

MINUTES

Autumn term 2017 meeting of the Trust Board

Held at Priestley College on Wednesday 15 November 2017, 6pm

Present:

Gemma Johnson GJ
Matthew Grant (CEO) MG
Howard Platt (Chair) HP
John Monaghan JM
Linda Waterson LW
Maureen Mellor MM
Neil Pearson NP
Paul Hinds PH
Stephen Whatmore SW
Toby Macormac TM

In attendance:

Andrew Moorcroft (Beamont Collegiate Academy) AM
Damian McGuire (Priestley College) DMc
John Carlin (Penketh High School) JC
Tim Long (Bridgewater High School) TL
Vicky Briggs (Great Sankey Primary School) VB

Part One – non confidential business

1. Welcome

HP welcomed the Trust Board to the meeting.

2. Absence/Apologies

The attendance register was circulated. Apologies were received from Ben Dunne, Bev Scott-Herron, Stuart Titchard, Angela Grace, Jane Griffiths and Sheila Yates.

The Trust Board **agreed** that consent be given to the absences.

3. Declaration of personal interests

Trustees were asked to declare any interest they may have, pecuniary or otherwise, relating to this meeting. No interests were declared.

The clerk reminded Trustees to return their pecuniary interest forms, if they had not already done so.

4. Minutes of the previous Trust Board meeting – 5 July 2017

a) Matters Arising

The Trust Board **agreed** that the date for the governor seminar will be 14 February 2017 followed by the Board Meeting.

A training event is due to take place on 29 November 2017 for those responsible for signing off DBS checks.

HP requested that AM circulate the organisation chart for the school improvement posts.

ACTION: AM to circulate school improvement organisation chart.

SW proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2017 be **agreed** as a correct record. TM seconded the proposal.

5. Committee Minutes

a) Audit and Risk Advisory Group – 11 October 2017

It was reported that there is only one Trustee on the Audit and Risk Advisory Group. As the acting chair, LW asked for volunteers.

GJ **agreed** to be a member of the Audit and Risk Advisory Group.

HP **agreed** to be a member of the Audit and Risk Advisory Group.

LW reported that the 'Risk Management Action Plan' was addressed at the Audit and Risk Advisory Group meeting.

LW and DMcG gave an overview of the external audit appointment process; MG advised that Members have agreed the appointment of the external auditors in writing and this will be endorsed at the upcoming Members Board meeting on 1 December 2017.

A Trustee asked if there could be clarification on the Trust policies vs the individual school policies. MG advised that a chart will be produced outlining the policies that are legally required for the Trust.

b) Finance, HR and Operations Committee – 11 October 2017

DMcG provided an update on the appointment of the external auditors. The committee discussed the appointment of Murray Smith. DMcG confirmed that the banking system is working well and all procedures are settling into place.

DMcG informed the Trust Board of the possible candidates for the internal audit. **A Trustee asked** if Murray Smith is a potential for the internal audit. LW advised that this would be a conflict.

The Trust Board discussed the possibility of all schools being represented at each committee meeting. Trustee's deliberated this and **agreed** that while all members from local governing boards are welcome to attend this will not be a requirement within the terms of reference.

A Trustee asked when more schools join, will they be represented on the Board of Trustees. It was confirmed that the structure of the Trust Board will not change (ie stay with 13 Trustees); this has been communicated to interested schools.

c) Quality and Standards Committee – 17 October 2017

In the chair of the committee's absence, HP asked for volunteers to be a member of the Quality and Standards Committee.

NP **agreed** to be a member of the Quality and Standards Committee.

The Trust Board **agreed** the Quality and Standards Committee will have a maximum of 10 members.

A Trustee asked if JC would update the Trust Board on the plans to increase the range of expertise of governors at Penketh High School. JC informed the Trust Board that he has been looking into training programmes for governors, a new staff governor has been elected and a possible parent election is due to take place.

A Trustee **recommended** that a database for all local governors within TCAT schools be created. The Trustee felt it would be valuable to easily view the skill set and interests at local governing body level. This could help with school to school support by having governors involved in more than one school within the MAT.

A Trustee asked if AM could explain his role as the Executive Lead in School Improvement. AM advised that he is supporting school to school support two days a week; mainly for Sir Thomas Boteler and Penketh High School. The first round of peer reviews has been almost completed and it has been a positive experience for all involved. This is a robust mechanism that will challenge and validate the school set judgements.

The team of lead practitioners are now fully deployed; AM acknowledged a substantial amount of monitoring and support has taken place considering the short time the team have been in place.

MM reported that Penketh South Primary School received the outcome of the one to one meeting and the local governing body were impressed with the clarity of the information. Trustees thanked AM for the work completed this term.

6. **Executive Report**

MG wished to personally thank the trustees on behalf of the Central Executive Team for the support given during the intense period of work.

MG advised the purpose of the report is to provide Trustees with a flavour of the work that is taking place daily, along with examples of collaborative working.

a) Quality of Provision

MG informed the Trust Board that score cards provide a brief overview of the current performance of each school and will be updated termly. AM presented the approach to quality improvement at the recent Quality and Standards Committee on 17 October 2017.

It was reported that progress within the following schools is positive:

- Beamont Collegiate Academy
- Bridgewater High School
- Great Sankey Primary School

MG noted the importance of the lead practitioners addressing concerns about outcomes at Sir Thomas Boteler and Penketh High School.

The Trust Board recognised that the Central Executive Team have done well to identify key members of staff to lead on school to school support.

b) Trust Wide Initiatives for Students/Pupils

MG reported that pupils and students across TCAT have enjoyed working together on a number of activities.

It was reported that a 'developing bridges' workshop took place on 15 November. Beamont Collegiate Academy hosted 'DOJOCON'; a global event where young people come together to work with professionals to develop computing and technological skills.

e) Teaching School

TL provided an update on the Teaching School at Bridgewater High School. Trustees were informed that the Teaching School will be known as 'Learning at TCAT – A Teaching School Alliance'.

TL informed the Trust Board of the three main elements of the Teaching School:

1. Deliver initial teacher training

This element will offer prospective teachers a minimum of two placements in different educational environments. This will help TCAT develop capacity and expertise whilst supporting professional development for employees across the Trust.

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) placements have been allocated for 18/19. The teaching school are currently in the process of bringing together ITT Co-ordinators to help develop the placement offer and capacity across the Trust.

2. Professional development and research

It is important for TCAT to evidence impact. The Central Executive Team are working together to build a structure to capture CPD in individual schools.

3. School to school support

The school to school support will be channelled through the teaching school. This area will show impact and will evidence success.

MG informed the Trust Board that OxNet (University of Oxford) are developing programmes to ensure young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from studying at Russell Group Universities. MG and TL will be visiting Oxford

University to discuss how they can support the Teaching School and the work within TCAT.

A Trustee asked how a person would apply to be part of the teaching school. TL explained the process and entry requirements when applying for a place in a teaching school.

TL informed the Trust Board that the Teaching School will work alongside Tarleton Teaching School Alliance who are part of a network that have been approved to run school-centred courses (known as SCITTs).

It is hoped that those teachers who have been trained through the Teaching School will eventually be employed by TCAT.

At present all schools within TCAT have links with Schools Direct; this will continue until the Teaching School is established.

f) Funding and Finance

DMcG informed the Trust Board that there is still some work to do with regards to the transfer of balances. Budget planning for the future will hinge on local and national decisions regarding the National Funding Formula.

Savings have been generated due to the joint insurance with Zurich.

The Central Executive Team are supporting both Penketh High School and Sir Thomas Boteler High School as they seek to secure more first choice applications for Year 7 entry in September 2018.

Priestley College is likely to be 20 places short of target. DMcG reported that given the reduction of Year 11 numbers in both Warrington and Halton it is pleasing to see that recruitment from Year 11s has increased.

e) Growth and Development of the Trust

MG reported that Beamont Collegiate Academy have submitted an application to acquire the building that previously accommodated Future Tech Studio School. This will allow the school to increase its capacity over time as it is currently oversubscribed.

A priority for the Central Executive Team will be to ensure that further savings are consolidated to help identify funds that can be redirected for school/college improvement. The Central Executive Team are holding a planning meeting on 17 November to start discussions on structures and sustaining a central fund to support the improvement function.

MG and TL attended an Academy event at Lord Derby Academy in Knowsley on 14 November 2017; while the meeting did not provide much advice on developing back office structures it did endorse the well timed process that TCAT have followed.

MG attended a meeting at Dixons McMillan Academy in Bradford on 21 September 2017. MG reported that it appears that Multi Academy Trusts seem to be falling into two camps; those run by businesses with centralised control and those that work on the principal of earned autonomy and partnership.

The Trust Board were informed of local, regional and national academy updates.

The Trust Board were reminded that representatives of TCAT continue to develop the offer and are working hard to ensure that back office functions and finances are secure.

MG advised that 8 schools are interested in joining the MAT however 4 schools would be a more practical amount. There is currently no urgency for schools to be invited into the Trust. Trustees noted it would be beneficial for more primary schools to be involved to ensure the depth and breadth of primary level school improvement.

Conversations with interested schools will continue to take place. HP advised that Trustees are pleased to support this process and are prepared to attend meetings with interested schools should this be required.

MG informed the Trust Board that TCAT have been invited to talk with others (within Warrington and outside of Warrington) about the journey of converting and have been described as an example of excellent practice in developing a cross phased trust.

A Trustee asked TL if there is funding available from Sub Regional Improvement Board. TL explained the process of bidding for funding. The Trust Board acknowledged that it would be sensible to wait to bid until there is a clear understanding of what TCAT will need to be involved in.

LW attended the Warrington Governor Conference on 11 November 2017. She informed the Trust Board that the main theme was around accountability and school to school support. LW believes that TCAT are heading in the right direction.

7. Agree recommendations for Terms of Reference

The Trust Board **agreed** the recommendations made at committee level for the TCAT Committee Terms of Reference.

8. The Challenge Academy Trust Strategic Objectives (Growth and Strategy Plan)

MG outlined the 5 strategic objectives for TCAT. MG advised that the Growth and Strategy document is being used during discussions with other schools who are thinking about joining the trust. There are plans to continually develop this document.

NP wished to note that the document clearly outlines the reasons for joining the Trust and felt it was a fantastic document to provide to interested parties.

A Trustee asked when it would be appropriate to share this amongst local governing boards. MG encouraged trustees to share the document with their local governing boards as they will be supporting the delivery of the plan.

MG encouraged Trustees to share the Executive Report with their local governing boards to ensure they have a clear sense of what is happening within TCAT.

MG reminded Trustees that both documents are not for public circulation.

9. Consultation feedback on the closure of Appleton College

TL provided a document outlining the feedback for the consultation. There were 11 online responses to the consultation and 5 parents attended the open evening.

TL confirmed that the sixth form building will become the centre of learning for TCAT and is a great opportunity for the Trust. Whilst it has not been a difficult decision to close the sixth form, it is a sad one. The decision to move ahead with the proposal to close Appleton College to new entrants from September 2018 has been ratified by the local governing board.

10. Code of Conduct

MG presented the 'NGA Model Procedures: Code of Conduct' to the Trust Board. MG asked that each local governing board review the document and provide feedback to the Trust Board.

ACTION: Each Local Governing Board to review the NGA Model Procedures: Code of Conduct and discuss if this is something they would wish to adopt.

11. Any Other Business

a) Priestley College

MG informed the Trust Board that there is an internal grievance within Priestley College that may move to a tribunal case. MG was advised to share this with the Trust Board given that TCAT are the employer. **A Trustee asked** if the tribunal will require Trust Board participation. MG confirmed that the tribunal will not require Trust Board participation.

b) Sir Thomas Boteler High School

The Trust Board were informed that the Diocese of Liverpool may wish to withdraw management and governance for Sir Thomas Boteler High School.

The Trust Board were informed that the trust will need to revisit the Articles of Association and the Schemes of Delegation, as both the Diocese of Chester and the Diocese of Liverpool are named, if this happens.

The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT)



The local governing board for Sir Thomas Boteler will be discussing their membership, and a further discussion will take place with the Members Board meeting on 1 December 2017.

Part one of the meeting ended at 7.20pm

SIGNED

Chair

Date