

MEETING OF MEMBERS & TRUSTEES OF BOLTON IMPACT TRUST

MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021 AT 4.00 PM

Present: K Davies (KD) – Chair of Trustees, J Bennett (JB), Paul Hodgkinson (PH) - Executive Head Teacher, D Luczka (DL) - Member, D McKeon (DMc), P Norton (PN) and M Sidebottom (MS)

In Attendance: R Leonard (RL) - Vice-Principal, D Smith (DS) - Finance Director, 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 B Atkinson (BA), S Hincks (SH) and T Grimshaw (TG).

KD informed Trustees that a members' meeting had been held to appoint D Luczka as a Member. It was noted that JB would need to leave the meeting at 5.00 pm.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

PH declared that he was Chair of the charity Sapphire Partnership. Mrs Luczka was the Partnership Manager at Sapphire Partnership; however, he did not feel that this presented any conflict of interest.

No further declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

3. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No items of Any Other Business were notified.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Trustees were advised that there was currently one Trustee vacancy on the Board. The Executive Principal reported that he would focus on filling this vacancy after Christmas, taking into consideration previous discussions regarding equality and diversity.

5. TRUST FORMS FOR COMPLETION

Trustees were asked to complete and return the following forms:

Declaration of Eligibility & Privacy Consent Form (TG, PH, PN and MS to complete)

Register of Business Interests Form (for any Trustees who have not yet completed this or were absent from the last meeting)

Safeguarding Declaration Form (all Trustees)

DS reported that internal audit had picked up on two Register of Business Interests forms as the Trustees in question had not declared their current occupational roles as Head Teachers, although this had been disclosed on previous forms. Trustees were asked to include all information including anything that may be deemed as a potential interest.

Action: Trustees (complete and return forms)

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

Agreed: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Trust Meeting held on Tuesday 5 October 2021

Matters Arising

PH reported that he would provide an update on traded numbers within his Executive Principal's report.

7. COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Agreed: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held on Friday 12 November 2021, the Finance & Resources Committee Meeting held on Friday 12 November 2021, the extraordinary Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on Friday 3 December 2021 and the Risk & Audit Committee Meeting held on Friday 3 December 2021

Matters Arising

Standards Committee Meeting

PH reported that the Quality of Education afternoon was due to take place on 5 January 2022 and a report would be provided to Trustees once this had taken place.

Finance & Resources Committee

Trustees were advised that details of the Capital Bid were included on today's agenda.

Risk & Audit

Trustees were informed that PH and RL were to meet with JB, Chair of the Committee, in January to discuss safeguarding across the Trust.

PH stated that currently himself and RL acted as conduits between the Trust and Local Governing Boards (LGBs). However, moving forward, KD and JB would be involved more to create stronger links between the Trust and LGBs.

KD had requested that safeguarding be discussed as a separate forum or within the Standards Committee remit rather than just within the Risk & Audit Committee. Trustees agreed that safeguarding was a hugely important issue for the Trust due to the significant number of vulnerable students and this should be included on every Standards Committee agenda and the committee terms of reference be updated to reflect this.

Agreed: That safeguarding be included on every Standards Committee agenda and the committee terms of reference be updated to reflect this.

Action: RL / ES (include safeguarding on Standards Committee agendas)

8. **EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL'S AUTUMN TERM REPORT**

The Executive Principal shared his autumn term 2021 report. 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 currently 20% of staff were absent at the Forwards Centre due to Covid. The Trust had sought advice from the Local Authority (LA), and it had agreed that the academy would close early for Christmas on Friday due to the number of positive cases.

KPI data would be collected, and the new SEF process would be tested in January 2022. All information would be aggregated into a report and presented to the Standards Committee in the spring term. Any red flags arising from the data would be presented to the Risk & Audit Committee.

Details of the Trust Leadership Training Schedule were provided, and Trustees were informed that 14 members of staff were completing the New to Leadership course. PH advised that the 'Big 10 BIT Leadership Checklist' was now in place and included ten aspects that all leaders were expected to know. The first was attention to detail to policy, safeguarding, data, latest guidance etc, which was deemed to be crucially important for someone in a leadership role. In response to questions PH stated that the Big 10 was essentially a Trust competency framework and 9 of the areas were included in the Head Teacher standards. Some of the areas would also be linked to the Academy Leads performance management.

Pupil Numbers and 2022-23 allocations

PH advised that all academies within the Trust were full or almost full. It was noted that the Forwards Centre was full as of today. PH stated that he had had a very productive meeting with Bolton Council and the Trust would continue to work with the LA regarding KS4 provision.

The Trust continued to trade with a growing number of Local Authorities and there were currently 18 out of borough pupils on roll at Lever Park.

Around the Academies

PH advised that the Central Team was supporting the new leader at Park School, and this was one of the many benefits of working within a Multi-Academy Trust.

Partnership work and facing outwards

PH reported that he had attended a meeting with the third-party external provider, and he was now waiting to receive a letter from the CEO. PH stated that he would continue

to liaise closely with the Chair of Trustees and Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee and all Trustees would be kept updated regarding any progress made.

PH advised that NLE work with Spring Lane, Bury was almost complete; however, there may be opportunities in the future to provide support via sponsorship.

HR and Wellbeing

PH provided an update on recent internal and external appointments.

Trustees were informed that the Wellbeing survey results had been largely positive and action plans had been put in place where needed. The Trust had received the Gold Award for Wellbeing from One Education.

The Executive Principal invited questions at this point.

The Chair stated that it was pleasing that a lot of progress had been made on the Business Strategy, particularly regarding out of borough business.

DMc stated that the Trust had done a phenomenal job in getting the Trust to a secure financial position, especially during such challenging times.

KD stated that the Big 10 Leadership Checklist would be a very useful tool in providing consistency throughout the Trust and he expected that this document would evolve over time and include broader organisational competences such as Being a Brand Ambassador for BIT. KD added that the checklist would also be a useful tool in recruitment and selection.

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

The Chair proposed that the Finance Update be discussed at this point.

9. FINANCE UPDATE

Financial Monitoring Report – Autumn Term 2021/22

Trustees were directed to the Autumn Term Financial Monitoring Report which outlined:

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- The final monitoring position (both revenue and capital) for the 2021/22 year, based upon transactions that have occurred in the period 1st September 2021 to 31st October 2021.
- The Trust's cashflow position as at 31st October 2021, including monthly cashflow predictions up to August 2022.
- The Three-Year Forecast for the Period 2020/21 to 2023/24
- The Trust's Balance Sheet, as at the 31 October 2022.

DS reported that the Trust was currently anticipating an outturn surplus totalling £315,000, which was £32,000 less than the original budget. This was due to significant variances within individual academies and a detailed report was provided. DS advised that Youth Challenge Primary was currently quiet capacity wise with the LA commissioning an average of 13 part time pupils against a capacity of 24 pupils. PH stated that if this trend continued then further consideration may need to be given to KS3 numbers. DMc stated that LA funding cuts may be forcing Primary Head Teachers to look at in-house solutions rather than alternative provision.

A Trustee asked if BIT could request additional funding for pupils due to their additional needs. RL reported that the incoming KS3 pupils were very challenging but did not have Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) in place therefore did not come with any additional funding. Youth Challenge Secondary was not set up to accommodate these challenges but was now at capacity so the LA may be more receptive in providing additional funding to enable BIT to take the pupils. A Trustee asked what happened to pupils if the Trust did not accept them. RL explained that there were other provisions in Bolton that the pupils could attend.

DS advised that the Three-Year Forecast was very positive and there was sufficient carry forward to repay the ESFA loan from January 2022. A Trustee asked if in-year surpluses were expected to continue to be positive over the next three years. DS stated that this would depend on the Trust having continued success in diversifying but added that the DPS price had not been increased over the last few years so this had the potential to generate additional income. Conversations would need to be had with the LA regarding this but DS cautioned that he expected push back from the LA so this would need to be managed carefully.

Agreed: That the Autumn Term Financial Monitoring Report 2021/22 be received and noted

Capital Bid Report

DS directed Trustees to the Capital Bid Report and stated that the report provided Trustees with information in relation to three bids prepared by AA Projects as follows:

- Disabled Access Works at the Forwards Centre – Totalling £159,000
- Roof Replacement Works at Lever Park – Totalling £949,000
- Safeguarding works at Lever Park – Totalling £169,000

The Finance and Resources Committee had met on 3 of December 2021 and adjourned until a further meeting on 7 December 2021 to develop a further understanding of the bid details. At the meeting on 7 December, the Finance & Resources Committee agreed to support the high contribution level of over 30% to maximise the potential of the bid success. The Trust would be required to contribute £416,000 over a ten-year period, which would be on the basis of securing a ten-year loan from the Department of Education. Trustees had agreed to submit the full bid to maximise its potential success but would endeavour to minimise any unnecessary spend by working closely with AA Projects.

In response to questions DS advised that he would incorporate the loan into the budget strategy but added that he did not expect the Trust to be successful in all three bids.

The Chair stated that he was confident that due diligence had been carried out and Trustees had since had sufficient time to scrutinise the details of the report and the Trust was able to justify the cost. DS reassured Trustees that this could be built into the budget. DMc asked if the costs were reflected in the current budget. DS advised that this would only be incorporated into future budgets.

Agreed: That the Trust ratify the Finance & Resources Committee decision to agree to support the bids, with a 30.1% contribution, totalling £416,000 over a ten-year period

JB offered his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

10. **STATUTORY ACCOUNTS**

The following documents had been uploaded to the Gateway:

- Trustee Report and Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021
- Management Letter
- Trust Response to Management Letter

DS reported that the statutory accounts were very positive and directed Trustees to the report. DS advised that there had been 8 audit recommendations and provided further details of these for Trustees' information. The Trust's response and the actions taken in response to the recommendations were listed within the Trust Response to the Management letter. KD recommended that the report and action plan be presented to the Risk & Audit Committee.

Agreed: i) To approve the Trust Statutory Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021
ii) To receive and note the audit recommendations included in the report

Action: DS / ES (include audit report and action plan on spring term R & A agenda)

11. **SCHOOL TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF PAY AWARD**

The Clerk had uploaded a report to the Gateway detailing the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document 2021 ('STPCD'), which no longer published full pay ranges, rather it set the minimum and maximum value for each scale of teacher e.g., main scale, upper pay scale and the various leadership groups. It was then for each Local Authority, school and Trade Union to consult and agree how they would manage the local pay framework within these broad parameters. The headline changes to the LA Pay Policy are;

A pay freeze for teachers other than:

- £250 consolidated pay award for all paid below £24K in essence these will be Unqualified Teachers (UQT) and will not be implemented until November 2021 as the document will not be finalised until 14 October 2021

The revised teachers' pay legislation introduced in 2013 allowed schools more freedom to manage teachers' pay; however, schools are reminded that should you decide to significantly deviate from the LA model Pay Policy, it would be necessary for you to negotiate these changes separately with the joint Teacher Unions.

Support & Non-Teaching Staff

The three local government unions (UNISON, GMB and Unite) had confirmed that their respective consultation ballots on the National Employers' final pay offer of 1.5% would run through to late September or early October 2021. All three unions would be recommending that the pay offer[s] be rejected. Further updates would be provided to

schools once the consultation process had run its course and the unions had notified the outcome.

RL advised that the Trust followed the recommended national teacher pay awards; however, currently there were no Unqualified Teachers so this would not be applicable. It was noted that the updated Pay Policy had been approved by the Pay & Appraisal Committee.

Agreed: i) To approve the pay award, once finalised
ii) To approve the updated Pay Policy

12. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

Trustees were reminded of the agreed meeting dates for 2021/22:

Trust

Tuesday 29 March 2022

Tuesday 12 July 2022

Standards & Finance

Friday 4 March 2022

Friday 10 June 2022

Risk & Audit

Friday 18 March 2022

Friday 24 June 2022

All meetings to be held virtually.

13. CONSENT TO ABSENCE

Agreed: To consent to the absence of B Atkinson, S Hincks and T Grimshaw

14. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Business.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY

Agreed: That no items of discussion at this meeting be designated as confidential in accordance with the Academy's Memorandum and Articles of Association

The Chair wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and thanked all Members and Trustees for their hard work and support during a very challenging year.

With no further business the meeting closed at 5.15 pm

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date:

(Chair of Trust Board)

ACTIONS

Minute Number	Person Responsible	Action Required
5	Trustees	Complete relevant forms
7	RL / ES	Include safeguarding on Standards Committee agendas
10	DS / ES	Include audit report and action plan on spring term R & A agenda