



PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: 7th July 2021
 Time: 9.30am
 Venue: Microsoft Teams

Clerk: N Burgess
 Present: R Kumar, C Nevin, C Fisher, D Brown, L Elias, P Benton, D Kershaw, T Little, W Mason, and L Woolley,
 In attendance: M Vevers and L Magrath

Action		Initials
1	Following this meeting inform Clerk, by email, of changes to Register of Business interests	TL/DK
1	To review the Governor Onboarding Information which will be given to new LAC Governors across the Trust	LW/WM
2	T Little to speak to A Law regarding Trustee recruitment	TL
5	To report back on the progress of the application to become an employer provider to be able to deliver training	LM
5	Trustees were asked to send any feedback to LW regarding the Trust Development plan	ALL
6	Share Disaster Recovery Plan with RK	WM
6	List of Trust Directors with the Link Trustee on to be uploaded to Teams	NB
AOB	To record thanks to V Horsfield	TL

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	Apologies were received from J Crombleholme and V Horsfield.	
		AOB items	There were no other items of business to raise which were not covered in the agenda of this meeting.	
		Register of interests	T Little and D Kershaw to inform the Clerk, by email, of the changes to their business interests they wished to record.	TL/DK
		Minutes of the last Trust Board meeting	The minutes of the last meeting on 5 th May 2021 were approved as a correct record of the meeting. The following matters arising from the previous meeting were confirmed as completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees were asked to inform the clerk of any changes to their record on the Register of Business Interests- all 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees to be given access to the LAC channels within Teams- NB Following feedback at the meeting reflect and redefine the wording with the Trust Development Plan – Exec Team <p>Upload the HR Metrics report to the documents for this meeting – W Mason</p>	
		Annual updates and onboarding	<p>M Dyer has been working on the new Governor onboarding information and, the annual information pack for all Governors and Trustees to complete at the start of the academic year. The information has been reviewed by the Governance, Oversight and Standards Committee at their recent meeting and will be amended and updated in preparation for use next academic year.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the content and it was agreed the volume of information could be daunting to a new Governor. There is a lot of responsibility on Trustees and Governors and it was acknowledged that undertaking the role is already a big time commitment for volunteers.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to categorise the information in terms of compulsory for compliance, and desirable to be completed later. It was agreed that LW and WM would work together to review and define what is essential and what could be considered as background information.</p>	LW/WM

2	People	Membership and succession planning	<p>It was agreed that link arrangements had been difficult to sustain during the pandemic and that is anticipated Trustees will re-establish the links at the start of the next academic year. The following Trustee links were noted:</p> <p>Maths – L Elias English – C Nevin Science – R Kumar Humanities – D Kershaw Culture, Creative and Rhetoric – T Little MFL – C Fisher Careers – R Kumar SEN – P Benton SRE/PSHE – P Benton Sporting Excellence – J Crombleholme</p> <p>CN reported that there are new Chairs of Academy Committees at all the new schools, except for LCH. CN has now withdrawn from all schools but will remain at LCH for the present time.</p> <p>CN is attending an Inspiring Governance event in the week following this meeting and reported it may be possible to recruit future Governors via this channel.</p> <p>V Horsfield will resign as a Trustee with effect from 31st August 2021, to take up a post as Deputy Headteacher in London.</p> <p>LM has spoken to A Law regarding recruitment of a new Trustee to the Board. TL agreed to have a further conversation with AL regarding a potential appointment.</p>	TL
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3	Systems and structures	Schedules of Business for 2021-2022	<p>LW informed Trustees the schedules had no material changes other than dates for statutory compliance requirements.</p> <p>It was agreed Trust Board Meeting 5 would be a dedicated strategic planning meeting. It was discussed that a possible approach in planning before the meeting would be a small working group identified.</p> <p>The schedules for the LAC meetings had been refined following feedback from Heads of School and LAC Chairs.</p> <p>LW commented that the Clerks found the SOB a very useful documents when preparing for meetings, which in turn ensured the meetings ran smoothly and all statutory deadlines were met.</p> <p>Q – TL asked if the Schedules of Business were a Trust document or had been prompted from elsewhere? A – The document is a hybrid of various sources and has been cross checked against CST guidance to ensure the document complies with all statutory deadlines.</p> <p>The Scheme of Delegation shows the Accountability framework and maps to the Trust Board and Local Academy Committee schedules as appropriate. The deadlines are then mapped into the life cycle of the meetings to ensure everything is covered and approved in a timely and relevant manner.</p>	
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4	Reporting	Trust Board Committee Chair updates	<p>Verbal updates were received from the Chairs of Trust Board Committees:</p> <p><u>Audit, Finance and Resources Committee</u></p> <p>L Elias gave a brief overview of the meeting which had taken place on 14th May 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deadline for the BFR had been changed and this was now deferred to the next meeting of the committee in July 2021 • Management accounts were received for the period to 31st March 2021 with a £600,000 surplus projected for the year end • The new finance system was implemented on 1st April 2021 and was working well • The committee reviewed internal scrutiny reports and were happy to report there were no concerns raised • Covid catch up grants claimed and received were discussed • WM had issued an updated contracts report to Trustees • Trustees present at the meeting had received a very comprehensive presentation by the Trust HR Director around the HR metrics report. • Trustees were very pleased to note the Trusts excellent retention figures in comparison to the national average figures • It was noted the Trust are working hard to recruit high quality IT staff from a sector which is very much in demand at present • Trustees reviewed the Risk Register <p>Q – TL asked how, as a Trust, the information in the HR metrics report is used to recruit in the most effective way?</p> <p>A – LE confirmed that word of mouth is always a vital recruitment indicator. LM also reported that in interview the question “why the Laurus Trust?” is always asked and the number one answer is the reputation for the Professional Learning which is offered, and is well known around the North West.</p> <p>The Laurus Institute will be launched to all Trust staff at the start of the academic year. All Professional Learning, for teachers and support staff will be in one place for all staff to access.</p> <p>Trustees noted that the NQT year has now been replaced with a 2 year period for Early Career Teachers (ECT). The Trust had been part of the ECT Framework</p>
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			<p>pilot before coming into effective from September 2021.</p> <p><u>Governance, Oversight and Standards Committee</u> C Nevin gave a brief overview of the meeting which had taken place on 17th June 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees noted the resignation of V Horsfield • M Dyer presented proposals for the documentation provided to new Governors and a form to be used by all Governors and Trustees to capture the annual declarations • Trustees discussed a potential Governor Away Day as an opportunity for all Trustees and Governors across the Trust to come together to share ideas and better understand the strategic direction of the Trust • It was agreed that LAC Chairs would be invited to the Spring 2022 meeting of GO&S committee • Annual reports of the Academy Committee to the Trust board were scrutinised • Training was discussed and it was agreed that in some cases it was best to allow each Academy Committee to select the most relevant training for their group • The skills audit was discussed and a new simplified version, which would more accurately capture skills and competencies, would be presented for consideration at the next meeting of the committee, in November 2021. 	
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5	Being strategic	Management of Trust Growth (Priority 7: Marketing, Communication and Branding)	<p>LM reported to Trustees on Trust Growth:</p> <p><u>Hazel Grove High School Sixth Form</u> Surveys are currently being completed which will then be given to the Architects to interpret and present the options available to the Trust.</p> <p>It is hoped by September 2021 there will be an artists impression available to show to students in year 10 at HGHS. Marketing is taking place starting with year 9 students.</p> <p><u>AP Free School</u> Progress is currently very slow. EFSA have plans approved to be submitted. It is confirmed that the AP school will now open no earlier than September 2023, and that this date could possibly be later.</p> <p><u>Gorse Bank pre school</u> Gorse Bank are looking to consider expanding their provision, to secure pupil numbers moving forward, by providing pre school education to offer 60 places.</p> <p>The barrier is the funding to build accommodation as there is no capacity in the current school buildings. The Trust are currently in the process of engaging with a company who are able to provide accommodation. Surveys are currently being completed to ascertain exact costs and this will be reported back at a future meeting.</p> <p>Q – DB asked would parents be charged for the preschool? A – Parents would utilise the 30 hours funding and top up any additional hours to cover their working day.</p> <p><u>Laurus Institute</u> The Trust are excited to launch the Laurus Institute to all staff in September 2021. Professional Learning for all under one banner. There will be a Professional Learning Lead in each school. There is a dedicated section on Sharepoint for all staff and the site will contain CPD, videos, links.</p> <p>The Trust are in the process of applying to become an Employer Provider and deliver training. LM will report back on the progress of the application at TBM1.</p> <p>Q – CF asked is there a finite budget for learning? A – Yes – there is a lot of inhouse learning which takes place and the Trust utilises the Apprenticeship Levy as</p>	LM
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			<p>much as possible.</p> <p>MV commented that there is already a lot of expertise across the Trust and this meant not as much money would need to be spent externally. Training can also be delivered Trust wide.</p> <p><u>Other opportunities</u></p> <p>There are no developments are present in terms of bringing other schools into the Trust. With regards to the Woodford School the Trust is still interested in becoming the operator. There is a consultation happening at present.</p> <p>Q – PB asked after the end of the consultation when will you know the outcome?</p> <p>A – it is anticipated that a decision will be made in September. The school will be built and hopefully ready to open in September 2022.</p> <p>The Trust have recently been working with a larger more established Trust in terms of Trust Growth. This partnership had proved to be excellent development for the Executive Team. The question now is where are the opportunities for growth? All Trusts are having the same issue.</p> <p>From September 2021 Ofsted inspections will resume and there may be opportunities if some schools are in special measures and then have to become part of a Trust.</p>	
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		Strategic Priorities	<p>The revised Trust Development plan was issued to Trustees following feedback at TBM5. Thanks were offered to JC, DK and RK for taking the lead on their sections.</p> <p>Q – TL asked LW and LM if they felt the review process was helpful? A – Yes it was good to capture Trustees thoughts and ideas and have input into all sections. The individual meetings held were all different but very useful. A blueprint for the future would be to have Trustee working groups.</p> <p>It was agreed the indicators for success were now more specific and robust.</p> <p>Q – LW asked DK what were her impressions of the review process? A – The working groups were able to breakdown their section in great detail, work on and bring back to the whole team. It felt this was a very useful exercise. It is good to involve Trustees earlier in the process. This is in no way a criticism, but to utilise their skills, expertise and willingness. In some situations smaller groups can be much more effective.</p> <p>RK commented in agreement with DK. It felt more productive to be able to have a different conversation which was unstructured and be able to brainstorm ideas rather than follow a set and structured routine.</p> <p>Trustees discussed that opportunities for growth may not be available at present but in early 2022 options may begin to arise. The Trust needs to be ready and keep the Trust Development plan as a live document, regularly reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Trustees were asked to send any comments they wished to make regarding the Trust Development Plan to LW.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the publication of the Trust Development Plan.</p>	All
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6	Holding to account	Risk management	<p>WM presented the Trust Risk Register which is non Covid related. Trustees will review in detail at the meeting of the Audit, Finance and Resources meeting in the week following this meeting.</p> <p>The key risks for the Trust are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Cyber security</u> A number of MATS have recently been targeted. WM and M Stewart are working closely to review and implement strategies to prevent. M Stewart has been in contact with the Head of IT at Caxton. Penetrative testing is taking place over the summer to see if there are any gaps. Staff training is planned. Multi factor authenticity is being implemented. It was acknowledged that further investment in firewalls may need to be made once the testing is complete and any gaps identified. 2. <u>Recruitment to SCITT</u> The number of Primary Associate Teachers recruited for the coming year has increased. Secondary numbers are significantly lower than previous years. Factors for this include bursaries being slashed and being based in a particularly competitive area for provision. 3. <u>Finances</u> The Trust spends within means annually but there is a huge amount of capital projects which require funding in the future. <p>Q – TL asked WM if there are any areas which leave you uncomfortable? A – Those reported are the 3 main areas of risk but they are not uncomfortable. The prospect of Trust growth is exciting and we want to make the opportunities a reality.</p> <p>Q – CF asked is the SCITT recruitment unique to us or across the board? A – The recruitment numbers are down all over. It is a very turbulent time for ITT. A further update will be given at the Autumn term meeting. The Trust will also be looking into the Teaching Apprenticeship route now that bursaries have been slashed. This would be beneficial for career changers who could not otherwise afford to apply.</p> <p>Q – PB asked would the Trust accept late applications? A – The whole process is done via UCAS which now</p>
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			<p>does not reopen for applications for the following year until October. Also the induction has been done already and schools allocated for Associate Teachers.</p> <p>LM commented that Altius had been approached by another provider who had been graded inadequate by Ofsted. Of their 15 trainees there was only 3 who Altius would have recruited. Applicants have been turned down in the past and the bar is high. It is much better to have 20 high quality Associate Teachers than higher numbers who are not of the same quality.</p> <p>Q – RK asked in terms of Cyber attacks is there a Disaster Recovery plan in place and a budget?</p> <p>A – WM agreed to share the Disaster Recovery plan with RK. Details of funding allocated will be in the report to the AFR committee.</p> <p>Q – Does insurance cover cyber attacks, do the Trust pay the ransom?</p> <p>A – M Stewart is the best person to ask the granular details but WM and LM were both reassured of the contingencies in place after speaking to MS. The insurance does not cover at present but will do in the future. The Trust is felt to be in a good position following recommendations to purchase products other schools will not be aware of thanks to the contact made with Caxton. It was noted that whilst such products are expensive you cannot underestimate the risks.</p> <p><u>Covid 19 Risk assessments</u></p> <p>The risk assessments are continually updated ongoing as guidance changes. Any changes are responded to rapidly and individual schools update their operational guidance.</p> <p>MV is currently looking at the risk assessment for the return of schools in September and the risk assessment will run alongside the Local Outbreak Management plan. The risk assessment will be amended for September with the reality that there could still be late changes to the guidance over the summer.</p> <p>Staff will still be able to wear a mask and social distance if they choose whilst still aligning with national guidance. It is recommended that the enhanced cleaning across the Trust stays in place.</p> <p>LM reported the figures to Trustees relating to cases in the last 4 weeks.</p>	WM
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			<p>There have been 97 students confirmed positive and this has resulted in 1772 students having to isolate.</p> <p>There have been 13 members of staff confirmed positive and 71 staff having to isolate.</p> <p>It is anticipated the risk assessment for September should be much less involved. Operational guidance will only come into play if there is an outbreak. The Local Outbreak Management plan is currently work in progress and will change as more information and guidance is received.</p> <p>Q – A Trustee asked what is the ratio of staff when a number of staff are isolating where the school can run and remain open?</p> <p>A – It is difficult to clarify as it depends on the role of the member of staff and the restrictions as to what can be done with the students whilst remaining in their bubbles. Members of SLT in each school have been trained on how to open up their school in the event of the key holders not being available.</p>	
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		Staffing structures	<p>The Central Services staff structure and the list of Trust Directors were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>WM informed Trustees that the Central Services team was now a 50 strong team of high quality specialists. There are vacancies currently advertised for HR and IT for September. A Cohen is leaving her post in August and will be replaced by a temporary appointment of Trust Operations Manager from September 2021.</p> <p>Trustees received the list of Trust Directors and were pleased to note new appointments had been made from September to Music, Drama and Sport. It is planned to recruit Trust Directors for Technology and Computing by September 2022.</p> <p>Q – A Trustee asked are Trust Directors spread across all schools?</p> <p>A – Lots of the appointments have originated from CHHS, some of which have moved to other Trust schools and there have been some external appointments.</p> <p>There have been numerous promotions and progressions across the Trust schools, including appointments from the new schools who have joined and not just the legacy schools.</p> <p>TL asked that there be a list of Trust Directors with the name of their link Trustee to be available and uploaded to Teams</p>	NB
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		<p>The Policy working group have worked through the policies and recommend them to Trustees for approval.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16-19 Bursary Policy • Appraisal Teachers • Asbestos Policy • Attendance, Absence and Deferral Policy • Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy • C.O.S.H.H. Policy • Code of Conduct for LT Trustees and Governors • Complaints Policy • Complaints Procedures • Consent Policy • Data Protection Policy • Data Breach Policy • Data Subject Rights • E-Safety Policy • Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy • Fire Procedures • First Aid Policy Primary • Flexible Working Policy • FOI Policy including Publication Scheme • Health and Safety Policy • LAC Policy for Laurus Primary Schools • LAC Policy for Laurus Secondary Schools • Legionella Policy • Lone Worker Policy • Medical Conditions in Schools – Secondary • Medical Conditions in Schools – Primary • Preparation and Practice Policy • Relationships and Sex Education Policy Primary • RIDDOR Policy • RSE Policy • Selection and Recruitment Policy • SEND Policy • Staff Acceptable Use for ICT Policy – Secondary • Working at Height Policy • Recruitment Policy 	
	Approval of Trust policies as per the Trust policy schedule		
	Schools Census	WM confirmed that all Trust schools had completed and submitted their School Census.	

	AOB	DHS Consultation	<p>Following consultation with stakeholders it is proposed to move Didsbury High School to the Laurus School day timings.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the move to the new school day for Didsbury High School with effect from September 2021.</p> <p>The Chair wished to record thanks to V Horsfield following her resignation as Trustee.</p>	TL
	Meeting Dates:	Meeting dates	<p>Wednesday 6th October 2021 at 10.00am Wednesday 1st December 2021 at 10.00am Wednesday 2nd February 2022 at 10.00am Wednesday 23rd March 2022 at 10.00am Wednesday 4th May 2022 at 10.00am Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 10.00am</p>	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes

- Trustees reviewed the onboarding documents which will be given to new Governors and Trustees as they are appointed
- Trustees received and noted the updated Schedules of Business
- The Chairs of Audit Finance & Resources and Governance, Oversight & Standards committees gave Trustees a brief verbal overview of their last meeting
- The CEO gave a verbal update of Trust growth a present
- Trustees were given details of the Laurus Institute, a bespoke area for Professional Learning for all Trust staff
- Trustees reviewed and approved the Trust Development Plan
- WM presented the Trust Risk Register
- Trustees received the updated Covid 19 Risk Assessments
- 35 Trust policies were approved
- Trustees received updated staffing structures for the Central Services Team and Trust Directors
- Following a consultation Trustees approved DHS moving the school to the Laurus Trust school day times