



Company Number: 07977368

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

**Thursday 30th January 2020 at
Faringdon Community College, 6.30pm**

Present:

Liz Holmes (LH) Chair
Duncan Millard (DM) CEO
Ian Wright (IW)
Paul Walker (PW)
Paul Turner (PT)
Mark Greenwood (MG)
Helen Turner (HT)
Christine Price-Smith (CPS)
Jeremy Twynam (JT)

In attendance:

Anne Lynn (AL) COO
Alexandra Molton (AM) Clerk

Apologies:

Anthony Cook (AC)

PROCEDURAL MATTERS		
1	Welcome, Apologies and Resignations	Action
	Apologies were received and accepted from AC. LH has spoken with an individual who may be interested in joining the Board and they will attend a future meeting to find out more about the role.	
2	Notice and Quorum Requirements	
	The meeting was quorate.	
3	Declaration of Interest / Pecuniary Interests	
	None were made at this point in the meeting.	
4	Accuracy of the Minutes of Board Meeting held on 5th December 2019	
	PW confirmed that his comment regarding the lack of space at FIS was in respect of the limitations that this may place on progress at the school rather than lack of space for moderation work. Trustees agreed to the minutes with these changes made by hand.	
5	Matters arising from 5th December 2019 and previous meetings	
	LH confirmed the following progress on the actions which were included on the action tracker which had been circulated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LH had one outstanding item the meeting on 19th September 2019 and she has sent out a report on this. Trustees did not have any questions on the report. LH clarified that the external assessor confirmed that the outcomes from the College were the highest in the County. This has been particularly enhanced by the connection with BMW and FCC being one of their six chosen 	

	<p>schools in Oxfordshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AL confirmed that AP attended the ARC meeting to discuss further the role of the Audit Committee. AC asked AL to report to the Board meeting on his behalf as he was unable to attend this meeting. It was agreed that the Audit Committee members will attend new Governor training to get a better understanding on the educational context of their roles. There are also plans for the Audit Committee to sit under the Resources Committee in the future and for the committees to work together more closely, with suggestions that one member from each committee could sit on the other to better share information and knowledge. • AL had emailed Trustees since the last meeting with copies of the Audit Committee reports and confirmed the correct Fixed Asset 2019 figure. 	
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ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY		
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6	Trust Strategic Plan Progress report based against KPI's	
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	<p>DM gave an introduction to the Strategic priorities for PPG and SEND using the traffic light system to show focus for the next 18 months. He confirmed that it is difficult to predict growth for the Trust as this is dependent on exterior factors which are out of the Trust's control.</p> <p>There is some movement forward with local schools wanting to become associated with the Trust but no concrete news on this as yet.</p> <p>AL confirmed that work is taking place in the background regarding areas such as staff wellbeing and these will link to strategic priorities in the future.</p> <p>ACTION: DM to produce a growth plan report for the Board to consider at the May Board meeting.</p> <p>(a) PPG</p> <p>LH confirmed that the QoE Committee are focusing on these issues for the Trust. The minutes from the last QoE meeting were circulated to Trustees in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Charlotte Kitching (CK) and James Hood (JH) are leading on PPG this year and focusing on new strategies which can be implemented across the Trust to make a significant and notable difference to these children. CK and JH had attended the January QoE meeting to give an update on their work so far.</p> <p>PT confirmed that over 50% of the PPG children across the Trust come from FIS and FJS. JH has been working in Faringdon schools to try and improve prospects for PPG children. CK is focusing on PPG at FCC and looking at new strategies to improve the outcomes for these children.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that the focus for the Trust is working hard to improve the outcomes for those children who move through the entire school system as PPG children as the progress scores for these children are below the national average.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees questioned whether the military children from local schools are affecting the figures but LH confirmed that actually these PP children are often the best performing among our schools.</p> <p>(b) SEND</p> <p>Helen Cox (HC) has been tasked with looking at SEND across the Trust this year and attended the January QoE meeting to give an update on her work. HC has not been in post very long but has started developing an overview of this across the Trust.</p> <p>HC confirmed that the last audit of OCC showed them as a failing local authority and HC explained that this was largely due to the quality of EHCPs which are produced.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees asked whether there would be the possibility of a Trust referral unit and AL</p>	DM
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	<p>confirmed that at this time there is not the capacity for this although there is certainly local need.</p> <p>Trustees discussed how severe the level of disruptive behaviour is in schools across the Trust. AL confirmed that the Trust is encouraging Headteachers to record every event that happens against a member of staff as it is vital to have a record of each of these instances in case these need to be referred to later.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>Trustees agreed that in the absence of any County plan on how to address SEND the Trust would keep focusing on its own Academy schools and working hard to support these children and their learning.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees questioned how many physical attacks had taken place on staff across the Trust over the last year.</p> <p>ACTION: AL to find out how many assaults and attacks have taken place on Trust staff and confirm this for the March Board meeting.</p> <p>PT confirmed that one of the main issues identified by HC was the system for obtaining funding for SEND children, especially those who need EHCPs. There have been procedural changes which mean that Heads need to apply for funding each year for each child who requires an EHCP. The EHCP itself takes some time to collate and OCC are very reluctant to fill in the sections of the EHCPs which they are required to. This can cause delays in funding being received and therefore support being put in place for these children. The committee asked HC how the Trust could address these issues but she confirmed that there is little that the Trust can do.</p> <p>The committee asked HC what three things could be put in place by the Trust to improve SEND provision across the Trust; HC confirmed that providing administrative support for the SENCOs to free them up to work directly with teachers and children more would make a significant difference.</p> <p>HC also confirmed that there is no one across the Trust who is currently moderating EHCPs to consider the effectiveness and work going into these. OCC have previously carried out reviews of EHCPs but no longer offer this service.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>Trustees agreed that these could be topics for the summer conference for Governors.</p>	AL
7	<p>Report on Safeguarding within the Trust – analysis of Safeguarding, health checks and challenges to Safeguarding practice in our schools.</p>	
	<p>DM explained that Linsey Baldwin (LB) is doing a huge amount of work and making a significant difference across the Trust. Trustees agreed that her appointment had been a great success for the Trust and her work should be applauded, particularly in terms of the impact she is making on Headteachers’ workloads. LB is also providing an interface between Headteachers and parents and therefore helping to maintain good relationships between parents and Headteachers.</p> <p>The Trust is looking forward to how more strategic Safeguarding initiatives can be put in place.</p> <p>LH confirmed that the ESFA has contacted the Trust twice over the last year regarding two safeguarding complaints which were raised with them. The cases were investigated; LH as Chair of the Board contacted Headteachers regarding these issues and full and satisfactory responses were sent back to the ESFA who consequently closed these complaints. As a result the Trust has asked that Headteachers improve record keeping of all significant instances which take place to ensure that accurate and timely records are kept. In addition Staff and Volunteer Codes of Conduct and procedures around using volunteers in schools will be closely considered and policies strengthened as necessary across the Trust.</p> <p>Challenge</p>	

	<p>Trustees questioned why all schools across the Trust do not use the same system to record Safeguarding issues. AL confirmed that each school makes their own decision on how they decide to record these instances. It would be ideal for all schools to use the same system and there are a few schools which use the same systems.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees asked for an explanation of how Safeguarding in schools operates and LH confirmed that Headteachers are bound to report all instances of Safeguarding concerns, both within and without school, to the relevant authorities.</p> <p>Trustees asked how staff identify Safeguarding concerns and DM and LH confirmed that staff look for key signs from the children. It is important to keep stringent records in case these need to be referred to in the future.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees asked where the School duty of care ends; is this at the school gate, or once children are at home?</p> <p>AL confirmed that legally instances that take place outside of the school are not the school's responsibility. Realistically schools would usually get involved due to matters of reputation and concern for the wellbeing of the children. There remains a legal duty on staff to raise any concerns of possible safeguarding issues they identify even if it arose beyond the school gate.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees asked why L&F only have one Safeguarding Lead when the other Trust schools have at least two.</p> <p>DM confirmed that there should be two at each school and he will investigate this.</p> <p>JT offered to provide Trustees with details of an organisation in Oxford which supports children with parents in custody.</p>	
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STRATEGIC MATTERS

8	Receive Feedback on Trustee visits	
	<p>HT visited FJS on the first day back in January. She found the staff very welcoming and the atmosphere very calm. She met with the Headteacher and the SENCo. The Head has an open door policy for all staff, children and parents which HT thought created a positive school environment. There are some issues around the SEND data coming from FIS when children move to FJS; PT confirmed that there will be some future moderation between staff at both schools to try and alleviate this.</p> <p>The Head was impressed with input from JH and LW and PPG work at FJS, which she felt was making an impact.</p> <p>HT spoke with office staff, who are a bit unsure how they fit into the Trust and HT asked whether there are any regular updates on the Trust for these staff members. AL confirmed that there are plans to look at this more closely, to ensure clarity in terms of what is expected from everyone and make sure that all staff have the same information about the work of the Trust.</p> <p>PW visited FIS in November and went on a Learning Walk with the Head. He and SR spoke about FFT data and the underperforming groups at the school and he was encouraged to see that there are solid plans on how to address these. Children at the school clearly have great relationships with staff. The main issue for the school is space, particularly in terms of having enough breakout space for interventions. PT felt it was great to see that staff are fully aware of the issues affecting their children and know the local context well.</p> <p>AL confirmed that AC has visited WAT and he will report back on this to the March Board meeting.</p> <p>JT will report back to the Board in March as he is shortly due to visit JBL.</p> <p>PT will report to the Board in March on L&F.</p>	

	<p>MG will try and report on SHR in March. IW will report in May on FCC. Trustees asked whether there is a preferable term to visit schools AL confirmed that it depends when suits the Headteachers and Governors best.</p>	
9	<p>Consider scope of a Trust Survey of pupils, parents, governors and staff</p>	
	<p>LH asked Trustees to consider how surveys of staff, Governors, parents and children would provide useful insight into how the Trust is rated by these stakeholder groups. DM confirmed that work is already taking place on a staff survey to take place in the summer.</p> <p>There were concerns over the responses that could be received from some stakeholder groups in terms of what people know about the Trust, and Trustees recognised that it was important how surveys were put together and how responses were analysed in order to provide meaningful results.</p> <p>MG volunteered to assist with planning these surveys. PW is also able to provide some advisory overview as he also has some experience in this area.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees asked are schools not supposed to be doing surveys already? LH confirmed that they are and this does take place, but the Board need to consider how at a Trust-level we can find out about issues and start addressing these. LH confirmed that step one is to find out about the current surveys that are already taking place across the Trust. The Board can then start considering what else should be looked at.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>Trustees suggested face to face sessions with stakeholders after the surveys had taken place would be useful to address issues which arise and show that actions is being taken to address these.</p> <p>ACTION: MG and PW to work together to devise a strategy for approaching surveys by 21st May.</p> <p>ACTION: LH to gather information on what surveys already take place and feed this back to Trustees.</p>	<p>MG/PW</p> <p>LH</p>
10	<p>Central Staff Review Proposed Structure - Confidential</p>	
	<p>This session was confidential due to the nature of the item.</p>	
<p>MONITORING</p>		
11	<p>2019/20 Performance Management reporting on moderation of;</p> <p>(a) Pay committee outcomes</p> <p>(b) Objective setting and use of CPD to improve Teaching and Learning</p>	
	<p>(a) Pay committee outcomes</p> <p>Information on this was circulated to Trustees ahead of the meeting. It is clear that staff leaving or entering part way through the year were not receiving appraisals. Casual staff have also not had appraisals, but work is taking place to ensure these are not missed in the future. Another training session is planned for Governors on the role of the Pay Committee and the Governors in terms of challenging the outcomes of the Pay Committee and recommendations of the Headteacher.</p> <p>(b) Objective setting and use of CPD to improve Teaching and Learning</p> <p>DM and AL have been looking more closely at these. The focus in most schools was Subject Leadership and providing support and training to help teachers to get established in this following the changes in the Ofsted framework. Trustees recognised that there are several examples of cases where staff have</p>	

	<p>attended training and then returned to share this with their own school staff. Trustees agreed that it would be good to look at sharing these across the Trust to save money on external training.</p> <p>Challenges</p> <p>Trustees questioned whether it might be more useful to train a member of Trust staff to deliver some training internally rather than lots of staff members attending the same external training.</p> <p>Trustees questioned whether it was useful to deliver internal training on inset days and AL confirmed that this could cause issues in terms of staff being available to attend.</p> <p>Trustees asked whether it would be possible to those with similar targets to be joined up to assist with them achieving these by supporting each other. DM confirmed that individual targets are confidential and therefore it would not be possible to link staff up in this way.</p>	
12	<p>Receive report on Asset Management Priorities and demand for additional pupil places</p>	
	<p>LH asked for thanks to be passed to JR as her report provided a useful snapshot of the current situation.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the value of combining the previous Asset Plan and a new 5 Year Plan and using this as a document for recording the progress of the current issues.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <p>Trustees questioned whether the Trust needs to focus on tackling smaller maintenance issues to prevent them from becoming larger problems later on. AL agreed that this was a sensible approach and is happening but confirmed that capital funding for schools remains low and impacts the amount of work that can take place.</p>	
13	<p>DPO Annual Report to the Trustees</p>	
	<p>This was circulated to Trustees in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees questioned the use of refresher training for staff and AL confirmed that Heads will be reminded to ensure all staff are trained each September.</p> <p>Trustees were pleased that there were both no serious concerns across the Trust and no issues leading to any action.</p>	
14	<p>Reporting from Committee Chairs by exception</p>	
	<p>QoE spoke with RK about Sports Premium at their January meeting and she confirmed that 2020 could be the last year for this funding. RK confirmed that she was satisfied that if this funding ceased all teaching staff are able to teach PE to a reasonable level, however it would mean that the majority of external providers of activities would be reduced. RK also does a lot of work to link Trust schools with other local schools and the committee thanked her for this work.</p> <p>QoE had asked for copies of LGB minutes to find out how PPG and SEND is challenged by LGBs and it was clear that the Governor interrogation of this varied massively across the Trust. The committee have asked for details of further committee meetings where these may have been more closely considered, to be able to compare this across all of the schools</p> <p>Colin Profitt has just announced his retirement at the end of this academic year. AL confirmed that the advert for this will go live in early February and the School hopes to appoint before Easter, to start in September 2020.</p>	
15	<p>AOB</p>	
	<p>Determine Admissions Arrangement for 2020.</p> <p>A paper with these details was circulated to Trustees in advance of the meeting. AL confirmed that plans for the new school are now in draft and the S106 has been</p>	

