



THE LEARNING ALLIANCE

PART I MINUTES

TRUST BOARD MEETING

OF

THE LEARNING ALLIANCE (TLA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

HELD ON MONDAY 11th July 2022 at 9am.

Present:

Mr D. Wootton (Chair)
 Mr A. Pear (Vice Chair) (AP)
 Mrs C. Thomson (CT)
 Mrs S. Dempsey (SD)
 Mr R. McCluney (RM)
 Mr R. Armstrong (RA)

In Attendance:

Mr M. Cladingbowl, CEO (MC)
 Mr D. Twambley – COO (DT)
 Mr A. Howells –Director of Quality (AH)
 Mrs E. Hooley (EH) (items 1-5 inclusive)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Apologies:

Mr M. Ashcroft (MA)

Part 1	
Administration	Action
1. The Chair <u>welcomed</u> everybody to the meeting. <u>Apologies</u> were received and accepted as recorded above and the meeting was <u>quorate</u> . 2. There were no Declarations of interest for the matters on the Agenda. 3. Paper 3.0 The <u>Minutes</u> of the Board meeting held on 23 rd May 2022, uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, were approved and will be signed by the Chair on GH. <u>Matters Arising</u> – The Action Log was updated as noted thereon. Trustees asked whether there was an update on the Digital Marketing Strategy and it was reported that there had been only 1 meeting of the Strategy Group, from which there was nothing to report so far. It was reported that the data dashboard, DC Pro was now up and running and capable of generating attendance and behaviour reporting. Trustees asked when Trustees will be given sight of dashboard reporting which they could challenge and approve and it was reported that reporting would begin in the 2022/2023 Autumn term and the dashboard would be interactive by Spring/Summer that academic year.	Challenge Challenge
4. Reports (Exception) from Committees	
4.1 <u>Finance & Staffing</u> The Finance and Staffing Committee (the Committee) Chair reported that the Committee had discussed performance management developments and are encouraged by the work being undertaken, in particular with regard to the uncoupling of the pay review and performance management processes. Finances are being effectively managed across the Trust and appropriate measures are in place to monitor capital projects. Director of Marketing and Operations James Routs may be asked to attend the September Board meeting to provide a more detailed picture on capital projects. ACTION: The Finance and Staffing Committee Chair and COO will provide a paper to the Board for discussion on the strategic prioritisation of need with regard to School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding and its allocation to Trust schools. The Chair thanked the Finance and Staffing Committee for its effective financial oversight, which is of great benefit to the Trust Board. ACTION: It was reported that the Audit Report is awaited and will be issued to Trustees prior to the September Board meeting.	RA/COO DT
4.2 <u>Governance and Search</u> Paper 4.2 SD G&S Committee Report for Board uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was received . It was reported that further work needs to be done on governance succession	

<p>planning and diversity and Trustees recommended ACTION: AH will carry out an analysis of the Trust governance demographic, which can be benchmarked against the Trust community.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Governance and Search Committee will henceforth be known as The Governance Committee, to better reflect its priority responsibilities.</p> <p>4.3. <u>LGB Matters to Share with Trust Board</u> – Paper 4.3 LGBs Matters to Share with the Board uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, was received. It was reported that overall, Trust LGBs are providing improved scrutiny and challenge. A Trustee recommended clerking resources needed strengthening and ACTION: the COO and AH will consider the recommendation. It was recommended that there was an operational need to designate an owner at Trust level, for each local level matter raised. The Chair recommended ACTION: the matters raised could be split into 1. Business and Capital 2. Roles, Responsibilities and the Scheme of Delegation 3. English as an Additional Language (EAL). Further consideration will be given to address this.</p>	<p>AH</p> <p>COO/AH</p> <p>COO/ Trustees / AH</p>
<p>5. Strategic Matters</p>	
<p>5.1 <u>Update on proposal to explore changing the name of SWS</u> It was reported that there had been no appetite for a name change from the wider stakeholder group consultation, so the school's name will remain Sir William Stanier School.</p> <p>5.2 <u>Safeguarding Update including Strategic Priorities</u> and 5.3 <u>Review of 2021/22 Project Swim lanes</u> and 5.4 <u>Outline of Strategic Priorities 2022/2024 Papers</u> 5.3 <u>Project Workflow Updates</u>, Paper 5.4 Outline of Strategic Priorities 2022/2024 Cover Note 11 July 2022, and Paper 5.4a Trust Strategic Priorities 2022-2024, uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, were received. Trustees were encouraged that the Trust is moving forward on the majority of targets but advised that there should be a portfolio of independent workstreams running in parallel, to avoid the risk of confusion due to overlap in reporting. ACTION: The CEO will consider rationalisation of the workstreams and SD offered assistance.</p> <p>Trustees asked whether the Trust has capacity to complete all of the workstreams. It was reported that AH has been considering capacity and the 2022/2023 workstreams will be built to support the strategic priority document and will include target dates and slippage.</p> <p>Trustees asked when the disaster recovery and carbon neutral plans will be available for Trustee consideration. It was reported that the Executive are looking at how to put plans in place, taking specialist advice where needed, in matters such as sustainability and carbon footprints.</p> <p>The CEO reported that he has been doing extensive work with Trust schools' communities, particularly in Crewe, which will be discussed in detail at the Trust Conference on 15th July.</p> <p>Trustees asked why the Priorities were listed as a 2-year plan. It was reported that 2 years was seen as a natural point at which the priorities should be reviewed; at the point where the Trust will be more attuned to where it is going in terms of the Government White Paper.</p> <p>As recommended in Paper 5.4, Trustees agreed the Strategic Plan (attached as 5.4a).</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u> It was reported that safeguarding remains a Trust priority, with a target to become outstanding in this area. The Board was delighted to have confirmation of the appointment of Mrs Hooley as safeguarding lead for the Trust. A recommendation for Trust wide safeguarding day was met with approval and other initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will continue to meet to share best practice. b. Schools will continue to work with Supporting Children in Education Settings (SCiES) with an Ofsted awareness focus c. Safer recruitment training will continue to be rolled out d. Work continues on the standardisation of record keeping, Relationships and Sex Education and Personal Health Social and Economic (PHSE) programmes, the reporting process between DSLs and LGBs and Trust/LGB responsibilities' structures. e. The Trust is signed up to a national trial looking at pupil voice across the UK. f. A safeguarding report will be provided to the Board at every Board meeting. <p>The Board thanked Mrs Hooley for her assistance with the recent SWS Ofsted inspection. There followed a 5-minute comfort break and EH left the meeting.</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Challenge</p>
<p>6. Operational Matters</p>	
<p>6.1 <u>School Reviews – Overview of Key Findings</u> Paper 6.1 School Update Cover Note, Paper 6.1a School Update – Summary Document 11 July 2022, Paper 6.1b School Improvement Programme 2022-2024 (SI) Draft v1.0 – 11 July 2022 uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, were received. It was reported that Trust primary schools' results had not yet been tabulated. There were no surprises arising from the</p>	

<p>reviews, but whilst there remained residual weakness overall, Trust schools were performing better than the national average.</p> <p>Trustees asked whether the decline in behaviour standards at Crewe UTC could be a consequence of Mr McDaid's capacity workload from also being Head of SWS. It was reported that it was not thought to be a consequence of Mr McDaid's capacity, but more a consequence of it being a different cohort of students. A new Deputy Headteacher had recently been appointed at Crewe UTC, as well as increased pastoral support and it is believed that those appointments will result in improvements in behaviour.</p> <p>It was reported that in the primary schools' combined metrics of English, Writing and Maths, the national average was 59%. Egerton Primary School (EPS) achieved 83%, which was the same as their pre-Covid result. Black Firs Primary School (BFPS) was at 80%, Castle Primary School (CPS) at 59%. CPS' writing score had lowered the combined score, but English and Maths were in the high 70s/low 80s and Trustees were reminded of the school's small cohort. Greater depth figures had improved at BFPS and continued to be good at EPS.</p> <p>The CEO shared the SIP onscreen and reported that assurance and monitoring visits continue at all Trust schools and a calendar of events is being prepared with regard to those and training programmes. The Learning Institute is being utilised as a resource for the sharing of best practice and for the delivery of some training and the COO and CEO currently retain oversight of this resource to ensure consistency across the Trust.</p>	<p>Challenge</p>
<p>As recommended in Paper 6.1, Trustees noted the Reports in Paper 6.1, 6.1a and 6.1b.</p> <p>ACTION: The Chair will write to Mr McDaid and Mrs Hooley to thank them for their work during the Ofsted inspection. The Chair had written to Mr Whittaker to thank him on behalf of the Board for his work during the Knutsford Academy (KA) Ofsted inspection.</p>	<p>Chair</p>
<p>6.2 <u>Detailed Budgets and 3-year Forecast</u> Paper 6.2 Budget Overview 2022-3 and Paper 6.2a 3 year Forecast 2022-5 uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, were received. It was reported that the 2022/2023 budgets and 3-year projection had been reviewed by the Finance and Staffing Committee which it recommended the Board approve. The Trust is in a strong financial position and the central deficit budget is intentional with the aim of investing in capacity to drive school improvement and allow the CEO time to focus on developmental growth.</p>	<p>Challenge</p>
<p>Trustees asked how the decision has been made as to how to spread capital spending over the next few years. It was reported that capital is drawn down from revenue reserves. At Congleton High School (CHS), the Local Authority has invested £2million for basic need expansion and this has been supplemented by drawn-down reserves by the school to address wider welfare challenges. Knutsford Academy's (KA's) spend is a reinvestment programme to improve performing arts and address shared leisure centre challenges.</p>	<p>Challenge</p>
<p>Trustees noted that central services had an income of £102k and expenditure of £106k and asked whether the £102k equated to Trust schools' 5% of General Annual Grant (GAG). This was confirmed. Trustees noted that the teachers' pay increase was noted as 3% and asked whether this was a feasible figure given the cost-of-living crisis. It was reported that the staffing budget was notional; it is believed that supplementary grant funding would be available if there were to be a substantial change in staffing costs. The current area of concern is actually in utility costs and an allowance for a 60% increase in all schools has been calculated.</p>	<p>Challenge</p>
<p>Trustees noted the anomalies in shared services. It was reported that the Trust had secured additional central SEND capacity following a Headteacher request for further support. A qualified SENCo has been appointed who will drive the Trust SEND strategy and support its schools. ACTION: The COO will provide a breakdown of the new appointee's time allocation, overall capacity and responsibility structure at the next meeting.</p>	<p>challenge</p>
<p>The Chair noted that the Trust was in a good financial position, reserves were healthy and the estates strategy was sound and the Board approved the figures as noted in Papers 6.1, 6.2 and 6.2a.</p>	<p>COO</p>
<p>6.4 <u>Conference Update</u> - Trustees had some concerns about the Trust conference going ahead in the current Covid climate, at a time when staff were already in such a busy work environment. The COO assured Trustees that the situation was under daily review and that the Trust would take a balanced judgment as to whether to proceed. Attendees will be asked to do a lateral flow test prior to attending and face masks will be optional. The COO will check-in with Trustees on Thursday 14th for a final decision.</p>	<p>challenge</p>

7. Feedback form Trust Board to LGBs	
ACTION: AH will check each point has been addressed by the Trust Board and The CEO/COO/AH will feedback to the LGBs.	CEO/COO/AH
8. AOB	
It was reported that the Chairs' Forum had been a positive meeting with good dialogue and the Chair thanked AP for hosting the event.	
Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 5th October 2022	Meeting closed at 12.03pm

ACTIONS From March 2022 Meeting			
ACTION	By When	By Whom	Confirmed Complete
4.1 The Finance and Staffing Committee Chair and COO will provide a paper to the Board for discussion on the strategic prioritisation of need with regard to School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding and its allocation to Trust schools.	Autumn term	RA	Delegated to Governance Committee
4.1 The Audit Report is awaited and will be issued to Trustees prior to the September Board meeting.	Autumn term	COO	
4.2 AH will carry out an analysis of the Trust governance demographic, which can be benchmarked against the Trust community.	Autumn term	AH	
4.3 The COO and AH will consider clerking capacity needs	Ongoing	COO/AH	
4.3 An owner at Trust level will be designated, for each local level matter raised. The matters raised could be split into 1. Business and Capital 2. Roles, Responsibilities and the Scheme of Delegation 3. English as an Additional Language (EAL). Further consideration will be given to address this.	Ongoing	COO/AH	
5.2 The CEO will consider rationalisation of the project workstreams in the swim lanes document	Autumn term		
6.1 The Chair will write to Mr McDaid and Mrs Hooley to thank them for their work during the Ofsted inspection.	ASAP	Chair	
6.3 The COO will provide a breakdown of the newly appointed Trust SENCo's time allocation, overall capacity and responsibility structure at the next meeting.	Autumn term	COO	
March 2022 Meeting			
5.2a The Chair and AH will meet to discuss the governance review in more detail asap.	ASAP	Chair/AH	Complete
5.2b : AH will resend out the Trustee Survey and asked that Trustees complete.	23/05/22	AH/Trustees	Complete
5.3 The CEO will keep Trustees apprised of any changes regarding RSC.	ASAP	CEO	Ongoing

5.4 A brief update on safeguarding will be disseminated to Trustees.	ASAP	AP	Complete
6.1 Detailed consideration will be given to data and new dashboard utilisation	23/05/22	COO/SD/MC CEO/COO	Complete
8. Trustee visits to TLA schools will be arranged	Autumn 2022/23	AH to assist	
From 31st January Meeting			
5.4 The CEO and COO will give consideration as to whether it might be appropriate to provide the Board with further information about national safeguarding issues such as sexualisation and to provide assurance on recent safeguarding issues arising in schools.	Summer term meeting	Trust Board	
From 18th October Meeting			
4.1 The Trust Board will seek to appoint a Trustees with extensive financial knowledge and experience to support oversight and challenge in this area.			Deferred
DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 23rd May 2022 Trustee Away Day at 9:30am			