



## LAURUS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Date: 07.10.2020

Time: 10.00am

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Clerk: N Burgess

Present: P Benton, L Elias, C Nevin, L Woolley, T Little, R Kumar, C Fisher, J Crombleholme, V Horsfield, D Brown, D Kershaw and W Mason

In attendance: L Magrath, G Theobold, M Vevers and D Woolley

Action	Initials
Trustees to inform the Clerk of any changes to their Register of Business Interests	All
LW to look into all documents being issued to Trustees at the start of the year for completion, where possible.	LW
Trust Board Committee membership to be reviewed annually – to be included in the schedule of business	LW

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	There were no apologies.	
		AOB items	There were no other items of business to raise at this meeting.	
		Register of interests	Trustees were asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their record.	All
		Code of Conduct Laurus Email addresses	Trustees are required to sign up to the Code of Conduct on an annual basis.  Trustees have been sent a Related Party Questionnaire which they are asked to complete and return as soon as possible.  Laurus Trust email addresses have been set up for every Trustee and Governor for GDPR compliance. The accounts set up will be used for all Trust business and will be in place of Trust Governor. In future all meeting documents will be on Microsoft Teams. All Trustees were in agreement that going forward Laurus Trust accounts will be used for Trust business.	

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The Laurus Trust | Registered in England and Wales | Company number 07907463  
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Scheme of Delegation	The Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Information and Guidance from NGA and CST has proved useful when reviewing the document.	
Part 1 Minutes	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.</p> <p>All actions from the meeting had been completed.</p> <p>Trustees had looked at the updated Trust and individual school websites and were very impressed, the websites looked very professional and the content was excellent.</p> <p>Trustees were very supportive of the videos on each school website as part of the virtual open evenings. LM reported that, in terms of first choice applications, most of the schools were over half full before the open evening videos had been released.</p>	
Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Trust Board	A confidential email ballot had taken place prior to the meeting. The Clerk informed that a unanimous vote had been received to re-elect T Little as Chair and C Nevin as Vice Chair for a further 12 months.	

2	People	Membership and succession planning	<p>LW reported that following interviews yesterday a Clerk appointment was made to add to the existing clerk team. C Vogt will be Academy Committee clerk for Gorseley Bank and Laurus Ryecroft.</p> <p>CN and LW have been looking at the Inspiring Governance database for potential talent to recruit to Academy Committees.</p> <p>There has been 1 successful appointment to HGHS and a couple of applications are pending. Applicants are invited to complete the application form, they then meet with members of the Executive Team and if successful are appointed to an Academy Committee based on their skills set.</p> <p><b>Q – How do we ensure the appointment process is independent?</b> A – CN is the non Executive Team person who would normally be involved. Appointments are made based on skills and gaps on individual Academy Committees.</p> <p><b>Q – Do we still have Parent Governors?</b> A – Yes and also staff Governors, both of these appointments are done by elections.</p> <p>Trustees were invited to be involved in any of the appointments.</p> <p>Skills audits are undertaken every two years. Trustees and Governors will shortly receive a revised skills audit to complete. The skills audits are a useful tool to ascertain any gaps and plan recruitment and relevant training around this.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the preference that at the start of the year all documents were issued for completion, eg skills audit, related party questionnaire, register of business interests. It was agreed that the Trust would look to issue a complete set of required documentation at the start of the academic year</p> <p><b>Q – Is there mandatory training to complete as part of the annual package?</b> A – Yes there will be, the training plan was put on hold due to Covid.</p> <p>A link included with the agenda was for the NGA Leading Governance Programme for aspiring Chairs. The Trust has two fully funded places available. The course would provide a good platform for any aspiring Chair, Trustees</p>	LW
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			<p>were asked to put forward anyone they would consider the course would be of use to. There will be 4 new Chairs at the new schools who will need support and the course will be particularly relevant to them. Trustees were asked to speak to LW for further details. It was noted that 3 LAC Governors had already signed up to the programme and there were a couple of other interested Governors. Ideally, for succession planning, 6 Governors would undertake the programme. Trustees <u>agreed</u> to the Trust funding an additional 4 places.</p> <p>In addition, all of the Clerk team are currently undertaking the Governorspace Clerking qualification.</p>	
3	Systems and structures	Governance structures	<p>Terms of Reference for all committees have been updated and Trustees <u>approved</u> the updated versions.</p> <p><b>Q – Who is on the committees, to be able to know who is discharging responsibility of behalf of Trustees?</b> A – Membership of all sub committees is on the Trust website.</p> <p><b>Q – How are people appointed to committees?</b> A – Recruitment is organised by Chairs. Membership was reviewed last year but there was not a specified period of appointment.</p> <p>It was agreed that committee membership would be reviewed annually and that LW would look into including this in the Trust Schedule of Business.</p> <p><b>Q – How often is the Pay Appeals committee used?</b> A – The committee has never yet been called to meet, there has possibly been one appeal at HGHS in the past.</p>	LW

4	Reporting	Trust Board Committee updates	<p>LE gave an update of the Audit Finance and Resources Committee meeting which had taken place in July.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main purpose of the meeting was to approve the 20/21 budget. The EFSA no longer require a 3 year budget plan but it is considered good practice to still do so. It was noted that it was difficult to forecast in these uncertain times and thanks were offered to WM and her team for their work in producing the budget and forecasts. It was acknowledged that changes to the 3 year budget plan would be communicated as necessary by WM.</li> <li>• Top slicing was increased to 6% for all schools to help recover the Central Services deficit.</li> <li>• LFET funding is reducing ongoing and it was noted that to continue the Electives programmes as they are would be a challenge without the funding.</li> <li>• The Reserves Policy was approved.</li> <li>• The Trust had received an excellent Internal Audit report.</li> <li>• Following the meeting £293,000 was received as Covid Catch up funding.</li> <li>• Approval was given for the purchase of new computer software.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q – What is the impact of the increase of top slicing to 6% on the individual schools?</b></p> <p>A – this was discussed and agreed with all Heads of School and could possibly decrease back to 5% in the future. The deficit in Central Services was due to the need to front load the recruitment to be able to open all the schools and have the infrastructure in place to support them.</p> <p>It was discussed that the 2 primary schools in the Trust may not have seen the benefit of the Central Services Team before the pandemic. Schools were able to concentrate on the education of the children without the additional worries of IT, FSM, additional cleaning which was all done by Central Services teams</p> <p>All Heads of School were happy with 6%. Each school should also be targeting 5% of their budget for reserves.</p>	
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5	Being strategic	Trust Development plan	<p>The Trust Development plan was issued prior to the meeting. Priorities remain largely the same.</p> <p>Support staff are included in the training plans to ensure growth and development of the workforce.</p> <p><b>Q – What has been the impact of Covid on the Trust Development plan?</b></p> <p>A – In terms of Academic Focus it is difficult to be able to evidence the critical success factors were met. Ambition is being kept high and the catch up funding will be used to ensure that no child is left behind because of Covid. It was noted that the pressure on Heads of School is immense, without the addition of confirmed cases but that school improvement is being kept at the forefront.</p> <p>Trustees acknowledged the difficult job staff were undertaking in very uncertain times whilst still keeping the ambition burning and accepting we have to work with Covid ongoing. Morale of staff is very important and Trustees are aware of the considerable pressure they are under.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the Trust Development Plan.</p>	
		Admissions Policies for each school	<p>Trustees were issued with 9 Admissions policies, for all 7 schools, 6<sup>th</sup> form and Nursery. All policies have been consulted with Heads of School and no changes were made.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> all Admissions policies.</p>	

		<p>Academic Focus – Priority 1: Headline Performance</p>	<p>DW presented to Trustees. Attention was drawn to the process for awarding Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). The grades are Centre awarded rather than Teacher Assessed in case of Subject Access Requests.</p> <p>CAGs were submitted to exam boards and algorithms allocated the grades. Small centres were massively advantaged with the algorithms.</p> <p>A Level grades were changed on the day and retracted and reissued which resulted in some students getting higher on the algorithm and CAG. It was a complex moving situation which affected university places massively. On average students were not disadvantaged.</p> <p>The KS4 cohort related to much larger groups of students. BTec results were not issued until 2 weeks after GCSE results.</p> <p>R Howarth at CHHS and B Vickers at HGHS and their data teams undertook an immense amount of work which took a significant amount of time to ensure the students got the grades they deserved.</p> <p>It was discussed that it was a particularly stressful summer but that ultimately the majority of students ended up where they wanted to go but that it was definitely not the normal experience of triumph on results day and the moods were subdued.</p> <p>Reports for CHHS and HGHS were issued to Trustees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>JC offered thanks to staff, as Trustee, Governor and parent, to say she was really appreciative of everything which had been done for students.</p> <p>Trustees were shown the roll of honour which reflected the grades and destinations for KS5 students at CHHS. All Trustees reiterated their appreciation of the work involved to achieve the outcomes for students.</p>	
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		Growth	<p>AP Free School A survey of the ground is being done on the west side of HGHS fields.</p> <p>Belle Vue school bid The Trust was not successful in the application process and the project was awarded to Coop Academy chain.</p> <p>Kelloggs The Trust were invited by Pozzoni to a meeting regarding a development on the old Kelloggs site near the Old Trafford Cricket ground. This would be for a two-form entry primary school. There is nothing further to report at present and updates will be given at future meetings.</p> <p>Laurus Institute Laurus Institute is to enable all provision to be under one banner, with high quality professional learning for teachers and support staff. Apprentice levy could be used to train and grow the next generation of leaders. Trust are looking into working with organisations with degree awarding powers in the future. JC and LW agreed to have an offline conversation around this.</p> <p>Any suggestions going forward to be included in the business case should be submitted to LW.</p>	
	Holding to Account	Covid 19	<p>The 2 updated Risk Assessments were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Face coverings are worn in all high schools where social distancing cannot be maintained, such as communal areas and lesson changeover times. Track and trace information is acted upon and students are advised to self-isolate following contact with a positive case. It was discussed that as soon as a positive case is confirmed in school there is a significant amount of track and trace work to be completed by school leaders. Although this is challenging it is working well and schools are doing the best they possibly can.</p> <p>LW confirmed that sitting in rows does not support social distancing in primary schools and that different ways to seat the children are being explored. Staff are wearing visors when working closely with children and where students can face forward they are doing, although this can prove difficult in Early Years and KS1.</p>	



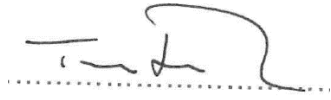
6		GDPR	Trustees were reminded to undertake the GDPR training which had been issued with the papers for the meeting. The training takes an average of 45 minutes and a certificate of completion is issued.	
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<p>Academies Financial Handbook update</p>	<p>WM updated Trustees on the changes within the Academies Financial Handbook.</p> <p>There is a clear and direct correlation between Governance, Finance and educational performance.</p> <p>Baroness Berridge has replaced Lord Agnew.</p> <p>There are number of changes to the handbook this year which focus on internal scrutiny.</p> <p>WM recapped the 10 “musts” for Trustees and was confident Trustees complied with all.</p> <p>An issue raised is with only one AGM per year how do we keep Members involved. This is something to think about for the future and return to at a later meeting.</p> <p>Consideration must be given to the long term viability of the Trust and a reason why the Trust still complete a 3 year budget forecast, despite it being removed as a requirement.</p> <p>Different audit companies should undertake internal and external audits – this is in place within the Trust.</p> <p>Any salary over £100,000 must be published on the Trust website, this information is already included in the Trust accounts, which are published on the website.</p> <p>All CFOs should now hold a financial qualification – WM is a qualified Accountant.</p> <p>CEO and CFO must be employees.</p> <p>The audit this year will be done remotely and findings reported back to the AFR committee.</p> <p>The Whistleblowing policy has been published on the website.</p> <p>The Risk Register will be reviewed once a year and this will be incorporated into the Schedule of Business. The Risk Register will also be a standing item on every AFR agenda.</p> <p>The Heads of School will work closely with CFO on curriculum resources and staffing ratios.</p> <p>WM was thanked for a succinct and valuable presentation. Trustees will be issued with a copy of the</p>	
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		Financial handbook.	
	Financial position	<p>The unaudited accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 showed an in-year surplus of £790,000 which reflects the drop-in income due to the effect of Covid 19 on wraparound care, Sports Centres and Catering.</p> <p>A considerable amount of funds are being spent on consumables such as wipes, sanitisers and cleaning products, which whilst proving expensive are essential.</p> <p>Sports Centres are open and are operating on around 70-80%.</p> <p>Catering figures are down as some parents are providing students with their own food.</p> <p>Savings were made on overtime, lunch duties and invigilation during lockdown.</p> <p>TL undertook to send an email to all staff in the Trust to convey thanks on behalf of Trustees.</p>	
	AOB	There were no other items of business not covered in the agenda.	
	Meeting Dates:	<p>TBM3 TBM4 TBM5 TBM6</p> <p>Wednesday 02.12.2020 at 10.00am Wednesday 03.02.2021 at 10.00am Wednesday 24.03.2021 at 10.00am Wednesday 05.05.2021 at 10.00am Wednesday 07.07.2021 at 10.00am</p>	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees agreed Laurus Trust email addresses must be used by Trustees and Governors for all Trust business</li> <li>• The Chair and Vice Chair were re-elected for a further 12 months</li> <li>• Membership and succession planning were discussed and Trustees approved additional funding for additional places for the Chairs Development programme</li> <li>• The updated Terms of Reference for all Trust Board committees were approved</li> <li>• Trustees received an update from the Chair of Audit, Finance and Resources from their July meeting</li> <li>• Trustees approved the Trust Development Plan</li> <li>• Trustees approved the 9 Admissions Policies</li> <li>• Trustees received an update on the plans for growth of the Trust</li> <li>• Trustees received a presentation on the changes to the Academies Financial</li> </ul>

Handbook

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. D.', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Chair of Trustees:

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020