



MINUTES OF TRUST BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday 29th November 2023
 Time: 10.15am
 Venue: Laurus Trust- Boardroom

Clerk: N Burgess
 Present: G Turnpenney, D Brown, T Little, R Kumar, J Crawford, M Vevers, L Magrath, L Woolley, W Mason, A Gilmour, C Nevin and D Woolley

	Action	Initials
1	Trustees are asked to note the changes to the financial Scheme of Delegation	All
1	J Crawford to be added to the membership of the Governance, Oversight and Standards committee	NB
1	To update Trustees on the progress of applications via Nurole	TL
1	Clerk to send the contact details for the Trust Director of PSHE to J Crawford	NB
1	Trustees to send their completed link visits to the Clerk	All
2	PAN and previous years figures to be added to the admissions data	SD
2	To draft a response to pillar 5 of the Trust Quality descriptions	TL/LW

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from D Kershaw, J Crombleholme and S McGill.	
		AOB items	J Crawford was welcomed to her first meeting as a Trustee and introductions were given.	
		Compliance	Trustees were asked to note the changes to the Financial Scheme of Delegation.	All
		Minutes of the last Trust Board Meeting	Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 20 th September 2023 were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting and there were no matters arising.	
		Membership	The updated Governance structure was circulated prior to the meeting. J Crawford will be added to the Governance, Oversight and Standards Committee.	NB

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			TL commented that there will be an advertisement on Nurole and that any applications would be reviewed in the new year. A further update will be given at the next meeting.	TL
	Link Trustee Updates		J Crawford agreed to become the Link Trustee for PSHE. TL will handover outside of this meeting and the Clerk will send the email address for the Trust Director. There have been 3 Link Trustee Records of Visits submitted since the last meeting. 1 for English and 2 for SEND. Trustees are asked to send their completed ROV to the Clerk for retention.	NB All
	Trust Board Committee Chair updates		<p><u>Governance Oversight & Standards</u> C Nevin gave a brief overview of the 20th September 2023 meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees were updated on the planned personnel changes to the Clerking group Membership of Academy Committees was discussed and recruitment is ongoing Roles of Chair and Vice Chair were discussed. Draft job description will be drafted for discussion at the Trustee and Governor Conference in November Terms of Reference and Schedules of Business were received and noted Chair to seek other Trustees to serve on this committee Chairs will meet on Teams termly to share good practice <p><u>Finance and Resources</u> S McGill had submitted a summary of the F&R meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee received the financial statements for 2022-2023 The final Audit Report was not yet completed, but there were no issues raised. Thanks were offered to S Taylor and the Finance Team Trustees received a verbal update of the September 2023 Management Accounts Approval was given for Trust Finance Manual and Finance policies, and also changes to the Financial Scheme of Delegation Reserves Policy was approved The Modern Slavery statement was approved Trustees received a comprehensive report from the Trust Director of IT A report on commercial use of sports facilities was received and discussed and it was noted this was an area of growth CFO gave an update on the actual and 	

			<p style="text-align: center;">potential impact of Priestnall joining the Trust.</p> <p>Q – The accounts project a deficit at the end of the year. Is this a concern?</p> <p>A – Not this year, due to sufficient reserves. We have always known this would be the case due to the unknown of the Sixth Forms and student numbers. The number of students is lower than we would like but this will increase and the calibre of the students in all of our Sixth Forms is excellent. Students always accept numerous offers of Sixth Form places and final numbers are not confirmed until they commence their studies in September.</p> <p>Q – What is the quality of provision in the area and also the availability?</p> <p>A – Vocational subject places are available but academic spaces are tight. Some of the larger Sixth Form providers are expanding. There is a shortage of Sixth Form places in Manchester and this is why we opened the Sixth Form at DHS early. It was noted that in Tameside a lot of students travel into Manchester for Sixth Form provision.</p> <p>WM confirmed that there had been changes within the Finance team and that updated Management Accounts would be available for Trustees to view shortly.</p> <p><u>Pay and Remuneration</u></p> <p>G Turnpenny gave Trustees a brief overview of the meeting which had taken place on 2nd November 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Heads of School had attended individually to make representations for their school. Thorough evidence was submitted and Trustees were happy to approve all of the pay recommendations • Trustees approved the implementation of the Teachers and Support staff pay awards, backdated to September 2023 • Performance Related Pay was discussed and will be brought back to the committee at the meeting next year • Trustees <u>approved</u> the Pay Policy • Trust Director of HR presented the Gender Pay Gap Report 2022. The Trust are closing the pay gap and Trustees had no concerns • Trustees considered external benchmarking of executive pay 	
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		Exec Team updates	<p><u>RAAC</u></p> <p>WM confirmed that in October 2022 all schools in the Trust had had a visual inspection as recommended by DfE. In September 2023 the Trust looked to do some more intrusive structural surveys to give leaders more comfort.</p> <p>At CHHS a small amount of RAAC was subsequently found in the roof of the corridor outside of the Estates office. The RAAC was later identified as well maintained and in an isolated area. A structural survey was immediately completed and no issues found. The school reopened after one day, but following DfE guidance the affected area has to remain cordoned off until work has been completed.</p> <p>At GB and PRS further surveys have not identified any RAAC at either school. At HGHS there has been none identified but there is one remaining area to be checked as a more intrusive survey is required behind a hidden space.</p> <p>Q – If we are saying we are ok today will there be an issue in the future?</p> <p>A – At the 2 local LA schools where RAAC has been recently identified there have been additional supports put in rather than removing the RAAC completely. It is considered low risk.</p> <p>Trustees were reassured that at CHHS the area identified was well maintained and was in a very small area. It was suggested that to future proof that we know we have investigated everything and to keep photos and surveys to be able to refer back to in the future.</p> <p>The Critical Incident team have met with all Heads of School to plan in the eventuality that a school would need to close and to risk assess.</p> <p>St Thomas’ Primary School in Stockport have moved into Woodford Primary School for this half term due to extensive RAAC being found in their building. This was following a request from the Director of Children’s Services for Stockport. LM commented how proud she was of the way Trust colleagues had moved quickly to ensure the move was as seamless as possible and was completed in a very short timeframe.</p>	
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			<p><u>HGPS</u></p> <p>Due diligence is currently in progress for this school. The subgroup of 3 Trustees, SM/DK and RK had met to discuss the findings and were appreciative of the substantial amount of information provided. They had raised any questions they had, which were subsequently answered. The subgroup concluded that the benefits outweighed the risks and they would recommend to Trustees their support for HGPS to join Laurus Trust.</p> <p>WM confirmed that the biggest risk faced was around pupil numbers. There are currently 70 places available in the school. The buildings and IT infrastructure have been well invested. It was noted that as a Trust we could do extensive work around marketing the school, which is already a feeder school for HGHS.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the request to progress the application of HGPS joining Laurus Trust.</p> <p><u>Crown Street Primary School</u></p> <p>The building of the school is nearing completion. Final handover is expected at the end of June 2024. It is hoped the building work will be completed by the end of January 2024.</p> <p>Work is taking place to recruit pupils. Tours are being held at our sister primary schools and drop in events are also taking place at venues close to the school, eg Central Library. The school is one form entry and will also have a preschool. We are in close contact with Manchester LA to review admission applications. It was noted that the Trust have protection for being under PAN for the first 3 years. The Trust also currently has a billboard on Deansgate, for one month, advertising the school.</p> <p><u>Laurus Grace</u></p> <p>The original free school bid was in 2016. The school is proposed to open in January 2025 but this is subject to change as there are further delays. Planning permission has now been granted.</p>	
2	Being strategic	Theme: Recognised for Excellence	LM commented that the Trust hosting St Thomas' Primary school has raised the Trust profile and helped engagement with other primary colleagues.	

		<p>Priority: Government, stakeholders and influencers</p>	<p>HGHS are hosting an event for Four Nations and DfE representatives. There will be 20 visitors who will have a tour of the school, a presentation on School Improvement and a Q&A session.</p> <p>LM/LW and JM have met with Director for Cheshire East to discuss a possible opportunity to bid for a school in the future.</p> <p>LM will this week be attending a roundtable discussion the DfE with Baroness Barran.</p> <p>Times Parent Power have recently contacted the Trust to request photos.</p> <p>Laurus schools Progress 8 scores has raised the profile of the Trust.</p> <p>Leaders have received a request from another large MAT to host 20 members of their SLT to visit the Trust.</p> <p>There are also numerous other visits planned including from MMU and Chartered College of Teachers.</p> <p>Q – Does the Trust have a PR Agency? A – No. We wish to balance being ambassadors with recognition of the Trust brand and visibility. We want people to understand what it is we do rather than trying to sell our brand.</p> <p>A long discussion took place around influence. We feel we are where we should be in the local area and are well connected within the LAs we operate in. We are less represented at a national level. We would like to expand within the LAs we are already working with and are not looking to expand to a nationally.</p>	
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		<p>Priority: Parents, Carers, students and pupils</p>	<p>Admissions data is very positive and all of our schools are oversubscribed for applications for September 2024 entry for secondary. The closing date for primary applications is 15th January 2024.</p> <p>We are working to market Crown Street Primary school to parents/carers.</p> <p>It was requested that of the data presented to Trustees the PAN for each school be added and the previous years application data.</p> <p><u>Sixth Form</u> Recruitment to all of our Sixth Forms is a priority for our Marketing team.</p> <p>Q – Are the figures of applications to date comparable to previous years? A – Yes. Our students are making more informed choices. This year we will also have students in Y11 at Priestnall considering our Sixth Forms.</p> <p>Q – Do we use alumni? A – Yes we have our Old Laureates network. They come into school and speak to our students. Our students are our ambassadors.</p> <p>Trustees were shown a student video which had been produced by the Trust Marketing team.</p> <p>Our schools are making links with our local communities as an aspect of the Leadership and Service cornerstone. An example of this is visits to local care homes.</p>	SD
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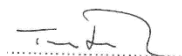
		<p>Priority: Our schools and potential members of our Trust community</p>	<p>DW presented to Trustees the headline figures for our schools with the Progress 8 included.</p> <p>Progress 8 aim is to be a positive figure. To achieve this it is vital that the curriculum is fit for purpose and stretches the students. All schools, with the exception of HGHS, do not include Y9 MFL results due to CAG/TAG. We are able to use our Progress 8 score as a marketing aspect for our Sixth Forms, whilst understanding that parents/carers are driven by outcomes.</p> <p>Q – Is there a dominant subject across all schools? A – In every school Separate Science progress is incredible and this is a largely selective subject. MFL progress is also very strong.</p> <p>We are conscious not to narrow the curriculum offer. Students having access to a broad and balanced curriculum is a real strength of our Trust.</p> <p><u>Trust Quality Descriptor 5</u> The Trust Quality descriptions document was circulated prior to the meeting, as published by DfE.</p> <p>Governance and Leadership is a specified pillar within the document. There is an opportunity to identify any weaknesses, whilst at the same time reviewing the strengths of the board. TL will review the Governance and Leadership pillar with Members at the AGM meeting in December. This review will then form part of the self-review process which will take place at the strategic board meeting in May 2024.</p> <p>Input from Trustees is requested to compile a response to the Executive Team as part of the review. TL and LW will then work together to draft a response which will be considered at the next meeting.</p>	TL/LW
3	Holding to account	Auditing and reporting arrangements for matters of compliance	The next meeting of the Audit and Resources committee is scheduled for 8 th December 2023. External auditors will attend to present the final accounts and audit report, ahead of recommendation to Members for approval at the AGM on 11 th December 2023.	

		Risk	<p>The Trust Risk Register has been delegated to the Audit and Risk committee but has been included in the documents for this meeting for Trustees information.</p> <p>Q – Of the risks identified on the register which is taking most of Leaders time?</p> <p>A – Recruitment and retention is a big concern, and this is also an issue nationally. Recruitment and retention is consistently on all of our agendas. We are working on ways to offer the Trust as the employer of choice. Teacher recruitment at secondary level is a big challenge. We are also finding that LSAs, Estates and Playworkers are posts which are proving difficult to recruit to.</p> <p>Q – Do you complete exit interviews with staff leavers?</p> <p>A – Yes, staff are invited to complete an exit interview. There are no particular big issues identified. We have had staff going overseas, career changers, and also staff who are moving out of the area. Some individuals have requested to work from home and we cannot accommodate this request for all roles.</p> <p>WPS and St Thomas’ risk assessment has been delegated to Audit and Risk committee.</p>	
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		Policies for approval as per the Trust Policy Schedule:	Trustees <u>approved</u> the following policies: Anti-bullying policy Behaviour and Anti-bullying (primary) policy BTEC policy CPD Complaints policy CPD Malpractice and Maladministration policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy Exams policy Family Leave policy Harmful Sexual Behaviour policy Low Level Concerns policy Medical Conditions (secondary) policy NEA policy Online Safety policy Pay policy Post exams policy Safeguarding policy Use of a Word Processor policy Records Management policy Secondary Employment policy Disciplinary policy Review of Marking policy Equality policy Appropriate policy Animals in school policy	
4	AOB	Meeting dates for Trust Board and all committees	The calendar of all Trust meetings was circulated for Trustees information.	
5	Meeting dates:	Meeting dates:	Wednesday 6 th March 2024 at 10.00am Wednesday 1 st May 2024 at 10.00am Wednesday 3 rd July 2024 at 10.00am	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes	
J Crawford was welcomed to her first meeting as a Trustee	
Trustees were asked to note the changes to the financial scheme of delegation	
Trustees received a brief verbal summary of the Pay & Remuneration, Finance & Resources and Governance, Oversight & Standards committee meetings	
Executive team updates were received on RAAC, Crown Street Primary School and Laurus Grace	
Trustees approved for HGPS to join the Trust	
Trustees reviewed the TDP theme for being recognised for excellence	
Trustees approved 24 policies	

Meeting closed at 12.20pm



Chair of Trustees

06.03.2024

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