

MINUTES OF TRUST BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday 3rd July 2024
Time: 10.00am
Venue: Priestnall School

Clerk: N Burgess
Present: M Vevers, T Little, A Gilmour, G Turnpenney, C Nevin, L Woolley, D Woolley, D Brown, W Mason, J Crawford, D Kershaw, L Magrath and S McGill (via Teams)

| | Action | Initials |
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| 1 | Trustees to inform the Clerk of any changes to their record of business interests | All |
| 3 | To provide Trust Assurance Framework review document to Members at AGM | NB |
| 4 | Produce a summary of detailed measures of success for Trust Development Plan | MV |
| 6 | Send calendar invites for all meetings for the next academic year | NB |

| Agenda – Part 1 | | | | |
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| Category | Item | Notes | Action | |
| 1 | Governance Arrangements | Apologies | Apologies were received and accepted from J Crombleholme | |
| | | AOB items | There were no other items of business which were not included in the agenda for this meeting. | |
| | | Register of Interests | The Register of Business Interests was circulated and Trustees were asked to notify the Clerk of any changes to their record | All |
| | | Minutes of the last Trust Board meeting | Minutes of the meeting held 1 st May 2024 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and there were no matters arising which would not be covered in the agenda for this meeting. | |
| | | Scheme of Delegation | <p>The Scheme of Delegation has been fully reviewed by the Executive Team. It has been reviewed and compared to other trusts, both nationally and locally, in-line with sector guidance.</p> <p>The document is more streamlined and user friendly and very clearly defines the delegated functions. The Scheme of Delegation is underpinned by the Articles of Association and Funding Agreement.</p> <p>Q – It is Trustee responsibility to monitor financial and</p> | |

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| | | | <p>educational performance. As Trustees how do we ensure we receive enough information to be able to do this?</p> <p>A – Sub-committees pick up this work and report back at full Trust Board meetings. We would not wish to cover all of this work at Trust Board meetings as this would be duplication and not best use of time. Chairs of sub-committees can flag any issues via Trust Board meetings.</p> <p>With regards to educational performance there is also the link visits which are completed by Trustees with the Trust Directors. In addition, the Trust Board and Academy Committee focus is always on outcomes at the first meeting of the academic year.</p> <p>In terms of finance, for next academic year we have changed the schedule of meetings so that the Finance and Resources committee meeting will be held before the final Trust Board meeting, to allow for approval of the budget. It is always difficult when setting the budget in July as there are some figures which are not known until September.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the Scheme of Delegation.</p> | |
| | | Schedules of Business | <p>The Schedules of Business have been updated for the forthcoming academic year. The Schedule of Business informs the agendas for all meetings.</p> <p>Trust Board Schedule of Business is set to ensure Trustees fulfil their delegated functions. There will be 5 meetings per year. Meeting 4 will be for self-evaluation and will look at areas of the Trust Development Plan.</p> <p>The Academy Committee Schedule of Business has been refined to allow for the reduction of 4 to 3 meetings per academic year. Student and pupil outcomes will be the main focus for the first meeting of the year.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the Schedules of Business.</p> | |
| | | Terms of Reference | <p>There were no major changes to the Terms of Reference circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>CN had devised a draft Terms of Reference for Academy Committees and this document will be reviewed ongoing.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the terms of reference for Trust Board and all Trust Board committees.</p> | |

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| | | | <p>funding, and with them bring additional income due to additional student numbers.</p> <p>Q – To open Laurus Grace early and for transition groups have you had to recruit additional staff?</p> <p>A – There have been no additional staff recruited and we have been able to redeploy existing staff. We will need to recruit LSAs for Priestnall due to the increase in student numbers in the Resource Base. We will also need to recruit additional LSAs at Ryecroft for September due to an increased number of students who have an EHCP.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the capital projects.</p> | |
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| | | Trust Growth | <p><u>Trust Growth opportunities</u></p> <p>There has been an application from a Stockport Primary School to join the Trust and this decision is awaiting approval from the RSC. There has also been initial interest from another local primary school.</p> <p>The RSC office had contacted LM with a view to look at another Trust joining Laurus Trust. This was not something Leaders would wish to progress with at this time.</p> <p>There has also been an approach by Director of Education for Stockport with regards to a local high school. This is something which will need to be considered but is in the very early stages. LM to arrange a visit to the school.</p> <p>LM noted that in order to grow there would need to be growth within the Central Services team and also Trust Directors to have capacity to take up the opportunities.</p> <p>Trustees acknowledged the need to be cautious to not grow to fast and that it may not be possible to take advantage of every opportunity. Trustee thoughts on the update given were requested.</p> <p>In terms of another Trust joining the Trust if was felt that the due diligence process would need to be fully reviewed and adapted as this would be a very different process than a single school joining.</p> <p>Geographical locations of schools joining the Trust would always be a big consideration. Another Trust joining would be something which would need careful consideration of all issues.</p> <p><u>Laurus Grace</u></p> <p>D Woolley will be the Executive Headteacher for Laurus Grace and M Sackville-Ford is Head of School.</p> <p>Laurus Grace is an alternative provision for 11-16 students with SEMH issues. There is a high demand for places for students within the LA.</p> <p>The initial free school application to open was submitted in 2016. The opening has been brought forward in temporary accommodation until completion of the new build. A significant of work has been completed in a short timescale to allow Laurus Grace to open early in September 2024. We are currently awaiting the pre-opening inspection for the school.</p> |
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| | | | <p>There is a possibility there may need to be further temporary classrooms from January 2025, prior to completion of the permanent building. The school will open on the site of HGHS and existing sports facilities are being redeveloped elsewhere on the school site to accommodate the new build.</p> <p>WM had met with the Academy Committee at HGHS to answer any of their questions. The planning permission process has been challenging.</p> <p>Q – Will there be an Academy Committee for Laurus Grace?</p> <p>A – The Academy Committee will operate under HGHS for the first year. This is a model we have used, and which has been successful, for all of our new schools as they have opened.</p> <p>Trustees were informed of the Section 10 consultation which is currently open for Laurus Grace.</p> <p><u>Sixth Form</u></p> <p>Trustees were updated on the application numbers for the Trust Sixth Forms. Numbers are provisional and will not be confirmed until after GCSE results day.</p> <p><u>Associated College of NIOT</u></p> <p>NIOT was founded 2 years ago by 4 large MATs. They run a programme for delivery of NPQ, ECF and ITT.</p> <p>An approach was made to the Trust, due to a gap in provision in the North West area, to deliver ECF, NPQ and ITT.</p> <p><u>Crown Street Primary School</u></p> <p>The school has now been handed over by Manchester City Council.</p> <p>Parent induction sessions are planned for the week following this meeting. There will be a teacher led pre-school which is full, and 18 children joining in Reception. The school has guaranteed funding for the first 3 years and increasing pupil numbers is a priority for the coming years.</p> <p><u>Hazel Grove Primary School</u></p> <p>There have been delays with the LA but all is in line with the school joining the Trust in September 2024.</p> | |
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| | | | <p><u>Progress of another primary school applying to join the Trust</u></p> <p>The due diligence sub group of Trustees recommend to the Trust Board to proceed with the application that the joins the Trust, subject to full due diligence, RSC approval and the legal process.</p> <p>An email has been received from the advisory committee to state that conditions will apply to approval, which states only the CEO can be a Trustee. An enquiry will be sent to clarify the timescales for this request.</p> <p>Full approval will be on the agenda for a future Trust Board meeting.</p> <p>LM asked Trustees on their appetite for growth of the Trust?</p> <p>Trustees felt that opportunities which are of benefit to the children and the Trust should be explored, and that both potential and challenges should be recognised.</p> <p>LM reiterated that she would be worried about the capacity of the Central Services team for growth with the current size of the team. The team would need to grow to allow the Trust to grow in the future.</p> | |
| 3 | Systems and Structures | Skills Audit/Self review External review | <p>The Trust Assurance Framework had been completed at the previous meeting and was circulated for Trustees review.</p> <p>The document had been provided to the internal auditors as evidence of self-review taking place.</p> <p>It was noted it was important to have continual review of the skillset of the Board and to consider this when appointing new Trustees.</p> <p>The document will be provided to Members at the AGM and will be live working document which will be reviewed ongoing.</p> | NB |
| | | Trust/school staffing structures | There is no further update for this meeting. | |

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| | | Trust Board Committee updates | <p><u>Governance Oversight and Standards Committee</u> The Chair of the committee felt that in future a verbal update of the meeting was not as valuable as a written update, which could be uploaded in advance to allow time to prepare questions and challenge.</p> <p>To summarise the previous GO&S meeting held:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of clerks within the Trust is evidenced by their clear and robust meeting minutes • Recruitment and retention to Academy Committees is ongoing • Focus and attendance has been an issue for some Academy Committees • It is recognised the need to maintain the links with Chairs • Policy sub group is working well but this could be changed in time and more volunteers are requested • The Chair of AC at CHHS had attended the meeting to discuss the work of their Academy Committee <p><u>Audit and Risk Committee</u> <u>March meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee had reviewed the Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24 • Reviewed benchmarking against another Trust • Had asked questions regarding the progress of Crown Street Primary School and the progress of Hazel Grove Primary School joining the Trust • An in-depth discussion around the financial position had taken place • Reviewed the Risk Register in detail, in particular Cyber security which has been identified as a separate risk • Reviewed the Critical Incident plans <p><u>June meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit has now been moved to SBS • Reviewed the Internal Audit Report for terms 1 and 2 • Reviewed the Audit Tracker • Looked at the Risk Register, in particular Cyber Security as a growing risk • RPA insurance cover was reviewed • A report from the Trust Director of IT on Cyber security was reviewed and discussed • Internal audit focus for next year was discussed and the welcome of external assurance | |
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| | | | <p><u>Finance and Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of management accounts and budget • Further update on finances • Oversubscription applications for all schools • Sector benchmarking • Annual update from Estates Team and detailed project plans • Health and Safety report • Demonstration of Estates team compliance checks – well managed including reports and financial planning • Gender Pay Gap report – feedback from the committee was that this was a very well presented report • Approved modern slavery statement for the websites • The next meeting of the committee is 5th July | |
| | | <p>Link Trustee updates</p> | <p><u>MFL – S McGill</u> Visited Priestnall to see the integration into the Trust. Year 7 making good progress. Visited lessons. Will visit again after the GCSE results.</p> <p><u>Primary – J Crombleholme</u> Last visit was May 2024. The record of visit has been uploaded for information. The link is valued by all Heads of School.</p> <p><u>SEND – G Turnpenney</u> Met M Sackville-Ford in June 2024 and discussed early opening of Laurus Grace, SEND transition and SEND numbers at Laurus Ryecroft.</p> <p><u>CC&R – T Little</u> The meeting will be taking place later in the day of this meeting.</p> <p><u>Maths – A Gilmour</u> The meeting will be taking place later in the day of this meeting.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Trustees for giving up their time to undertake the visits to maintain these important links.</p> | |

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| | | Safeguarding | <p>DB circulated the Safeguarding Strategy document prior to the meeting. The purpose of the document is to connect Trustees with what is happening in our schools. DB and A Clayton are the Trust Leads for Safeguarding.</p> <p>Safeguarding is obviously the ultimate priority and there are 8 priority areas for all schools. Safeguarding works cross phase in the Trust. The strategy is RAG rated for ease to be able to keep connected.</p> <p>Trustees were reassured to receive the document and found the RAG rating easy to navigate. It was requested that within the report, where acronyms are used for the first time the word is specified in full. Trustees had no further questions.</p> | |
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| 4 | <p style="text-align: center;">Being strategic Theme: Our people</p> | <p>Priority: Attraction and Recruitment</p> <p>Priority: Valuing and Investing</p> | <p>The Executive Team have reviewed the Trust Development Plan and made minor changes.</p> <p>Within the first theme there is repeated mention of all our schools being oversubscribed. A new Government could make changes which we would need to reflect in this section.</p> <p>Building Trust capacity is a language change to what success looks like and how we maintain. Succession planning remains as capability and agility remain the intention if other programmes come along.</p> <p>Q – Will we see progress on what success looks like? A – 2 of our schools are good and the others are outstanding.</p> <p>Q – How many students go to Russell Group universities – will be able to get numbers to be able to see progress and measure success? A – We will look at producing a summary of measures of success for Trustees to review.</p> <p><u>HR Metrics</u> J Jenkins, Director of HR, attended to present to Trustees.</p> <p>There are lots of supporting documents to supplement the data contained within the report. The data is 1st September 2023 to 1st May 2024.</p> <p><u>Attraction</u> Work has been done to look at our harder to recruit roles and to look at trends. We have reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attracting playleaders ● SEND training package ● Benefit offers ● TES package ● Recruitment award ● Jobs fair attendance ● Race at work ● Women’s health and career progression <p><u>Recruitment</u> In terms of vacancies there were 88 new vacancies and 141 back filled roles. We are now advertising roles internally in the first instance.</p> <p>Teaching staff recruitment was static and support staff recruitment increased. We now use social media platforms more widely to reach a wider audience.</p> | MV |
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| | | | <p><u>Recruitment and onboarding</u> We have appointed a Talent Acquisition Co-ordinator to see what more we are able to do. We now have links with 10 local universities and are able to further advertise teacher and support vacancies. We are also increasing our brand awareness.</p> <p>We have been able to streamline our onboarding portal due to feedback from new starters. There is also the function of line manager and employee checklist for completion.</p> <p><u>Employee engagement survey</u> Issues raised included workload, health and wellbeing, development and staff recognition. There was an increase in staff raising the issue of workload as this year we included as a specific question within the survey. From September 2024 we are planning a workload working group across all schools.</p> <p>Support staff PDR online was launched and this has proved to be successful. We have increased our course offer and been able to increase professional development opportunities. We have launched a number of new learning and development opportunities for support staff and these are a combination of in-person and online, all are delivered in-house and there has been excellent uptake so far.</p> <p><u>Health and Wellbeing</u> We have recently introduced a 24hour GP service for all staff and their immediate family members. This service is already having an impact and we will be able to include statistics for usage in this report next year.</p> <p><u>Women’s Health</u> We have policies in place to support our staff with IVF, baby loss and paid leave.</p> <p><u>Suicide prevention</u> There are some highly complex cases and we promote to our staff to ensure that they know the support that is available to them.</p> <p><u>Employee relations</u> The team are currently working with some very complex cases.</p> <p>There have also been 52 out of 58 flexible working requests approved and 215 contract changes.</p> | |
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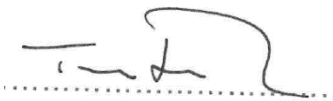
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| | | | <p>Sickness absence has increased but is still a way below national average.</p> <p>JJ summarised the key achievements for the year and detailed the focus for the coming year. Trustees were informed that the HR team had recently won the School Recruitment Award at the Education Business Awards. The team had also been nominated, for the second year, for the Wellbeing Trust awards.</p> <p>Thanks were offered from Trustees to JJ and the team for the significant amount of work undertaken.</p> | |
| 5 | Holding to account | Summer Census | WM confirmed that the summer census was completed and submitted in all Trust schools. | |

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| | | Policies for approval | <p>Trustees approved the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asbestos policy COSHH policy CEIAG policy Code of Conduct for Trustees and Governors Complaints procedure Consent policy Curriculum policy Disciplinary policy ECT policy Exam Access Arrangements policy EYFS (Primary) policy Family Leave policy Fire Procedures First Aid (Primary) policy Flexible Working policy Health and Safety policy LAC (Primary) policy LAC (Secondary) policy Leave of Absence policy Legionella policy Lone Worker policy Medical Conditions (Primary) policy Physical Intervention policy Relationships and Sex Education (Primary) policy Riddor policy RSE (Secondary) policy Staff Pool Vehicle policy Suspension and Exclusion policy Target Setting, Assessment, Recording, and Reporting (Secondary) policy Teaching and Learning (Secondary) policy Teaching and Learning (Primary) policy Whistleblowing policy Working at Height policy 16-19 Bursary Policy | |
| 6 | | AOB | There were no other items of business raised. | |
| | AOB | Meeting dates to note: | <p>TBM1 – Wednesday 2nd October 2024 at 10.00am TBM2 – Wednesday 4th December 2024 at 10.30am TBM3 – Wednesday 12th February 2025 at 10.00am TBM4 – Wednesday 7th May 2025 at 10.00am TBM5 – Wednesday 9th July 2025 at 10.00am</p> <p>Calendar invites will be sent for all meetings.</p> <p>Please could Trustees advise the Clerk, at the earliest opportunity, if they are unable to attend a meeting.</p> | NB |

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| | | Calendar | The calendar of Trust meeting dates was circulated for Trustees information. | |
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| Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes | |
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| Trustees reviewed and approved the updated Scheme of Delegation, Schedules of Business and Terms of Reference | |
| Trustees received an update on the Trust financial position | |
| Trustees approved capital projects which were funded externally | |
| Trust growth opportunities were discussed | |
| Trust Board committee updates were given by Chairs of committees | |
| Link Trustee Visit updates were given | |
| Trust Director for Safeguarding presented the Trust Safeguarding Strategy | |
| Trust Director of HR presented the HR Metrics for the current academic year | |
| It was confirmed that the Summer Census had been completed and submitted in all Trust schools | |

Meeting closed at 12.15pm



T Little
Chair of Trust Board
02.10.2024