



Company Number: 07977368

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday 25 March 2021 at 4.30 p.m. via Teams

Present:

Liz Holmes (LH) Chair  
 Duncan Millard (DM) CEO  
 Rev Jason St John Nicolle (JS)  
 Ian Wright (IW)  
 Paul Turner (PT)  
 Mark Greenwood (MG) (part of meeting)  
 Anthony Cook (AC)  
 Sarah Church (SC) (part of meeting)  
 Carrie Insley (CI)

In attendance:

Louise Warren (LW) DofE  
 Sandra Green (SG) – Clerk

Apologies:

Rev Paul Walker (PW)  
 Christine Price-Smith (CPS)  
 Anne Lynne (AL)

PROCEDURAL MATTERS		
1	Welcome, Apologies and Resignations	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologies had been received from PW and CPS. SC had notified that she would be delayed in joining us and MG had notified that he would have to leave early during the meeting. All were accepted.</li> <li>LH welcomed all those present, and JS as our newest trustee. LH advised that JS had kindly accepted acting as Link Trustee for Websites and as a member of the QfE Committee.</li> <li>No resignations received.</li> <li>LH reminded all present of the requirement to keep confidential all matters discussed until they were confirmed as being in the Public arena.</li> <li>.</li> </ul>	
2	<b>Notice and Quorum Requirements</b>	
	The meeting was quorate.	
3	<b>Declaration of Interest / Pecuniary Interests</b>	
	None were made at this point in the meeting.	
4	<b>Accuracy of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of Board Meeting on 28 January 2021</b>	
	Trustees <b>AGREED</b> the accuracy of both sets of minutes, which will be approved in writing by LH when the pandemic circumstances permit.	
5	<b>Matters arising from 28 January 2021 and previous meetings</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LH <b>CONFIRMED</b> that the Appraisal documents presented at the last meeting are, indeed, the latest versions.</li> <li>• DM <b>CONFIRMED</b> that local communities and businesses had been thanked via local press for their generous donations of IT equipment to schools.</li> <li>• SG <b>CONFIRMED</b> that two of the school LGB clerks and she had attended an online awareness session on Pupil Premium at 6 p.m. on 24 March, given by James Hood for PP Link governors and the clerks, and had found it very informative. The clerks and SEND Link governors had been invited to attend a similar session regarding SEND, to be presented by Helen Cox at 5 p.m. on 30 March 2021. LW advised that Lyndsey Baldwin is carrying out Safeguarding awareness sessions with individual schools across FLT.</li> <li>• SG <b>CONFIRMED</b> that all other Carried Over items had either been dealt with or were included as agenda items or scheduled for future meetings.</li> </ul>	
6	<b>Out of Committee activities</b>	
	LH advised that no such activities had occurred.	
<b>STRATEGIC MATTERS</b>		
7	<b>Update of Partial Closure of Schools</b>	
	<p>(SC joined the meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DM spoke to the papers as previously circulated. Headlines: Attendance in school is exceptionally good. Headteachers' comments are powerful regarding bringing children back after #2 lockdown, which has been harder for all. Somewhat of a relief when schools re-opened. Lot more trust between schools and FLT due to increased interactions and support given to schools. Primary schools focussing on lots more P.E. and practical subjects for pupils as many have been more sedentary during lockdown. The staff are very engaged and pleased to be back. We can all be very proud of what our schools have achieved. FCC has undertaken a great deal of CV testing of pupils, which has been a logistical nightmare. Pupils have been required to wear masks in the classroom if necessary and have accepted with grace.</li> </ul> <p>Q: SC: Whilst it is fantastic how positive the comments are – have schools felt they could air their difficulties?  A: DM: I will give you some feedback on the first two weeks back since 8 March. We are at the beginning of another journey as the consequences of the lockdowns and the pandemic are going to be felt and emerge over a long time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emerging priorities are:  Primary Sector = <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English and Maths prioritized by parents so the Foundation subjects have taken second position.</li> <li>- Stamina in learning, including in writing.</li> <li>- Resilience and ability to push themselves.</li> <li>- Relationships.</li> <li>- Routines and expectations.</li> <li>- Ongoing support for Vulnerable and Challenging children.</li> <li>- Momentum of school life.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• These reflect the school complexity of regaining normality where there are some complex issues. It has been a very challenging 18 months for all. FLT is giving support. We offer a weekly drop-in session via Teams on a Wednesday lunchtime as an opportunity to speak to someone from the Trust.</li> </ul> <p>Q: PT: There is no 'normal' – this is the new 'normal', so the old way won't be the way it is going to be done in future.  A: DM: Parents have done their best.</p>	

	<p>Q: IW: Interested in the difference between those children who have been able/encouraged to access the opportunities?</p> <p>Q: CI: Yes, it will be interesting to reassess after Easter as everyone has been limited by their home environment so no opportunity to change.</p> <p>A: LW: We need to reinforce metacognition. Pupils getting used to the classroom and learning. Staff have been able to be autonomous whilst working at home but are now needing to fit in after-school activities so their work days have lengthened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental worries about education needs for their SEND children. Schools have focussed on Reading, Art, Foundation Subjects, etc since their return.</li> </ul> <p>LH: There are aspects of remote learning which we might not want to jettison. There is so much expectation of the curriculum at Primary level, so the Board need to give schools backing for their choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This has been raised with the Headteachers via ALT and we will be looking at Foundation subjects after Easter break.</li> <li>• Assessment is difficult in remote learning. Formative at Primary level, i.e., quizzes, memory games - gentle version. LW attended OCC Working Party and will report back on SATs paper steer, as schools have agreed to use same paper to provide level data for FCC.</li> <li>• FCC had their Y13 Mock exams before Easter.</li> <li>• LW: Parents' feedback will follow via a report template at the end of term. We will do some standardised scores, etc so we know which pupils require extra interventions to bring them up to speed.</li> </ul> <p>Q: PT: Will Parents only be able to receive and give feedback online?</p> <p>A: LW: It will vary with the child's individual circumstances to meet needs. Schools are discussing how best they can interact with parents.</p> <p>A: DM: FCC will provide it online as Staff and Parent feedback was positive. (Mark Greenwood left the meeting)</p> <p><b>ACTION: DM/LW to discuss at ALT what aspects of foundation subjects the trust it is not going to be possible to deliver a board endorsed trust position.</b></p>	
8	<p><b>Report on FLT Staff Absence</b></p>	
	<p>It was agreed that this item would be postponed until the May 2021 meeting so that AL could present on it.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Paper to go to May 2021 Board Meeting.</b></p>	SG/AL
9	<p><b>FLT Strategic Aims</b></p>	
	<p>DM spoke to the paper and the traffic light system used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no questions from the attendees regarding the monitoring report.</li> <li>• DM continued that it shows a very positive position, with most areas going in the right direction.</li> <li>• Benchmarking was amber but has now occurred.</li> <li>• The pandemic has impacted on Pupil Progress due to two lockdowns. This will be reviewed again next month but will still be an issue.</li> </ul> <p>Q: LH: Is there justification to add another section in 'Pupil Progress' whereby this reflects baseline understanding of where the gaps are for our children? This was 'academic' but is now also 'social' and 'emotional' so could DM and LW consider please?</p> <p><b>ACTION: DM/LW to consider the feasibility of incorporating baseline understanding of where social and emotional gaps are for pupils.</b></p> <p>Q: IW: Staff Wellbeing: could we be more explicit about Staff's state after such a challenging year?</p> <p>A: DM: I think the 3–5-year plan could incorporate that, and how we support our staff.</p>	DM/LW



	LW was thanked for her very useful report.	
14	<p><b>Equality Objectives and Access Plans</b></p> <p>LW spoke on the paper. She confirmed that Tori Ray had been employed to undertake an in-depth inventory of schools' equality objectives, followed up with two schools to review.</p> <p>LW: Q: Would it be appropriate for each LGB to have an appointed EO&amp;AC Link governor? And a Board EO&amp;AC Link Governor? Objectives need to be set each three years, to be reviewed each year and updated on the school's website.</p> <p><b>ACTION: It was AGREED that LW/DM should discuss with the Headteachers at the next ALT and report back to Board.</b>  <b>ACTION: LH to advise on Board EO&amp;AC Link Governor.</b></p> <p>Q: PT: QfE are going to look at Equality Objectives re pupils – will ARC be good enough to do this in respect of FLT staff please?  A: AC: Yes, ARC will.</p> <p>LH: Thanked LW/PT for their work on this matter and it was important that a standardized approach was adopted across FLT, via the ALT, and then back to the Board to roll out across LGBs.</p> <p><b>The Equality Framework was AGREED.</b></p>	<p>DM/LW</p> <p>LH</p>
15	<p><b>Financial Performance of the Trust</b></p> <p>AC spoke to this item. There are two headlines:</p> <p>1) P5 was quite quiet, with not much to report just expecting costs to rise as schools have reopened, e.g., cleaning.</p> <p>2) SHR remains a concern re its deficit budget. Pupil numbers are a challenge with classes of 20 or so.</p> <p>CV costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Officers capture any costs, currently c.£84K.</li> <li>• 50% of lost lettings' income has gone – want to get this back.</li> <li>• Will only get Free School Meal Vouchers money, so c.£75K expenditure loss.</li> </ul> <p>There has been lots of hard work by many people to save costs.</p> <p>Q: SC: Given cost of PPE, cleaning, etc required, is there any Government payback for extra?</p> <p>A: AC: We are asking but no response yet.</p> <p>LH: Thanked AC and ARC and all staff involved in managing costs.</p> <p>Q: LH: DM will we be receiving a report on pupil numbers, especially for SHR? We were expecting the extra housing around SHR to result in extra children.....</p> <p>A: Yes, SHR are struggling with pupil numbers.</p> <p>A: AC: ARC is monitoring it carefully. The impact on budgets is very difficult so we need costs to be saved wherever possible. It is difficult to forecast costs.</p>	
16	<b>2019/2020 Incidents of Violence against Staff</b>	

	<p>LH reminded those present that the information within the report was dependent on the individual schools entering the data onto the Accident &amp; Reporting System.</p> <p>LH asked if those present considered that any action was needed in respect of the contents of the report provided by Jo Ray?</p> <p>Those present responded that they did not consider any further action needed to be taken, with the exception, as raised by SC, that it will be worth comparing reported numbers each time as comparison.</p> <p><b>The Board CONFIRMED that they had received the paper.</b></p>	
17	<p><b>2019/2020 Budget Assumptions</b></p>	
	<p>AC spoke on the report prepared by AL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.8% costs inflation and some assumptions made.</li> <li>• Finance Governors due to meet on 22 April 2021 to review this and participate in working groups.</li> <li>• Outcomes will be cascaded to LGBs for budgets to process.</li> <li>• Toughest planning cycle due to such extreme and unusual circumstances.</li> </ul> <p>LH responded that it was very pleasing to hear that the LGB finance governors would be so involved in the process.</p> <p>JS volunteered to attend the meeting on 22 April (post-meeting update: SG sent invite but unfortunately JS is now unable to attend due to another pressing engagement).</p>	
18a	<p><b>Report by Chair, ARC</b></p>	
	<p>AC spoke to his report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern regarding the condition of FCC's English Village, which is pretty bad as identified by the H&amp;S assessment. As the Board is aware, this has been included in FLT's latest CIF Bid, but will need serious consideration if we do not get funding.</li> <li>• FJS Reserves: £180K has been spent on premises work which was not planned for and which all happened together.</li> <li>• Block B: Positive! Thank you to staff for their patience and to Jo Ray for all her hard work.</li> <li>• Duncan Jenkins: Thank you to DC for all his hard work on the WAT LGB and as an active member of ARC.</li> </ul> <p>Q: LH: What issues would the non-availability of the English Village raise?</p> <p>A: AC: Considerable issues, so we are really hoping that the CIF funding comes through.</p> <p>LH thanked AC for his informative report and summary.</p>	
18b	<p><b>Report by Chair, QfE</b></p>	
	<p>PT spoke to his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to standardize our definition of 'bullying'.</li> <li>• ALT have been asked to consider FLT's educational strategic aims for 2025 – LW will be reporting back to the Board in due course.</li> <li>• ALT have been asked for their views on FLT giving a 'Thankyou Day' - LW will be reporting back to the Board in due course.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SENCo are worried about the non-availability of Ed Psych services. LH responded that she has a direct connection to OCC who are not currently visiting children and therefore have a huge backlog of cases.</li> </ul> <p>IW: Need to recruit a couple of quality Parent governors.</p> <p>LH: To discuss offline on how best to assist and could ask LGB chairs if they have had any applicants whom they could not absorb on their boards but who might be interested in QfE. LH thanked PT for his informative report and summary.</p> <p><b>OFFLINE ACTION: IW/LH/PT to discuss.</b></p>	
19	<b>Risk Register</b> - It was <b>agreed</b> that this had been addressed via agenda items.	
20	<b>Review of Trustee Training and Development</b>	
	<p>LH advised that she had undertaken a complete review of Trustees and had found there to be vast competence in most areas, so not many gaps. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having access to what might be expected re Ofsted visits: this gap is already being filled by DM's online training presentations.</li> <li>• What is a 'broad and balanced curriculum'? - wondered if LGBs would also understand that?</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: LH/DM/LW to discuss hosting an Autumn Seminar to cover off 'what is a broad and balanced curriculum?'</b></p>	<b>LH/DM/LW</b>
21	<b>Any Other Urgent Business:</b> As notified to the Chair before the meeting	
	<p>1) Confidential Item: See separate Minute.</p> <p>2) AC: FJS/FIS: Will provide a full update next meeting. A large piece of work on a strategic project is in hand to ensure the most cohesive outcomes. <b>ACTION: To provide a full update on FJS/FIS at May 2021 meeting.</b></p> <p>3) The Board <b>AGREED</b> to MG's proposal (made earlier in the meeting due to his having to leave early) that each future meeting feature an item whereby two of the current risks as appearing on the FLT Risk Register were presented and discussed. <b>ACTION: MG to liaise with SG re which risks for each agenda. (Agreed post-meeting to commence from June 2021 onwards as already covered off in May meeting)</b></p>	<b>AC/AL</b>  <b>MG/SG</b>
	<b>Close of Meeting</b> - Meeting ended at 6.43 p.m.	
	<p>LH thanked all for attending and for their very useful questions and contributions.</p> <p><b>N.B.: Date of next Board meeting is 1 July 2021, which will be the final one of the current academic year.</b></p>	

Sg/23.04.2021

Approved and Signed off by:

Date: