

## THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST

### Trust Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 4pm

**Venue:** TCAT Professional Development Centre

**Chair:** Howard Platt

**Clerk:** Melissa Alexander [m.alexander@tcat.uk.com](mailto:m.alexander@tcat.uk.com)

Trustee Board Members			End of Term
LB	Linda Boys	Trustee (Foundation - Diocese of Chester)	31.08.2028
JC	John Cartwright	Trustee (Member appointed)	23.06.2025
MG	Matthew Grant	Trustee (Member appointed)	20.06.2028
PM	Phil McEwan	Trustee (Member appointed) (Chair, GSP)	14.07.2025
AM	Andrew Moorcroft	<b>CEO</b> , Trustee	N/A
HP	Howard Platt	<b>Chair</b> , Trustee (Member appointed)	01.07.2025
JW	John Warren	Trustee (Member appointed)	11.01.2028
LW	Linda Waterson	Trustee (Member appointed)	01.07.2025
SW	Stephen Whatmore	<b>Vice Chair</b> , Trustee (Member appointed) (Chair, BCA)	01.07.2025
PW	Peter Winter	Trustee (Member appointed)	11.01.2028
SY	Sheila Yates	Trustee (Chair, PRI)	01.03.2028
Also Invited to Attend			
PC	Phil Calrow	Chair of Governors, Meadowside Primary	
CO	Carole Owen	Chair of Governors, Padgate Academy	
FL	Fergus Laing	Chair of Governors, Broomfields Junior School	
PO	Paul Otter	Chair of Governors, Appleton Thorn Primary	
AP	Anita Pailing	Chair of Governors, Bridgewater High School	
MB	Moiria Bryan	Chair of Governors, Penketh High School	
CW	Carolyn Williams	Chair of Governors, Penketh South Community Primary	
AOR	Ashlea O'Rourke	Chair of Governors, Dallam Community Primary School	
VB	Vicky Briggs	Director of Education, TCAT	
AL	Adrienne Laing	Operations Director, TCAT	
BL	Ben Logan	Head of HR, TCAT	
TL	Tim Long	School Improvement Lead, TCAT	
DM	Damian McGuire	Finance Director, TCAT	

Documents shared prior to the Trust Board Meeting:

Agenda TCAT Trust Board 12.09.2024  
Item 4 & 6 TCAT Governance Updates and Information  
Item 6 (i) LGB TOR  
Item 6 (ii) Trust Board TOR  
Item 7 Final Minutes TCAT Trust Board 11.07.2024  
Item 9 (i) TCAT College Outcomes Provisional 2024 Trust Report  
Item 9 (ii) TCAT Primary Outcomes Provisional 2024 Trust Report  
Item 9 (iii) TCAT Secondary Outcomes Provisional 2024 Trust Report  
Item 10 TCAT Admissions Policy 2026-27 Draft 1  
Item 11 Finance Update  
Item 12a Estates Management Report September 2024  
Item 12b Deed of Covenant 31.05.2024 Final Draft  
Item 13 (i) Policy Schedule  
Item 13 (ii) TCAT Health and Safety Policy Revised 2024

Additional Information shared prior to the Trust Board meeting: Trust Board Meeting  
Presentation 12.09.2024

Agenda Item	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>The Chair, HP, opened the meeting at 16:01 and welcomed Trustees and attendees. This meeting was quorate with more than one third of Trustees in office present.</p> <p>HP formally introduced MG, previously CEO of The Challenge Academy Trust and Principal of Priestley College as a new Trustee of TCAT. HP also made a formal Introduction to LB, representative of Diocese of Chester.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Absence/Apologies/Non-Attendance:</b></p> <p>MA shared apologies that were sent in advance to the Trust Board meeting. Apologies were sent by VB, JW, SW and PM. All apologies were accepted by the Trust Board.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair</b></p> <p>MA referred to the Article of Association and started with Vice Chair self-nominations. MA shared with the Trust Board that SW had emailed and put himself forward for self-nomination. MA asked for approval, a vote was cast and the Trust Board approved SW's self-nomination. MA shared that a self-nomination had been collected for the appointment of Chair to the board prior to the meeting by HP. MA asked for the Trust Board's approval and this was a unanimous approval.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Register of Interests</b></p> <p>MA shared that All trustees were required to confirm Register of Interests on their GovernorHub Profile by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September. MA explained that the links to all required training can be found within the resources section on GovernorHub and guidance for this training can also be found in the SWAY which is item 4 &amp; 6 uploaded on GovernorHub.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Declaration of pecuniary interests</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of pecuniary interests in relation to items on the agenda.</p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Membership and Organisation</b></p> <p>MA informed Trustees that approval was required for the Terms of Reference for Trust Board and LGBs. MA referred to documents uploaded onto GovernorHub prior to the meeting. All trustees approved both Terms of Reference documents.</p>

	MA confirmed that all training and confirmations had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. MA shared that all members are required to update training and confirmation sections of GovernorHub. MA confirmed that guidance had been provided in the 'Resources' section on GovernorHub.								
7.	<p><b>Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024</b></p> <p>a) Approval of the Minutes: The minutes from the Trust Board meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July were approved.</p> <p>b) Matters arising: There were no matters arising.</p> <p>c) Action log: HP confirmed that several Trustees visited Tyn-Y-Felin in August and HP shared positive feedback relating to this visit.</p> <table><tr><th>Minute Reference</th><th>Actions to be taken</th><th>By whom</th><th>Completion date</th></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>HP to put forward a date for a visit to Tyn-Y-Felin with other Governors.</td><td>HP</td><td>ASAP</td></tr></table>	Minute Reference	Actions to be taken	By whom	Completion date	11	HP to put forward a date for a visit to Tyn-Y-Felin with other Governors.	HP	ASAP
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11	HP to put forward a date for a visit to Tyn-Y-Felin with other Governors.	HP	ASAP						
8.	<p><b>CEO Verbal Update (AM)</b></p> <p>AM shared that the Annual Impact Report 23-24 is in the process of being developed and will be shared with Trustees in due course.</p> <p>AM shared with the that there had been growth within The Challenge Academy Trust. Dallam Community Primary School officially joined TCAT August 1<sup>st</sup> and The Sutton Academy joined 1<sup>st</sup> September. AM provided a short summary relating to each academy such as PP, SEND, Ofsted and pupil information. AM Provided further details relating to South Wirral High School joining TCAT and confirmed that everything is on track at present. AL added that migration for Dallam and Sutton has gone well.</p> <p><b><i>A Trustee asked 'What is the geographical spread for the expansion of TCAT?'</i></b> AM confirmed that TCAT's expansion would always be within thirty minutes of TCAT PDC and that there is no plan to go outside of this. AM explained the reasoning for this is to ensure all academies can be provided with prompt support from the Central Team, should they require it.</p>								

AM referred to a presentation that was shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting. AM provided an update relating to TCAT in numbers covering pupil/ staff numbers/ Ofsted/ annual budget and capital investment.

AM provided an update relating to Tyn-Y-Felin Outdoor Centre, including the initial plans for the use of the centre. AM Confirmed that TCAT are awaiting the final lease signing for a six-year lease. Further details were shared relating to the management and development of the centre, such as the Steering Group, Centre Manager appointment and investment budget. AM shared details linked to investment budget from interest earned from investment to refurbish cottage. A health and safety and risk assessment update provided, and initial visits have been planned across late autumn term. Penketh High School will be the first group of students to visit the centre in January 2025. Prior to this, a small group of students who attend Bridgewater High School will visit Tyn-Y-Felin for a trial run to ensure all logistics are covered for future trips.

***A Trustee challenged 'Does the kitchen need to be assessed? If needs be, would an external catering company provided food three times a day for the centre?'*** AL confirmed that Lisa Gannon is carrying out a risk assessment on 13/09/2024. AL added that a supervisor who has a Level 3 catering qualification can prepare and provide food, such as breakfast. AM confirmed that TCAT would like to implement different models depending on the age of students. TCAT are also keen to work with local companies and are in the process of discussing the catering options that are available.

Central Service Updates:

- AM provided an update relating to the TCAT Central Team. Melissa Alexander's role has been amended and Melissa will complete governance support and has enrolled on the NGA course which will run September-July.  
Laura Fletcher's role has been amended and will include complete data analysis and MIS.  
Paul Sinnott's role will now include additional responsibilities for estates and IT.  
Carlo Mullen has been appointed as Trust IT Technical Lead and is scheduled to start this new role on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October.  
Joe Obiro has been appointed as Centre Manager for Tyn-Y-Felin Outdoor Centre and will officially start this role on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November. Prior to Joe starting his role, there will be several tasks that Joe will be engaged with to assist with the planning and preparations for an upcoming visit to Tyn-Y-Felin.  
Laura Shawcross has been appointed as TCAT Admin Apprentice and will oversee the Trust calendar, events and assist with the management of the TCAT Professional Development Centre.

- AM provided Trustees with an update relating to marketing and compliance: AM shared that Rogue Digital won the procurement exercise and have been contracted to design and host both central and academy websites to bring consistency across the Trust. Stacey Snagg has led the development of academy websites and has also completed a marketing audit. AM confirmed that all TCAT academies now have prospectus and video marketing on their websites.
- AM provided Trustees with an update relating to new systems that have been implemented into the Trust. The first system discussed was Civica Finance and DMC shared further details linked to this new platform. Overall, staff have provided positive feedback following the implementation of this new system. DM shared that the next phase will be the new invoicing system. DMC is hosting a VAT training session WC 16/09/2024 to provide further continuous professional development for the Finance Team.
- The second system that was shared was the HALO Online Service Desk. AM confirmed that the purpose of this helpdesk is to track IT jobs across the Trust. AL added that this system has the potential to track and monitor estates projects across the Trust, however, in the immediate, the focus is to ensure HALO is being successfully implemented across the Trust.

***A Trustee queried if TCAT would consider implementing HALO into different areas.*** AM Confirmed that TCAT are keen to implement this system to support many areas including estates, but the key focus is ensuring this system is effectively implemented to support IT before using the platform to support other operations.

- The final system to be discussed was TCAT People Hub which is a cloud-based HR management system that has now been fully implemented across the Trust.
- AM shared some final verbal updates relating to new providers and initiatives that started.  
Compliance Education: A full tender process has been completed and Compliance Education were successful in supporting the Trust with Health and Safety. AL added that this provider have already visited each of the academies and have made an impressive start.  
Harrisons: Harrisons won the recent tender to provide catering across a number of the academies. AM and DM added that the feedback has been extremely positive.  
New pupil initiatives: The TCAT Challenge Award has been launched based on the Character Education framework. This award follows a clear structure and framework, and AM and SS are working with key

partners to support this initiative. Academies have freedom to operate this initiative to suit the needs of their students and celebrations have been organised for July 2025 at The Halliwell Jones Stadium.

***A Trustee challenged 'Is this open to all students or for select students?'***

AM confirmed that this is open to all students. The TCAT Challenge Award will look different within each academy. A TCAT hub group has been established to support this.

***A Trustee also questioned 'Is there an idea of what success will look like for the TCAT Challenge Award?'***

R: AM shared details relating to different projects that will link to tasks. Guidance has been provided but academies have ability to feedback.

***A Trustee asked, 'Will there be stepping stones for this award?'***

AM confirmed there is a bronze, silver, gold approach but this is subject to change.

- AM provided an update relating to Trust Priorities for 24-25 and shared that Operational Excellence is one of the key areas of focus across the Trust to strengthen the curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- AM shared that there has been a TCAT Operations Handbook developed to support with all operational systems and processes. This handbook has been delivered across the trust and will be an ongoing project to support colleagues across the Trust.
- AM shared that a key focus going forward is the embodiment of core values. AM shared with the Trust Board that a reflection task was completed, with Heads and Principals in July. AM shared the key focus for the next academic year is the educational excellence and linked this to the Trust's Strategic Action Plan, and they areas of pupils, people and performance.
- SLT and conferences: The first SLT Seminar of the year will take place on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at The Halliwell Jones Stadium. There will be a leadership conference hosted on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October at The Halliwell Jones Stadium, and leaders from surrounding areas will be invited to discuss the current educational challenges.
- ESFA Audit: A two-week Finance and Governance audit has been completed. AM shared details relating to this review and the recommendations made by the DfE.

AM asked if there were any questions.

***A Trustee questioned 'Moving forward with the changes in trust IT, is this something JC can be involved with?'***

	AM confirmed that JC will be welcome to support with this as TCAT's digital strategy evolves.
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Exams Performance (VB)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TL provided an update for Trustees on behalf of VB. TL shared that the implementation of the new Four Matrix process was used to analyse the GCSE results for the 2024. TL shared that this new system was successful and enabled much faster access and analysis of GCSE results.</li> <li>• TL referred to the comprehensive reports provided by VB and referenced the papers uploaded on to GovernorHub and expressed that the detail is covered within this reports.</li> <li>• TL shared that there were strong results for TCAT academies, covering primary, secondary and post 16. TL shared that at present, the report only covers attainment.</li> <li>• TL added that Some schools are going through the process of remarks, however, overall, there is a solid set of results. TL offered to take any questions and shared that further analysis will be discussed at Local Governing Body and the upcoming Quality and Standards Committee meeting.</li> <li>• There was some discussion relating to amendments in the Ofsted framework. TL confirmed that TCAT will be taking P8 to Quality and Standards and emphasised that this would be considered in a contextual form.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>A Trustee challenged the T-Levels results at Priestley College.</i></b> SY provided further details relating to students who did not pass T-Levels. SY explained that quality of education was no concern, and that students are waiting for remarked grades. SY added the number of students who passed their retakes and pass rates are consistently above the national average.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Admissions Approval for Academies to Consult (AL)</b></p> <p>AL shared the Admissions Arrangements Policy with Trust Board. AL highlighted key areas with Trustees and explained that at present this document is only relevant for Warrington academies and shared that there will be a new policy developed for The Sutton Academy. AL confirmed that consultations are required to take place relating to PAN numbers. AL asked Trust Board for their approval for this paper.</p> <p><b><i>A Trustee questioned 'Are we are expecting any challenges?'</i></b> AL confirmed that there are no challenges to be expected. AM shared an update from consultation to meet the needs of expansion. AM confirmed that PAN expansion for TCAT academies have been shared with the Local Authority and that there will be no surprises.</p>



	<p>AL confirmed that BAM will be completing the new build for Penketh High School and completion of the new build will be in 2027. There were no questions raised relating to this estates project.</p> <p><b><i>Q: AL asked for approval for the Admissions Approval for Academies to consult.</i></b> R: All Trustees approved.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Finance Update (DM)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DM referred to the finance papers uploaded on to GovernorHub. DMC referred to the Teacher Pay update and shared that the finance paper conveys the recommended 5.5% increase. Reference was made to the budget that was approved by The Trust Board in July 2024.</li> <li>DM confirmed that there has been no agreement made on pay rise for support staff. One union has rejected this request, and another is currently out to ballot.</li> <li>DM confirmed that this has been a positive start to the year due to full funding. The only academy where this is not evident is Appleton Thorn Primary School.</li> <li>DM confirmed that the decarbonisation project is almost complete across the Trust and that the money has been held back in preparation for paying invoices.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>A Trustee questioned 'Is there an audit process about to begin and are there any concerns to hit the December deadline?'</i></b> DM confirmed that there is an audit scheduled to begin in early November and that there are no concerns. DM added that there will be expansion within the Finance Team, and Jayne Tallant from The Sutton Academy will be supporting TCAT to reduce the pressures faced by the Finance team. DM added that Jayne will be working on TCAT work at The Sutton Academy and has access to everything required as this is cloud based. Jayne Tallant will also be based at TCAT across the course of the month to support budget processing.</p> <p><b><i>Q: The Chair asked if Trustees had any questions for DM.</i></b> R: No questions were asked.</p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Estates &amp; Summer Projects (AL)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AL confirmed that summer projects have come into fruition and that there have been a number of projects taking place across the summer.</li> <li>AL confirmed that funding for capital comes through on an April-March basis.</li> <li>AL provided Trustees with an update that Beamont Collegiate Academy's dining room has been completed with funding from the</li> </ul>

	<p>EFSA and school reserves and this has made a positive impact on the academy. AL shared that feedback from both staff and students have been positive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AL shared that the LED project is ongoing and the reasoning for this is to ensure that all academies across the trust have LED lights. This project is going to be implemented throughout the academic year. Across the trust, there will be a saving of £200,000 per and will also have a positive impact on the environment. The Estates Team are monitoring gas and electrics usage and comparing recent years. Programmes have been amended and managed to focus on the LED project as this will save the Trust a significant amount of money, and therefore, was a priority project.</li> <li>AL explained that the ground source heat pumps project is still in the process of being implemented with four out of five academies now complete and one academy is currently undergoing snagging. The final works and commissioning will be late September/ early October. Meadowside has experienced some delays but have had their fabric improvements, pipe upgrades and will have boilers once issues are resolved. Trustees expressed how impressed they are with the ground source heat pump project.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>A Trustee queried 'When will the ground source heat pumps be switched on?'</i></b></p> <p>AL confirmed that this will take place end of September/ beginning of October and will share details when dates are confirmed.</p> <p>AL shared that Padgate Academy have received £3.4 million from the Local Authority to support with their academy refurbishment. AL asked for all Trustees approval to accept this grant.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Can Trustees formally agree to the £3.4 million grant provided by the Local Authority?</i></b></p> <p>R: All trustees approved</p>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Policies (AL)</b></p> <p>Trustees received the policy schedule and Health and Safety policy prior to the meeting. Specific points raised by AL were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AL explained that the Policy Schedule is under constant review to ensure policies are up to date. AL shared that all policies can be located via IAmCompliant.</li> <li>AL referred to the Health and Safety Policy and shared that there had been minor amendments made to this policy.</li> </ul> <p>AL asked for Trustees approval for the Health and Safety Policy. All Trustees approved the Health and Safety Policy.</p>

<b>14.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>AM showcased Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School's new website which was launched on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September. The website was updated by Rouge Digital as part of the website development project.</p> <p>LB opted to join the Finance, HR and Operations Committee following the Trust Board meeting. MA will be responsible for ensuring LB is added to this committee on GovernorHub.</p>
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Dates for 2024-25</b></p> <p>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024  Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025  Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025</p>
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>Confidential Matters (Part Two)</b></p> <p>No confidential matters discussed during this meeting.</p>

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed.