

MEETING OF MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF BOLTON IMPACT TRUST

MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM

TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2022 AT 4.00 PM

Present: K Davies (KD) – Chair of Trustees, B Atkinson (BA), J Bennett (JB), S Hincks (SH), Paul Hodgkinson (PH) - Executive Principal, D Luczka (DL), D McKeon (DMc), P Norton (PN), J Paradine (JP) and M Sidebottom (MS)

In Attendance: V Gavin (VG) – Business Development Manager, R Leonard (RL) - Vice-Principal, D Smith (DS) – Financial Advisor, E Stoddard (ES) – Clerk to the Trust and A Woosey (AW) – Director of Standards

KEITH DAVIES IN THE CHAIR

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed Members and Trustees to the meeting.

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr D McKeon.

KD informed Trustees that Members had met immediately prior to this meeting and had appointed Julia Paradine as a Trustee. J Paradine was welcomed to the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

3. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No items of Any Other Business were notified.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Trustees were informed that Julie Slater would no longer be joining the Trust due to a potential conflict regarding related party transactions. Therefore, one Trustee vacancy remained.

PH reported that the Central Team had been working to strengthen the Park School Local Governing Board (LGB). LGB vacancies had been advertised and two strong candidates were now being put forward.

Agreed: To approve the appointment of Victoria Coupe and Priya Patel on the Park School LGB

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Trust Forms (Minute Number 6)

The Chair asked if all Trust forms had been completed. VG replied that a few forms were still outstanding and asked that these be returned asap. Forms could be re-sent to Trustees if need be.

Agreed: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Trust Meeting held on Tuesday 4 October 2022

Action: All outstanding forms be completed and returned

6. **COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Agreed: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held on Friday 11 November 2022, the Finance & Resources Committee Meeting held on Friday 11 November 2022, the Risk & Audit Committee Meeting held on Friday 25 November 2022 and the Pay & Appraisal Committee Meeting held on Friday 25 November 2022

There were no matters arising, which were not already included on today's agenda.

7. **TRUST COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP / SCHEME OF DELEGATION / LGB TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Trust Committee Membership

Agreed: i) That J Paradine be appointed as a member of the Finance & Resources Committee

ii) That J Bennett be appointed as a member of the Pay & Appraisal Committee

Scheme of Delegation and Central Team Function

PH stated that the Scheme of Delegation had now been updated in line with the new Central Team function.

A Trustee asked if Local Governing Boards (LGBs) would have any Risk Register responsibility as this all seemed to be at Trust level. PH stated that this had been discussed with A Ager, External Reviewer, who had also stated that she would like to see more delegation to the LGB. PH stated that with Trustees permission he would be happy to review the LGB responsibilities within the Scheme of Delegation. The Chair stated that it was important that the Scheme of Delegation was allowed to evolve as the Trust continued to grow.

PH directed Trustees to the Structure Chart and Central Team roles. PH stated that he felt this model would allow for future growth. The Chair stated that Trustees needed to look strategically at the structure moving forward and proposed that this be deferred for a matter for discussion by the Business Strategy Group.

PH reported that at the last meeting it had been proposed that the LGB at Youth Challenge be reduced to one Staff Governor and one Parent Governor and the LGB at the Forwards Centre be increased from one to two Staff Governors but reduce to one Parent Governor. Since the meeting it had been advised that the LGBs could not reduce to one Parent Governor as the Instrument of Government stated that there needed to be a minimum of two Parent Governors on each board. Therefore, both

Youth Challenge and the Forwards Centre LGBs would need to increase back to two Parent Governors on the LGB.

Agreed: i) That the Scheme of Delegation be approved subject to the LGB column being reviewed

ii) That the Structure Chart and Central Team Roles be deferred for a matter for discussion by the Business Strategy Group

iii) That Youth Challenge and the Forwards Centre LGBs increase to two Parent Governors on the LGB

Action: Clerk (add Structure Chart and Central Team Roles to spring term agenda for ratification)

8. **EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE TO TRUSTEES**

The Executive Principal shared his autumn term 2 update. The main sections of the report included:

- Introduction
- Pupil Numbers and 2022-23 allocations
- Around the academies
- Partnership Work and facing outwards
- HR and Wellbeing

Introduction

The Executive Principal reported that D Smith had now retired from the Trust but was working in an advisory capacity until a new Chief Finance Officer was successfully appointed. The CFO post had been advertised with a closing date of 6 January 2023.

Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner, had visited BIT. Dame Rachel de Souza had been very impressed with the provisions and had stated that she would like to continue to work with the Trust moving forwards.

Pupil Numbers

PH stated that all of the Trust academies were either full or close to full. Allocations for 2023-24 would remain the same with the exception of an additional 10 places at Youth Challenge Secondary and a reduction of 10 places at Park School.

Around the Academies

PH provided an update on each of the Trust academies. Trustees were advised that the cohort at Youth Challenge was very challenging with some very complex cases. The Youth Challenge Primary and Forwards Centre merger had gone well, and the Forwards Centre continued to provide a high-quality provision.

There were currently 90 pupils at Lever Park and provision continued on an upwards trajectory. Park School remained on the Risk Register, a lot of work had been carried out and the provision was now making good progress.

Partnership Work and Facing Outwards

PH provided an update on Outwood Grange, the Wigan Free School application, The Bridge Short Stay School, advisory work with Sheffield City Council, the Minerva Learning Trust, Sheffield and APSEND CEO Network.

PH stated that the partnership work focused on school-to-school support, and this was encouraged by the RSC. The Chair stated that the RSC's comments regarding growth and geography was consistent with the Trust's growth plan. In response to questions PH stated that the partnership work could only benefit the Trust once they started to expand.

SH asked if the Trust had any insight into the new Ofsted SEND framework and if Bolton was expected to be inspected. PH stated that he had contacted the LA for further information but had not yet had a response. SH stated that she had attended a meeting with Ofsted and advised that they were keen to encourage collaborative working between education and health.

HR and Wellbeing

PH provided an update on staff wellbeing, including:

- New Employee Assistance Programme
- Drop-ins
- Regular wellbeing communications
- Menopause support
- Men's health
- Christmas raffles

Agreed: That the Executive Principal's update be received and noted

9. STATUTORY ACCOUNTS

The following documents had been uploaded to the Gateway:

- Bolton Impact Trust Accounts 2022
- Bolton Impact Trust Management Letter
- Trust Response to Management letter

DS provided an update on the final outturn position.

Trustees were directed to the five points in the management letter and the Trust's response to this.

Audit Finding 1:

It was noted during the DBS checks that from the sample selected, although the process had been carried out, in two instances the DBS information had not been updated on the system.

Trust response:

DS advised that the system had been updated with immediate effect. Additional ongoing verification would be incorporated into regular management checks to ensure adherence to the process.

Audit Finding 2:

During the course of the audit work on Equals card transactions, it was noted that from the sample selected, in 4% of the cases, the receipts provided did not adequately evidence the items purchased and in a further 4% of cases, there were missing receipts. It was recommended that those members of staff with responsibility for ordering goods and services continue to be reminded of procedures, as detailed in the Financial Procedures Manual.

DS stated that the Trust had made significant progress in this area; however, some receipts did not adequately show what was purchased. This would be re-visited, and additional training would be provided.

Trust response:

Members of staff will continue to be reminded and ongoing checks will ensure compliance

Audit Finding 3:

During an audit of petty cash that from the sample selected it was noted that an entry on the petty cash sheet did not match the supporting receipt by £2. It was advised that those members of staff with responsibility for ordering goods and services continue to be reminded of procedures, as detailed in the Financial Procedures Manual.

Trust response

Members of staff have been reminded of the procedures and ongoing checks will continue.

Audit Finding 4:

It was noted during the audit of petty cash that from the sample selected, in one instance, it was not possible to verify a transaction due to the missing date stamp at the end of the receipt.

Trust response

DS advised that as in the above finding, members of staff had been reminded of the procedures and ongoing checks would continue.

Audit Finding 5:

The academy trust has three members. The DfE's strong preference is that academy trusts should have at least five members as having more members provides for a more diverse range of perspectives and ensures members can take decisions via special resolution without requiring unanimity.

Trust response

The Trust will source additional Members to meet this requirement.

DS stated that he did not feel that any of the audit findings were significant, and all had been actioned.

- Agreed:**
- i) To approve the Trust Statutory Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022
 - ii) To receive and note the audit recommendations included in the report

10. FINANCE UPDATE

Financial Outturn Report – Autumn Term 2022/23

Trustees were directed to the Financial Outturn Report which outlined:

- The financial monitoring position (both revenue and capital) for the 2022/23 year.
- The Trust's cashflow position as at the 30 November 2022, including monthly cashflow predictions up to August 2023.
- The Trust's Balance Sheet, as at the 30 November 2022.

DS reported that the projected financial position for the Trust for 2022/23 was a surplus totalling £148,000. A Trustee commented that this figure was less than what was reported at the last Finance & Resources Committee meeting and asked why this had reduced. DS reported that this was due to:

- Agreed Pay Award
- Reduced pupil numbers at The Forwards Centre (September to November)
- Park School

DS added that he felt that this was a one-off year and was confident that business would continue to be brisk moving forward.

Agreed: That the Financial Monitoring Report for the Autumn Term 2022/23 be received and noted

11. EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

A copy of the External Review of Governance Summary Report had been provided for Trustees' information. KD provided an overview of the actions but added that the Trust were already underway with many of the actions listed. KD stated that A Ager had felt that governance across the Trust to be strong. A more detailed report would be provided, and A Ager would conduct a review in March / April 2023.

12. POLICY RATIFICATION

RL advised that the Appraisal Policy had been updated with regards to changes to the working week and a change to the Academy Lead Performance Management process. It was noted that RL would now be conducting the Academy Lead Performance Management.

Trustees were informed that the Safer Recruitment, Disclosure and Barring Policy now included reference to online recruitment checks. The Trust would be conducting checks on the advice received from One Education and these would be undertaken for shortlisted candidates only.

Agreed: i) To approve the updated Appraisal Policy
ii) To approve the updated Safer Recruitment, Disclosure and Barring Policy

13. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed: That the meeting dates for 2022/23 be confirmed as:

Trust

Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 4.00pm

Tuesday 18 July 2023 at 4.00pm

Standards & Finance

Friday 3 March 2023 at 11.00am / 12.00pm

Friday 9 June 2023 at 11.00am / 12.00pm

Risk & Audit

Friday 17 March 2023 at 11.00am

Friday 30 June 2023 at 11.00am

14. CONSENT TO ABSENCE

Agreed: To consent to the absence of D McKeon

15. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Business.

16. CONFIDENTIALITY

Agreed: That none of the items of discussion at this meeting be designated as confidential in accordance with the Academy's Memorandum and Articles of Association

With no further business the meeting closed at 5.00 pm

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____

(Chair of Trust Board)

ACTIONS

Minute Number	Person Responsible	Action Required
5	Individual trustees	Complete and return trust forms
7	ES	Add Structure Chart and Central Team Roles to spring term agenda for ratification