



Local Governing Board to The Learning Alliance

Crewe UTC LGB

Blended Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Part 1 Minutes



**Crewe Engineering
& Design UTC**

Date: 21st June 2023 at 4.30pm

Present:

Dr M. Marsh – Chair
 Professor N. Fowler (NF)
 Professor G. Harris (GH) (on Teams)
 Mrs H. Tattersall (HT)
 Mr C. Geddes (CG)

Apologies:

Mr J. Condliffe (JC)

In attendance:

Mr W. Chitty – Principal (WC)
 Ms R. Whim – Vice Principal (RW)
 Dr A. Howells – Trust Director of Quality (AH)
 Mr S. Ferguson – Head of Employer Engagement (SF)
 Mrs J. Millward – Consultant for TLA (JM)

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received from JC and the meeting was quorate.
2. It was confirmed that there were no Declarations of Interest for items on this Agenda. Unless otherwise stated, all papers had been provided to Governors prior to the meeting.
3. The Minutes of the Crewe UTC LGB meeting held on 1st March 2023, uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) were **agreed**.

Matters Arising – The Action Log was updated as noted thereon.

WC introduced **JM**, who is working with the Trust on a consultancy basis, supporting the UTC in everything from curriculum planning, wellbeing and staff performance to behaviour.

JM assured Governors of her significant experience background in education and **reported that** the UTC is a different place to the one with which she started working in January 2023.

JM informed Governors that WC is astute and clear on where the UTC needed to go. Improvements are being made firstly and most importantly, for the benefit of the pupils the UTC serves and there is now evidence of the improvements’ intentions and impact which will prove useful when Ofsted next inspect the UTC.

Improvements are a work in progress, but the UTC is aware of where further work is needed and has become more forensic and is able to put in place and implement improvement strategies. The most recent data shows that those strategies are impactful and previous areas of weakness are becoming stronger. The UTC has worked hard to eradicate poor behaviour and has been very successful in its endeavours. The UTC now has data on disruption to learning behaviour: In the first half term of the 2022/2023 academic year, there were 294 behaviour incidences. The current, summer term figure is 21 incidences. Whilst the term is not yet over, the figures show a huge, positive shift in behaviour, indicating that pupils’ needs are being met, so they are not disrupting learning. Behaviour incidences have declined, despite there being no permanent exclusions this year, which is unusual in this type of school, evidencing the changing attitudes and behaviours, which is very encouraging.

The UTC is moving at a better pace with processes and procedures, has high aspirations for its pupils and a clear focus on pupils and their needs is evident. The UTC’s systems and procedures are much improved and are clear and transparent.

The reading strategy is of particular note, focusing on attention and support for the bottom 20%; from a back to basics start, the UTC now has a clear picture of where those pupils are and has the strategies in place to further aide progression.

The strict approach to uniform is having a positive impact on pupils' attitude to the UTC and their expectations and there has been a remarkable improvement in uniform; pupils look smart and proud to wear the uniform.

Challenge: Governors asked how much of the summer term behaviour has been affected by exams and attendance. It was reported that exams had not been impacted at all by behaviour. Pupils did not have study leave and a number of the pupils with previously more challenging behaviours, have been on site more.

JM reported that WC and RW have shown great leadership and have cascaded their professional approach to all staff, who have a positive attitude and support the UTC's direction of travel.

Challenge: Governors noted that historically, prior to joining TLA, they had interrogated the data provided, which had appeared positive. Post Covid, TLA informed Governors that changes were needed. Governors were keen to understand what had happened to necessitate that change, so they could endeavour to ensure that it did not happen again. It was reported that historically, pupil recruitment had not been as robust as it could have been. The recruitment process has improved and there are good expectations of the new cohorts. Historically, there was no reliable measurement nor consistency for benchmarking progress. The reading intervention is a good example of how the UTC is now able to ascertain base reading levels, set strategic interventions and measure impact. JM assured Governors that they had done their best with the information provided at the time and that their challenge as well as support of the UTC, was an important part of governance. WC and JM invited Governors to visit the UTC and are welcome to visit whilst JM is on site.

4. School Performance

Paper Principal's Report was received.

4.1a and b. School Improvement Plan (SIP) It was reported that there has been significant, targeted work around Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and reading ages. A number of pupils had reading ages significantly below their chronological reading age and the academic mentor, funded by the Covid catch up funding, and recently implemented strategies, have had a significant impact on all reading ages. This improvement is also testament to leadership and teaching in the English department. Employer engagement progress has been outstanding under SF's work.

In response to Governor challenge, WC confirmed ACTION that the SIP will include ratings and impact measures on each line where appropriate, so that Governors can ascertain where the UTC is meeting targets.

4.2 Summer Term TLA Review The Trust's most recent review recommended 24 immediate actions. The UTC quality assures its actions and ensures it is making the right progress, making operational tweaks to ensure best progress. Historic pupil feedback highlighted a dissatisfaction with the offer being delivered, as there was low employer engagement and experience, but the UTC has made huge strides in that area and employer recruitment has been highly successful, especially since SF joined.

4.3 2023/2024 Curriculum – 6th Form Pathways and KS4 Subjects It was reported that historically, the UTC had been running many pathways that were not viable with the number of pupils. Streamlining the offer at 3 points of entry has resulted in offers much better suited to the pupils and a subsequent increase in pupils applications. The UTC is considering its options with regard to the potential national removal of BTEC qualifications and will look to ensure that it can offer its pupils viable, suitable alternatives.

4.4 Admissions and Pupil Number Update It was reported that previous years' decline in pupil numbers has improved and so far, 40, 6th formers are expected in September 2023 and interviews are ongoing. It is anticipated that by mid-September, the Yr10 on-roll number could be in the mid-90s. It is believed that this is due to the streamlining of the UTC's offer and improved messaging. 24 students are expected for T'Levels in September which overall, represents a significant, positive shift in numbers.

4.5 Pupil Progress and Attainment

Challenge: Governors noted from the Principal's Report "...less than acceptable progress" and asked what is behind that. It was reported that the data highlights the point that staff are increasingly developing an insight into behaviour and data, recognising and understanding patterns of individuals who are not making the best possible progress, putting in place interventions to support them and ensuring the curriculum is challenging enough to encourage improved progress.

Challenge: Governors asked when examinations outcomes and progress mapping data would be available. It was reported that it was envisaged that it would be available for the Autumn term LGB meeting. An external service will carry out and produce data analysis.

4.6 Careers and Destinations As in Principal's Report.

4.7 Pupil Premium As in Principal's Report.

4.8 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) As in Principal's Report.

5. School Welfare

5.1 Employer Engagement WC assured Governors that SF's vast skills and experience were invaluable and had already proved impactful, in his short time in his role as Head of Employer Engagement.

SF reported that it had been clear that employer work had diminished and needed to be rebuilt rapidly, especially to support T'Level pupils. The UTC has now embedded employer set projects, available to every learner, launched, supported and judged by employers.

Learning and employer projects have been mapped to the curriculum for core subjects, following a programme of engineering key points throughout the year, so that core subjects back up and consolidate engineering experiences.

Yr10 are half way through their work experience week, local well respected companies, such as Bentley, have provided quality, structured visits and there are 39 employer talks planned for next year, so far. 8 enrichment activities are planned, 7 of which are engineering activities with employer support and there are plans to engage additional, specialist companies.

The mantra of 'Industry ready' has been embedded, including addressing conduct, attendance and punctuality, to support pupils' successful future employment destinations.

WC reported that the curriculum mapping exercise had been significant and that in a short space of time, it had allowed department leads to ensure a cross-over with the engineering course delivery, to assist in ways of learning which enables transferrable skills between subjects. The UTC is unique in its employer set projects being matched to the curriculum, so that lessons can be tweaked to reinforce curriculum integration. Governors praised the engineering and core subject curriculum links and were pleased to note that engineering has been highlighted as being at the heart of the UTC offer.

Challenge: Governors noted that WC had streamlined the UTC's numerous, historic vision and values messages and had included the mantra 'Industry ready' as an aide to discussion about what those visions and values might be. WC is keen to include Governors in the conversation about what the UTC offers and how it articulates that to stakeholders. Governors agreed that it is important to show pupils that there are many pathways to engineering and design, including university and that message ought not be diluted. ACTION: THE CLERK will arrange a working party for Governors and UTC SLT, to discuss the vision and values and the link governor role.

It was reported that examinations had concluded and even the most challenging and vulnerable pupils had sat their GCSEs. Governors expressed praise and thanks to staff for this testament to their hard work. Yr13 vocational course work submissions are due.

Contained in **Paper Principal's Report:**

5.2 Attendance **It was reported that** Yr10 attendance is now better than ever and is in line with the national average.

Challenge: Governors noted that punctuality appears to have declined over the last academic year. It was reported that this decline is actually due to improved reporting and addressing of punctuality through a tightening of procedure and processes and gathering data to identify the students who need targeted support.

5.3 Behaviour As referred to in JM's report.

5.4 Safeguarding

Challenge: Governors noted that safeguarding data had improved but noted trajectory increases in the number of items asking whether it is a linear accumulation across the year. It was reported that pupil safeguarding files are not always transferred immediately to the UTC, but as the pupils become embedded into the UTC, they increasingly share their experiences and trust in the UTC's support. The UTC's demographic

differs to most other secondary schools and anecdotally, there are fewer incidences at the UTC overall, but staff are increasingly improving at recognising issues and behaviours.

5.5 Staff Wellbeing It was reported that there has been a great improvement in staff wellbeing, in part due to great improvements in pupil behaviour.

Challenge: Governors asked what is being done to praise staff and pupils for the advancements made. It was reported that the UTC staff had been very positive in the recent TLA staff survey and good progress has been made. The UTC has made wellbeing a priority alongside the pastoral and academic focus and staff are professional and good in their roles. Progress made is reinforced in Monday briefings and staff can see and feel the improvements and UTC and Trust support. High quality engineering staff have been recruited and an advert has gone out to recruit permanent in-house cover. The UTC and Trust share success and praise regularly and look for opportunities to look after staff.

6. Policy Updates

6.1 It was confirmed that all statutory policies had been approved by correspondence and are up to date.

6.2 Link Governor Monitoring HT confirmed that a meeting had taken place earlier that day, between WC, HT and the Trust marketing team, covering a lot of useful ground. WC and JC had met to discuss cross-institutional projects and NF was in the process of arranging a Link visit shortly. The planned workshop will also cover the link governor role.

7. Governor and LGB Update

7.1 Training Governors were reminded to enter any training in their Governor Hub profiles. AH thanked the Governors who have completed the Skills’ Audit and asked those who have not yet done so, to do so. **ACTION: THE CLERK** will look over the Skills’ Audit outcomes and recommend relevant NGA training modules to individual Governors who request it. Governors were asked to note that an updated Keeping Children Safe in Education will be implemented 1st September and Governors will be asked to read and confirm understanding and compliance of the document. **ACTION CLERK:** A summary of the changes will be made available to Governors.

7.2 LGB Composition No Governors’ terms of office expire this term. Additional employer Governor opportunities are being considered.

7.3 LGB Self-Assessment A date will be agreed in the 2023/2024 academic year.

8. Local Matters

8.1 Local Matters Nothing to report.

8.2 Matters to Share with the Trust Board Nothing to report.

8.3 Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB Nothing to report.

8.4 AOB

Challenge: In response to Governor query, it was reported that the UTC is Ofsted ready and it is thought it will be a great opportunity to show the progress it has secured.

The Chair reported that the Trust had reported at the recent TLA Chairs’ Forum, that the merger is progressing as expected. The Chair is meeting with the Trust executive at UTC tomorrow to discuss Crewe and its schools. It is envisaged that improved engagement with Crewe primary schools will lead to an increased stakeholder understanding of what a UTC is. Chairs’ Forum also discussed the balance between growth and stability, improvement and consolidation, the latter of which are now the Trust’s intended focus. AH added that strategic opportunities will continue to be considered, but acquisition is not a Trust priority.

The Chair advised that Baker Dering are holding a dinner and conference and Governors are invited to attend.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: TBSC Autumn 2023 **Meeting Closed at 6:25pm**

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

