



Crewe UTC LGB

Blended Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Part 1 Minutes



Date: 1st March 2023 at 4.45pm

Present:

Dr M. Marsh – Chair
Professor N. Fowler (NF)
Professor G. Harris (GH) (From 5:15pm on Teams)

Absent:

Mr C. Slater (CS)
Mr J. Condliffe (JC)
Mrs H. Tattersall (HT)

In attendance:

Mr W. Chitty – Principal
Ms R. Whim – Vice Principal
Dr A. Howells – Trust Director of Quality

Clerk: Mrs C. Gritton

Administration

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting. CS was noted as absent. Apologies were received from JC and HT. The meeting was quorate as of 5:15pm when GH joined the meeting. Until that point, the meeting was for information purposes only and no decisions were made.
2. It was confirmed that there were no Declarations of Interest for items on this Agenda.
3. The Minutes of the Crewe UTC LGB meeting held on 7th December 2022, uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) were **agreed**.

Matters Arising – The Action Log was updated as noted thereon. It was reported that the Trust COO had advised that the Trust would be providing Ofsted support and training for Governors in readiness for inspection as the school is in the Ofsted inspection window. The Trust Chairs’ Forum is scheduled for 9th March, when TLA LGB Chairs will share their experiences from those TLA schools recently inspected.

4. School Performance

Papers 1 March 23 Crewe UTC Report for Governors (the Governor Report) and TLA UTC Review Feb 2023 (the Review), uploaded to GH prior to the meeting, were **received**.

4.1 School Improvement Plan (SIP) It was reported that the Trust involvement and support in quality assurance had been very welcome and helpful, helping improve consistency and clarity around the curriculum purpose and stretching of the most able. ‘Teaching to the top’ has been well received by staff and rolled out. Governors noted that the Review contained many positives and that significant progress had been made, with subject leaders in English, Maths and Science in particular. **[ACTION SLT: Next steps will be reported showing planned actions and timescales].**

The points for improvement were noted and it was reported that the ongoing evolution of departmental plans will assist with those matters. The Principal had been pleased to note that the Review had highlighted the positive behaviour around the school and Trust advisor, Mrs Millward had provided some helpful feedback and advice on behaviour and attitude. On the whole, pupils’ conduct and lesson behaviour was good and pupils are happy at the school.

The Chair noted that the Review referred to disrespectful behaviour not always being challenged by staff and **requested an [ACTION for Matters to Share with the Trust Board:** support for and development of middle leaders and staff to ensure they are able to set the bar high enough to ensure all pupils can reach their potential].

The Principal assured Governors that the UTC is focusing on recruitment processes, to ensure that it attracts and recruits the right pupils for whom this school is best suited and that the UTC seeks to provide those pupils with the right curriculum, support and delivery to drive improvement. Middle leaders are being

held to account, staff are onboard with the SIP and pupils are aware of expectations. **The Chair noted this as encouraging.**

Challenge: A Governor noted that the Review referred to students being 'bored' as they were not receiving the level of 'hands on' experience they were expecting. Governors felt that the unique opportunity of the UTC is that pupils should never be bored and that if they are, it can lead to poor behaviour and disengagement in learning; pupils need to be stretched and challenged. **The Principal reported that** KS4 and KS5 curriculums have been redesigned, in response to pupil feedback regarding lack of workshop experience; hours have been reallocated across the board to ensure pupils have the opportunity to gain workshop skills. Also, the school has an exciting window of recruitment open; Head of Engineering and Teacher of Engineering. The advertisements have already attracted significant interest from people with good credentials, skills and experience. The school has also appointed a Personal Development Coordinator and a T' Level Coordinator, in fixed term positions, who are adding huge value and it is hoped that such new staff, supporting the ethos of the UTC, will enhance school improvement plans and help further improve outcomes. Great strides have been made in employer engagement and since the Governor Report was prepared, there are even more employers onboard supporting the school.

- 4.2 Admissions and Pupil Number Update** **It was reported that** for September 2023, 42, Yr10s have accepted a place and there are 31 pending interviews and decisions. Recruitment has gained significant momentum in the last 3 to 4 weeks and 33, Yr12 had accepted places and there are more to interview. Open evenings have been a huge draw, providing detailed information of what is on offer and those applying have been found to have researched the UTC and its offers. T' Level interest is growing and the curriculums built and budgeted for, for September are viable. Parents and pupils have been advised that BTECs are being phased out and the next open evening will have an engineering specialism focus. **In response to Governor Challenge: Governors were assured that** the UTC is clear on when BTEC funding will be withdrawn and what effect that might have on its pupils and curriculum and there were no concerns.

GH joined the meeting at 5:15pm

Challenge: Governors asked whether the UTC has the quality and hours of work placement needed for T' Level pupils, given that this forms a large part of T' Level education. It was reported that placements are available and the T' Level cohort is currently few in number, so it is the ideal time to check that the proper processes are in place. **Challenge: Governors asked whether the UTC could sustain that as numbers increase. It was reported that** employers are increasingly keen to be involved with the UTC and the Principal is exploring a number of potential new opportunities.

- 4.3 Pupil Progress and Attainment** **It was reported that** it is anticipated that the streamlining of the curriculums will produce significantly different outcomes next academic year. **[ACTION SLT: Progress tables will show where pupils are on target and provide data to enable results' comparisons between academic years.]**

Mock examinations are taking place this week and teachers' working at grades were contained in the Governor Report. Mocks are over a 1 week period, rather than the previous 2 weeks, as this is believed to be in the best interests of the pupils; examination sessions are in the morning and revision sessions in the afternoons. Pupils are calmer, more engaged, there is a marked improvement in effort and performance is good. It is anticipated that mock examination data has moved on and comparison data will be available across subjects. **It was confirmed that** a small number of pupils in the bespoke provision had joined the UTC later in the school year, for various reasons, so interventions and support had not been in place from the start of the school year. However, where it is thought to be of benefit, bespoke, individual interventions and support are now in place.

Challenge: Governors could not ascertain the degree of progress made from the data provided and asked what is the trajectory. It was reported that teachers' working at grades provided, were not always consistent, so middle leaders are being asked to implement interventions on an individual pupil by pupil basis, in addition to other initiatives across the UTC, aimed at raising standards. **Challenge: Governors asked what happens once a pupil achieves a grade 4. It was reported that** this is why individual interventions are in place; to ensure that if that grade 4 is actually still an 'underperformance' for an individual pupil, interventions and support remain in place to ensure that they reach their absolute

potential. The UTC is on an upward trajectory and middle leaders are tasked with ensuring as many pupils as possible are joining the UTC on that journey.

Challenge: Governors noted that there are 2 bespoke sub-sets and asked whether there is any negative impact of one group over another. It was reported that the sub-groups are taught separately from the main cohort and from each other, in order to provide the best support possible. Overall, this is resulting less disruption to learning and it is hoped that the main cohort in particular can now make rapid progress.

4.4 Covid and Pupil Premium Update Nothing to report.

4.5 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) There followed a discussion about persistent offenders and PP/SEND ratios and Governors were satisfied that the in depth knowledge SLT have about individual pupils (details of which were shared as a general oversight and not shared to any degree that any pupil could be identified), assured them that the UTC understands its pupils' needs (SEND or otherwise) and endeavours to initiate interventions to suit those individual needs. The Principal assured Governors that the UTC does not seek to close its doors to any pupil with complex needs, but rather seeks to recruit pupils for whom this is their best opportunity for a positive outcome.

4.6 Literacy Report **It was reported that** the UTC needs to work on closing the literacy gap and is considering whether the school can appoint an academic mentor to support that work. The Principal and the TLA Director of Finance will be discussing the national tutoring programme on Thursday 2 March. **[ACTION SLT: The literacy report will be brought to the next meeting].**

5. School Welfare

5.1 Attendance **It was reported that** there were a small number of persistent absentees for whom attendance was challenging due to a number of complex reasons. The UTC continues to support those pupils to help them gain qualifications. 68% of the UTC cohort had been persistent absentees at some point in their education and Mrs Millward had provided helpful absenteeism advice and guidance to support all pupils. **[ACTION SLT: Attendance data will show attendance averages for Cheshire East, for comparison].**

5.2 Behaviour **Challenge: Governors asked whether the PEx and suspension numbers were as expected for this size cohort. It was reported that** the UTC has very few repeat offenders and there were fewer than last year. This is thought to be due to the pupils understanding what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour. **Challenge: Governors asked how many of the 21 suspensions in Yr11 are in the bespoke provision. It was reported that** it was about 50% and it is believed that suspensions would increase if there were no bespoke provision. The UTC is happy to take pupils on managed moves and provide a fresh start, where this is the right environment for those pupils, whether they need additional support or not. Companies providing work experience opportunities have reported that pupils have excellent behaviour and attendance.

5.3 Safeguarding **It was reported that** the UTC now has a second set of onsite counsellors. CPOMS is proving a useful tool for the input and tracking of data and the workload has increased. The 2 new, incoming Student Welfare Officers (SWOs) will also be trained to Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and 1 of them is also a trained counsellor. The counselling service Visyon, recognising the need in the school, has offered to provide its services for free, saving the school c.£8k a year for this much needed service. The Chair recommended that the UTC consider reaching out to employer partners to ask for counsellor sponsorship. Governors were assured that the UTC offers the best possible pastoral experience. **Challenge: Governors asked why the safeguarding workload has increased. It was reported that** this is a national trend, reflected across Trust schools and staff have been upskilled to recognise and report issues; staff briefings include safeguarding sections so issues are being identified and monitored and data is better captured in CPOMS, more consistently across the Trust, so trends can be identified. Pupils are also now more prepared to share issues. Children's mental health data is of concern nationally and had led to an increase in the need for pastoral support but the Trust is aware of this and supports its schools centrally and individually.

5.4 Staff Wellbeing Recruitment is looking positive and drivers for staff leaving do not appear to be for welfare reasons. There are no emerging issues to report.

6. Policy Updates

The following policies were approved by the Chair, subject to comments as listed. The policies had been uploaded to GH prior to the meeting and Governors had been asked to send any comments to the Clerk/UTC prior to the meeting and otherwise being confirmed as approved by correspondence. No comments had been received so the policies are considered **approved**.

6.1.1 Accessibility Policy

6.1.2 Behaviour and Conduct Policy – **Approved. [ACTION Governors: To make themselves aware of policy contents]**

6.1.3 Charging and Remissions Policy

6.1.4 Health and Safety Policy

6.1.5 SEND Policy

6.1.6 Relationships and Sex Education Policy

6.1.7 Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

6.1.8 Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy – **Approved, subject to removal of the reference to a UTC nurse.**

6.1.9 Early Careers Teachers and Induction Policy

6.1.10 Attendance Policy

6.1.11 First Aid Policy

6.1.12 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – **Approved subject to the safeguarding lead Governor being Mrs H. Tattersall not Mr M. Marsh.**

6.1.13 Pupil Premium Policy - **Approved**

6.1.14 Admissions Policy 2024/2025 – **Approved, subject to insertion of further detail with regard to the follow-on process if pupils engage in Yr12 foundation.**

6.2 **It was reported that** the Trust governance team is working on the production of a Trust central policies' schedule, with the aim of aligning policy review dates and content where appropriate.

6.3 **It was confirmed that** JC is Engineering Link Governor and **[ACTION LGB: the LGB needs to assign a Governor to the KS4 and KS5 Link Governor roles AND Governors need to work together to reinvigorate the LGB and discuss whether it might be useful to carry out another LGB Skills' Audit]**. AH offered to do a training session with Governors to support and assist this work.

7. Training Governors were reminded to log any training in GH.

8. Other Matters

8.1 Local Matters Nothing to report.

8.2 Matters to Share with the Trust Board Support is requested for and development of middle leaders and staff to ensure they are able to set the bar high enough to ensure all pupils can reach their potential

8.3 Matters for the Trust Board to Share with the LGB An update on the merger will be shared at the TLA Chairs' Forum on 9th March 2023.

8.4 AOB 2 parents had put themselves forward to be Parent Governors **[ACTION: With 2 membership places open, subject to them meeting with the Principal/Clerk/Chair for informal discussions about the role and subsequent interest and suitability, can go to the TLA Governance Committee for approval]**.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 21st June 2023 at 4:30pm

Meeting Closed at 6:30pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....