



Company Number: 07977368

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday 3 December 2020 at 4.30 pm via Teams

Present:

Liz Holmes (LH) Chair  
 Duncan Millard (DM) CEO  
 Ian Wright (IW)  
 Rev Paul Walker (PW) (joined meeting)  
 Paul Turner (PT) (joined meeting)  
 Mark Greenwood (MG)  
 Christine Price-Smith (CPS)  
 Anthony Cook (AC)  
 Sarah Church (SC)

In attendance:

Sandra Green (SG) Clerk  
 Louise Warren (LW) DofE  
 Lt Cdr Carrie Insley (Observer: prospective new  
 Trustee - unfortunately lost connection early in  
 meeting)  
 Alex Peal (AP) Chair of IA&R Committee:  
 Item 8 only

Apologies:

Anne Lynn

		Action
1	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies, Resignations, Appointments, Elections and new Trustees</b></p> <p>1.1 LH opened the meeting at 4.40 p.m. and thanked all for attending. Apologies had been received from Anne Lynn, and it was announced with regret that Helen Turner had resigned as a trustee. The Board thanked Helen for her contribution during her time in this role.</p> <p>1.2 LH welcomed SC as a new Trustee, Carrie Insley as an Observer and potential new trustee, and Alex Peal, Chair of the Independent Audit &amp; Risk Committee who would be speaking on Item 8. SC and AP gave brief self-introductions but unfortunately CI was unable to do so as she lost connection via Teams.</p> <p>1.3 LH reminded all in attendance of the need for confidentiality of all matters discussed if not already in the public arena.</p>	
2	<p><b>Notice and Quorum Requirements</b></p> <p>The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	
3	<p><b>Declarations of any personal business interests relating to this meeting</b></p> <p>No declarations of any personal business interests relating to this meeting were made.</p>	

4	<p><b>Accuracy of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of Board Meeting held on 24 September 2020</b></p> <p><b>Resolution</b> Trustees were satisfied to sign off the meeting minutes as accurate records of the meeting.</p> <p><b>STANDING ACTION: LH to sign a copy of the minutes when the current restrictions on meeting in person are lifted.</b></p>	LH/SG
5	<p><b>Note any changes to Trustee link roles and other areas of responsibility</b></p> <p>5.1 (Brought forward from AOB) In response to the query as to whether we were resurrecting Link Trustee visits to schools, DM stated that Headteachers would appreciate Zoom/Team/e-mail contacts from the Link trustees. In-person visits are still not advisable.4.2 LH confirmed that she had previously sent out a document with everyone allocated to their Link role. Trustees were asked to add to this document via GovernorHub the name of the school to which they are attached.</p> <p><b>ACTION: All Link Trustees to add this information to document via GovernorHub.</b></p> <p>5.2 LH advised that a Safeguarding Link trustee is required as a result of Helen Turner’s resignation.</p> <p>5.3 In answer to SC’s query about her allocation, LH responded that she would usually be allocated to Helen Turner’s previous school, unless this created a conflict of interests.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LH to liaise with SC once the Link Trustee document has been completed by Trustees.</b></p>	<p>Link Trustees</p> <p>LH/SC</p>
6	<p><b>Out of Committee Activity: Annual Appraisal of CEO</b></p> <p>LH advised that this had been held with AC, CP-S and LH as the Panel. DM had met many of his Objectives in a challenging year when many of peers had experienced difficulties in doing so.</p>	
7	<p><b>Matters arising from 24 September 2020 and previous meeting</b></p> <p>SG confirmed that all items were <b>complete</b> except the following:</p> <p><b>Action B1</b> begun 9/7/2020: Siobhan Vinall/SG have had several communications with the Diocesan office to request a new Diocesan trustee following the resignation of Jeremy Twynam. <b>CP-S advised that this was being dealt with at a senior level and it was hoped that a nomination would be found. If not, SG will liaise again with Diocesan office to request written confirmation of the situation and it will be put into abeyance.</b></p> <p><b>Action B8</b> begun 24/09/2020: To note approval of Trust Action Plan 2020/2021:</p>	SG

	<p>Monitoring proposals</p> <p>KPI's</p> <p>Operational structures</p> <p><b>Carried forward to January 2021's meeting.</b></p>	<p><b>SG</b></p>
<p>8</p>	<p><b>Presentation by Alex Peal, Chair of Independent Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b></p> <p>Rev Walker joined the meeting</p> <p>LH welcomed AP, who spoke to the main points in the Internal Audit Report previously uploaded onto GovernorHub.</p> <p>AL's comments were added by DM in her absence. AC noted that good progress had been made against previously identified areas.</p> <p>The Board <b>RECEIVED</b> the Internal Audit Report and <b>AGREED</b> any actions arising from it.</p> <p>AP was asked to highlight to the Board in future any examples of exemplar practice which he sees elsewhere.</p> <p>AP advised the Board that, whilst none of the Resources Committee had attended the IA&amp;R Committee meetings, AC, as Chair of the Resources Committee and AP were speaking regularly which was proving of benefit to both parties.</p> <p>AP then spoke about the proposed plan of work for the IA&amp;RC to not just focus on financial matters but to extend it to other areas, e.g. IT. Two of the IA&amp;RC have particular expertise in IT and thus can offer much. However, the work of the IA&amp;RC is flexible and can change if priorities need it to change.</p> <p>LH thanked AP and the members of the IA&amp;RC for their excellent work and valuable contribution to the operational progress of the FLT, including the ability to include non-financial matters.</p>	

<p>9</p>	<p><b>Review effectiveness of transition arrangements and destination data 2019/2020</b> DM talked to this item and his previously loaded up paper. FLT is working on making the transition 3-18 as effective and smooth as possible.</p> <p>SC asked why some pupils had gone to Kas, Commonweal, etc, and who stayed on to FCC's Sixth Form, why did they chose to go to these providers? DM did not know as information not gathered. FCC draws pupils from a wide range of areas beyond its catchment which may lead to some pupils looking for 6<sup>th</sup> form provision more local to them. There are lots of choices and courses available in the local area. The future branding of the FCC is to be as an academic college, mainly providing academic A Levels.</p> <p>LW commented that we need to ensure that there is enough challenge for them to wish to stay in Faringdon.</p> <p>Mark Greenwood joined meeting</p> <p>IW stated that it would be good to know which colleges we are competing against.</p> <p>PW suggested that it would be useful to hold Exit Interviews with pupils to ascertain this information.</p> <p>DM responded that FCC may offer the actual course these pupils want, but they want to have a 'college' experience, rather than remain at their school. Pupils are therefore being spoken to regarding what will enable them to get to their preferred university as this may well encourage them to remain at FCC.</p> <p>LH <b>thanked</b> all those who had contributed towards this very useful information and <b>requested that Link trustees pursue with their respective schools when they speak to them.</b></p>	
<p>10</p>	<p><b>Review Risk Register</b> MG spoke to the paper previously uploaded onto GovernorHub. The Risk Register has been limited to strategic items only, as operational items are now contained within the individual LGB's risk registers. Eight risks had been identified as common to all schools, as could be seen. The risk register will have frequent reviews and the contents and plans adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>LH responded that it was very pleasing to see schools having their own risk registers, with devolved responsibility for monitoring. The Board can now focus on oversight of the schools' activities as captured in the Trust register.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Board to identify, effect and review such a mechanism.</b></p> <p>LW reported that the schools had initial concerns about being able to compile their own risk registers but it had proved to be a very useful exercise to undergo with LGBs and SLTs to give better understanding, relevance and accuracy of contents.</p>	<p>All</p>



<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of Activities from Board Sub-Committees:</b></p> <p><b>A) Resources</b></p> <p>There were no questions raised on the summary previously uploaded onto GovernorHub.</p> <p>AC was asked if there was anything he wished to particularly bring to the Board’s attention? AC responded that the Covid-19 pandemic had placed considerable pressure on budgets as, whilst we had a good Summer Term regarding reduced costs due to school closures, we are now seeing more costs due to the pandemic, and because the pandemic is prolonged there has been a considerable loss of lettings revenue.</p> <p>AC advised that he will circulate a report to the Board out of committee if the financial position deteriorates.</p> <p>DM advised that the staff questionnaire was ready to be circulated but it was felt that this should occur once normal school activity takes place.</p> <p>The Board <b>RECEIVED</b> and <b>APPROVED</b> the summary of the Resources Committee.</p> <p><b>ACTION: AC to provide summary of CV-related costs at the 25 March 2021 meeting.</b></p> <p><b>B) Quality of Education</b></p> <p>There were no questions raised on the summary previously uploaded onto GovernorHub. PT noted that there were some positives against items on the Risk Register.</p> <p>PT was asked if there was anything he wished to particularly bring to the Board’s attention? PT said there was not.</p> <p>PT reported that he had attended an ALT meeting, specifically to hear about remote learning. FIS had been experiencing some issues due to some pupils and staff having no access to IT resources at home, but these had since been resolved.</p> <p>LW added that reviews of SEN and Safeguarding of all schools are in hand and it had been very useful to upload the individual school risk registers for the Board to see.</p> <p>The DfE has announced adjustments to the exam plans for 2020/2021.</p> <p>PW asked if there has been any Government guidance regarding filling the holes in pupils’ knowledge due to the CV disruptions to education? DM responded that all the Government has said to date is for schools to give pupils advance notice of topics which will be in exams so that they can focus their studies. Also that teachers were supporting pupils to ensure that there were no significant gaps in their knowledge. LW advised that a considerable amounts of catch-up funding has gone into schools for activities related to this aspect.</p>	<p><b>AC</b></p>
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	<p>LH <b>thanked</b> both AC and PT for providing these extremely useful summaries of the activities of their committees.</p> <hr/> <p><b>12 Confidential Item: please see separate Minutes</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>13 Trust Covid-19 response</b></p> <p>DM spoke to his paper previously uploaded onto Governor Hub. Parents and pupils have been very positive. Some school have reported higher attendance than this time last year!</p> <p>Enormous pressure on staff members, not just due to changes in routine and need for remote learning, but also staff absences due to attending CV testing for self or family members, self-isolation for self or family members, non-CV absences, etc.</p> <p>Five schools have had to implement their Remote Learning policies. There have understandably been some challenges but feedback has been very positive, including from parents. It has been found that the efficacy of remote learning for the younger children has a greater reliance on parental support than had been apparent, so some challenges there.</p> <p>The peak of CV cases in the schools seems to have passed and many lessons have been learnt about how remote learning worked. A recent ALT meeting allowed Heads to share their experiences.</p> <p>LW advised that FCC and FJS, who had the largest cohorts of affected children had given positive feedback, with FCC managing to provide the pupils' with the usual 5 lessons a day via remote learning and FJS had 90 children registering first thing but not always attending for lessons all day.</p> <p>All schools had reported that their SEN children were harder to reach and support when not attending in person.</p> <p>The recovery curriculum, whilst excellent, has been found to have a lack of enrichment opportunities and there has been increased demand to encourage appropriate behaviour.</p> <p><b>ACTION: DM to update on 'lessons learnt' regarding our Remote Learning Strategy in due course.</b></p> <p>A discussion was held as to how we could reward our staff for the extra efforts, with DM/LW reporting back on the relevant contents of discussions from the ALT meeting held on 2/12/2020. Headteachers have been doing what they felt they could to suit local circumstances, which the Board supported.</p> <p><b>ACTION: DM/LW to provide a summary paper of school actions to bring to the January 2021 Board meeting.</b></p>	<p><b>DM</b></p> <p><b>DM/ LW</b></p>
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14	<p><b>ACTION: LH to send a letter of thanks.</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Receive a budget monitoring report</b>  AL had sent in the comments:  Please refer to the relevant papers unloaded onto GovernorHub and note that it was very early in the financial year to look at the numbers as these are still subject to change. In relation to additional Covid costs, the DfE have stated that only schools suffering with very poor staff attendance - and if a significant amount of their reserves have been used - will get additional funding. The Finance team are keeping a precise record of CV-related costs to claim back as much as possible.</p> <p>As the Board already knows, FJS has some urgent and essential repairs needed in the sum of c.£180,000 – with reserves at £230,000 this will significantly reduce FLT’s reserves.</p> <p>SC asked if there is a Trust-wide reserves policy or is it locally determined?  AC responded that the reserves position is delegated to LGS, with their Finance governors empowered but with tight communications with the Central Office and Resources Committee. Some Central decisions are made. The reserves are considered as a whole sum – held by the MAT. The Resources Committee has a responsibility to ensure that the right checks and balances are in place.</p>	LH
15	<p><i>Post-meeting note: The Trust does have a Reserves Policy, as a trust we ensure that we have at least one month’s salary in reserve.</i></p> <p>LH <b>thanked</b> AL, AC and the Central Office team for their considerable efforts in producing this very useful information.</p>	
16	<hr/> <p><b>Benchmark Trust spending</b>  Due to AL’s absence, this item was carried over to January 2021’s meeting.  <b>ACTION: AL to provide a verbal update on Benchmark Trust spending at the January 2021 meeting.</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Any Other Business</b>  Item raised was included in Item 5 above.  No other items raised.</p> <p>LH thanked all those attending and wished a Merry Christmas to those who will not be attending the AGM on 17 December 2020.</p> <p>Date of subsequent Board Meeting: <b>Thursday 28 January 2021 via Teams.</b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Sg/08/12/2020</p>	AL

