



## MINUTES OF TRUST BOARD MEETING

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
 Time: 10.00am  
 Venue: Laurus Trust- Boardroom

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

	Action	Initials
1	Trustees are asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their Register of Business interests	All
1	Request for agenda items and speaker to be arranged ahead of the next AC Chairs meeting	LW/NB
1	Update on application from prospective Trustee to be given at the next meeting	TL
1	Trustees are reminded to send their completed record of visit proformas to the Clerk	All
2	Plan for TBM4 to be circulated	LW
3	Trustees are asked to read the Prevent Duty Guidance document	All
4	Calendar invites will be sent out for all meetings at the start of the academic year	NB

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	Apologies were received from D Woolley.	
		AOB items	There were no additional items of business which were not already covered by the agenda for this meeting.	
		Compliance	Trustees were asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their record of business interests.  There were no material changes to the Scheme of Delegation.	All
		Minutes of the last Trust Board Meeting	Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting. There were no matters arising and all actions were completed.  It was noted that the admissions policies for HGHS and GBPS had been approved as a post meeting action.	

		<p>Trustees were informed that LW and CN have agreed with Heads of School to reduce the number of Academy Committee meetings from 4 to 3 with effect from September 2024. This was due to attendance issues at meetings this current academic year. There will now be one meeting in the Autumn term.</p> <p>CN commented that there had recently been the first Chairs meeting held and attendance had not been as high as expected. The meeting had produced some useful conversations around the induction process for new governors and self-review mechanisms.</p> <p>For future meetings a request will be sent out for agenda items ahead of the meeting and there will also be speakers from the Trust, at the start of the meeting, to allow Chairs to understand how ACs fit within the structure.</p> <p>Chair and Vice Chair roles were discussed and Vice Chairs are optional.</p> <p>PDC training was discussed and a briefing document will be devised to show exactly how the process runs and to ensure accuracy and compliance.</p> <p>It was also agreed to reset links with AC Chairs and members of GO&amp;S committee. This will be agreed at the next meeting.</p>	NB/LW
	Membership	<p>Terms of office were reviewed and updated:  J Crombleholme – extended by one year  T Little – appointed for a further 3 year term by LFET  C Nevin – appointed for a further 4 year term by Members</p> <p>T Little also updated that a prospective trustee, who had applied via Nurole, would be meeting members of the Executive Team in the week following this meeting. Trustees will be updated on the meeting at the next meeting of this committee.</p>	TL
	Link Trustee Updates	<p>There have been 4 Link Trustee Records of Visits submitted since the last meeting. 1 for English, 1 for Maths, 1 for Primary and 1 for SEND.</p> <p>Trustees are reminded to send their completed ROV to the Clerk for retention.</p>	All

			<p><u>Maths – A Gilmour</u> AG is meeting the Trust Director for Maths immediately after this meeting and as part of the meeting will be visiting some lessons. There have been a number of new staff in Maths as the Trust has grown, including Sixth Form, and it is interesting to see them embedding and progressing.</p> <p><u>English – C Nevin</u> The recent meeting focus had been on Literature. How it is taught and resources and to raise the awareness and level of Literature. It is interesting to see the students understanding the context the of text in the way in which it is written.</p> <p><u>Science – R Kumar</u> The meeting had focussed on new A Levels and aspirations. There are now 70 Science teachers and 30 technicians across the Trust. Oracy of students was discussed and is a focus in preparation for their university interviews.</p> <p>TD of Science is passionate about the subject and this is reflected in Science week. A concern which was noted was recruitment and retention. DB commented that Science recruitment had been particularly challenging this year. Maternity leaves, relocation and sabbaticals were noted as reasons for staff leaving.</p> <p><u>MFL – S McGill</u> There is no update for this meeting.</p> <p><u>Humanities – D Kershaw</u> There is no update for this meeting.</p> <p><u>Culture, Creativity and Rhetoric – T Little</u> TL had met with HE and had discussed the report to LFET and the key impacts of the programme. It was discussed that the challenge is how to measure impact in this area. Progress is being made and is ongoing.</p> <p><u>PE – W Mason</u> WM had observed PE lessons at CHHS in December 2023 and will be visiting DHS and PRS as part of the next link visit.</p> <p>It was good to see the impact of the Sporting Excellence programme for all students, not just those on the Elite Pathway. Visits to Loughborough had had a big impact on GCSE and A Level PE students. At CHHS there are record numbers of students studying PE in</p>	
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			<p>Year 12.</p> <p>WM commented that the TD for PE had a strong vision for PE across the Trust.</p> <p><b>Q – How is the relationship with Loughborough?</b> A – It is excellent, we are the only Trust they work with and there are good opportunities happening.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding – T Little</u> A Safeguarding Link Visit is scheduled immediately after this meeting.</p> <p><u>SEND – G Turnpenney</u> GT had recently met with MS-F and reviewed case studies. BLIP pathway was discussed for students with behavioural issues.</p> <p><u>CEIAG</u> There has been a recent change to the Lead for Careers across the Trust. RK is in the process of arranging an initial meeting. RK commented that the Personal Development curriculum delivered at all schools is outstanding.</p> <p>Students are being prepared for careers which are not yet even known. RK commented it is essential that students know they don't have to make the decision today, and to have the confidence and mindset to be able to change in the future.</p> <p><u>Primary – J Crombleholme</u> JC had met LW for a strategic conversation and the following were discussed: Admissions at GBPS St Thomas being hosted at Woodford Crown Street Primary School CHPS – parental engagement HGPS – due diligence. Visits to schools will be scheduled for next term.</p> <p>LM informed Trustees that CHHS and LCH, at the request of Stockport LA, would be admitting additional students over the PAN in the coming years, due to a shortage of school places in the area. Additional income received will be used to fund an extension at LCH and CHPS. The extension would provide additional space to increase wraparound care at CHPS and to add an additional Computing room at LCH.</p>	
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			<p><b>Q – What is the demographic for primary schools now?</b> A – Manchester is currently full but the birth rate is down. It is already happening in Stockport but CHPS and WPS are both currently oversubscribed. Work will need to be done to increase numbers at HGPS in all year groups.</p> <p><b>Q – What will the impact of VAT on school fees be?</b> A – It is not yet know and this could change if there is a change of government. It will also depend on how the independent schools make the change.</p> <p><u>PSHE – J Crawford</u> JC has recently met with the TD to gain an overview of PSHE across all the schools. Visits to observe lessons are planned for the summer term.</p> <p>TL thanked Trustees for their time in making the visits.</p> <p><b>Q – What provision is made for high performing students and is this done across the Trust?</b> A – This is done by quality first teaching and is reflected in the number of top grades achieved by the students in all of our schools, the numbers far exceed national average.</p> <p>Quality of the curriculum is also key. We teach a large additional amount above the national curriculum to engage our students. The Apertura programme is also run outside of lessons</p>	
		Trust Board Committee Chair updates	<p><u>Audit and Risk</u> J Crobleholme gave Trustees a brief overview of the December 2023 meeting:</p> <p>Received external audit report for 2022-2023 and delighted to report a clean audit with no recommendations Reviewed final accounts for 2022-2023 and recommended to Chair of sign off Approved appointment of external auditors for a further 12 months Reviewed internal audit plan Reviewed Risk Register Received new guidance from EFSA on internal scrutiny for Audit and Risk committee members</p> <p><u>AGM</u> Trust Board performance update was given to Members All matters of statutory compliance were completed</p>	

		Exec Team updates	<p><u>Priestnall</u> We feel we have made significant progress since September 2023 and are in line with where we would want to be. SLT agree that we are out of the stabilise phase and moving into repair. We have a new plan for the repair phase with updated actions.</p> <p>We now wish to embed the Behaviour Policy and Behaviour for Learning. Students did not previously have high expectations of their behaviour and understandably there have been incidences of pushback. We acknowledge that a culture shift takes time.</p> <p>We are also working closely with staff and encouraging attendance at FPL.</p> <p>Uber ARC event is coming up and this is the culmination of the ARC events which have taken place in all schools across the Trust. ARC is compulsory in all other schools and this year has been voluntary at Priestnall – currently 40 staff are attending.</p> <p>The AC at Priestnall was discussed and the need to recruit new governors to the committee.</p> <p><u>HGPS</u> The DfE have now given approval for HGPS to join Laurus Trust. A kick off meeting has now taken place regarding the legal aspects and had involved WM and members of her team.</p> <p>Pupil numbers are a concern and this is something which the Trust will be working to increase.</p> <p><u>Crown Street</u> The building will be ready for handover in June 2024.</p> <p>Recruitment will be taking place for a School Operations Manager over the coming weeks Project Manager MM-J will be working closely with Head of School Once the building has been signed over in June the trust RPA insurance will apply</p> <p>It was agreed that at the start of the next Academic year a Trustee meeting would be held at Crown Street.</p> <p><b>Q – How are the pupil numbers for Crown Street?</b> A – They are where we would like them to be. We did not market further afield, stability is vital.</p>	
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			<p><u>Central Services</u></p> <p>A document was circulated prior to the meeting which detailed the current structure of the Central Service function and the plans for developing capacity with the team to meet the objectives.</p> <p>WM was thanked for the report and Trustees had no further questions.</p> <p><u>Potential opportunities</u></p> <p>Initial expressions of interest have been received from a secondary school in Cheshire East and a large primary school in Stockport. The Executive Team are looking to arrange visits in the coming weeks and will update Trustees at a future meeting.</p> <p><u>Apprenticeships</u></p> <p>Trustees commented that from the report circulated prior to the meeting they were unaware of the number of opportunities available and how much is on offer at the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees offered their thanks and commented they found the videos particularly useful as they brought learners experience to life and it felt very relevant to show the impact on the individuals.</p> <p><u>Response to Sutton Trust report</u></p> <p>The Trust response was circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted it is difficult to compare like for like with other Trusts due to access to the data available.</p> <p>The report contains maps which give an indication of the areas around our schools. PP level in Manchester LA is 49% and at DHS is 39%.</p> <p>A long discussion took place around the level of PP students in our schools and the need to serve the local areas correctly, whilst being mindful of the levelling the playing field vision.</p> <p>It was noted CHHS was actually situated on the edge of its catchment area, which is unusual. LCH does not have a catchment area and places are allocated on distance. Both schools have waiting lists for September 2024 places.</p> <p>It was noted that Trust schools serve their immediate community and this will continue to be monitored.</p>	
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		Compliance	<p>Members of the Executive Team confirmed compliance in the following areas:</p> <p>WM confirmed Website audits are completed termly and will be a focus for the Spring internal audit.</p> <p>WM confirmed the Spring Term Census has been completed in all schools and the support from the Trust Data team was invaluable.</p> <p>WM confirmed that DBS and Section 128 checks are completed for all staff.</p> <p>LW confirmed compliance with the SEND Code of Practice, Attendance Registers, and that the Trust approach to curriculum and assessment meets statutory requirements. LW also confirmed that EYFS policies and procedures are in line with the EYFS framework in all Trust primary schools.</p> <p>MV confirmed that in Trust secondary schools statutory requirements for Careers Guidance and also Approach for Directing Pupils Offsite and Exclusions is in place and compliant.</p> <p>TL confirmed that the Performance Management of the CEO had been completed in January 2024. There have been further discussions prior to this meeting and details are currently being finalised by the Pay and Remuneration Committee.</p>	
2	Being strategic	Theme: Building Trust Capacity	<p>The Trust Development Plan is a 2 year plan, of which this current academic year is the first year. There will be a light touch review of the plan at TBM4 and the focus will be on Governance and CST Trust Assurance framework.</p> <p>The internal governance review will focus on Board Leadership, Structures, Accountability and Compliance.</p> <p>Trustee questions were invited.</p> <p><b>Q – Is there an intent to turn some metrics in the plan into a score card?</b></p> <p>A – In education some measures cannot always be quantified in numbers. We adopt a blended approach and record indicators of success to show we are working towards our aims. Bold measures can be reviewed and we can assess where we are up to.</p>	



			<p>We can share figures, where possible, at a review point during the year, for Trustees information.</p> <p>A long discussion took place around measures, Progress 8 and outcomes. It was noted that some measures are not measurable directly in education, and are easier to measure from a business perspective.</p>	
		<p>Priority: Sound service and financial base allows the exploration of further opportunities</p>	<p>The Central Services Thematic goal for this year is developing capacity.</p> <p>Central Services are looking at how they are accountable for their performance and how capacity is developed to serve the schools in the Trust and also meet the Trust objectives.</p> <p>The document circulated prior to the meeting reflects the structure of the Central Services function, and details the working smarter processes and systems which have been implemented. It was noted that any changes made have to be for the right reason.</p> <p>Trustee questions were invited.</p> <p><b>Q – We grow in line, and not ahead, why is this?</b>  A – We have larger departments, some of which have an Assistant Trust Director, and this growth is also done around affordability. We have to balance the income and expenditure within the constraints. We are trying to prepare our people for future proofing. This then enables us to build capacity for future growth. Growth is key.</p> <p><b>Q – (to WM) There are a lot of direct report postholders to you, how do you manage this?</b>  A – I have two Deputies who are looking to take on more. We are also in a transitional position in the Estates team. WM noted she is at capacity and that her line management covers a broad area of the spectrum, but that it is vital to have an overview of all. The structure will need to be reviewed again at some point in the future.</p>	

		<p>Priority: Outstanding Governance and Leadership</p>	<p>MV detailed the cross trust collaboration which has been implemented.</p> <p>There are Trust Networks in place and there are Trust Directors in specific subject areas.</p> <p>The document circulated prior to the meeting detailed the collaboration in further detail.</p> <p>Whole Trust curriculum and Pedagogy is the responsibility of MV and the work done by DW in the role of Director of Education.</p> <p><b>Q – This is a good report but it would be useful to understand how this is applied, for example in case studies?</b></p> <p>A – It is possible case studies could be added at a later date.</p> <p>AG commented that he had attended a Trust wide Maths meeting but had not applied this to the cross trust collaboration aspect.</p> <p>RK commented he had seen the role of Trust Director develop over recent years. It is vital to develop and progress whilst still retaining autonomy.</p> <p>Departments work together to develop curriculum and pedagogy across the Trust and this is an attractive prospect for applicants who are looking to join the Trust.</p>	
		<p>Priority: Clear and Effective School Improvement Strategy</p>	<p>The School Improvement Strategy has a synergy to the Cross Trust Collaboration document. The education blueprint outlines the means by which each Laurus school will fulfil the vision of the Trust.</p> <p>Trust wide groups meet and colleagues are able to meet other schools and to be supportive of each other.</p> <p>The blueprint is built around Vision, Culture, Drivers and Praxis.</p> <p>SIP follows a four step model of Stabilise, Repair, Improve and Sustain. It is always ensured that each school phase is measured on an individual basis.</p> <p>Executive Heads of School look at priorities and what needs to be done to achieve them in our schools.</p>	

		TBM4 plan	The plan for the strategic board meeting is currently being finalised and will be circulated in due course. The meeting will focus on an internal governance review, based on the CST Framework for Trust Governance.	LW
3	Holding to account	Prevent Duty	Trustees are asked to read the Prevent Duty Guidance document, circulated prior to the meeting, to be aware of the changes in their responsibilities. Training will be given at the start of the meeting in July.	All
		Governance Handbook	The Governance Handbook was circulated as part of the meeting documents for Trustees information.	
		Policies for approval as per the Trust Policy Schedule:	Trustees <u>approved</u> the following policies:  Low Level Concerns policy Fire Procedures	
4	AOB	Meeting dates for Trust Board and all committees	Dates for all meetings were circulated to Trustees for information.  For the next academic year calendar invites will be sent for all meetings.	NB
5	Meeting dates:	Meeting dates:	TBM4- Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 10.00am at CHHS TBM 5- Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024 at 10.00am at PRS	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes
Trustees agreed the reduction in the number of Academy Committee meetings from 4 to 3 per year
Link Trustee updates were received
Verbal updates were given by the Chair of Audit and Risk and Chair of Trust Board for the AGM
Executive Team updates were given on various current projects
Members of the Executive Team updated Trustees on matters of compliance
Plans were discussed for the strategic planning meeting which will be held in May 2024
Trustees reviewed Central Services function
Trustees received an update on cross Trust collaboration and the School Improvement Strategy
Trustees approved two policies

Meeting closed at 12.05pm



**C Nevin**  
**Vice Chair of Trust Board**  
**01.05.2024**