


**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Extraordinary Meeting held on
Tuesday 2nd September 2020, 5.15 pm, July via Zoom**

Present: Brian Message (BM), Chair and Trustee
 Paul Fenney (PF), Trustee
 Cliff Fluet (CF), Trustee
 Gary Weston (GW), Trustee
 Andy Rankine (AR), Trustee
 Bev Curtis (BJC), Trustee
 Ian Phillips (IP), Trustee
 Claire Rose (CR), Trustee
 Rebecca Ryan (RR), Trustee
 Andrew Goulding (AEG), CEO

In attendance: Mr Dave McMillan (DRM), Finance Director
 Mrs Debbie Warner (DW), Clerk

1.	Apologies for absence
	Apologies were received from Chris Meddle and Dan Lewis
2.	Declaration of interests
	No conflicts of interest were declared.
3.	Election of Trustee
	Raj Joshi was welcomed to the meeting and his appointment of Trustee was unanimously approved by the Board.
3.	To approve the minutes of the last meeting of 7th July 2020
	The minutes of the last meeting were deemed to be an accurate account of proceedings and were signed off by the Chair.
4.	Update for Headteachers
	Headteachers were invited to present their recovery plans and to provide an update to Trustees on their readiness to reopen schools.
	Cromwell School
	Headteacher, Hannah Connor-James, expressed confidence that the school was well placed for reopening and plans that were in place fitted well with latest Government guidance. Wrap around care and the new pre-school is expected to open from the start of term and a meeting between HCJ and preschool manager is scheduled to take place to discuss management of shared areas of the school.
	Questioning:
	Q: How is staff morale?
	A: HCJ was able to report that it was surprisingly positive and that staff have embraced the new way of working. She is aware of a few anxieties but return to work meetings are planned for these members of staff.
	Q: Have there been any parent comments regarding reopening?
	A: HCJ had not received any correspondence airing concerns from parents. HCJ is due to send out a ParentMail to parents and some questions may come from that.
	Q: Is the school confident that the appropriate interventions are in place to support children that have not been working over the lockdown?
	A: HCJ advised that the school is anticipating some difficulties both academically and from a well-being point of view. Plans are in place for a recovery programme. Therapies and social support will be the initial focus and then the school can look to reduce the academic gaps. Informal assessment to discover gaps are being planned for. Senior Leader, Carla Parker, will deliver training to staff on recovery and interventions. Plans for extension to the school day to help children catch will also be scheduled.

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Godmanchester Bridge Academy

CP advised that the school was fortunate that to have a large school with relatively low numbers of children which made planning for reopening slightly easier. Two thirds of the school returned in July which has helped with the planning for September reopening. The latest Government guidance did not require the school to make many adjustments to the processes already in place. There will be a need to assess where children are academically but looking at mental health and well-being will be the first priority for the school.

Questioning:

Q: How is staff morale?

A: CP thought moral was good and that staff are fully prepared for reopening. Staff are keen to get back to work.

Q: What, if any, correspondence/concerns have been raised by parents?

A: CP had received correspondence regarding concern over a family situation but the school has been able provide reassurance. Further guidance on reopening will go to parents today.

Godmanchester Community Academy

RB described the complexities of the school being on a small site for the larger numbers of children. A lot of process are already up and running due to the return of children in July. Communication has gone out to parents and staff on reopening guidelines and school development and recovery plans have been shared with staff. An update on the school's safety procedure will be going to parents tomorrow. RB advised the Board that there are some challenges with the layout of the school and some minor amendments may be necessary once school has reopened. Staff intend wearing PPE equipment. All staff returning will be briefed prior to reopening to ensure success. Wrap around provision will be running from 8-6.

Questioning:

Q: What is the expected level of attendance and how the school will deal with non-attenders?

A: RB is expecting attendance to be good. Previous correspondence to parents has set the expectation that attendance is compulsory.

Q: What process is in place if a positive case of COVID-19 occurs, and how will this will be communicated and to what extent?

A: In the event of a suspected case, contact will be made with parents of children in the infected bubble. GCA will be expected to follow PHE advice.

Hinchingsbrooke School

AN provided a detailed analysis of this year's exams results and stressed that has been a very difficult process this year. The Government's u-term resulted in 700 re-issued results with further issues relating to BTEC results. A Level and GCSE were reverted to Centre Assessed grades. AN was pleased to report that A Level results improved from C+ to B- from last year and the school's ALPs rating improved from 6 to 2. Unfortunately this year's data will not be published and results for the school will be based on last year. AN added that, generally, this year was a weaker year group which has been evidenced in the A8 figure but P8 had been phenomenal. English and Maths predictions were extremely accurate. The disadvantaged gap had widened but this likely to be due to the whole year group doing better. AN made an acknowledgement to Sixth Form Staff who managed students' emotional needs during the exams process.

Questioning:

Q: Has the bar has now been set higher for sixth formers due to good results this year?

A: Yes, incremental changes by the school have had a huge impact and this is expected to continue.

Q: Have Sixth Form numbers increased this year with the improvement in final results?

A: No, students were accepted on their Centre Assessed Grade.

MJP provided information on imminent reopening. MJP's view was that morale was good but it was inevitable that some staff would be anxious; some staff have not been in school since the start of lockdown. It is useful to have 2 training days at the start of term in order to support members of staff who need it. PHE have advised on how to deal with a case of COVID-19 and suggested communication is available to send to families and their

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guidelines will be followed should there be a case. MJP is not aware of any member of staff or student not planning to return. A ParentMail has been sent today with reopening guidelines together with a detailed booklet for staff and parents. MJP advised Trustees that school has set the expectation for both staff and students to wear face coverings when moving around the school.

Questioning:

Q: What steps are in place to ensure behaviour among students is as good as it possibly can be and what strategies are in place to support teachers?

A: Stringent guidelines which have been set out in the reopening booklet to ensure behaviour is good at the school. MJP added that students are likely to have an understanding of the seriousness of the situation and the booklet clear sets out the expectations on behaviour. This will also be embedded through assemblies and form time. MJP added that it was crucial for the school to make a strong start in this area.

Q: Has consideration been given to disadvantaged groups; will they have access to PPE equipment?

A: There is a stock of face coverings which will be made available to students if required and the school is in a good position to deal with a range of students' circumstances.

Q: A Trustee thought there was likely to be a ripple effect of student anxiety and asked what strategies are in place to ensure the school provides a calm and comfortable provision for students.

A: MJP explained that the first few weeks will focus on mental health and well-being rather than enter into a series of assessments. MJP stressed the importance of the school reopening well and get it right from the outset.

A Trustee requested that relevant checks are carried out on the cooling and heating systems in school due to the movement around the school by students and in the case that doors and windows need to remain open.

The Finance Director was able to confirm that heating engineers have been to Hinchingsbrooke School to ensure these are operational and to consider the air flow through the buildings.

A Trustee asked that PPE should be checked to ensure that it carried the quality kitemark.

The Chair wished the Headteachers well in the reopening of schools.

ACTION: TRUSTEES TO BE ADVISED OF ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR RETURNING PUPILS - HEADTEACHERS
KITEMARK CHECK ON PPE EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY SCHOOLS - HEADTEACHERS

5. Board to approve and sign off risk assessments

Risk assessments for each school had been scrutinised by Trustees. Furthermore, the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, Andy Rankine, was satisfied that the risk assessments were in line with government policy. Trustees unanimously approved the risk assessments for each school.

6. Godmanchester School – Leases (AEG)

The CEO advised that the issue with the lease for GBA has now been resolved and signed. Winckworth Sherwood, the Trust's solicitors, discovered that historically proper processes had not always been followed and GBA had remained as a tenant at will. The lease acknowledges the occupation of the 125 year lease broadly followed the standard DfE format.

The CEO was also pleased to report that a resolution has been met with the LA agreeing to fund the work on the drainage at GBA.

7. 2020/21 budget and 3-year forecast review (DRM)

The Finance Director provided key points to Trustees:

Deficits are seen in years 2 and 3.

Vast majority of variances are due to pay rises.

Government have recommended 3.1% pay rise for teaching but this is still out for consultation.

Support staff pay award of 2.75% has been out for consultation but it has been agreed by unions to accept a 2.75% pay increase, this is a massive hit on the budget.

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	<p>Student numbers are starting to increase at HBK Sixth Form and at Cromwell Academy but the effect of this will not be seen until the next academic year as funding is lagged.</p> <p>Cromwell Academy: Currently fully staff.</p> <p>Hinchingbrooke School: currently overstaffed in Business next year. Assumption will be that SLT will be reduced by 1 member but teaching time would need to be added back, possibly with a part-time teacher.</p> <p>Recruitment model being used by the current Principal has seen more senior staff being replaced with good quality NQTs and he has been very effective in this area. Cost of supply teachers is still too high and this needs to be cut further. Cover team to be increased.</p> <p>The Trust agreed the 2.75% pay increase for Support Staff.</p>
8.	AOB
	<p>After an update on budget, Trustees thought it would be useful for new Trustees to receive a presentation on education finance.</p> <p>ACTION: FINANCE UPDATE MEETING TO BE ARRANGED FOR NEW TRUSTEES - CLERK</p>

Meeting finished at 6.45pm

Signed:
Date: 20/10/2020

