

PART I MINUTES

**TRUST BOARD MEETING
OF
THE LEARNING ALLIANCE (TLA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES:
HELD ON MONDAY 29th March 2023 at 9:15am.**

Present:

Mr D. Wootton (Chair)
Mr A. Pear (Vice Chair) (AP)
Mrs C. Thomson (CT)
Mrs S. Dempsey (SD) (Online on Teams)

Mr R. Armstrong (RA)
Mr M. Ashcroft (MA)
Mr R. McCluney (RM)

In Attendance:

Mr M. Cladingbowl - CEO
Mr D. Twambley – COO
Dr A. Howells – Director of Quality
Mrs E. Hooley – TLA Associate Headteacher (Item 5.3 only) (EH)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Apologies:

None

Part 1

1. Administration	Action
<p>1. The Chair <u>welcomed</u> everybody to the meeting. No <u>Apologies</u> were received and the meeting was <u>quorate</u>.</p> <p>2. There were no additional Declarations of Interest to those listed on Governor Hub.</p> <p>3. Paper 3.1 The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 14th December 2022, were approved and will be signed by the Chair on GH.</p> <p>4. Matters from the Previous Meeting (Action Log) – Paper 4.0 Matters Arising Report (Action Log) 29 March 2023, was received and updated as recorded therein. Challenge: In response to Trustee query, it was confirmed that the COO and Chair of the Crewe UTC (the UTC) LGB have met to discuss the curriculum offer. The UTC LGB Chair is agreeable to the proposed curriculum changes and the relationship with the Employer Partners remains strong. The UTC Principal continues to engage with local businesses to encourage new Employer Partners. [ACTION: The Chair, UTC LGB Chair and UTC Principal will meet to agree timeframes and milestones. All Trustees will be invited to that meeting and the UTC Principal will attend the July 2023 Board meeting to discuss].</p> <p>Unless stated otherwise, all Papers had been uploaded to Governor Hub, prior to the meeting.</p>	<p>Chair/UTC LGB Chair and UTC Principal</p>
5. Strategic Priorities	
<p>5.1 <u>Trust Growth and Development</u></p> <p>5.1.1 <u>Update on Merger</u> This item was taken under Part 2.</p> <p>5.1.2 <u>Update on Senior Leadership Appointments in Schools</u> It was reported that Mr Barlow continues to provide great support to the Trust secondary schools and it is anticipated that Mrs Hooper will continue to provide staff development support to the Trust primary schools. Trustees noted the dedicated, hard work of the outgoing Headteachers of Congleton High School (CHS), Knutsford Academy and Cheshire Studio School (KA and CSS), Egerton Primary School (EPS) and Black Firs Primary School (BFPS) and were pleased with the appointments of the new Headteachers for those schools. The Trust will provide a strong core induction programme for those Headteachers, encouraging their engagement with the visions and values of the Trust. Challenge: In response to Trustee query, it was reported that there had been a high proportion of diverse candidates.</p>	

<p>5.1.3 This item was taken under Part 2</p>	
<p>5.2 <u>TLA Strategic Priorities 2022-24: Update on progress Papers 5.2 Update on Strategic Priorities Cover Note 29 March 2023 and Paper 5.2.1 Update on Trust Strategic Priorities 2022 to 24 29 March 2023, were received.</u> [ACTION: The Trust Estates' Strategy and Data Management systems will be provided to the Board at the July meeting]. Trustees noted that Trust support is being provided for recruitment across its schools; it is particularly hard to recruit Maths teachers, as is the case nationally. Trustees noted the risks associated with recruitment and retention of support staff across the Trust. [ACTION: The CEO and COO will present a paper to the Finance and Staffing Committee, detailing how the Trust is managing staff recruitment and retention on the strategic management list and the Finance and Staffing Committee will subsequently report to the Board].</p>	<p>CEO/COO</p> <p>CEO/COO</p>
<p>There followed a short comfort break from 11am to 11:10am.</p> <p>5.3 <u>Safeguarding Paper 5.3 Strategic Safeguarding Update March 2023, was received. A report by EH. It was reported that</u> EH continues to support Trust schools and work with Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) on CPOMS consistency across the Trust. Trustees were keen to have sight of the dashboard as soon as possible and it was reported that categories of reporting had been agreed and work to amend those categories in CPOMS is ongoing. Staff training will take place over the summer term to ensure everybody understands the categories and reporting process. Challenge: Trustees asked who will decide on the categorisation of issues. It was reported that in some schools, DSLs will categorise and in others, staff inputting the matters will categorise. Challenge: Trustees asked how the Trust will ensure confidence in the data. It was reported that a glossary for each category will be in place and quality assurance will be carried out at Trust level. A central system has been created to record low level concerns or allegations against staff. Trustees voiced some concern about this system, asking Challenge: whether the member of staff would be advised of any issue reported, whether it would be noted in their HR record and whether allegations reported could potentially follow members of staff in their career. Trustees were assured that the implementation of the system was in direct response to the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) requirement that schools must have a clear reporting system in place. If concerns were to be raised, it would be reported to the Headteacher or the member of staff's line manager and the member of staff would be informed. The system is simply a record of concerns and outcomes and is a mechanism to protect pupils and staff, whilst being a way of identifying themes of cultural behaviour and trends as well as individual trends. The system looks to ensure staff are aware of how to protect themselves, without shifting any focus from the protection of the pupils, which is something the Trust does very well. [ACTION: The CEO/COO will ensure that the system complies with the terms of the Trust's Privacy Notice and Trustees advised that the lowest level of response ought to be 'No case to answer' or 'No action needed']. Challenge: A Trustee asked whether the CEO and COO could assure Trustees that the Trust has a suitable hierarchical framework of policies in place regarding safeguarding. [Action: The COO will provide a paper detailing the framework at the next meeting].</p>	<p>CEO/COO</p> <p>CEO/COO</p>
<p>EH left the meeting at 11:38am</p>	
<p>5.3.1 <u>Mid-year update</u></p>	
<p>5.3.2 <u>DfE Assurance Letters</u> This item was taken under Part 2.</p>	
<p>5.4 <u>Mid-year School Performance Update</u></p>	
<p>5.4.1 <u>Ofsted Update Paper 5.4.1 Ofsted Update 29 March 2023, was received. It was reported that</u> the Trust schools which have recently been inspected, had outcomes which were as good as expected. It is anticipated that Castle Primary School (CPS) will remain Good and the Trust continues to provide support to CPS following the recent, sad loss of a senior leader. Mr Witty is performing well in his role of Principal of Crewe UTC and the college is moving in the right direction.</p>	
<p>5.4.2 <u>TOA</u> This item was taken under part 2.</p>	
<p>5.4.3 <u>SWS</u> This item was taken under Part 2.</p>	

7. Committee Reports	
<p>7.1 <u>Audit and Risk (meeting held on 8th March 2023)</u> Paper 7.1 Audit and Risk Committee Report for the Board 29th March 2023 v2SD, was received.</p> <p>7.2 <u>Finance and Staffing (meeting held on 28th February 2023)</u> It was reported that the issues the main focus of the recent F&S Committee meeting, were those as discussed at today's meeting. Staffing remains challenging across the Trust as it does nationally.</p> <p>7.3 <u>Standards curriculum and performance – Feedback from LGBs (Spring term)</u> Paper 7.3 LGB Matters – Standards and Curriculum – Report, was received. It was agreed that the new trust may set up a Standards Committee with oversight of the LGBs.</p>	
8. Governance Matters	
<p>8.1 <u>Feedback from Chairs' Forum</u> Paper 8.1 Chair Forum Meeting Note 09March2023, was received. It was reported that this had been a positive meeting to which Chairs had raised relevant issues and provided useful insights. Ofsted was a focus of the meeting, with schools sharing recent inspection insights.</p> <p>8.2 <u>Feedback to and from Members</u> It was reported that the Chair briefs Members regularly. [ACTION: the Chair and AH will provide a note of the matters discussed in this meeting to Members].</p> <p>8.3 <u>Feedback to LGBs</u> Note to be prepared as for Members.</p>	Chair/ AH
9. Any Other Business	
<p>It was reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPS is hosting delegates from Kenya in May, with regard to their link project, a project very important to the school and its Governors. • Mr Chitty has reached out to the Baker Dearing Trust, leading to Lord Baker visiting the college. • The Trust has made an application for an NGA Governance award. • BFPS is holding a celebration event of the opening of its new build this afternoon. All Trustees are welcome. 	
<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 19th July at 9am . Location TBC. Meeting closed at 15:52pm</p>	