



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TRUST BOARD

Held on Thursday 3 August 2023, 11.30am, via video conferencing

Present: Miles Cole
Jackie Cutchey
Vic Daniels (Chair)
Claire Heald
Lynsey Holzer (CEO and Accounting Officer)
Toni Kittle

In attendance: Stewart Harper (Governance Consultant)
Karl Jackson (Deputy Chief Executive Officer)
Karen Jarvis (Head of Corporate Services)
Nicki Mayne (Deputy Director of Finance)
Clive Paskell (Director of Finance)

Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

1. Welcome was extended to all present, especially to Claire Heald who was attending her first Trust Board meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Jeremy Beswick, Peter Dabrowa, Fran Hargrove, Ngoc Nguyen, Steve Purdy and Ben Stickley.

Declaration of Interest

2. There were none.

Minutes of the last meeting

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 were approved without amendment

Matters arising

4. Matters arising which did not appear elsewhere on the agenda would be handled

Financial Planning

5. The Board received a draft budget for 2023/24, noting that this had been discussed in detail by the Finance & Resources Committee. The Board received draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee.

6. The Chair noted, in the absence of the Chair of the Committee, that the Committee had discussed the assumptions around the budget which were in line with ASCL recommendations and the latest pay award for teaching staff.
7. The Chair also noted that there remained some financial issues which could not be resolved in a single year, so there remained schools in a deficit position in the coming year. Further work would be undertaken to address these matters over the course of the year.
8. The Chair noted that management accounts, the revised format for which was still being refined, would be shared with all Trustees on a regular basis. This should, it was hoped, improve the ability of the Trust Board to oversee the Trust's financial position. Focus should be on trends and overall direction of the Trust. It was noted that the first set would be available by late October 2023.
9. Trustees were content that the Finance & Resources Committee had undertaken a rigorous review of the budget assumptions

RESOLVED: to approve the 2023/24 budget and future years' financial forecasts

10. A trustee asked how the CEO and Executive Team were working to ensure that school leaders were held accountable for achieving the budget parameters, and how realistically they could do so. The CEO noted that there had been considerable efforts undertaken, and that school leaders were all aware of the challenge and stood willing and ready to rise to it. There was a recognition amongst school leaders of the scale of the challenge.

CFO

11. The Board noted that Phil Beecher had been successful in an external recruitment process for a new Director of Finance, and was recommended for appointment. It was noted that the Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee had been part of the process.

12.

RESOLVED: to appoint Phil Beecher as Chief Financial Officer with effect 1 September 2023

Any other business

13. The Chair noted that draft responses to the two Termination Warning Notices had been circulated by email earlier in the day. It was agreed that the CEO and Accounting Officer would be authorised to send the letter to the DfE if no substantive changes were requested by Trustees before Monday 7 August 2023.

**RESOLVED: to authorise the CEO and Accounting Officer to send the response to the DfE
(subject to any changes received by end of business on 7 August 2023)**

Date of next meeting

14. Dates for meetings in 2023/24 would be confirmed shortly.