the Guidance on Reasonable Charges</p>	
<p>6.7</p>	<p>Capital monitoring to 31st January 2024</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated reports and NOTED the summary financial position for Capital for the Trust for the period ending 31st January 2024.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the move of the Mousehole Safeguarding Fencing Project - £106,500 to be funded by 2023/24 SCA. This includes an additional approval of £45,000 from the initial estimates provided in March 2023.</p>	
<p>6.8</p>	<p>Confidential contract approval</p> <p><i>For confidential contract approval please see confidential minutes.</i></p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Director of Operations report</p> <p>Trustees RECEIVED the previously circulated report.</p> <p>A Trustee SHARED that new building regulations were coming into force which include new client responsibilities and was ASSURED that the Trust would consider this when looking at future profiles.</p> <p>A Trustee QUESTIONED why some staff in schools were not completing their safesmart training and was INFORMED that this is often due to sickness and absence.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the recent RPA audit in Mullion Secondary and Roche Primary schools which are awaiting report.</p>	

	<p>A Trustee ASKED how the increase in SARs is impacting and was INFORMED that it has triggered increased use of the DPO (PHP Law) and added administrative burden on schools and central teams.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that the process is currently being looked at and the balance between schools, the central team and the DPO. Trustees were INFORMED that as understanding is improved the aim is to limit the use of the DPO.</p>	
	<p>Date of next meetings:</p> <p>Trust Strategy Day – Wednesday 24th April, Hayle Academy and Bodriggy Schools Full Board – Thursday 23rd May 2024, 0900 Risk and audit committee – Wednesday 22nd May 2024, 1600</p>	

Pending	In progress	Complete	Outstanding		
Number	Action			Who	By When
Minutes 21.03.24					
Number from minutes					
1.6	Amendment to the SoDA			BC	
1.6	Dates to be sent to all members of committee			BC	
3.	Referencing of policies and paragraph 9 of Behaviour policy to be looked at.			JW/TL	
5.	Amendments to the LGPS employer discretions policy			HA	
5.	To circulate wellbeing and workload charter			HA	
6.2	Circulate approved reserves policy.			EB	
6.4	Amendment to Investment policy and circulate			SD/EB	