

Board of Trustees
Wednesday 7 July 2021, 1.30pm
Virtual Meeting via Teams

Attended:

Andy Mulcock (AM) - Chair
 David Hall (DH)
 Moira Marder (MM)
 Saxon Spence (SS)
 Lee Elliot Major (LEM)
 Rob Bosworth (RB)

Philip Bostock (PB)
 Richard Jacobs (RJ)
 Sarah O’Meara (SO)
 Alex Walmsley (AW)

Charlotte Davies – Director of Business & Operations (CD)
 Jon Lunn – Director of Education Performance (JL)

Sue Pym – Director of Finance (SP)
 Tim Rutherford (TR) – Deputy CEO

In Attendance:

Tamsin Frances (TF) – Strategic Projects Lead for Item 5 & 6 only

Meeting Minutes

Item Ref	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>AM welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Crispin Taylor (CT).</p> <p>Declarations of interest were noted, as follows: AW: Director, First Federation Trust. DH: Exeter University</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Previous meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 26.05.21 were approved as a full and accurate record. All actions were recorded as complete.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p><u>CEO Performance Management</u> – AM confirmed that this had been undertaken and that a new CEO salary scale was now in place. A pay award had been agreed and had been backdated to 01.04.21.</p>	

<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Strategy for 2021</u></p> <p>TR gave a presentation on the Trust Strategy for 2021-22. A copy of the presentation was circulated with the minutes.</p> <p>The Trust is a vibrant network of schools. TR emphasised that schools were at the centre of the Trust and needed to operate as unique and special places for their own communities. The Ted Wragg Offer was shared and is consistent in all schools.</p> <p>The Trust must also collaborate with schools outside of the Trust and TR confirmed the language for the ways in which this was achieved.</p> <p>There were six key priority areas for the focus of work within schools.</p> <p>Networks and communication – need to develop leaders, and vibrant trust networks supporting both vertically and horizontally. Supplementary responsibilities would be key going forwards.</p> <p>Communication – schools are at the heart of this, and it is important to ensure that the work of Business Services is effective in schools.</p> <p>SS queried how differentiation was made between different types of curriculum methods to allow each child’s needs to be met. TR confirmed that all schools had made an assumption on the best way that children learn. The learning model, had not been widely contested.</p> <p>The learning environment was linked to memory and moving information from short-term to long-term memory. This could help to identify the barriers where children were struggling and lead to better communication. It was key to understanding the pedagogy that sits behinds the curriculum planning.</p> <p>MM noted that there was no further money available and that existing funds would have to be moved within the sector. MM wanted to explore ways of supporting Teaching Assistants to develop to be able to support SEND children. This could be achieved by providing training, appointing on appropriate grades, and reviewing the way that the roles were utilised. This was a big challenge and one that the Trust wanted to grasp.</p> <p>TR noted the 8 principles of excellent teaching that were adhered to within the Trust. These were split between coaching and subject mastery.</p> <p>Schools need to be more explicit about the ways in which they believe children will learn. Creative divergence is important but there also needs to be a clear explanation of the rationale for this.</p> <p>LEM noted that effective feedback was the second part of teaching. He noted the potential of explicit sessions to get feedback from children and queried if there was a policy for this within the Trust. TR noted that the assessment policy was not yet consistent across every school however some parts were agreed for classroom practice. There was not an explicit feedback mechanism, but there were best practice principles which needed to be understood and shared.</p> <p>TR also noted that, without the feedback coming from primary schools currently, there could be benefits from mandating a test on entry into Year 7.</p>	
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	<p>DH noted the tensions between standardisation and professionalism. Trusts need to develop challenging and robust professionalism, this was often at a subject level within schools. DH noted some concern that descent could be silenced by the hierarchy and that it was important to encourage constructive forms of descent.</p> <p>TR noted the need for clarity on how children learn, to effectively allocate resources. There should be a clear model for reading and maths.</p> <p>JL also noted that immediate feedback was best. Live feedback within schools was for teachers to move and circulate within classes to give immediate feedback to children during tasks. There were automated feedback methods built in. There was also some good work being done in the primary sector on pre-teaching.</p> <p>It would be beneficial to flip the model to be a Trust of Schools where the schools are the “engine room” of the Trust.</p> <p>TR confirmed that Relentlessly Positive Collaboration was the message for the Trust going forwards.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Governance Review Final Sign Off</u></p> <p>TF joined the meeting for this item.</p> <p>TF recapped the outcomes of the Governance Review and the strategic response to this. The revised Governance Structure had been previously agreed by the Board so the key task was to sign off the documents developed following the review.</p> <p>TF noted that the <u>Scheme of Delegation</u> had been amended slightly to make roles clearer and to ensure, where possible, that there was only one group with overall responsibility for each item. Confirmation had been received from PHP Law that this was compliant. The Scheme of Delegation was Approved.</p> <p><u>Board of Trustees Terms of Reference & Cycle of Business</u> – These were agreed.</p> <p><u>Education Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> – These were agreed.</p> <p><u>Growth & Development Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> – these were agreed</p> <p><u>Chairs Governance Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> – these were agreed</p> <p><u>Finance & Resources Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> – these were agreed</p> <p><u>Audit & Risk Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> – these were agreed.</p> <p><u>LGB Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> these had been updated further following working party involvement. Feedback had also been received and incorporated from the Diocese. These were agreed.</p> <p>TF gave an update on the signing off process for the remaining documents.</p>	

<p><u>Governance Handbook</u> – this was being developed and would be a working document, updated at least annually. The aim was to bring all relevant information together into one document. The handbook would be available on the Staff Hub and a link would be circulated to Trustees.</p> <p>Action: MF to send Staff Hub log in details and link to Governance Handbook to Trustees.</p> <p>RJ noted the large amount of documentation being developed. He queried if there was a simple guide that could be given to parents to incorporate the ethos and provide guidance on the Trust. An easy reading document would be beneficial. TF noted that the Ted Wragg Offer was a short document and was a more simplified version that broke topics down into the basics.</p> <p>TR also noted the ongoing work with parents and staff, and being clear about what the Trust represents. There needed to be a comfortable balance between school identities and the benefits that the Trust brought. AM agreed with the need for documents being appropriate for the correct audience.</p> <p><u>LGB Chairs Group Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business</u> the draft versions would be discussed by the LGB Chairs Group at their meeting in October for sign off at the December Board of Trustees meeting.</p> <p><u>Education Panels</u> – The timeline for panels still needed to be agreed and would be reviewed by the Education Committee on 10.11.21.</p> <p>A draft proposal had been circulated for the Education Scrutiny Panel. TF ran through the feedback process of the panel and how this would feed back to the Board via the Education Committee. This would be a transparent process and would be an opportunity to enhance best practice across the schools.</p> <p>DH queried the phrase “intensive care” and whether the term was appropriate or being widely used in the sector. TR noted a successful model of intensive support was currently being used effectively at the College. It was agreed that “Intensive Support” would be a more appropriate term. DH confirmed that he was happy with this.</p> <p>The Inclusion and Social Justice Panel still required more input. The initial proposal was for a similar format to the Education Scrutiny Panel in terms of the cycle of business and the way they would meet. The focus of the first meeting of the panel on 28.09.21 would be to look at developing the model for the Board of Trustees to agree. The DS and SENCo network dates across the Trust would link into this panel to allow for collaborative working.</p> <p>SS noted that this would be a crucial part of the Trust’s commitment to the vision. She queried if giving the panel responsibility to look at outcomes or destinations of students should be included. With the current strong links with Exeter College this could be straight forward. TR noted that this was picked up within line management but could be shared more widely. The Education Committee would be able to stipulate to the scrutiny panels any specific items of focus for the year. RB agreed that Exeter College Transition Co-ordinators could do more work with the panel in terms of transition. He felt that the panel was a good sign of the evolution.</p> <p>RB also noted that the panel would get close to the data and detail, and that he would value the return of the learner voice data on the agenda. The learner voice used in a qualitative way would be welcome. i.e. case studies. TR noted that his would be welcomed, within the governance structure and that student parliament feedback may be a supplemental duty for</p>	<p>MF</p>
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	<p>one of the Deputies. JL noted that, within the review pilot, feedback from eight groups of children had been standardised and that student voice was a pivotal part of this.</p> <p>DH noted the improvement plans and the timings within the cycle. In the summer term there was an emphasis in terms of improvement planning and he noted the need to adjust these plans, in the light of performance data, and queried how this would be included in the whole cycle of the year. A tweaking of the language could convey this more appropriately.</p> <p>TF noted the balance between detail and sharing the key points. Student voice would also be fed back from the work of the linked governors, this was currently being finalised. The processes would need to be agile and flexible to respond to the needs as they arose.</p> <p>TR noted the need for considering timescales and that it was hard to implement any strategic changes beyond September. He queried whether the strategic plan should be broken down into cycles, but this needed to work for the Trust.</p>	
6.	<p>Vision & Values</p> <p>TF gave an update on the Trust’s refreshed vision and values. The Trust’s vision working party had agreed the language and launched this with school leaders and new starters.</p> <p>The importance of embedding the language simply across the Trust community was agreed, and this would include communicating clearly via the website. It was agreed that the message was powerful and needed to be out there and consistent.</p> <p>There was still a piece of work around values to be completed to look at how schools could articulate the vision.</p> <p>RJ noted the importance of engaging with parents and queried if there was a system of regular communication with parents, for example a regular Trust update. He was keen to see a community of parents being developed. TR agreed that this was important for both parents and staff. A full communication review was needed for the Trust. This would be a significant piece of work.</p> <p>SS suggested that, as there was now a new County Council, it would be positive to send a Trust document to the new councillors with Trust schools in their wards. PB also suggested including City Councillors in this. Action: TR /TF to take this forward and report back to October Board Meeting on where this has been shared.</p> <p>AM noted the hard work of TF in leading the work on the Governance Review and extended thanks to all who had contributed.</p> <p>TF left the meeting at 14:00</p>	TR/ TF
7.	<p>Appointments & Resignations</p> <p><u>Appointments</u> The recent LGB appointments were noted and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ernie Lloyd – Chair, Whipton LGB • Rich Dear – Co-opted, Whipton LGB • Joanne Hill – Co-opted, Whipton LGB • Sarah Robinson – Co-opted, Whipton LGB • Sarah O’Shea – Co-opted, West Exe 	

	<p>It was noted that Steve Strang had been appointed as Chair of CEC LGB to replace Sarah O’Shea who was moving to West Exe.</p> <p>AM noted that three new Governors and a Chair had been appointed at Whipton Barton. SOM confirmed that she would be undertaking a handover with Ernie Lloyd, the incoming Chair. The Clerk role advert was now live and SOM was hopeful that an appointment would be made</p> <p>MF to send out appointment letters to newly appointed Governors.</p>	<p>MF</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Trustee Recruitment Update</p> <p>Lindsay Hetherington from the University of Exeter would be joining the Board of Trustees and would be formally appointed at the October meeting.</p> <p>AM also noted discussions with other potential Trustees. MM and AM were meeting with Ben Manning from Plymouth City College on 08.07.21.</p> <p>PB would be continuing as a Trustee for a further term of four years. MF to send a letter of confirmation to PB and amend all records.</p>	<p>MF</p>
<p>For Approval</p>		
<p>9.</p>	<p>Approval of Budget for 2021-22</p> <p>SP confirmed that the Budget had been recommended for approval by the Finance & Resources Committee on 23.06.21, where it had been reviewed in detail.</p> <p>Trustees were requested to approve the budget for 2021-22, the medium-term financial plan and the submission to the ESFA.</p> <p><u>Letter to Academies Financial Officers</u> SP noted the letter received from Baroness Berridge outlining the key changes to the Academies Financial Handbook from 1 September 2021. MF to circulate the new version of the Academy Trust Handbook to all Trustees.</p> <p><u>Budget 2021-22</u> SP noted the key points to be considered when approving the budget.</p> <p>Trustees approved the proposed Trust Budget for 2021-22.</p> <p>Trustees agreed the medium-term forecast and budget being submitted to the ESFA</p> <p>AM thanked SP for her hard work with the budget.</p> <p>A full record of the Discussion is in Part B of the Minutes</p>	<p>MF</p>

For Monitoring

10.	<p>Finance & Risk Update</p> <p><u>Finance & Resources</u> – the last meeting on 23.06.21 focussed on the budgets and the April management accounts.</p> <p>The main point arising from capital spend, under the present financing model, was that the Committee were receiving several approval requests for relatively modest amounts of money. The thresholds would be reviewed so that the Committee only received requests for larger amounts going forwards.</p> <p><u>Audit & Risk</u> – the first meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee was also held on 23.06.21. The Terms of Reference had been agreed and membership discussed.</p> <p>The internal assurance reports and audit processes were reviewed. No problems were identified.</p> <p>The committee had requested that cyber security was an area of focus. A detailed review was undertaken against the ESFA Checklist and there was now a greater awareness of cyber risks to the Trust. Two key points arising were to understand the risks and, secondly, accepting that the risks were there and ensuring that suitable systems and processes were in place.</p> <p>A Chair was needed for the Audit committee. The new Academy Trust Handbook had confirmed that the Finance & Resources Committee and Audit & Risk Committee Chairs could not be the same person. It had been agreed that a new Chair could shadow the existing Chair for the first meeting and be appointed at the end.</p> <p><u>ASAP Sports Hall</u> – A working group had been set up to review the ASAP Sports Hall planning.</p> <p>CD confirmed that the funding provided would be based on the DfE specification and that additional costs would need to be funded by the Trust.</p> <p>CD gave an update on the current position. A technical advisor had been appointed through the DfE procurement framework and was reviewing the current plans. They would come back with a more detailed procurement proposal and design based on their specification. The response was expected within the next week and would be circulated to the Working Group.</p> <p>CD noted that the current licence arrangements with the YMCA were in place until September 2022, however it was likely that the new build would not be completed until Spring 2023. There was a contingency plan for the sports provision over that period. An extension of the current lease was being discussed at a meeting with the YMCA w/c 12.07.21.</p> <p>AW noted that there was a substantial gap in investment in the project of approx. £1m for which the Trust would need to pay.</p>
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11.	<p>Committee Updates</p> <p><u>Education Committee</u></p> <p>There was no specific update from the Education Committee.</p> <p><u>Growth Committee</u></p> <p>PB confirmed that the Lipson transfer had been approved by the Headteacher Board on 06.07.21 which was encouraging.</p> <p>South West Exeter New School – will now not open until September 2023.</p> <p>A full record of the Discussion is in Part B of the Minutes.</p> <p><u>Chairs Committee</u> had met informally and were being active in planning ahead.</p>	
12.	<p>PFI / Fusion Update</p> <p>The Fusion Board had met on 30.06.21.</p> <p>AW noted that the DfE had not yet signed off the transfer of the contract, and Fusion was still running on letters of content.</p> <p>St Peters and Wynstream were still supportive of the Trust’s work on the project which was very positive.</p> <p>A full record of the Discussion is in Part B of the Minutes</p>	

Items for Information		
13.	<p>Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>The Risk Register had been reviewed at the Audit & Risk Committee and there had not been a significant number of changes.</p> <p>It had been agreed to revisit the scoring mechanism behind the Risk Register and to review this at the next Audit & Risk Committee. Some risks appeared to be RAG rated lower than expected using the existing scoring matrix.</p> <p>No new risks had been added since the previous meeting.</p>	
14.	<p>Governance Meeting Dates 2021/22</p> <p>MF confirmed that dates had been confirmed and circulated. Venues were still to be finalised but the intention was to meet within the Trust Schools depending on the capability of the venues.</p>	

Any Other Business

David Hall – AM extended thanks to David who would be stepping down from the Board at the end of the academic year. MM noted DH’s positive leadership of the Education Committee that had helped the Trust to value other areas and to value the whole child. DH had given a new way of thinking and the Trust would do better now because of David’s input. DH would be missed but he was leaving the Trust in a stronger place.

DH noted the great strength of the Trust and noted his appreciation of the support from the Executive and Board.

AM was looking at interim arrangements for the Chairing of the Education Committee in the Autumn Term. SOM was open to this possibility.

AM extended thanks to all the Trustees and Executive for their hard work during the year.

The meeting closed at: 15:30

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 20 October 2021, 4.30pm, St Luke’s School

Signed by the Chair of the Board:



Date: 20.10.21