

INSPIRE PARTNERSHIP MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:
Tuesday 11 May 2021	4.30pm	Via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

Chair of Trustees:	Mr J North (JN)	
CEO:	Mrs S Vickerman (SV)	
Trustees:	Mr B Smith (BS)	Mr G Worsdale (GW)
	Mr C Gray (CG)	Mrs C North (CN)
	Mr J Cripps (JC)	Mrs C Norfolk (CNOR)
	Mr P Arundel (PA)	Mrs K Partridge (KP)
In Attendance:	Mrs T Fallon (COO) (TF) Mrs T Jackson (CEO) (TJ)	
Clerk:	Susanna Stott (SS)	
Apologies:		

ITEM	ACTION
<u>PROCEDURAL ITEMS</u>	
The Chair welcomed both TJ as the new CFO to the IPMAT and KP as new Trustee to the meeting.	
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
There were no apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
There were no Declaration of interests received in relation to the meeting and Agenda.	
3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 19 JANUARY 2021	
The minutes of the meetings held on 6 October 2020 and 12 January 2021 were agreed and proposed as a true record by CG and GW, and will be signed by the Chair, who will return both signed copies to Jo Batty at the Maypole Centre for filing.	
4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING ON 19 JANUARY 2021	
There were no matters arising from the minutes.	
5. CORRESPONDENCE	
No correspondence has been received to report.	
6. REPORT – STANDARDS & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 16 MARCH 2021 AND RESOURCES & AUDIT MINUTES – 23 MARCH 2021	
Standards & Curriculum Committee Report	
The minutes of the Standard & Curriculum meeting held on 16 March 2021 had been	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>GW as Chair as the Standards & Curriculum Committee shared an overview of the areas discussed during this meeting, noting that there were three main areas of focus. GW commented that Leah Charlesworth (LC), had given an excellent presentation on the development and underlying principles of the curriculum, explaining the Intent, Implementation and Impact.</p> <p>Alison Buckler (AB) from Grove Lea Primary then led a presentation on the delivery of Geography as part of the curriculum, which was extremely useful and shared clear insight into the planning of the subject. Following the success of this presentation, GW noted that at the July meeting we will have overviews of the PE curriculum and PP.</p> <p>The third area focussed on examining in more detail the SEND provision across the IPMAT. Following attendance at the SEND Governor training, this had been extremely useful. JN noted as part of this discussion attendees had sight of the current figures for SEND children across the MAT and agreed to share this information further with all Trustees.</p> <p>GW offered his thanks to LC and AB for their excellent presentations.</p> <p>Resource & Audit Committee Meeting It was noted that the minutes of the R&A Committee had been shared with all Trustees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>CG as Chair of the R&A Committee explained that the main focus had been the update received from TJ, as the newly appointed CFO of the MAT, on the work being undertaken to get the finances of the Trust up to date, with particular emphasis on cash accounting updates. The Committee had noted the frustrations expressed by some HTs on not receiving their budgets to enable planning around recruitment as an example. However we felt it important to ensure the correct information was shared with schools. The Committee noted the considerable work undertaken by TJ in a very short period of time.</p> <p>Representatives from the newly appointed Internal and External auditors attended the meeting and shared their experiences. CG commented that Clive Owen LLP, the External Auditors have considerable experience in Academy Finance and TIAA, the Internal Auditors will now attend all future R&A meetings. All Committee members felt this had been a very positive interaction.</p> <p>Following Trustees sharing their areas of concern with regards to the Trust Risks, the continued development of the Risk Register was discussed, and this will continue to be updated on a regular basis and shared with Trustees. The information on the MAT CIF bid applications of approximately £2.5 million was reviewed and the Exec HT and Deputy HT pay scales approved.</p>	<p>Chair</p>
<p>7. REPORT OF MEMBERS MEETING – 4 MAY 2021</p>	
<p>The Chair explained that the Members have now agreed to meet termly and commented that this is a very effective group. KP was originally a member but has now been appointed as a Trustee. JN has now returned as a Member.</p> <p>The purpose of the meeting in May was for Members to accept the IPMAT accounts and thereby allowing them to be submitted to Companies House before the end of May. The Chair noted that TJ attended the meeting sharing an overview of the year end position for the MAT accounts along with individual school budget positions. The Chair offered his</p>	

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<p>thanks to TJ for her attendance. Members are required to agree the appointments of the Internal and External Auditors which was confirmed during the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair explained that Members were informed of the changes to Trustee appointments. The Trustee skills audit results were shared, including the actions taken to improve the areas of weaknesses identified through the audit. This had been an excellent meeting and Members agreed that for the next academic year, meetings for the Autumn and Spring Terms will continue via Microsoft Teams, with the May 2022 meeting taking place at the Maypole Centre.</p>	
<p>8. CEO REPORT</p>	
<p>The CEO report to Trustees was shared with attendees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The CEO explained that all our children are back in school now, and in the main have returned to school well. In some cases we have seen some children having a slightly rocky start, but this was to be expected. Children of keyworkers and our vulnerable children who have stayed in school throughout the pandemic have received a good standard of education as they have been in small groups. Whilst some children have done well while working remotely from home, other children have fallen behind and schools are now working to close these gaps. There is the potential with children who have fallen behind that this may be a long term issue, but all these children have been identified.</p> <p>LC is supporting all our schools to develop a four term SDP plan and we have worked with leaders to identify the gaps in learning across the curriculum. CPD for all staff continued extremely well with training delivered to all schools through various Trust/Aspire programmes. The Leadership Development Programme has begun and all HTs along with Deputy HTs and Assistant HTs have taken part. Developing future leaders have almost completed the “Aspiring Leaders Programme” which has been particularly impactful in supporting the building of leadership capacity within the Trust. We now need to look at the next layer of aspiring leaders and provide them with training and support.</p> <p>SV commented that we are not sure when Ofsted Inspections are due to restart, but we think it is likely from June.</p> <p>SV explained that Marketing and PR for the Trust has been a very important focus over the last six months. Centrally we have received considerable support from KP who has joined the meetings with Engaging Education. The new websites are now “live” at Gawthorpe and Towngate Primaries with Half Acres, Ackton Pastures and Girnhill moving to the new website next week. Promotional films are now being undertaken at each school. Considerable work is being undertaken on the Values for the Trust.</p> <p>SV noted the staff changes detailed within the CEO report and added that TJ as our new CFO has been a very welcome addition to the Trust.</p> <p>The Deputy CEO of the Trust has resigned which is clearly a great disappointment. We wish to continue using LC as a consultant for SIP as if we don't have strong school improvement initiatives we won't grow as a Trust. Noting the risk of not having a Deputy CEO in post, we propose to advertise in September for this position and ideally appoint for the 1 January 2022..</p> <p>Q: Is there nobody else within the IPMAT who could be viewed as a successor? A: In the plan we have costed, I am asking for one HT to be seconded for one to one and half days per week. We have a lot of new HTs and one HT who has taken on an Exec HT role overseeing two MAT schools.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>CNOR noted her disappointment at the report of LC's resignation but recognises the reasons why. However, CNOR commented that LC adds a lot of value to the continued development of the Trust and SIP, and it is important that we continue to work with her in a consultancy capacity. KP noted her agreement and support of these comments.</p> <p>Q: Would you expect that the Deputy CEO would not continue to work with the Trust once a replacement is appointed? A: No, we would absolutely want to continue working together as she is an excellent SIP, particularly if we continue to grow the Trust.</p> <p>The Chair agreed that it will be important to find the best candidate in the current market and expects that this is likely to be from outside the Trust. Trustees agreed to the proposal to advertise the Deputy CEO position.</p> <p>The Strategic Aims of the Inspire Partnership MAT (Draft) document was shared with Trustees during the meeting.</p> <p>JN explained the purpose of the document and asked Trustees for comment. The draft document was supported by attendees, and it was agreed that a meeting will take place very shortly with JN, CN, KP and JC to approve this document following completion of the work currently being undertaken by SV and TF.</p> <p>SV explained that we are hoping to get all information to the website designers by the end of May. The Trust plan will fit in with the headings detailed with the Strategic Aims document. SV noted she has also written an Annual Impact Report and the draft has been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting. The report is now at the printers. In addition to this we have also written a MAT Prospectus which is currently with the designers for approval and finalising. Any Requires Improvement school are to be encouraged next year to "try before you buy" with a MAT supported with an SLA.</p> <p>CNOR commented that it isn't common to use the word "staff" anymore, perhaps a more modern approach would be suitable, using "people" instead and in the opening statement to include the "sharing of resources." JN agreed to note these recommendations.</p>	<p>JN/CN/ KP/JC</p> <p>Chair</p>
<p>9. CFO REPORT/COO REPORT COMBINES</p>	
<p>The combined CFO and COO report has been shared with Trustees via the GVO portal prior to the meeting. TF explained that normally a CFO report would be written for the Resources & Audit Committee and a COO report for Trustee meetings. On this occasion we have worked together to combine this report.</p> <p>TF explained included within the report are the CFO priorities, noting it has been an incredibly fast start for the CFO with most of these priorities already met or currently ongoing. Budget reviews for all schools have now been completed and we are very confident that the data is accurate, and this is thanks to TJ.</p> <p>The Internal Audit programme starts next week firstly with a Cyber Security Audit which is being completed remotely this year. Further internal audits in the following areas are planned before the end of July:</p> <p>Financial Controls Health & Safety Compliance Risk Management</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>CFO report</p> <p>TJ explained the position with the projected balances of the restricted and unrestricted funds reported to April 2021, commenting that one of the difficulties has been understanding the assumptions that have been built in. TF and I have worked well to build a full picture.</p> <p>The position for schools as at 31 August 2020 reported does not include fixed asset funds and pension liabilities. Meetings with HTs, SBMs, SV, TF and TJ have taken place and whilst time consuming they have been necessary and worthwhile. The position reported for 2021 August is the forecast to the year end, and we are fairly sure this figure is unlikely to change. The reserves position detailed is where we expect to be.</p> <p>TJ commented that there is more work needed to further confirm the Trust position for the next year and the following year. The restricted and unrestricted funds figures for 2022, includes assumption of no pay awards or further pupil funding received but has included 2.75% inflation. Future figures for 2022/2023 include known staff changes and key assumptions but do take into account fluctuation of pupil numbers.</p> <p>TJ explained that some further time is needed to look at the Grove Lea Primary budget. They are new to the Trust, and we haven't had the opportunity to look at staffing structures. TF noted that Grove Lea is an "outstanding" school so it has an expensive staffing structure, but they can support this. We don't have the final transfer budget figure yet following the recent conversion but have already seen cost savings as the Grove Lea HT is now the Executive HT for both Grove Lea and South Hiendley Primaries, resulting in staff cost reductions.</p> <p>TF commented the central team will review the staffing structure across the Trust and will looking at number of TAs, contracted hours and cost of staffing, stating that it will be good to have an overview at Trust level which might shape our decisions on staffing structures for next year.</p> <p>Focus is also on increasing pupil numbers for example at South Hiendley and Towngate nursery. Some of the Trust schools have classes with small numbers of children which will impact the budget. The HTs and staff are working extremely hard to increase the numbers with marketing campaigns around their local communities and using social media.</p> <p>Management Accounts</p> <p>TF reported that HTs and LGB Chairs have received their Management Accounts for each school. No queries have been received so far. TJ apologised that Trustees had not seen the most recent Trust Management Accounts but explained that we need to look further into the IPMAT central accounts. We can see there are costs sat centrally, that require sending out to schools. Hopefully, the March 2021 will be shared with Trustees before the end of this week and quickly followed by April 2021 Management Accounts.</p> <p>Q: What is happening at Gawthorpe Primary over the three year period?</p> <p>A: It looks like they are going to lose £70k from their budget next year but this has included some assumptions arounds staffing.</p> <p>SV explained that we won't now be appointing two Assistant HTs at Gawthorpe so cost savings will immediately occur and there is not a cause for concern as this will be resolved.</p>	

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<p>Q: In the R&A Committee meeting, expressions of concerns noted by HTs on not having the up-to-date budget information was the inability to know if they could recruit. Presumably, they now have all the budget information they need to support planned recruitment and are these possible appointments accounted for? A: Yes, they are accounted for within each budget, and it is reflected in the last management accounts.</p> <p>SV explained that the next big piece of work planned over the next six to 12 months is too fully research the option of GAG pooling funding for the Trust.</p> <p>TF outlined the approach for GAG pooling noting that a considerable number of Trusts now have a pooling arrangement. At the moment the Trust has a core offer where we charge a top slice of 5% to each school which is used to pay for all our central services. As the Trust has grown the Central Team have absorbed more services and we are having to charge separately for further ad hoc work. Introducing Gag pooling would mean that instead of taking a top slice percentage all budget funds would move into one budget and allocate educational resources budgets to schools to manage. This would remove a lot of responsibility away from the school, for example with staffing and improve efficiencies in terms of not needing to recharge for the services we run centrally. It will remove some of the burden from the HTs enabling them to concentrate on teaching and education at school level. As a Trust we are working for the benefit of all of our children.</p> <p>TJ noted there a number of Trusts who are moving to Gag Pooling funding options. It will take some burden away from the HTs whilst still giving the schools freedom and their identity to concentrate on the teaching.</p> <p>CG noted this sounds a sensible approach and some schools who have reserves available would still need agreement from the Trustees to spend their reserves. CNOR supported this proposal noting that HTs across the Trust might want to know if there is flexibility to tailor resources to their specific children. SV commented that it does need to be very carefully thought out.</p> <p>Q: Have you broached this option with any HTs yet? A: Not yet. There are other conversations with HTs to take place first.</p> <p>Q: Would we be looking at GAG pooling to be in place for September 2022? A: To complete the consultation in the right way, and the work that will need to be undertaken, then yes we will be looking at introducing this scheme in September 2022. We will be talking to a number of Trusts who are already moving towards this position. It is not a quick process, and we will also need to ensure we have a clear picture of the budget positions for each school.</p> <p>COO Report TF explained the COO report was large as it had included the Premises plan for all schools for this academic year.</p> <p>HR/Staffing Update TF clarified that the figures of new starters, leavers and maternities, includes a number of staff who have had fixed term contracts that are coming to a natural end. We have not had a large turnover of staff but will continue to do further analysis.</p> <p>We have five members of staff on long term sickness and if this continues for more than 4 weeks is dealt with centrally. The medical capability hearing is not taking place now and the staff member has resigned. Other cases are ongoing and welfare calls are taking</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>place.</p> <p>Kickstart Scheme SV and JB completed a significant amount of working managing the recruitment to available positions in the Trust. We have six new starters bringing an income of approximately £10k into the central budget. Adverts will go “live” again in August ready for a start date in the Autumn Term.</p> <p>Grievance There is one potential informal grievance with a member of staff at Ackton Pastures. A meeting is due to take place next week with the Union and we hope this will be resolved.</p> <p>Dismissals A teacher at Gawthorpe Primary was dismissed due to performance related issues. Legal advice was sought.</p> <p>Payroll Consolidation The consolidation of the payroll for all teachers and support staff was successfully implemented on the 1 April 2021. All staff are now paid on the 15th of the month which is much better in terms of efficiencies.</p> <p>Pension Awareness Sessions The Trust offered all staff the opportunity to attend a pension awareness sessions delivered by Wesleyan on 21 April – Teachers Pension Fund and 28 April – West Yorkshire Pension Fund. This has been very well received.</p> <p>Cycle2Work Scheme Two colleagues to date have used this scheme and is available to all staff.</p> <p>Sickness Absence Health Scheme The Trust have renewed the sickness absence insurance policy for a further year. This has included Champion Health Service as part of the policy and has given staff access to a comprehensive package of support. The feedback from colleagues shows that this has been invaluable and is confidential. We do recommend this to any staff who are absent.</p> <p>Premises TF reported that all the CIF bid work from the previous year has now been completed. PA and Alex Swithenbank will visit the schools to view the finished work.</p> <p>The decision on the CIF bid applications submitted by the Trust is now delayed and we are not expecting to hear until June. We have already gone out to tender for all the work in readiness and keeping our fingers crossed for success.</p> <p>An ITT has been issued to four companies for the Trust’s statutory compliance contract from September 2021 to ensure we are getting good value for money. The tender submission closes on 25 June 2021 and TF will report back to Trustees when a decision has been made.</p> <p>IPMAT Capital Plan – Draft The comprehensive draft plan has been included with the COO report. The purpose of this plan is for us to know as a Trust what our priorities are for investment into our buildings. A lot of the work required and included in the plan could potentially be included as part of our CIF bids. This plan will change the way we work as a Trust and steered by H&S needs and with priorities identified in school to improve environments and learning</p>	

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<p>areas.</p> <p>H&S Reviews Health & Safety Reviews were undertaken by Alex Swithenbank during January and February across all Trust school and the reports have been shared as part of the COO report.</p> <p>Priorities identified have been classed as high, medium or low. TF noted a significant number of H&S issues stated, link to housekeeping issues at the schools, which does mean that there are small areas to address to improve the working environment quickly. These is underway now. A number of other items detailed in the report will be addressed if successful with CIF bids.</p> <p>The Chair thanked TF for the comprehensive report.</p>	
<p>10. CHAIR’S REPORT ON MEETING WITH IPMAT CHAIRS</p>	
<p>JN reported that we are receiving excellent support from all our LGB Chairs who are very committed to attending Trust LGB Chairs’ meetings.</p> <p>The Agenda for the next meeting includes continuing to look further at the Governor Mark with Section 3 the next area to be discussed. It is likely to take 18 months to finish the whole process but has become a useful tool to support identifying further Governor Training.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the LGB was reviewed by the Chair’s to ensure it continues to be relevant and inclusive. JN suggested that TORs for the Standards & Curriculum and Resources & Audit Committees should now be reviewed.</p>	
<p>11. EVALUATION OF TRUST BOARD AUDIT</p>	
<p>The Chair wished to thank Trustees for their quick response in completing the Trust Board individual skills audit. Results have identified that as a Trust Board we have clearly improved our knowledge but has also identified areas to gain further understanding.</p> <p>These areas include for example, wanting to know more about the communities and catchment areas of our local schools. Following a very successful visit by Trustees to Girnhill Infants before the pandemic we are hoping to reintroduce visits to schools at the start of the new academic year. However, in the short term two Teams meetings have been arranged for Trustees to meet two HTs at each of the meetings, who will have the opportunity to share their knowledge on their local communities and enable Trustees to ask questions. Dates are confirmed as 15 June 2021 and 19 October 2021.</p>	
<p>12. TRUST DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE</p>	
<p>TF noted that a full day is planned for 12 May with the central team looking at updating the following areas and apologised for not being able to share the update today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPMAT Core Offer • Strategic Development Plan • SLA – “Try before you Buy” • The Risk Register 	
<p>13. POSSIBLE FURTHER TRUSTEE MEETING DATE</p>	
<p>Trustees agreed 27 July 2021 @ 4.30pm for an extra Trustee meeting. This will take place again via Microsoft Teams.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>14. AOB</p> <p>Q: Do you have an update on the issues experienced with the quality of school meals provided by Dolce?</p> <p>A: Any issues raised by any HT, we raise with Dolce immediately. The situation has settled down a little, and in fairness they are very keen to start providing hot meals.</p> <p>TF noted that the latest government guidance continues to include minimising movement between bubbles and mixing of our children. At this time we need to continue to work within the guidance. A meeting has recently taken place between Alison Ramsey and SBOs with Dolce, who have apologised for the mistakes made and we believe they are doing their best to make improvements.</p>	
<p>15. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS 2021-2022</p> <p>Trustee Meetings – 2021/2022 Tuesday 5 October 2021 – 4.30pm Tuesday 30 November 2021 – 4.30pm Tuesday 18 January 2022 – 4.30pm Tuesday 17 May 2022 – 4.30pm</p> <p>Resource & Audit Committee Meetings 2021/2022 Tuesday 16 November 2021 – 4.30pm Tuesday 22 March 2022 – 4.30pm Tuesday 12 July 2022 – 4.30pm</p> <p>Standards & Curriculum Committee Meetings 2021/2022 Tuesday 12 October 2021 – 4.30pm Tuesday 15 March 2022 – 4.30pm Tuesday 19 July 2022 – 4.30pm</p>	
<p>MEETING CLOSE TIME: 6.15PM Next meeting: 27 July 2021 @ 4.30pm via Microsoft Teams</p>	

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR: 

DATE: 11.05.2021