



Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting held on Tuesday 17 October 2023, 5.30 pm, via Zoom

Present: Brian Message (BM), Chair of Trustees
Gary Weston (GW), Trustee
Rebecca Ryan (RR), Trustee
James Nicholson (JN), Trustee
Raj Joshi (RJ), Trustee
Andrew Goulding (AEG), Trustee & CEO

In attendance: David McMillan (DRM), Finance Director
Debbie Warner, Clerk

1.	Apologies
	There were no apologies.
2.	Declaration of interests
	New declaration of interest from Gary Weston.
2.	Election/Re-elections
	<p>Board of Trustees: A self-nomination from Brian Message was received for the position of Chair for one further academic year. The Clerk advised that no nominations were received for the position of Vice-Chair, however, James Nicholson was in agreement to be nominated as Vice Chair for one academic year. Trustees were in unanimous agreement.</p> <p>The CEO thanked Chris Meddle who has stepped down from the position of Vice-Chair and from the Trust board. Chairs and Vice Chair elections is covered in item 4.</p>
3.	To approve minutes of meeting 18/07/2023
	<p>The minutes of the meeting were deemed to be an accurate account of proceedings and were signed off by the Chair. The action points from the last meeting were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees premeeting to finalise awayday agenda: This has taken place. • Invite Headteachers and CoGs to meet with Trustees and Executive Board: Trustees' meeting with chairs of Governors, Headteachers and Executive Board has taken place: One Trustee, who was present at the meeting, confirmed that the board agreed it would revisit the growth strategy document and consider alternatives to its proposed Plan B. • Invite Headteachers to meeting and discuss how SIT has helped them The CEO said that although a formal meeting has not taken place, the SIT meets regularly where concerns and areas of strength are discussed and shared. Ongoing.
4.	CEO's Report
	<p>Trustees confirmed they had received and read the report prior to the meeting. The CEO summarised key points from his report:</p> <p>CEO was pleased to advise Trustees that the year had started well in all the schools.</p> <p>A breakdown of Teaching /Support staff to student ratios in each of the schools.</p> <p>He was pleased to report that none of the schools in the Trust were affected by the national crisis concerning the use of RACC in schools.</p> <p>CEO reported that good knowledge and efficient use of Arbor is happening across the primary schools and the CEO added his thanks to Simon Eardley for providing training on this.</p> <p>CEO updated Trustees on the national picture on the 2023 approach to exam grading.</p> <p>CEO confirmed that the Pay Review Committee had met and the pay recommendations made by Headteachers were accepted by Trustees.</p> <p>The CEO reported on elections and re-elections of the local governing committees in schools across the Trust.</p> <p>The CEO referred to the unprecedented amount of recruitment which is putting HR under considerable pressure. It is also struggling since the departure of the HR Manager.</p> <p>The CEO advised Trustees that there had been considerable issues regarding IT and work in this area is ongoing to improve the situation.</p>

Signed:

Date: 6/12/2023

Questioning/challenge:

Q: A Trustee was aware of serious internet outages at Hinchingsbrook School and enquired whether a contingency plan is in place

A: The Finance Director advised that issues have arisen from the new provider and a meeting has been arranged to put pressure on them to rectify the situation.

Q: A Trustee asked if the downtime and performance could be measured

A: The Finance Director welcomed input from the Trustee with expertise in this area.

ACTION: DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN TO BE DRAWN UP – CEO/DRM

GW TO VISIT ACES CENTRAL TEAM AFTER HALF TERM AND PROVIDE INPUT ON IT ISSUES

The CEO provided Trustees with an update on each of the schools and voiced concern over the management of complex needs students. This is an ongoing issue which has been discussed in depth at Standards meetings and is common to all schools in the Trust. The CEO said that the situation is not sustainable. The Chair felt an action plan should be in place and make parents and staff aware that the Trust is investing in the situation.

The CEO also referred to the potential expansion of students at GBA. Should the school consider offering more spaces?

ACTION: CEO TO WRITE TO GILLIAN KEEGAN REGARDING HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS

FEASIBILITY STUDY ON EXPANDING PUPILS AT GBA - DRM

The CEO updated Trustees on the proposed discussion at the next exec meeting on 16 November and will share a “next steps” document with Headteachers.

The CEO referred to CIF bids which are currently being prepared for submission in December.

The Finance Director updated Trustees on site issues following the estates report from Heart Academies. He stressed the biggest estates issue following a fire inspection is the need to replace fire doors; he is waiting for the report following the inspection.

ACTION: REPORT ON FIRE DOORS TO BE SENT TO TRUSTEES – DRM

AUDIT TRAIL TO BE SENT TO RJ - DRM

The CEO updated Trustees on the proposed meeting with SEND meeting with the Trust and school senior leader in SEND which is being scheduled. Trustees confirmed their interest in attending this meeting which is planned for Wednesday 1 November.

Meeting finished at 7pm