

MINUTES

Autumn term 2018 meeting of the Members Board

Held at Bridgewater High School on Monday 17 December 2018 at 4pm

Present:

David Mowat DM
Jane Griffiths JG
Maureen Mellor MM
Steve Whatmore SW

In attendance:

Andrew Moorcroft (Beamont Collegiate Academy) AM
Angela Grace (Penketh South Primary School) AG
Howard Platt (Chair of Trust Board) HP
Lacy Muir (Trustee) LM
Matthew Grant (Chief Executive Officer) MG
Tim Long (Bridgewater High School) TL
Misia Barkley (Padgate Academy) MB
Kirsten Riley (Clerk to the Trust) KR

Part One – Non Confidential Business

1. Welcome

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions took place.

2. Absence/Apologies

Apologies were received from S Broomhead, B Scott-Herron, J Carlin and V Briggs. Members **approved** the apologies.

3. Declaration of personal interests

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

4. Membership

a) Appointment of Member – Maureen Mellor

There is currently a vacancy on the Members Board due to A Cannell's departure. Members received MM's CV prior to the meeting.

MM informed Members of her background and her rationale of becoming a Member for the Trust. MM is currently a TCAT Trustee and a governor at Penketh South Primary School.

JG proposed that MM be appointed as a Member. DM seconded the proposal.

Members **approved** the appointment of MM onto the Members Board.

b) Appointment of Trustee – Lacy Muir

The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT)



There are two vacancies on the Trust Board due to MM's appointment as Member and P Hinds departure. Members received LM's CV prior to the meeting.

LM informed Members of her background. LM is a governor at Penketh High School.

JG proposed that LM be appointed as a Trustee. DM seconded the proposal.

Members **approved** the appointment of L Muir onto the Trust Board.

DM asked if Members are responsible for the appointment of Trustees. SW confirmed that it is the responsibility of Members to appoint Trustees. If there was a Diocesan vacancy for a Member, the Trust would receive a name from the Diocese.

MM confirmed that she would send her resignation as a Trustee to both KR and HP.

AG arrived at 4.09pm

c) Terms of Office

MG highlighted that when the Trust was set up, it was agreed that Members would have a term of office of 4 years. In order to ensure all terms of office do not end at the same time, it was recommended that some Members are given 3 years, and some are given 4 years.

Members **agreed** for the clerk to draw names outside the meeting, and terms of office will be confirmed at the summer 2019 Members Board meeting.

Action: Clerk to draw names to determine terms of office for Members. Terms of office to be confirmed at the summer 2019 Members Board meeting.

5. **Election of Chair**

SW self-nominated for the role of chair of the Members Board.

Members voted and **agreed** that SW continue as the chair of the Members Board for a period of one year.

6. **Minutes**

a) Summer 2018 Members Board Meeting – 12 September 2018

The minutes from the meeting on 12 September 2018 were confirmed as a correct record.

b) First Autumn 2018 Trust Board Meeting – 17 September 2018

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting. Members **agreed** the minutes.

c) Second Autumn 2018 Trust Board Meeting – 7 November 2018

The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT)

SW advised that the Trust Board discussed the remuneration committee. The committee are due to meet on 12 February 2019. Terms of Reference have been agreed. Following appraisal, MG will present all recommendations of pay for senior staff to the committee.

The remuneration committee will also review the pay for those who have significant TCAT responsibilities.

The membership of the Remuneration Committee was agreed as:

- Chair of the Trust
- Chair of the Finance, HR and Operations Committee
- Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee
- Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee
- 2 other Trustees (S Whatmore and J Monaghan)

DM asked how many staff members will be subject to a review by the remuneration committee. HP confirmed this will be the heads/principals with cross trust responsibilities, plus D McGuire (TCAT Chief Financial Officer) and A Laing (TCAT Operations Lead).

DM asked how the salaries are currently paid. SW confirmed that TCAT is the legal employer.

MG advised that each organisation will have its own review of pay and salaries through the local governing board. The recommendations of the headteacher's pay will then go to the remuneration committee.

DM asked if the objective over time is to have consistency across TCAT. MG advised that this will vary due to the different sizes of the schools. The pay policy is clear about the size of the organisation and the level of responsibility.

JG asked if the Local Governing Board recommends an increase in headteacher's pay range, this decision would go before the remuneration committee. HP confirmed that it is the responsibility of the remuneration committee to approve this recommendation.

SW confirmed that TCAT has one pay policy that covers all schools.

TL confirmed that pay for main scale teachers in schools has been harmonised. Teachers were 'TUPE'd' across and there has been an improvement for everyone; all are on the same standard pay range. Over time an alignment in the leadership team will need to be addressed.

Teachers in the Sixth Form College remain on the nationally negotiated pay and conditions.

Members **agreed** the minutes.

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting. Members **agreed** the minutes.

e) Verbal update from Third Autumn 2018 Trust Board Meeting – 12 December 2018

MG advised that the main areas for discussion were regarding the audited accounts and an update on Padgate Academy. The draft strategic plan was also circulated.

7. **Draft Strategic Plan 2019-2023**

MG presented the draft strategic plan to Members for information.

The plan has been presented to Trustees who acknowledged that it should be more explicit about safeguarding; the Central Executive Team will address this in the New Year.

The strategic plan provides an overview of the Trust's current position and the plans for the future. Information about Padgate Academy has also been included. There is a three year financial plan provided and this will be revised on an annual basis.

DM asked if there is anything in the plan that has had less emphasis. MG advised that the main focus for the Trust is to improve performance and this is where the emphasis lies. There is information about the Teaching School and how it will improve the performance and quality of teaching and learning across the Trust. There is less emphasis on structures and business support for the future as there is still work to be done. A long term goal is to develop sustainability in terms of succession planning for the Trust.

DM asked if another multi-academy trust is likely to have a different emphasis within their strategic plan. MG advised that he recently attended a national conference aimed at Finance Directors and Chief Executive Officers. It was quite clear that there are different emphases in different Trusts; many models are driven on financial imperative rather than academic.

DM asked if a different government will have an impact on the vision for TCAT. MG advised that there would be a different emphasis if there was a change in government. The strategic plan and the operational plan will be revisited each year. The biggest 'unknown' is financial.

SW asked when the document will be finalised. MG advised that this is a living document and will be revisited when local governing boards have had the opportunity to review.

8. **Receive the Trust's Annual Audited Accounts 2017/2018**

MG advised that the auditor's section within the report is outstanding. This will be circulated to Members and Trustees as soon as it is received.

The auditors attended the Audit and Risk Committee and spoke positively about the accounts. The auditors discussed those schools in deficit and allowing them to

recover before they put money back into the Trust. The Trust is operating a deficit of just over £300,000. As Padgate Academy has now joined, the Trust will incur a further deficit. There were no issues raised from auditors regarding the actual accounts.

DM queried the analysis of movement for each school between 2017 and 2018. MG advised that this is a legal requirement.

DM asked if schools have their own bank accounts. MG confirmed that all schools are with Lloyds, but all have separate accounts at the moment.

DM asked if each school local governing board have their own account analysis. MG advised that all schools receive an analysis however the budget headings are due to change in order for local governing boards to be familiar with presentation of the figures.

SW asked when the final accounts will be filed. MG confirmed this will be filed as soon as the auditor's comments are received, before the end of December 2018.

JG advised that within the document, she is noted as the Chester Diocesan Board Member however she is the Liverpool Diocesan Board Member. She asked that this be amended. Action MG

Action: MG to amend document to reflect JG responsibility as a member of the Liverpool Diocesan Board.

DM asked if the accounts are for Trustees agreement. HP confirmed that the Trust Board approved the accounts and he has signed these along with MG.

SW wished to congratulate everyone for the production of the accounts.

HP acknowledged that he had seen the accounts a number of times and queried whether the process for ratification could be streamlined in future. MG advised that due to the turnover of the Trust, there is a requirement that there is a separate Audit and Risk Committee.

9. MAT Update

MG wished to welcome MB to the meeting. MG informed Members that Padgate Academy joined the trust on 1 December 2018. The Trust did not take on any of the historical deficit (£700,000) attributable to University Academy Warrington before the change to Padgate Academy.

The Trust secured £1.84million to invest in urgent capital items that were identified in the health and safety, and condition inspection of the school. The tender process for this work will commence from January 2019.

MG wished to thank MB and her colleagues who have been fantastic through the process. Students have designed a new badge to reflect the history of the school.

JG asked if there is a better atmosphere within the school. MB reported that staff are positive; they have been through a rocky time but are keen to make improvements for the students.

MG reported that the local authority recently had a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities inspection and chose to visit Padgate Academy and Priestley College. The inspector was very positive about the visits.

AM advised that the Trust is paying a proportion of his salary to lead on school improvement. He will now work 3 days per week on quality and standards across the Trust. He is also supporting the leadership team at Padgate Academy. There will now be a Principal and two vice Principals in place at Beamont Collegiate Academy from 1 January 2019.

DM asked where the money will come from for these activities. MG advised that the money for last year was provided from the Regional Schools Commissioner for Central Activity. This year there is a levy of 1.5% from all schools within the Trust that covers central activity.

TL highlighted that the Teaching School will organically grow from the core business of TCAT:

- Developing the workforce and driving school improvement
- School to school support
- Professional Development
- Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

TL informed Members that the Appleton College Sixth Form will be closing this summer and this will free up the Sixth Form building space; this is a professional space which can be used to develop the core business of TCAT. AM will have an office within the space to symbolise the commitment to school improvement and professional development. There will rooms available for each of the 'hubs' and there is a conference facility that can sit 100 people. This space will be a physical realisation of what TCAT is trying to achieve in terms of professional development for colleagues.

LM asked if the facility will be hired out. TL advised that the facility can be hired out. TL feels that the infrastructure lends itself perfectly to run as a teaching school. There is an administrator in place, who can arrange a meeting for all English teachers within the Trust, and is then able to evaluate that process effectively.

TL advised that there is a likelihood that over the next 3 years government policy will be that system leaders will deliver the bulk of school improvement. There will already be a committed structure in place at the Teaching School to offer services outside of the Trust.

AM highlighted that there is a gap in the market as not all schools are doing well with Teaching and Learning. No one in Warrington is delivering a training model to

improve outcomes and delivery. This is a good opportunity for income generation. The focus will remain in house initially. The core business for any Trust should be teaching and learning, and school to school support.

10. Any other business

It was noted that a primary school has expressed an interest in joining TCAT. As a vacancy remains on the Trust Board, there is a possibility that this can be filled by a representative of the prospective primary school.

MM confirmed that HP will now represent Penketh South Primary School on the Trust Board.

HP advised that TCAT had received comments regarding the number of Trustees on the Trust Board. The view from Trustees is that all are happy with the number. MG advised that the due diligence process for Trustees was robust and places were allocated based on the range of skills required.

HP asked that a new governance structure for TCAT is created to reflect the changes made at this meeting.

Action: MG to circulate new TCAT governance structure.

11. Proposed future meeting dates of the Members Board

Summer 2019: Monday 8 July 2019, 4.00pm

The meeting closed at 5.04pm