

# MINUTES

## TCAT Trust Board

Friday 29 May 2020, 10am

### PRESENT:

Howard Platt (HP)	Steven Whatmore (SW)
Jane Griffiths (JG)	Matthew Grant (MG)
Linda Waterson (LW)	Tim Long (TL)
Sheila Yates (SY)	Adrienne Lang (AL)
Susan Richardson (SR)	Ben Logan (BL)
Lucy Muir (LM)	John Monaghan (JM)
Stuart Titchard (ST)	Vicky Briggs (VB)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Lisa Adams – Clerk to Governors

Part One – non confidential business

---

### 1. Welcome and apologies

The Chairperson welcomed everyone.

Apologies were received from Bev Scott Herron.

The Chairperson reported that Neil Pearson has resigned as a Trustee and expressed his thanks for all the work he had done. It was noted that there is a vacancy on the Trust Board which will be considered after the lockdown.

### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

#### Funding agreement for Bridgewater High

MG reported that he has signed the agreement on behalf of the Trust Board.

#### Insurance

MG reported that the Trust have signed up with the government insurance scheme for all insurance purposes and Zurich for transport and travel insurances.

### **Penketh High**

A number of meetings have been held to review and monitor the deficit budget. Thanks were expressed to LM for her work.

### **Capital projects**

The subgroup met yesterday to review the ongoing and future capital projects. It was noted that the work on the new fence at Sir Thomas Boteler has started.

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to the following changes:

- Page 14 it was SW who asked the question and not TM
- Page 6 it was SR noted the Pan at Penketh High not SY
- JM and ST to be added to the attendance

## **3. Curriculum Continuity**

SY reported that she and JG met with VB, TL and AM to discuss TCAT's current offer for learners in all sectors and also the plans for a possible partial reopening of schools to specific groups from 8 June. Following the government announcement regarding a possible phased return for some learners a lot of work has been undertaken to ensure that schools are prepared and can move forward safely and in a timely manner. Detailed policies and protocols are being tested and checked to ensure that they will work. SY noted that although everything possible has been tested there will be situations that arise which may have not been considered.

JG and SY reported that they were delighted with the preparation that has taken place. It was noted that it is amazing the quantity and variety of learning that has taken place.

JG expressed how impressed she is with the work that has been going on around the estimated GCSE grades. JG noted that she attended a meeting with the Heads of Departments across the Diocese and one school within this Trust commented how well supported they had felt during this time.

AM reported that ranked lists are due to be submitted to him by next Tuesday. He will then sign them off and submit them to the examination boards. MG reported that the A-Level grades have an additional level of checking. These have since been returned with some minor tweaks. MG expressed he is

confident that the grading process is working for post-16 students. MG informed Trustees that there are some issues around the vocational subjects particularly in terms of the child care students as guidance is changing all the time. HP noted that the difficulty will arise when schools compare this years results with last year. **SW asked** when the results will be released to students. MG reported that the dates haven't changed with A-Levels released on 13 August 2020 and GCSE on 20 August 2020. HP noted that the results should be relatively shock free. AM reported that once the ranked lists are submitted the boards will then apply their process and equate a grade. MG noted that if there are any shocks in terms of grades there has been a robust process in place which provides evidence if any appeals are required.

#### 4. To consider the phase reopening of TCAT Academies from 8 June 2020

The following documents were shared with Trustees prior to the meeting:

- Primary school risk assessment
- Secondary school risk assessment
- Example of a completed Primary risk assessment – Great Sankey
- Example of parent information plus letter – Great Sankey
- Student risk assessment
- Staff risk assessment
- HR guidance for Principals and Headteachers
- Secondary School phased reopening
- Sixth Form College phased reopening plan

The reason for choosing 8 June is due to some schools still being on half term on 1 June 2020. MG informed Trustees that there will be some minor tweaks to some of the documents due to national guidance changing. The national guidance for Further Education Establishment's is still to be released. The Trust have worked with the Local Authority so Trade Unions have been involved along the way. MG reported that AM, TL, VB, BL and AL have done a lot of work in getting the schools ready.

TL felt that we need to be aware that communities are taking a cautious approach and this may change when more shops and centres open. At the current time a considered approach is being made to reopen schools so there are certain expectations. HP noted that it is likely that we will be overtaken by events but it is important that as a Trust we don't move too far ahead.

LM noted that we need to recognise that there will be a number of cautious parents within the communities who will be unsure about sending their children back to school. **HP asked** if there are any sanctions in place if children don't return. AM reported that there aren't. LM noted that Penketh High wants to encourage families to return however parents will have anxieties about their children mixing with key worker children. AL reported that the risk assessments have been significantly adapted and includes more

expanded details. She also reported that the primary schools are creating 'bubbles' for the key worker children to continue in and therefore will not mix with other children returning.

**SY asked** what the feedback from parents has been around reopening on the 8 June. VB reported that detailed information hasn't been shared with parents. A survey was issued asking parents if they would send their children back to school so that plans and arrangements could be developed. A lengthy document has been produced that will be shared with parents following this meeting. VB reported that the returns from the survey have indicated that the uptake across the schools will be high.

AM reported that attendance is down to parental choice and there will be no measures imposed for non attendance. He noted that the Primary Schools are at the sharp end with the expectation that the majority of staff will be required to return to teach in bubbles and more of the buildings will need to be used. He felt that the same expectations were not in place at secondary level. The government have provided very clear guidelines around shielding however there will be staff who are anxious that don't fall into a category. The Trust as employees will need to make a decision on how this is handled. In terms of capacity it will be a significant issue in the primary schools.

TL reported that his earlier comment was linked to the increase in number of parents returning to work. He felt that the number of Year 10 students returning is not going to be as high as would have liked. He asked what the Trusts position is on staff returning to school and if we allow working remotely to continue. HP felt that the default response is that staff come into school if they are required and where staff are anxious about returning the schools will manage without them if possible.

LM reported that Penketh High are going to do a virtual run through the school so that parents can see what changes have been put in place. Her feeling is also that the number of Year 10s returning will be low as they will be deemed to be old enough to stay at home if parents return to work. She feels comfortable with the approach that if teachers are not required to return to school they continue to work remotely and provide the excellent virtual learning that is already in place. AM felt that in terms of secondary schools we can afford to be more liberal but not at primary schools due to numbers. It is important that we progress carefully and sensitively.

SR reported that she has seen the amount of detailed planning that is in place at Broomfields Junior and thanked all those involved. She noted that in the press the unions have taken a negative view on schools reopening. She asked how the local unions had reacted to the plans. MG reported that meetings were held with the Trade Unions in the early stages and they were aware that any plans in place were cautious. The Local Representatives were supportive of the cautious and phased approach that was being taken.

AM felt that from now on it will be a day to day process to assess how the plans work in reality. He noted that the communication amongst the Primary Headteachers has been really good. **HP asked** if the Trust Board needed to meet prior to the reopening. AM felt that it would be more beneficial to hold a meeting once the schools had reopened to assess how it had gone.

Trustees approved the reopening plans for the schools on 8 June 2020.

**Action: Trust Board meeting to be held on Friday 12 June 2020, 10am**

## **5. Any Other business**

### **RSC**

Trustees were informed that the RSC has been in regular contact and are pleased with the approach the Trust have taken during the pandemic.

HP reported that he has been invited to join a Chairs Forum with the first meeting being held on Monday.

### **Organisation chart**

**HP asked** if he could have an updated organisational chart.

**Action: AM to send chart to HP**

### **TCAT Members Board meeting**

**HP asked** if it was worth calling a Board Meeting. MG reported that the clerk is currently organising a meeting.

**Action: clerk to e-mail the date of the Members Board meeting to HP**

### **Penketh High governors**

LM reported that John Holmes is due to finish as a governor at Penketh High after 30 years. She noted that the school will be arranging something to celebrate this. **HP asked** that thanks be expressed to John Holmes on behalf of TCAT.