

LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD OF BOLTON IMPACT TRUST

**LEVER PARK ACADEMY
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON
MONDAY 21 JUNE 2021 AT 4.00PM**

Present: Mr M Taylor (MT), Miss H Carr (HC), Ms V Anthony (VA), Miss J Ashworth (JA), Mr D Buchanan (DB), Ms S Gulshan (SG), Mr R King (RK), Ms E Simpson (ES) and Mr N Woosey (NW).

In attendance: Paul Hodgkinson (PH) Executive Principal, David Smith (DS) Finance Director, Mubeen Moosa (MM) Trainee Accountant and Carole Brooks, Clerk, Governance Services.

Heather Carr in the Chair

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

HC welcomed all present, in particular Vicky Anthony to her first Local Governing Board meeting.

Apologies for absence had been received from Andrew Feeley and Dillon Yates. There had been no communication from Stephanie Wynn or Andrew Lee, it was hoped they may still attend.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of pecuniary interest or conflict of interest were made.

3. NOTIFICATION OF 'ANY OTHER BUSINESS'

- Governance Gateway Access (Clerk)

4. MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

4.1 Notification of Governor vacancy

MT informed Governors that Phil Bold had decided to stand down from the LGB due to time constraints. This had created a vacancy which enabled Vicky Anthony to join the Board subject to local Governor approval. This was agreed unanimously.

The Clerk noted that she would update the database as required

PH confirmed that the Trust were also happy to confirm this appointment.

Thanks was conveyed to Phil for the support he had provided during his time as a member of the LGB.

Agreed: That Vicky Anthony be appointed as a Co-opted Local Governor to serve a four-year term of office.

Action:

- i) MT to forward the contact details for Vicky to the Clerk at the earliest opportunity
- ii) Clerk to forward a welcome letter and 'New Governor' documentation to Vicky as soon as her contact details are received from MT.

5. MINUTES/MATTERS ARISING OF THE LAST MEETING

Governors had received the minutes of the last meeting held virtually on 10 February 2021 for their review and approval. Governors confirmed that these were a true record of the meeting.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Governors reviewed the actions and matters arising from the last meeting that were not included on the current agenda. It was confirmed that all actions had been completed with the exception of the following:

6.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education documentation

MT confirmed that Rebecca Leonard had now received all the necessary signed proformas from Governors to confirm that they had received, read and understood the details required regarding KCSiE.

MT noted that the new Governor induction pack prepared and collated by a member of staff within the Trust would now include the KCSiE documents for newly appointed Governor's information and completion as required.

6.2 Deep Dive, Minute number 2.2

Further to the discussion at the last meeting, HC asked if arrangements had been made for JA to attend the next 'deep dive' into the Curriculum carried out by the staff team. It had been previously noted that this had not been possible due to the circumstances of the pandemic but would take place at the earliest opportunity when Covid arrangements permitted.

MT confirmed that this had not yet taken place but that the arrangements to be made were currently in progress.

Action: RL/MT to arrange for JA to join the staff team undertaking the next 'deep dive' into the curriculum, subject to Covid arrangements permitting and for JA to complete the visit proforma to be shared with Governors at the next LGB meeting thereafter.

6.3 Link Governor roles, Minute number 8.4

MT referred to the need to review the Link Governor roles and responsibilities and reallocate some link responsibilities in line with Local Governor skill set and better meet the needs of the Academy and ensure effective distribution of Governors expertise. As an example, it was suggested that Vicky Anthony as be appointed as link Governor for SEN in line with her SENCo experience. MT noted that following his review of each role/responsibility he would contact individual Governors to discuss any changes to their link role.

7. **ACADEMY LEAD REPORT**

Governors had received the Academy lead report compiled by MT for their review and information.

Key items included:

- Overview
- Pupil numbers on roll
- Attendance
 - Overall outcomes
 - Attendance by year group breakdown
 - Engagement/outreach pupils
- Behaviour and Exclusions
- English and Mathematics
- The Quality of Teaching
 - Curriculum Development
 - Personal Development
- Leadership and Management
- Safeguarding
- Buildings
- Staff Well-being

MT highlighted aspects of his report as follows:

Covid Recovery /Pupil Attendance

MT reported that from 8 March 2021 for the four weeks leading up to the 1 April 2021 pupil attendance was very low. However, with the use of the strong personal success targets (PST's) systems in place and encouragement from the staff team, pupil attendance had much improved as could be seen from the data circulated within the termly report. After the Easter 2021 break the focus to further improve continued and following the exit of the Year 11 cohort attendance data had now increased significantly to the present date.

MT referred to the change in the format of attendance reporting as detailed within the academy Lead report. It was noted that this was now being reported by session such as reporting their attendance for five morning sessions v five full days in order to better meet the needs of the pupils and reflect their attendance of 5/5 sessions. It was felt that this was more appropriate and better met the needs of the pupils attending Lever Park School.

PH explained that he was currently supporting a school in Bury at which this format of reporting had been successfully trialled. PH noted that in some cases 'less was more' and confirmed that this arrangement better met the needs of the pupils. PH referred to attendance figures being skewed in the past and therefore following collaborative working and testing the revised system

at the school in Bury, benefits could be seen, attendance data reflecting sessions v full days was therefore much improved.

PH commended MT and Mel for all their hard work in putting the new system together.

MT noted that the new system provided enabled constant tracking and provided a more realistic picture to enable better planning of the required interventions and PST's to be put in place. Governors were assured that this system would continue to be monitored and processes updated as required.

PH noted that the prior to the new system being put in place attendance figures were very low at around 38%. However, following implementation these initially increased to 61% and was now at 86%, which was a considerable improvement. PH stated that the improvements in attendance were testament to the relentless hard work put in by MT and his staff team.

Growth in numbers of engaged/outreach pupils.

MT reported that due to the circumstances of the pandemic, there had been major concerns regarding the attendance of around 10-15 pupils who had struggled to return to school post the last 'lockdown'. In order to support these pupils, a revised timetable had been put in place which was proving to be invaluable with more positive contact now being held with them. MT noted that these pupils had been very disengaged and having to undertake regular covid tests had not helped resulting in a negative impact on their attendance.

Governors were informed that the 'lighter touch' approach was proving to be effective with some pupils on this programme making a significant improvement. It was noted that the timetable would slowly increase along with the addition of online learning and homework.

MT discussed that offering bespoke learning packages tailored to individual pupils including safeguarding and educational development and building this up over time to better meet their needs was proving to be very effective and would continue to be monitored. It was noted that there were currently two members of staff responsible for supporting this programme of study, but that this was likely to increase over the longer term.

Building's update

MT informed Governors that the repairs to a leaking hot water pipe under-ground are scheduled for the summer holidays. This has proved to be a large undertaking but was pleased that the insurance company was taking an active lead in this as well as covering the cost.

The bid for the new roof and boiler was eagerly anticipated, news was due towards the end of June/beginning of July 2021. This date has been pushed back due to the circumstances of the pandemic.

MT reported that a bid was to be prepared and submitted for other work including the perimeter fencing, internal doors and windows.

Curriculum Development

MT reported that the curriculum was being further developed to include a 'Animal Management' B-Tech course during which, pupils would enjoy visiting local farms 2/3 times per week. Consideration was therefore being given to developing some kind of sanctuary, on-site farm/resource centre and having a few animals on the school site. This would link closely into

the nurture environment already in place for September 2021 and would be very beneficial to the pupils particularly in light of the pandemic.

Staffing

Governors were informed that there had been a vast change in the needs of the pupils at Lever Park School, particularly as a result of the Pandemic and that an increase in the provision of nurture support had been required. It was noted that the service provision from the LA was also growing in this area.

MT stated that whilst the pandemic had been a challenge to all concerned and devastating in some circumstances, it had brought about some very positive outcomes in terms of education and learning styles. The review and implementation of new processes and learning styles in order to better support the impact of covid on individual pupils had resulted in some very positive outcomes. It was noted that the virtual environment had better met the needs of some pupils with a small number of pupils having engaged and performed better online with an outreach package than they would have done if they had been required to physically attend on site. This would continue to be managed on an individual basis.

Behaviour Incidents

HC referred to the reduction in the number of positive handling incidents that had occurred as had been highlighted on the report provided. HC asked how this had been managed.

MT explained that staff were managing to de-escalate issues before they reach the point of needing any positive handling. This had been helped by a number of initiatives such as:

- Staff having an informed knowledge of each pupil and how they respond to differing circumstances
- Staff providing clear instructions
- Staff implementing early intervention's
- Reviewing the curriculum /timetable to better meet the needs of individual pupils.

PH stated that the context and population of Lever Park School was very different now to what it had been in previous years and the improvements made were testament to MT and his staff team for working together and promoting the new approach so effectively. PH commended MT and his staff team for all their hard work and dedication.

MT thanked PH for his kind words noting that he and the staff team would continue to work together to further develop the processes in place and implement new ones to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils at the school. It was to be noted that the duty of care, however complex, and the management style had vastly improved, and that the ethos came from the whole staff team.

7.1 Self-Evaluation (SEF) /School Development Plan (SDP)

Governors had received the SEF for their review and information. MT reported that he felt that the SEF was an accurate and fair reflection of the current provision and linked into the SDP very effectively. Governors were informed that the SEF was currently 'frozen' to enable the Trust to undertake the necessary reviews.

Governors were informed that the SEF would also be reviewed externally by Ian Lane, School Improvement Professional. It was to be noted that the challenge and support provided by Mr Lane was much appreciated by the whole staff team.

7.2 Visit from the School Improvement Professional (SIP)

MT confirmed that arrangements had been made for the SIP to attend Lever Park on 9 June 2021, but this had been postponed due to the circumstances of the pandemic. It was hoped that this could be re-arranged before the end of the summer term but if not, plans would be made for the visit to take place in the early autumn term 2021.

MT reported that information relating to items 6.3 to 6.6 of the agenda was included within the academy leads report.

8. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Governors had received the financial report prepared by David Smith for their review and information.

DS reported that Lever Park was in a slightly improved financial position than had been anticipated with a previously projected surplus of £49,000 having now increased to £88,000.

Governors were informed that the Trust had continued to diversify and work with other Local Authorities which had been very beneficial financially. The budget had been set for next year with around 25% of the income being generated from working with other LA's.

DS explained that the financial position of Lever Park and other provisions within the Trust had improved significantly as a result of the savings programme having been implemented across the wider Trust. It was noted that this programme had been approved by Trustees and also the ESFA.

Capital Bids

Further to the information received, DS referred to the two bids discussed earlier that had been submitted for:

- The replacement of the School Boiler
- The new roof

Governors were informed that both items would be around £500,000 each with 90% of the cost being funded externally. DS noted that the outcome of both bids had been delayed until the end of July 2021.

DS confirmed that the Trust had employed 'AA Projects' to project manage both schemes due to the complexity of the work involved. They were a very professional company and hoped that both of the bids would be successful.

A Governor asked what the Trust would be required to contribute to the total cost of all the work required.

DS confirmed that the Trust would be required to contribute 10% of the total cost and would be able to repay over 5 years on a 0% loan. It was thought that this would equate to around £26,000 per year if both bids were successful.

DS invited questions of his report.

NW commended the savings that had been made and asked if there were any updates in respect of the Bolton LA funding arrangements.

DS confirmed that the Trust had met their commitment to Bolton LA to fill 69 places from September 2021. This was in addition to pupils from other LA 's out of borough.

PH noted that the Trust would continue to work with Bolton LA as well as other neighbouring Authorities to ensure future sustainability. It was no longer lucrative to work to a one client model and were required to generate additional income working out of borough. It was noted that pupils with higher needs would also attract a higher funding banding.

DS confirmed that the Trust was in a much stronger position financially as a result of the savings and efficiencies programme that had been implemented. However, concurred with PH in respect of the need to continue to work with other LA's as well as Bolton to ensure future sustainability for the Academy. It was noted that Bolton LA were aware of this and understood the Trusts position. Governors were assured that the Trust would continue to serve Bolton LA and that positive dialect with Bolton LA remained with all recent meetings also being very positive. It was noted that a 'place review' for the next year was required to be undertaken with Bolton LA later in the Autumn term 2021.

A Governor asked how the other academies within the Trust managed their trading model.

DS confirmed that all Academies within the Trust followed a similar trading model.

DS explained that the circumstances of the pandemic had initially affected a number of pupil referrals for BIT but that this had improved with referrals increasing for the Forwards Centre and Youth Challenge Academies. It was noted that the traded work with schools had increased with schools paying a top up in respect of any early intervention requirements.

RK commended the processes in place and asked DS if he was familiar with the Northwest flexible purchasing system. It was suggested that BIT join the framework as it was felt that this may be beneficial to them.

DS thanked RK for highlighting this and asked RK to forward any information he had regarding this to PH and DS.

Action: RK to forward information on the flexible purchasing system to PH and DS

9. POLICY APPROVAL

9.1 SEND Policy.

Agreed: That Governors approve the SEND Policy

9.2 Approval of non-statutory Policies

MT confirmed that the following policies had been reviewed for Governors approval.as reviewed by the

- Remote Education Policy
- RSE Policy

- Blended Learning Statement

Agreed: That the policies as detailed above be approved.

10. **NOMINATED GOVERNOR ROLES**

10.1 Chairs' Briefing

The Chair had attended the summer term Chairs' Briefing held virtually on 10 May 2021 where the following matters had been highlighted:

- Governance Services Update
- Nurturing the team on your Governance Boards
- Summer Term Meeting Updates:
 - Governance Conference
 - Ofsted Inspections this term
 - Early Years Foundation Stage — New Framework
 - Re-launching the role of the Link Governor for Training

A report compiled by HC relating to the areas and items of discussion held at the Chairs briefing had been circulated with the agenda for governors review and information.

10.2 Partnership Meeting

Rebecca Leonard, Vice Principal for the Trust had attended the Partnership Meeting held on 24 May 2021. Governors were referred to the report that had been circulated on the Gateway for their information.

10.3 Link Governors Report on Training / Recent Training undertaken

10.3.1 Governance Training Programme 2021/22

The Clerk reported that the 201/22 Governance Training Programme would be available on the Bolton Governance Services website before the end of the current term and that governors would be informed via email when it was available.

Governors were encouraged to access any training to enhance their Governance role and to advise RL once completed. It was noted that if there was any other specific training that Governors felt would be useful to them to let RL know, and she would endeavour to make the necessary arrangements.

The Clerk asked that VA and any other newly appointed Governor that had not already done so to make the necessary arrangements to access the national Induction course for new Governors.

Action:

- i) Governors to review the courses available and make the necessary booking arrangements.
- ii) Vicky Anthony to access the national induction Course for new Governors.

10.3.2 Link Governor Briefing Sessions

The Clerk reported that a Link Governor Briefing session had been held virtually on 14 June 2021. The session had been arranged to re-launch the role of the Link Governor for Training and to undertake consultation on the Governance Training Programme for 2021-22. It was envisaged that the autumn term session scheduled for 21 September 2021 would be held in person at Bolton Science and Technology Centre (BSTC).

The Clerk noted that RL had stated at a previous meeting that she had planned to attend this.

The Clerk noted that the following information had been presented:

- Update on the work of the Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership. (Shona Green, Safeguarding Officer)
- Overview of the most recent updates and reforms to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. (Head of Service for Children with SEND)
- An outline of the proposed changes to the EYFS Framework to be implemented from September 2021 alongside key findings from early adopter schools. (Start Well Service)

Governors were informed that there were some significant changes ahead in respect of Safeguarding, SEN, Early Help and the language used, for which the launch date was yet to be advised. The Clerk referred to the circulated report compiled by RL advising the Link Governors with responsibility for SEN and Safeguarding to consider the questions that had been included within her report to assist them with their monitoring role.

10.3.3 Governor Skills Audit

DS confirmed that the skills audit had been completed and the results collated. It was noted that there were a few areas with lesser experience than others, but all areas were covered and the LGB was well represented with the necessary skills to deliver the support and challenge required.

10.3.4 Website Compliance

DS reported that the new website was now in place. Matthew Taylor, Rebecca Leonard and Victoria Gavin had worked hard to ensure that all the statutory items were accessible as required and the site was compliant.

The Clerk suggested that RK and MT undertake a review of the website ahead of each termly meeting with a report back to the LGB at the next meeting thereafter. This would ensure compliance was maintained.

Action: MT and RK to make arrangements to undertake a termly check of the website using the checklist provided and provide a report back to Governors at the Autumn term 2021 LGB meeting thereafter.

10.4 Bolton Governance Conference

The Clerk reported that the Governance Services Team was planning to hold a Bolton Governance Conference in the Spring of 2022. The Team had invited Chairs at this term's Briefing session to share their preferences for either a physical conference at the Mercure

Bolton Georgian House Hotel in Blackrod or a virtual event. Responses would inform planning and further information would be provided in due course.

11. **GOVERNOR VISIT REPORTS**

MT and PH thanked Governors for their attendance and commitment to Governor week. It was noted that this had been very well attended with the following monitoring reports having been submitted with the agenda for Governor's review and information:

- Leadership and Management - Heather Carr
- Post 16 Destinations - Richard King
- Staff and Pupil Well-being - Siobhan Gulshan

At this point on the meeting RK asked if there were any updates for governors in respect of teacher assessed grades.

MT confirmed that the Teacher assessed grades were submitted last week within the required time frame. It was noted that a significant amount of work had been completed in relation to this; thanks was conveyed to Rebecca Leonard for all her support in this matter. MT informed Governors that the school used a number of examination boards, and it was hoped that the school would receive an email requesting a selection of pupils work as evidence to support the judgements made and the final justification of results be confirmed.

12. **BUILDINGS AND PREMISES**

Governors had received an update in respect of buildings and premises as part of the Academy Leads report. MT referred Governors to the Information provided regarding the hot water pipe that had been leaking for a considerable amount of time. The leak had now been stopped and would be repaired over the summer break along with the removal of the asbestos that had also been discovered.

13. **GOVERNANCE SERVICES UPDATE**

13.1 Bolton Governance Gateway Discussion Boards

A detailed report had been provided in support of the agenda item. As a result of feedback Governance Services had incorporated a discussion board service on to the Gateway site. This allowed for secure communication between all members of the board for general information about meetings, events or links to specific guidance and points of interest, the discussion board should not be used to relay personal or sensitive information about individuals.

Once activated the discussion board could be "switched on" for MAT's at Trust and/or Local Boards limiting discussion facility to those individual levels.

Agreed: To request that the Clerk activate the discussion board for the Local Board.

13.2 Governance Recruitment

Further detail on how the Governance Services Team could support the recruitment of Local Authority Governors for maintained schools and assist for co-opted governors, or trustees and local governors for academy trusts had been provided in the supporting agenda report.

An online application was available on the Governance Services Website in order that schools could signpost potential candidates to the site for further information about the role and to complete the online form.

Details of three external organisations that work with Local Authorities or directly with individual schools and academy trusts to help find and place those interested in serving as a governor or trustee had been provided. These were Inspiring Governance, Governors for Schools and Academy Ambassadors.

When recruiting any Board should begin by establishing what skills or experience, they may require by referring to a skills audit which it is good practice to undertake annually. Governance Services could assist in undertaking and reviewing a skills audit for your board through the Development Health Check service.

If vacancies were longstanding, and the Board had the right number of governors with the necessary skills and experience, they may look to reconstitution to a smaller, more focused group and the clerk could provide further assistance to take this forward.

Agreed: That there was currently a wide range of skills across the Board but that a review of the skills audit would be undertaken in order to make an informed decision on any skills required as vacancies arise.

14. GOVERNOR IMPACT STATEMENT

PH thanked Governors for the high quality of Governance that had continued to be provided to Lever Park and the significant impact that the Governors of Lever Park had maintained over the past year. It was noted that whilst impact could be seen from the discussions and decisions made at termly meetings, it was felt that Governor impact was more significant during 'Governor week' with the high standard of challenge and support that was demonstrated during individuals monitoring visits and the high-quality reports that were compiled thereafter.

14.1 Impact made at this meeting.

The Clerk reported that the process of recording impact at termly meetings had been discussed at other LGB Meetings. As PH had discussed above, it had been agreed that whilst impact could be seen from the challenge, discussions and agreements made in termly LGB meetings, it was felt that the majority of the impact made was during Governor week and Governors monitoring visits to their individual areas of responsibility. It had therefore been agreed to remove this item from future termly meeting agenda's and only include it as an annual standing item on the summer/autumn term agenda. PH noted that he had agreed to prepare the annual statement, arrange its upload to the website subject to Governor's approval.

Following discussion, it was

Agreed: That the item relating to 'Governor Impact at each termly meeting' be removed from each termly agenda and be included on an annual basis on the Summer or Autumn term agendas.

Action: PH to complete an annual Impact Statement for Governors review and approval at the next meeting.

Governors were to be commended for their support and commitment to Lever Park, this was very much appreciated and valued.

15. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Agreed: That the Local Governing Board meeting dates for the 2021/22 academic year be held as follows:

Autumn Term 2021: Wednesday 20 October 2021 at 4.00pm

Spring Term 2022: Wednesday 9 February 2022 at 4.00pm

Summer Term 2022: Wednesday 8 June 2022 at 4.00pm

The Clerk noted that it was hoped that face-to-face meetings would resume in the new academic year, however, this was subject to the circumstances of the pandemic. It was proposed that for the present time Governors were to assume all meetings would continue to be held virtually unless otherwise informed.

It was noted that if Governors preferred their meetings to continue to be held virtually that was agreeable and that a blended approach of some virtual and some face-to-face meetings may also be considered.

Governor week – Autumn Term 2021

PH confirmed that the dates for Governor week would be confirmed at the earliest opportunity. A schedule of all dates was currently being compiled and would be circulated to Governors as soon it was completed.

Action: PH to circulate the Governor meeting schedule to all Governors at the earliest opportunity.

16. CONSENT TO ABSENCE

Agreed: To consent to the absence from this meeting of Andy Feeley, Andrew Lee, Dillon Yates and Stephanie Wynn

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 Governance Gateway Access

The Clerk referred to Governor access to the Governance Gateway reporting that a security patch had recently been applied which would auto remove any Governors who had not accessed the site during the past year. This was to ensure that access for any Governors who may have left and had not been taken off would be duly removed.

Governors were informed that there had been instances of serving Governors being auto removed simply because they had not accessed the site in the previous year. With this in mind Governors were requested to ensure that they access the Gateway ahead of each meeting

Governors were thanked for their co-operation in this matter.

Agreed: That Governors note the update to the Governance Gateway and the need to ensure access is maintained.

18. CONFIDENTIALITY

Agreed: That none of the matters reported in the minutes of this meeting be designated as confidential in accordance with the Academy's Memorandum and Articles of Association.

HC thanked MT and his staff team for all their hard work and continued commitment and dedication to the pupils of Lever Park School. This had been a very challenging year and the additional work undertaken to ensure the high standard of education provided to all pupils was maintained was much appreciated.

MT thanked Governors for their contribution to the meeting and for their on-going support and commitment to Lever Park School. It was recognised that Governors time was limited due to their own individual work commitments and the dedication shown was very much appreciated.

A restful summer was wished to all.

The meeting closed at 5.10pm

Signed as a correct record: _____
(Chairman/Vice-Chairman of Governors)

Date: _____