

MINUTES

Summer term 2018 meeting of the Trust Board

Held at Sir Thomas Boteler High School on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at 6pm

Present:

Howard Platt (chair) HP
Matthew Grant (CEO) MG
Gemma Johnson GJ
John Monaghan JM
Neil Pearson NP
Stuart Titchard ST
Linda Waterson LW
Sheila Yates SY

In attendance:

John Carlin (Penketh High School)
Tim Long (Bridgewater High School)
Andrew Moorcroft (Beamont Collegiate Academy)
Bev Scott-Herron (Sir Thomas Boteler High School)
Damian McGuire (Priestley College)
Kirsten Riley (Clerk to the Trust)

JC
TL
AM
BSH
DMc
KR

Part One – non confidential business

1. Welcome

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Absence/Apologies

Apologies were received from Jane Griffiths, Paul Hinds, Toby Macormac and Steve Whatmore and Maureen Mellor.

Trustees **accepted** the apologies.

3. Declaration of personal interests for the meeting.

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

4. Election of Chair/Vice Chair

a) Chair

HP self-nominated for the role of Chair of the Trust Board.

Trustees **agreed** for HP to continue as Chair of the Trust Board for one year.

Trustees discussed the position of Vice Chair and **agreed** that in the absence of the Chair, a chair of a committee would chair the meeting.

5. Minutes of the spring 2018 Trust Board meeting – 14 February 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

a) Matters Arising

MG advised that not all local governing boards have approved the budgets for the upcoming year. **HP asked** if the position for Penketh South Primary School had been ratified. DMC confirmed that the budget for Penketh South Primary School has been ratified and it is reflected in the paperwork presented to the Trust Board.

b) Action Log

Trustees **agreed** that all actions had been completed.

5. Minutes of the summer 2018 Extraordinary Trust Board meeting – 21 May 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record.

6. Committee Minutes

a) Spring 2018 Audit and Risk Committee – 7 February 2018

Trustees **agreed** that that the minutes be received.

b) Spring 2018 Finance, HR and Operations Committee – 7 February 2018

NP wished to note his gratitude towards Adrienne Laing for the General Data Protection Regulations work she had undertaken.

Trustees noted their thanks for Adrienne Laing's fantastic work.

c) Summer 2018 Quality and Standards Committee – 18 June 2018

NP asked that his name be added to the attendance list for the meeting.

Action: Clerk to add NP to the attendance list within the summer 2018 Quality and Standards Committee minutes.

SY reported that the purpose of the meeting was to scrutinise current performance; the majority of the meeting was spent discussing those schools that have the most challenging circumstances. Trustees were pleased to hear the improvement strategies in place coordinated by AM.

A comprehensive programme that will be fully staffed by TCAT teachers is in place that will be fully staffed by TCAT teachers. SY advised that the challenge for the committee will be to evaluate whether the strategies in place are making a difference.

AM reported that a meeting took place for the staff members across the Trust who will take a lead responsibility for proactive school improvement. Since the meeting heads of departments have met to plan collaborative working. AM is confident that the Trust is making an impact, not only with the Senior Leadership Teams, but also with teachers in the classroom. A data system is now in place to analyse the performance of the overall Trust.

HP identified an error within the minutes (item 5a), and asked that this be amended; the minutes state that '...designated provision and pupils with needs...' This will be changed to '...designated provision and pupils with special educational needs....'

Action: Clerk to amend the summer 2018 Quality and Standards Committee minutes to reflect the suggested change.

d) Summer 2018 Audit and Risk Committee – 20 June 2018

LW reported that Trustees agreed to change the membership of the committee; there will now be 10 committee members, with a minimum of three Trustees.

The committee noted the positive review of the Financial Management and Governance Self-Assessment (FMGS), and summarised the actions that would be taken forward. LW thanked those involved in the FMGS. In discussing one of the actions, LW reported that the Trust must now provide monthly budget monitoring reports to Trustees and the Central Executive Team.

The committee made a recommendation to appoint Wiley and Bisset as TCAT's internal auditors

The Trust Board **agreed** to the Audit and Risk Committee's recommendation to appoint Wiley and Bisset as internal audits for the Trust.

HP wished to note that the amount of scrutiny that TCAT will receive will be much higher than what academies would have received from the local authority. LW informed Trustees an overall annual audit from both the internal auditors and the external auditors will be undertaken.

The committee received an update on the draft plan from the internal auditors and the plan was agreed. It was pleasing to see a mix of financial and non-financial controls within the internal audit over the next three years.

The committee received an update on the Risk Management Plan; key risks were discussed and noted.

DMc confirmed that the external auditor's will commence their school visits on 9 July 2018.

GJ arrived at 6.13pm

e) Summer 2018 Finance Committee – 20 June 2018

ST reported that the committee discussed the management account and the updated position. A clear path has been set for the mid-year review and governors will be invited to take part next year.

The committee have an understanding about the tender processes taking place, most notably the bus and catering contracts. The committee also discussed how savings will be reported on and monitored for the future.

ST confirmed that the draft budget had been reviewed by the committee. The committee discussed the challenges for the schools. The allocation of school condition money was addressed in detail.

HP reported that claiming VAT will now be a much easier process; HP thanked DMc for this.

The Finance, HR and Operations Committee made a recommendation to the Trust Board to approve the Financial Regulations.

The Trust Board **approved** the Financial Regulations.

HP asked for DMc to confirm the surplus following Penketh South Primary School joining TCAT. DMc confirmed the surplus was approximately £8,000.

NP highlighted that a substantial amount of money has been allocated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), **NP asked** if the money has been allocated to specific works. MG confirmed that the Executive Report explains where the money will be allocated.

8. Executive Report

Trustees agreed to address the remainder of the agenda at 6.23pm before returning to the Executive Report at 7.00pm

MG presented the Executive Report to the Trust Board.

Following conversations between members of the Trust and headteachers and governors, HP and MG have formally written to a number of primary schools to invite them to work closely with TCAT over the next 12 months. The priority for TCAT's further growth continues to be the primary sector.

MG highlighted the changes within the Academies Financial Handbook.

MG reported that the Trust welcomed A Blench (ESFA School Resource Management Advisor) on 25 June 2018; he met with MG, HP and DMc to determine if he or a colleague could advise the Trust on improving financial management. A Blench advised he would help the Trust to contact the ESFA Capital team with regards to Penketh High School's site.

The Finance, HR and Operations Committee were presented with a detailed paper about the School Condition Improvement Allocation and the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund. The Committee agreed the priorities:

- Statutory compliance (Health and Safety, Disability Access)

- A centrally held contingency (if not spent in Year 1 it will be released for Year 2)
- Condition improvement and early intervention

The Trust is working with A Partridge (health and safety consultant) and E3Cube (Surveyors and Building Consultants) to advise on priorities moving forward. A Partridge will complete a health and safety report that may uncover further urgent priorities. In line with Trust financial arrangements, E3Cube have agreed to manage any tendering processes.

MG informed Trustees that a number of health and safety concerns have emerged that were not previously identified by the local authority. Moving forward, the Trust will insist on a health and safety audit within the due diligence process.

Trustees noted the projects identified within the Executive Report. MG **proposed** that the Trust Board approve the projects within the cost boundaries presented.

The Trust Board **approved** the projects at an estimated cost of £457,000 (with an additional £66,000 for the lift in Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School).

MG **proposed** that any variance up to £5,000 or 10% of the current estimate can be approved by the CEO and any variance above these values be approved by the Chair of Finance, HR and Operations Committee and/or the Chair of the Trust.

The Trust Board **approved** the variance proposal.

ST noted there is reference within the report to install a lift at Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School and asked if this is included in the immediate work. MG advised that the work is a priority, however further quotes will be required.

MG thanked TL for the update on the Teaching School within the Executive Report.

The Trust Board congratulated colleagues for being nominated for and receiving recognition in national and local award events. MG highlighted that C Keep (Penketh High School) received the 'TES New Teacher of the Year' award for her work with the SPARK project.

MG thanked those involved in HMI visit from J Jones who conducted a national research project on behalf of OFSTED. The Trust will not receive any direct feedback from the visit, but will be informed when the national report is issued.

MG congratulated Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School who secured a Sellafeld bid. This project is ongoing.

There have been a number of activities within TCAT involving visits from representatives and learners from the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. MG reported that TCAT has been asked to give a presentation to the University of Oxford Education Department to discuss opportunities to work more closely with 'OxNet' and the university.

MG confirmed that the company who will carry out a joint catering contract for Bridgewater High School, Sir Thomas Boteler and Priestley College will be 'Catering Academy'; the current providers for Bridgewater High School.

Priestley College had two presentations from shortlisted companies regarding bespoke bus services. 'Warrington's Own' busses won the majority of the contracts. MG was pleased to report that every employee in TCAT will receive a 25% discount on annual bus passes from 5 July 2018.

Trustees were provided with updated Score Cards for each academy from the TCAT Self Evaluation and Action Planning document. The Score Cards were reviewed in detail at the Quality and Standards Committee on 18 June 2018.

MG thanked V Briggs for creating the "first year at a glance" document; a one page overview highlighting the achievements of TCAT. Trustees noted that the document promotes TCAT well and it will be useful for staff to see also.

MG wished to note that he feels the Trust is making a difference to the lives of young people and wished to thank everyone who contributed to this.

9. Budget Planning 2018/2019

a) TCAT Proposed Budget

DMc reported that the Finance, HR and Operations Committee identified some issues in relation to the approval process as local governing board (LGB) committees had not yet met. The committee discussed the deficits and understood the reasoning behind them.

DMc explained that Beamont Collegiate Academy's deficit is due to the lagged funding. A growth in student numbers has led a misalignment with the income. Steps will be made to determine where future savings can be made.

Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School is forecasting a deficit. Numbers for the expected new students have improved upon previous years and exam results are moving in an upward trajectory. This is an ongoing situation and more steps will be taken in order to reduce the deficit as it is not sustainable long term.

The majority of LGBs within the Trust have now approved their budget. Priestley College's Finance Committee was not quorate however those in attendance felt it would be beneficial to continue to scrutinise the budget so that they could make a recommendation to the Trust Board. The budget will be presented to Priestley College's Finance Committee on 5 July 2018.

DMc reported that the figures from Priestley College have changed since writing the report, due to the catering contract. The final position will be better than the proposed budget.

When looking at the budget, **ST asked** how the central charge would be shown. DMc explained where the central charge would be shown.

ST noted the first cross establishment process within the MAT has taken place with a shared school catering contract for Bridgewater High School, Sir Thomas Boteler and Priestley College. **ST asked** how the process went. DMc reported that initially there were concerns about the contract offered; they were well suited for the high schools but did not quite fit a college setting. After a meeting with the 'Catering Academy' DMc has confidence in the service and felt reassured as they offered to change the delivery approach for Priestley College.

DMc reported that if numbers increase, TCAT will receive a share of the profit of the catering contract. A refurbishment of Bridgewater High School's Kitchen is likely.

HP asked the duration of the contract. DMc confirmed that the contract is 5 years.

NP asked if 'Catering Academy' is likely to be brought into all academies within the Trust. MG confirmed that this will be reviewed when each contract is due to end. HP advised that a change in contracts is a local governing board decision. MG explained that he has discussed the catering contract with the local authority and they advised that if the primary schools within the Trust were to withdraw, the school meals system within the local authority would be at risk of collapsing. MG highlighted that it is important not to undermine other services in order to benefit the Trust.

JC advised that he is pleased with Penketh High School's current catering services. LW confirmed that Beamont Collegiate Academy have in house catering at present.

The Trust Board **approved** the proposed budget.

MG confirmed that the two year forecast will be returned and sent to the Education Skills Funding Agency.

10. Approval of internal auditors

Trustees were provided with a document that outlined the appointment process.

Trustees approved the appointment of internal auditors during item 6d.

11. Validation of Financial Management and Governance Self-Assessment (FMGS) Return and Recommendations

MG highlighted that the FMGS had been reviewed in great detail during the Audit and Risk Committee on 20 June 2018 and the Finance, HR and Resources Committee on 20 June 2018. The Trust has accepted all recommendations from the Education Skills Funding Agency and all will be in place by October 2018.

12. Governance

- a) An Essential Guide to Governance in Sixth Form Colleges and Academies

Trustees were provided with a copy of the guide. MG advised that the guide is a useful resource for Trustees. All Members will also receive a copy.

b) Academies Financial Handbook

Trustees were provided with a copy of the handbook. MG advised that the executive report refers to the significant changes within the handbook.

13. Any other business

a) Academy Website Compliance

Trustees and the Central Executive Team were provided with a link that outlines the required information on each Academy's website.

14. Proposed future meeting dates

Trustees noted the proposed future meeting dates:

Members Board Meetings 2018-2019

- Autumn 2018: Monday 17 December 2018 (*time to be confirmed*)
- Summer 2019: Monday 8 July 2019 (*time to be confirmed*)

Trust Board Meetings 2018-2019

- Autumn 2018 (1) - Wednesday 7 November 2018, 6pm
- Autumn 2018 (2) - Wednesday 12 December 2018, 6pm
- Spring 2019 - Wednesday 20 March 2019, 6pm
- Summer 2019 - Wednesday 3 July 2019, 6pm

Quality & Standards Committee Meetings 2018-2019

- Autumn 2018 – Tuesday 9 October 2018, 6pm
- Spring 2019 – Tuesday 12 February 2019, 6pm
- Summer 2019 – Tuesday 11 June 2019, 6pm

Audit and Risk Committee Meetings 2018-2019

- Autumn 2018 – Wednesday 5 December 2018, 4.30pm
- Spring 2019 – Wednesday 6 March 2019, 4.30pm
- Summer 2019 – Wednesday 19 June 2019, 4.30pm

Finance, HR and Operations Committee Meetings 2018-2019

- Autumn 2018 (1) – Wednesday 17 October 2018, 6pm at Penketh South Primary School
- Autumn 2018 (2) – Wednesday 5 December 2018, 6pm
- Spring 2019 – Wednesday 6 March 2019, 6pm
- Summer 2019 – Wednesday 26 June 2019, 6pm

The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT)



MG asked that governors be encouraged to attend other school governing board meetings.

NP reported that he recently attended the Academies Roadshow in London; one item that was raised was around inter-Trust working. NP highlighted that there are now a number of MAT's within Warrington and asked if there was an opportunity for collaborative working work together. TL advised that schools are working together through the Teaching School Alliance. TL acknowledged that the Trust will continue to consider opportunities for collaboration.

The meeting returned to item 8 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

SIGNED

DATE

Chair