



Company Number: 07977368

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday 20 May 2021 at 4.30 p.m. via Teams

Present:

Liz Holmes (LH) Chair
 Rev Jason St John Nicolle (JS)
 Ian Wright (IW)
 Paul Turner (PT)
 Anthony Cook (AC)
 Rev Paul Walker (PW)
 Christine Price-Smith (CPS)

In attendance:

Anne Lynn (AL) - COO
 Louise Warren (LW) – Director of Education
 Sandra Green (SG) - Clerk

Apologies:

Duncan Millard (DM) CEO
 Mark Greenwood (MG)
 Sarah Church (SC)
 Carrie Insley (CI)

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

| 1 | Welcome, Apologies and Resignations | Action |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies had been received from DM, SC, CI and MG, and all were accepted. LH welcomed all those present and thanked all for having read through the considerable set of papers in advance of the meeting. LH advised that, due to DM's absence it would be appropriate to formalize how responsibilities would be covered. The Board were asked for their agreement that, for the duration, AL would be covering relevant and urgent operational matters. She would also take on DM's role as Accounting Officer for the Trust, LW would do the same for educational matters. To retain separation of financial responsibilities Jo Ray would cover off the role of Chief Financial Officer. As and when DM's return date was known, these measures would be reversed Out of Committee. <p>The Board AGREED with these proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LH reminded all present of the requirement to keep confidential all matters discussed until they were confirmed as being in the Public arena. LH advised that, with great regret, this would be PW's last board meeting as he has resigned his position due to taking up a new, exciting role in Windsor. On behalf of all the board members and attendees, LH thanked PW for the significant contributions he has made in his Diocesan and Link roles. All wished him well and knew that he would be extremely successful in his and his family's new venture. PW thanked LH and all those present for the kind support and encouragement which he had received from an amazing set of people whilst in these roles and would take that knowledge and experience with him. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LH noted that with PWs departure and hopefully a new appointee coming on board in time for the new academic year any revision of Link roles would be captured for the start of the new school year. | |
| 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 and Confidential Minutes of Board Meeting on 25 March 2021 | |
| | Trustees AGREED the accuracy of both sets of minutes, which will be approved in writing by LH when the pandemic circumstances permit. | |
| 5 | Matters arising from 25 March 2021 and previous meetings | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items were updated as per Carried Over List. SG CONFIRMED that all other Carried Over items had either been dealt with or were included as agenda items or scheduled for future meetings. | |
| 6 | Out of Committee activities | |
| 6.i | GDPR Breach: LH advised that there had been a GDPR breach re sensitive information being shared with individuals with whom it should not have been. Siobhan Vinall had ensured that it was appropriately reported to the ICO, along with an action plan. Pleased to be able to advise the board that, whilst it was confirmed by the ICO that a breach <u>had</u> occurred, our proposed action plan was considered adequate so no further action would be taken against us by ICO. | |
| 6.ii | <p>Cover for AO duties: Should the reassignment of AO duties be required for an extended period of time SV has been asked to provide a brief on the required actions.</p> <p>Q: AC: do we have a written process in place to cover such a situation as a key jobholder being absent, as this occurrence suggests that this is necessary? A: LH: we do not have one at present, this will be addressed.</p> <p>LH to meet with LW and AL to discuss resources during this period.</p> <p>ACTION: Written procedures and protocols to be in place by September 2021 to cover any long-term absence of CEO/COO/DofE</p> <p>ACTION: SG to update the FLT Scheme of Delegation to reflect this interim change and circulate as necessary. <i>(Action completed subsequent to meeting).</i></p> | <p>LH/SG</p> <p>SG</p> |
| 6.iii | Extra TD Day at FCC: LH advised that the Head of the FCC had submitted a request to LW/AL requesting an additional TD Day, in addition to the 5 already taken. He has asked to take the first day back after the May break to enable GCSE assessment work to be completed, to dismantle bubbles and move staff back to pre-Covid classrooms and undertake required Covid secure training for changes that will result from increased pupil movement around the school. Due to the time constraints around notifying parents and transport providers LH agreed this was an 'exceptional circumstances' and that there wasn't enough time for it to come before the Board for discussion. LH had therefore agreed to the request on behalf of the Board , on the understanding staff would be onsite for the whole of the school day, meaningfully engaged and that arrangements were to be made for any children who need to attend school due to childcare being an issue for their parents. | |

STRATEGIC MATTERS

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Initial Headteacher reflections on the pandemic, impact and plans

LW advised that DM had collated the feedback on this from the Headteachers. It was great to see that they felt well-supported via the ALT, other schools and the Central Team. There were several common themes, i.e.:

- Stamina (physical and attention) and independence are needing support.
- Slimming down to the core subjects to ensure strength in these and supporting rebuilding other subjects.
- Some children have required emotional support.
- Gap has become more pronounced with less-able pupils.
- Maths is seeing gaps in several schools so prioritising across the curriculum. School's use 'White Rose' scheme, except at SHR which uses 'Can Do' scheme.
- Good computing skills, e.g., in Google Classroom. Will review use and bring ourselves round to the same platform, which is likely to be Teams.
- Reduced attention span and increase of complex behaviour issues in SEND pupils.
- Sense of belonging needs rebuilding.
- Some relaxing of CV measures but need to see what happens at the end of June. Need to see us being strong leaders in our community as this is important for pupils and parents.
- Sally Robins has said that she is a better leader for having to be flexible.
- Schools have reflected with pupils on how good it is to come to school rather than learn at home.
- Attendance is excellent.
- Assessment: we will use 2019 SATs tests across FLT and EYFS will be assessed against Early Years Goals. 2019 Phonics with Year 1 children and teacher moderation – with all uploaded onto FFT. This will be used for children who are moving up.
- Foundation subjects: our curriculums are very bespoke so no common approach. Each school will continue to do so but is required to have a written Statement of Intent. Some schools are having a Focus Day, so a high level of autonomy works well.

AC: **Thank you LW** for a fantastic summary. This has been a great learning opportunity for all of us.

AC: Q: How can we ensure that our SEND children recover as soon as possible?

A: LW: That is more easily done in our Primary schools as relationships and interventions are easier to put in. Helen Cox will hopefully be moving to two days per week next academic year. Phil Bevan has said that it is an issue at FCC. Some schools have introduced Nurture Hubs so that SEND needs can be helped. 'Quality first' teaching as SEND children benefit from good relationships. FCC is putting resources into it.

Whilst the Headteachers have said that they greatly valued support from the SLT, they seem not to have mentioned extra communications with parents. We need to put a positive spin on CV to say that lots of things are being kept as they have been seen to be good.

Mocks for Years 11 and 13 are absorbing a lot of time for moderating.

Schools are using a joint form for their end-of-year written report which is more succinct.

CPS: That is excellent news about all the schools using a joint form – well done, Louise.

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| | <p>Q: LH: New teachers have had disrupted training, so it is worth considering a session for them?</p> <p>A: LW: Jude Scutt is working with them on that.</p> <p>LW was thanked for her excellent summation on the responses from the Headteachers.</p> | |
| 8 | <p>Report on FLT Staff Absence</p> <p>This paper had originally gone to the March meeting but had been deferred to this meeting due to the absence of AL to speak on it then.</p> <p>AL presented the paper.</p> <p>Q: LH: Do we seem to have a couple of Long-Term Sick and Anxiety is an element is this an issue, how do we support them?</p> <p>A: AL: The process does not break down if the anxiety is 'home-' or 'work-related'. Any employee who is absent due to 'anxiety' is automatically referred to our Occupational Health Service. If it is 'work-related' we put in a Stress Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Sophie Dors does engage with Headteachers if they have an employee with an issue which would benefit from further resources.</p> <p>Q: LW: Trust Appreciation Efforts: We discussed this with the Headteachers who consider that it would put too much pressure on schools, etc. So, we could use the INSET day of Monday 20 September as a Wellbeing Day.</p> <p>Q: LH: Were we thinking of bringing people in re Wellbeing or just a day off?</p> <p>Q: AL: We need to ensure that the provision also reaches all employees – including those who are part-time – as not all employees are contracted to work on INSET days or all days of the week.</p> <p>A: LW: It would be an additional day.....</p> <p>Q: AL: But not all of our employees work on a Monday either.....</p> <p>Q: LH: Any initiative should be developed to allow all employees to benefit? There needs to be something meaningful to actively support wellbeing.</p> <p>Q: JS: Have we consulted a small group of part-time and full-time staff to garner their feedback on the idea please?</p> <p>A: LW: Just the Headteachers.</p> <p>JS: Need to consider what message it sends....It is giving focus on Wellbeing.</p> <p>Q: LH: CPS: Have you seen anything on Wellbeing which you think would be of use?</p> <p>A: CPS: Only The Charter of Wellbeing.</p> <p>Q: IW: Could we have half a day of Wellbeing and half a day of Teambuilding?</p> <p>ACTION: Staff Recognition Initiative: to be brought to 1 July Board Meeting.</p> | All |
| 9 | <p>FLT Strategic Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents Survey: LH advised this was the only Red element of the strategic plan through out of committee activity suggestions for inclusion in school run surveys had been identified. Board was asked to approve final version of questions as posted to GovernorHub for this meeting. <p>Action: The Parent Survey questions were APPROVED for ALT to action with their parents and pupils. Strategic Plan status should be changed to Amber.</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the ‘ambers’ in the Strategic Plan: LW advised that FFT tracking was being used for pupil assessment in foundation subjects from September, which offers so many facilities for data analysis. • Staff and Pupil Wellbeing: AC: It is important that all the Staff feel engaged and know their role and feel valued. • Pupil Passports: LW reported that these continue to be worked on by James Hood. • Faringdon Schools LW advised that she and the two Head teachers t will be meeting with deputies re pedagogy of curriculum so we can offer cohesion and learning. • Blue Sky Thinking: Q: PT: Did the ALT provide their feedback on Blue Sky Thinking? A: LW: The people needed more time. The QfE thought that it would be a good idea for an FLT seminar to help develop and gather their thoughts. <p>Action: LH to send Headteacher feedback. DONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New 5 Year Strategy document: LH talked through how she had tried to pull this into one cohesive document to help how it links together in giving the direction of travel. <p>Trustees were requested to read through this, to make suggestions of any additions and then to go to AC’s ‘5 to Drive 2025’ and do the same. So, trustees are being asked for feedback for the Safeguarding and other elements please. LH will then collate and present to the Members on 17 June 2021 and bring back to the Board on 1 July 2021.</p> <p>Action: To make suggestions back to LH of any additions to the new 5 Year Strategy document and ‘5 to Drive 2025’, including feedback for the Safeguarding and other elements by 14 June 2021.</p> <p>Action: Revised 5 Year Strategy document, with Members’ feedback, to be presented to Board as item on 1 July 2021 agenda.</p> <p>Q: LH: Any further questions on this? A: All: No.</p> <p>LH thanked AC for all his considerable help with this matter.</p> | <p>LH</p> <p>All</p> <p>LH</p> |
| 10 | <p>Formal Review of FLT Risk Register</p> <p>AL spoke on this item in MG’s absence. It was suggested that, as AL and MG had only recently reviewed the Risk Register, a further major change would not be necessary however the current risks will be reviewed and brought back to the 1 July meeting for approval.</p> <p>LH: Agreed. The high risk is GDPR which we have encountered and will mitigate through training, level of risk and impact of mitigation probably remains unchanged.</p> <p>ACTION: To bring Formal Review of FLT Risk Register back as item on agenda for 1 July meeting.</p> <p><i>(JS left the meeting 5.45 p.m. – 6 p.m.).</i></p> | <p>MG/AL</p> |

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| 11 | Update of Strategic Projects | |
| | <p>AL and AC talked through this item.</p> <p>AL: Have had a couple more meetings re changes to FIS and FJS. Following the approval of the business case by the DfE a letter was issued out to parents for both schools. A FAQ and a banner on the Trust website directed people to the latest information.</p> <p>Lots of parents are communicating, with some confusion of parents as to which school's records their child is currently on. Building availability was delayed so children on the FJS record have been taught at FIS. Also, we are being asked if they can swap schools so that a child can be with their sibling/s.</p> <p>LH, AC and the Chairs of FIS and FJS LGBs met a couple of weeks ago to answer questions raised by the LGBs.</p> <p>New school names which are being recommended are:</p> <p>For FIS = Folly View Primary School For FJS = The Elms Primary School</p> <p>Q: PT: Historically, in Swindon and OCC, if new names were chosen and it was ruled to be a new school, the Staff had to reapply for their jobs? Q: AL: No, they are employed by FLT not by the local authority, so that is not relevant.</p> <p>AC: A moot point, which will go back round the LGB loop, is whether we have a 'Faringdon Primary' umbrella of: Folly View and The Elms, so they are shown as offering unified teaching and learning to make the schools linked whilst also separate.</p> <p>LH: Yes, it is very important to show unity of the old and new school as the consistency of the education is overseen by FLT.</p> <p>AL: It is really important that the two schools are seen as individual and separate with their own distinct ethos, etc otherwise the DfE may look for the schools to be joined together as one which would lose the schools' funding.</p> <p>AC: Yes, that is what was put into the Business Case. We will double check with the LGBs.</p> <p>ACTION: AC to update Board at July meeting as to whether 'Faringdon Primary' umbrella is to be used.</p> <p>Q: PT: Any thinking of inter-mixing of Staff? A: AL: Throughout, we have assured Staff that there will be no redundancies and there will be opportunities to move between the two schools.</p> <p>Q: IW: Will there still be two leadership teams? A: AL: Yes, we need to ensure that the schools are closely linked but separate schools. Leadership will be considered by Trustees as it develops. IW: It will require careful messaging.</p> <p>AL: Sally Robins and Sharon Farrell are working brilliantly together with the Central Team so we can maximise for the pupils. We will continue the dialogue re the projected numbers for September 2022, but it will be ongoing to 2027 and beyond.</p> <p>AC: Many thanks to the Heads, AL and Siobhan Vinall for all their hard work which has gone into this.</p> <p>AL: Thank you to the Board for answering last-minute queries in support of the Business Case</p> | <p>AC</p> |

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| | It was AGREED that the Board endorsed the use of the names 'The Elms Primary School' and 'Folly View Primary School'. within the context of FLT linkage being included. | |
| 12 | CONFIDENTIAL Item | |
| | See separate Confidential Minutes. | |
| 13 | Review of FLT Policies 2020/21 | |
| | <p>SG spoke to the paper on this item, which detailed the policies and procedures which require Board approval and their current status and accountability ascertained. One new policy on 'NQTs' was required, 4 required review and updating, and 3 were being progressed via other bodies.</p> <p>AL: They may take some developing and consulting with schools and will be provided as soon as possible.</p> <p>It was AGREED that the outstanding policies would be progressed, with the new one being brought before the Board and the remaining ones to go to ARC or QfE, as appropriate.</p> | |
| 14 | Report on Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children | |
| | <p>LW spoke to the paper regarding the attendance % during the partial opening of schools by CLA and CPLA</p> <p>LH: It is a very interesting review. It is clear where schools can establish a good relationship, it results in real positives outcomes for the pupils. Thank you to the Staff involved in achieving this.</p> <p>CPS: It is a superb document and so pleasing to know that each child is known as an individual. Terminology of LAC/PLAC to the new format is supported.</p> | |
| 15 | Receive a report on the Trust Health Checks | |
| | <p>LW advised that Peer Reviews had occurred at JBL on reading, maths, leadership, history, safeguarding and SEND. The Wolvercote Primary Head had attended as an external scrutineer. The results had been 'excellent' overall and a report will be built into JBL's Action Plan, noting suggested areas for development.</p> <p>History was interesting as the impact has not yet referenced and embedded.</p> <p>Ofsted expectations remain very high of the Foundation subjects, despite the lockdowns.</p> <p>At SHR, Rachel Smith, Headteacher from Ashbury, attended as an external scrutineer. Reading and maths were reviewed. Reading programme is being successful, although they are reviewing phonics to optimise.</p> <p>WAT: Pre-review for June visit. Various help and support being given. Focussed on leadership with the resignation of their only recently recruited Deputy Head. Interviews for a replacement are being held on 21 May. The resignation had unsettled Staff, so we have listened and reviewed and will do more. Looking to put in considerable support for the Head. Several other senior staff are moving on so there will be a new team. Sally Robins has been giving weekly coaching sessions to the Head but more is needed.</p> <p>IW: I know that lots of support has been put in. There has been lots of change. We thought that we had stability but the new Deputy Head decided that it was not the job she had expected. We are pleased to have some good candidates for the vacancy. A new person will come in to provide support for the Headteacher and SLT, and other support will be scaled up. The new Deputy will have a mentor,</p> | |

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| | <p>depending on their knowledge, skill and experience. There is a lot of work to do at WAT and I really hope that we have a solution now to get us through to next year.</p> <p>Thank you to LW, AL, SR and DM for all their support and help.</p> | |
| 16 | Receive an update report on School Website Compliance as at 30/03/2021 | |
| | <p>SG spoke to the papers, as written by Siobhan Vinall. Those schools which had still got non-compliances as at 30/03/2021 had each been chased up and it was now only FCC who had a handful of outstanding issues. SG has been reassured by FCC that these will be sorted very shortly.</p> <p>ACTION: To report back to the 1 July meeting whether FCC's Website is now fully compliant with requirements.</p> | SG |
| 17 | Feedback on Trustees' contact with link schools via a virtual visit report | |
| | No reports of visits had been received since the last meeting. | |
| 18a | Resources: Financial Performance of the Trust | |
| | <p>AC spoke on this item as discussed at the latest Resources Committee. Finances are fairly quiet as some of the risks, e.g. CV and finance, are receding, but overall, we believe are in pretty good shape.</p> <p>Capital spend: we spent £295K more than planned due to urgent building works, (especially at FJS), so this has impacted on the overall Trust reserves.</p> <p>The Finance Governors' Meeting went very well on 22 April 2021.</p> <p>We are making good progress in many areas.</p> <p>Q: PW: What impact has the change to Primary provision and new building, etc had on budgets?</p> <p>A: AC: We had planned ahead with the works so, in some ways, we are pulling forward work, so we are in good shape for 2022. The building is an old site (60 years or so) which has risks, but all considered as 'in hand'.</p> <p>We are fast moving into a better place than we have been for 3 - 4 years.</p> <p>AL: We will look at both primary schools' budgets together for September 2022 onwards due to the uncertainty around the pupil numbers/staff movements, etc, so it will be a holistic view.</p> <p>Q: PW: Having a brand-new school versus an old school is not beyond the parents' attentions?</p> <p>A: AL: At the moment, parents are wanting to swap from FIS to FJS as siblings are at FJS. Waiting for updated figures of population – new parents may pick FIS but it comes back to selling the schools. Some feel that older schools have more character.</p> <p>It may also depend on the families' locations in Faringdon. We are in close contact with OCC to ensure that neither school loses out.</p> <p>The 5 Year Plan has many uncertainties, so still lots of hard work to do to frame a long-term plan to 2030.</p> <p>AC and AL were thanked for their work on this item.</p> | |
| 18b | Budget: Receive an update briefing on 2021/22 Budget Assumptions | |

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| | <p>AL spoke to this item. The overall Trust revenue budget is looking better than predicted at the start of the year. However as previously discussed, this will be offset against the capital works required across the Trust. .</p> <p>AC: The Trustees can be assured that those who propose deficit budgets to the ARC on 17 June 2021 will come to speak to us re governance review.</p> | |
| 18c | <p>Budget: To receive for approval: Trust-wide Services Offer and Central Budget</p> | |
| | <p>As always, the Central budget has been discussed with the headteachers at a meeting earlier in the month.</p> <p>There are no real changes to what has previously been delivered, other than SEND provision which has increased from 1 to 2 days per week and the post of Apprentice in the Central Team has been changed to a Marketing/Communication post.</p> <p>AC: Congratulations to AL and the Central Finance Team for producing a budget which is fair and equitable.</p> <p>LH: It is exceptionally transparent in terms of how the central cost is generated and where contributions are going. Thank you to all involved with the work.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the 2021/2022 and 5 year central Budget.</p> | |
| 19 | <p>Trust-wide Health and Safety Report</p> | |
| | <p>AL: Thank you to Jo Ray for producing an excellent report on this item, which has already gone to ARC.</p> <p>LH: It is pleasing to see that incidents are being properly recorded so thank you to the Headteachers and School Staff for doing so.</p> | |
| 20 | <p>Receive reports from the Chair of Resources and Chair of QfE</p> | |
| | <p>Resources: As per paper provided and summary above.</p> <p>QfE: LW had stood in for PT at the previous QfE meeting so Trustees were referred to the Minutes available on GovHub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that SC and Lindsey Baldwin were linking up re Safeguarding Audit at Watchfield. • Snapshots of prepared FFT outputs will be brought to 1 July meeting by LW. ACTION: To bring prepared FFT outputs to 1 July meeting. • Joe Winter, FCC's Pastoral Lead, spoke re PP and vulnerable pupils and how staff work very hard on Attendance and Exclusion rates. Parental support often gets exhausted as their children get older, so FCC are working on this. • Disciplinary and Bullying Incidents are being reported more via CPOMs – FCC are scrutinising to ensure that incidents are recorded. • CPS's report re Church Schools and adherence to SIAMS: SHR and BUC will be re-inspected next year. 'There is a raised bar in the current SIAMS evaluation schedule and 'Good' is considered to be the new 'Gold' | LW |

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| | <p>standard so may see a drop in grade and we need to manage expectations around this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessments on Schools: Looked at various non-academic aspects. These are examined at each QfE meeting and uploaded onto site. Please note changes. | |
| 22 | Governance Summer 2021 Conference: Plans | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Seminar for Governors: Now looking at holding this in July 2021. | |
| 23 | Any Other Business | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn Seminar: 'What is a broad and balanced curriculum?' and a session for governors on how to question on strategic and not operational matters, and partly on behaviour and pupils being excluded. • Board Meetings 2021/2022: LH suggested that these be alternated between in-person (at 4.30 p.m. or 5 p.m.) and online via Teams (at 4.30 p.m.). ACTION: LH to seek views of Trustees and advise at 1 July meeting. • 1 July meeting: Trustees will be advised if it will be in-person – if so, probably in the FCC Hall and otherwise via Teams. ACTION: LH to advise on location for 1 July meeting. | <p>LH</p> <p>LH</p> |
| | Close of Meeting - Meeting ended at 6.43 p.m. | |

Approved and Signed off by:

Date: