

LAURUS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Date: Wednesday 05.05.2021

Time: 10.00am

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Clerk: N Burgess

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

In attendance: L Magrath, M Vevers

Action	Initials
Trustees were asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their record on the Register of Business interests.	All
Trustees to be able to access the LAC channels, within Teams, for all schools.	NB
Following feedback at this meeting reflect and redefine the wording within the Trust Development Plan	Exec Team
Upload the HR Metrics report to the documents for this meeting	WM

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	Apologies were received from C Nevin and V Horsfield.	
		AOB	There were no additional items of business to raise.	
		Register of Business Interests	There were no changes to the Register of Business Interests held. Trustees were asked to inform the Clerk of any future changes.	All
		Minutes of the last Trust Board meeting	Minutes of the meeting held on the 24 th March 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. <u>Actions from last meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There had been no changes of Register of Business Interests reported to the Clerk There were no requests for paper copies of the Governance Handbook received by the Clerk Diversity in recruitment of new Governors will be reviewed under the 	

			<p>Governance item of this meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WM has sent the link for the benchmarking tool to RK• The Skills Audit is currently being redesigned and will be circulated to Trustees and LAC Governors at the start of the next academic year	
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2	Being Strategic	Strategic planning for the next 2 academic years	<p>Trustees reviewed the Trust Development Plan 2020 – 2023.</p> <p>Q – JC asked what is the purpose of the Trust Development Plan, and what sits behind it? A – The plan is a high level strategic overview as each school has its own detailed Development Plan.</p> <p>The pandemic has limited opportunities for Trust growth. In 2023 DHS and LR Sixth Forms will open their doors and HGHS Sixth Form will reopen following the pause in admissions for 2 years. The Trust Development Plan is still very aspirational and should be looked at alongside each schools SDP as a roadmap to get to where we wish to be.</p> <p>Q- RK asked for figures to add detail to the plan. The aspiration is 10,000 students when full, how many student are there now? A – There are currently in the region of 5400 across the Trust, and this grows as each of the new schools admits another year group.</p> <p>Further Trust growth would potentially include adding a further 2 or 3 primary schools to the Trust family. There are currently no options for Free School bids.</p> <p>LW confirmed that it is a shared priority for all schools in the Trust to be Outstanding.</p> <p>A discussion took place around Heads of School or Trust Directors presenting to Trustees as opposed to reading 7 individual SDPs. It was agreed that communication would be more beneficial than more documentation.</p> <p>The hubs have been removed from the organogram included within the Trust Development Plan as this did not reflect the structure.</p> <p>Q – CF asked where the name Laurus Grace for the new AP School had come from? A – Following lengthy discussions it was felt the name best described the school. The Laurus Institute will sit alongside the SCITT after the Teaching School designation ends in Summer 2021.</p>	
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			<p>JC detailed the Academic Focus of the Trust Development Plan. The strategic priorities are agreed and underpinned by the Critical Success Factors. External validation is vital. This can be in the form of Trust to Trust, support programmes, Ambition Trust or reviews.</p> <p>There are no accountability measures for the second year due to the pandemic. There have been no KS2 SATS and no GCSEs and A Levels. Trustees felt it would be useful to be given destination data for Year 11 leavers.</p> <p>In terms of Curriculum Development critical success factor Trustees asked how do we measure what has happened? MV gave Trustees an overview of the support in each school. There are internal school reviews, monitoring by Trust Directors and if necessary the possibility of external validation.</p> <p>Q – TL asked when and where do you seek external validation?</p> <p>A – There are a number of options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Trust support and challenge • Work with another Trust who can carry out a review • There are options for a review by Ambition • Sir David Carter was due to complete an external review in summer 2021, this has now been postponed to autumn 2021. <p>LW reiterated that the curriculum is a key focus in all of the Trust schools. A way to audit this is by internal QA. LM, LW and MV have postponed the QA and this will be reviewed again in the second half of the summer term. HGHS, as the newest school to the Trust, has had a new curriculum plan, a staffing review, walkabouts completed by Trust staff and behaviour review.</p> <p>Music and Performing Arts are a key area which has been badly affected by the pandemic over the last year. An external candidate has been appointed as Trust Director for Music and a Trust Director for Performing Arts has been appointed from within the Trust. It is planned to relaunch Music and Performing Arts in the new</p>	
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			<p>academic year.</p> <p>Trustees thanked staff for the incredible amount of work which is undertaken to add the detail to back up the Development Plan.</p> <p>A long discussion took place on how Trustees could monitor individual schools progress towards their development plans. A number of suggestions were made, including LAC report to Trust Board and LAC minutes. Trustees will be given access to all Teams channels for the individual Academy Committees to have an overview. Trustees agreed that the Trust Board should remain strategic whilst monitoring.</p> <p>RK presented the Management of Trust Growth to Trustees. Trustees discussed what motivates others when growth is considered, are there opportunities there, are the Trust ready and asking the right questions?</p> <p>LM reassured Trustees that the aspiration is to grow but, due to the pandemic, at present there is little more leaders can do as the opportunities are not there for anyone at present.</p> <p>WM informed Trustees that over the coming years there would be a big focus on organic growth. There will be 3 Sixth Forms opening, in addition to the AP Free School. There is a danger of focussing too much on student numbers and growing at what cost or compromise.</p> <p>It was agreed that any Trust growth should be for the right reasons and not affect the standards and reputation of the Trust.</p> <p>LM asked Trustees if they wished the Trust to grow at any cost or would like the Executive Team to use their judgement in making recommendations to Trustees. Trustees agreed that any growth should be carefully considered to maintain the existing standards and reputation. To proceed with caution and not to compromise our existing students.</p> <p>DK presented to Trustees the Workforce Development aspect of the Development Plan. Wellbeing is the underpinning priority whilst</p>	NB
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			<p>also considering staff progression and development. All of this is currently being done but is not necessarily framed within the plan. Opportunities for CPD are vital and staff have opportunities to upskill to allow them to grow within their roles. Recruitment and retention is also a big ongoing focus across the Trust.</p> <p>The number one answer from candidates during interviews, when asked why they have applied to the Trust, is the reputation for professional learning and development for all staff. This is the bedrock of what is done as a Trust.</p> <p>Trustees were confident that staff wellbeing and professional development is a consistent priority and wished to ensure the development plan wording reflected the inherent aspiration.</p> <p>WM commented that wellbeing is, and will always be, a vital priority as a focus. The aspiration is for the Trust to be the employer of choice. The Trust currently has amazing retention figures, which are included in job adverts. Wellbeing is an agenda item for the upcoming Audit, Finance and Resources meeting and the Trust HR team have produced a most comprehensive metrics report. It was agreed that following the powerful feedback received at this meeting the Executive Team would reflect and redefine the Trust Development Plan wording and bring back to a future meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed the HR report for Audit Finance and Resources would be uploaded to the documents for this meeting for Trustees information.</p>	<p>Exec Team</p> <p>WM</p>
3	Holding to account	Approve policies as per the Trust Policy Schedule	There were no policies for approval at this meeting.	

4	Financial Probity	LCH Capital projects	<p>Prior to the meeting Trustees received a document relating to proposed capital projects at Laurus Cheadle Hulme.</p> <p>The two projects which require approval are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outdoor dining space covered area and installation of external food pod 2. Alterations to Reception area to create a conference room <p>LCH was the first of the Trust Free School buildings and was designed solely by DfE and with numerous restrictions.</p> <p>The current dining space area is not sufficient for staff and students as the school reaches capacity. The original plan for an extension to the current dining hall facilities, at a cost of £310,000 was not felt to be best value for money. The proposal to Trustees is for installation of an external food pod and subsequent catering equipment and associated tarmacing at an estimated cost of £62,500 and also installation of a covered external seating area and relocation of bin store at an estimated cost of £137,500.</p> <p>In terms of the Reception area it is proposed to remodel the existing Reception space to create a Conference Room facility, at an estimated cost of £59,259 and a separate Reception for CHPS, for which CHPS will contribute an appropriate amount. There will also be remodelling to create additional office space for use for Professional Learning, at an estimated cost of £44,000.</p> <p>The projects would be funded by the Reserves of £338,000 held LCH (as at 31.08.2020). In accordance with the Reserves policy the school needs to produce a 3 year budget plan to show a return to a reserves level of 5% of GAG, (currently £165,000).</p> <p>Trustees were disappointed to have to be considering spending these amounts on a new building, whilst accepting the spend was necessary to ensure the building at LCH was suitable for 5 year groups.</p> <p>Q – LE asked if the new external dining facilities would be practical in the colder weather?</p>	
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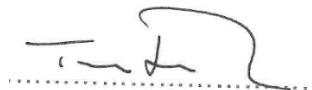
			<p>A – Experience shows the students still choose to go outside to eat. The outdoor food pods work very well at both CHHS and LR.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the proposed spending for the improvements to LCH outdoor dining and Reception areas.</p>	
		SMRA Self-Assessment	<p>WM had circulated the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool checklist (SMRA) which has been submitted to DfE. Trustees were asked to direct any questions to WM.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the SMRA.</p>	

AOB	Recruitment update		<p>Trustees discussed the list of questions which was circulated prior to the meeting. The questions were compiled by the Trust Marketing Team. It is anticipated that existing Trustees and Governors would complete the questions and add a photo and the results would be used as a marketing strategy to recruit new LAC Governors. LW is also working with Marketing to update the running advert on Inspiring Governance.</p> <p>Q – DK asked if the marketing would be more effective as a video rather than an answer sheet and photos? A – It was felt a video would be good going forward and could be done in-house.</p> <p>Q – TL – where did the six questions come from? A – The questions were agreed following research on various websites including NGA and CST.</p> <p>Q – CF asked if question 3, what is your profession, could put people off applying and may be more effective if the question was re-worded? A – It was agreed that it would be good practice to still include this question as this would aid deciding which LAC the applicant would be best suited when considering their skillset and experience.</p> <p>Q – PB asked where the shortage of LAC Governors was – is it one school in particular or across the Trust? A – All schools require more LAC Governors but LCH is the smallest committee at present and therefore needs to be a priority. It was noted that 8 LAC Governors on each committee, excluding staff, would be the optimum number.</p> <p><u>DHS mass testing trial</u> The risk assessment for the participation of DHS in the Government trial of mass testing, of students who have to go home after being identified as a close contact of a positive case, was issued to Trustees.</p> <p>DHS has been identified as being Control Arm of</p>	
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			<p>the study and this means students still need to go home and isolate and will take 2 LFT tests on days 2 and 7 to monitor their exposure to Covid 19. Further details will be reported back at the next meeting. Trustees were invited to direct any questions to WM.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the Risk assessment.</p>	
		Meeting dates	TBM 6 Wednesday 07.07.2021 at 10.00am – dependent on restrictions at the time it is proposed that this meeting will be held in person at the Trust offices.	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees reviewed the Trust Development plan in detail • Priorities reviewed were Academic Focus, Trust Growth and Workforce Development • Trustees approved the proposed spending for the outdoor dining facilities and Reception alterations at Laurus Cheadle Hulme • Trustees approved the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool checklist • Trustees received an update on Governor recruitment to the Local Academy Committees • Trustees approved the risk assessment for the participation in the mass testing trial at Didsbury High School. 	

Meeting closed at 11.40



Chair of Trustees:

7th July 2021