

INSPIRE PARTNERSHIP MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:
Tuesday 5 October 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)
	Mrs K Partridge (KP)	
In Attendance:	Mrs T Fallon (COO) (TF)	Mrs T Jackson (CFO) TJ
Clerk:	Susanna Stott (SS)	
Apologies:	Mr P Arundel	

ITEM	ACTION
<u>PROCEDURAL ITEMS</u>	
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Arundel, due to technical difficulties in joining the meeting.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
There were no Declaration of interests received in relation to the meeting. SS commented that new Declaration of Interest Forms have been emailed to all Trustees prior to this meeting and asked that they be signed and returned to Jo Batty at the Maypole Centre for holding. It was agreed due to the Covid-19 situation all signatures can be added electronically.	
3. CODE OF CONDUCT TRUSTEES	
The Chair explained that new Code of Conduct forms are required to be signed by Trustees. These have been sent out by the Clerk prior to this meeting, and it was agreed that electronic signatures were sufficient due to the Covid-19 position.	
AGM	
1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR	
The AGM of the Trust Board took place and JN was voted in unanimously to continue as Chair of Trustees for a further year's term of office.	

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ITEM	ACTION
<p>2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR</p>	
<p>CN was voted in unanimously as Vice Chair of the Trust Board and will continue in post for a further year's term of office.</p>	
<p>3. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES</p>	
<p>Members of the Committees within the IPMAT were confirmed.</p> <p>FAR Committee Mr C Gray Mrs C Norfolk Mr J Cripps Mrs K Partridge</p> <p>Standards & Curriculum Committee Mr G Worsdale Mr B Smith Mrs C North Mr P Arundel Mr J North</p> <p>Pay committee Mrs C Norfolk Mr G Worsdale Mr C Gray</p>	
<p>4. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR TO EACH COMMITTEE</p>	
<p>The appointments of Chairs for each Committee were agreed during the meeting.</p> <p>Resource & Audit Committee Mr C Gray</p> <p>Standards & Curriculum Mr G Worsdale</p> <p>Pay committee Mrs C Norfolk</p> <p>The Chair noted that the Pay Committee had met this afternoon to review the pay ranges for HTs, the CEO and some members of the central team. Salary ranges were agreed, and these will be confirmed in writing by the Chair of the Pay Committee.</p> <p>Trustee links were agreed:</p> <p>SEND – Karen Partridge SV will email KP and include the contact information for the Headteacher at Towngate Academy who will be the person to liaise with. KP asked if the Trust had any objectives she should focus on when meeting with the HT</p> <p>Safeguarding – Barry Smith The Chair recommended that BS arrange a meeting with AB, the Towngate HT who is the lead for safeguarding across the MAT. SV noted she will email AB to confirm the purpose of the meeting.</p>	<p>SV/KP</p> <p>SV/BS</p>

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	<p>Pupil Premium & Data – John North</p> <p>Health & Safety – Paul Arundel</p> <p>TF agreed to follow up with Alex Swithenbank (AS), the Trust Estates/Health & Safety Manager to ensure meetings are organised for Health & Safety walks around each school across the Trust. SV confirmed she will email both PA and AS.</p>	<p>TF</p> <p>SV/PA</p>
TRUSTEE MEETING		
4.	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 11 MAY 2021 AND 27 JULY 2021	
	<p>The minutes for the meetings on 11 May 2021 and 27 July 2021 were agreed as a true record and will be signed by the Chair.</p>	
5.	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES	
	<p>Minutes 11 May 2021 KP noted she had attended the meeting on 11 May 2021, but it hadn't been recorded. The Clerk apologised and confirmed she will amend the records accordingly.</p> <p>Trustee Meeting with HTs – 19 October 2021 The Chair reported that this meeting has now been confirmed and will take place with the Executive HT for Grove Lea & South Hiendley Primaries. The HT will also share an overview of her management of both schools.</p> <p>Minutes 27 July 2021</p> <p>Q: With regards to the Income generation strategy we discussed the need to extend the scope, has this happened? A: Not yet. We are currently reviewing all of the Trust finance policies. It is important to ensure the Financial Management policy is right. These policies will go to the next FAR meeting for approval.</p> <p>TF noted she was also conscious of the number of policies sent to the Trustees for approval during the summer holidays, so felt that the finance policies should be approved by the FAR committee.</p> <p>We now have a register of policies which include approximately 100 IPMAT and school policies.</p>	<p>SS</p>
6.	CHAIRS' MEETING REPORT	
	<p>The Chair shared an overview of the Chairs' meeting held on the 18 May 2021, noting SV attended and explained the work completed on the Vision and Values of the Trust and schools.</p> <p>The Chairs' received a Trust update and also an overview of the Members meeting. Discussion took place on the continuation of virtual meetings for the new academic year. SEND across the Trust was a focus during the meeting enabling Chairs to have a greater understanding of SEND provision within the MAT. It was recommended during the meeting that all LGBs have a SEND governor.</p> <p>Local school audit skills were discussed with the majority of Chairs' confirming that these had now been completed.</p>	

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<p>The Chair explained the continuing focus on the Trust Governor Mark, whereby we are reviewing one section at each meeting, noting it is helping to identify training needs.</p> <p>The next Chairs' meeting will take place on Tuesday 9 November 2021 and the CFO will be attending to share an overview of finance across the IPMAT.</p>	
<p>7. STANDARDS & CURRICULUM MEETING REPORT</p>	
<p>The minutes from the Standards & Curriculum meeting held on 20 July 2021 had been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting</p> <p>GW, the Chair of the S&C Committee reported that we had two main areas of focus for the meeting. One item included a presentation from the PE lead at Gawthorpe Primary Academy who was clearly very enthusiastic and committed in her approach. The Chair noted it was an extremely interesting way of approaching the PE curriculum.</p> <p>The second item was a Pupil Premium presentation by Leah Charlesworth who at the time was the Deputy CEO of the Trust and continues as the Trust SIP.</p> <p>Q: Is there any update on prospective Ofsted visits? A: It isn't very clear at this point. We know there has been some delay. Ofsted have stated that schools sitting on an "Outstanding" judgement which includes Grove Lea and Gawthorpe Primaries will be inspected within the next two years. We are expecting that Ash Grove Primary is likely to have Ofsted visiting in January, and South Hiendley also within the next two years. We have four schools sitting in the Ofsted window.</p> <p>SV commented that the emphasis on the inspection framework has changed. Margot D'arcy will be visiting Gawthorpe before this half-term to complete a review and South Hiendley and Ash Grove will have their reviews after half-term.</p> <p>SV explained that we have had an announcement that all Trusts can now be inspected by Ofsted and as part of this process, Ofsted would look at a third of your schools sat in the Ofsted window. This means we could have the call in January for a Trust inspection and then Ofsted would visit the three schools the following week. SV noted we are focusing now on ensuring all our documentation is ready and up to date should this happen.</p>	
<p>8. FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK MEETING REPORT</p>	
<p>The minutes from the last Resources & Audit Committee meeting, now known as the Finance, Audit & Risk (FAR) Committee held on Tuesday 13 July 2021 has been shared with attendees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>CG as Chair of the FAR committee explained the main topics discussed. Firstly, committee members received an update on our new internal auditors and the work being undertaken. Feedback was that the auditors are proving to be extremely thorough and are building a good relationship with our central team. Areas already audited include Cyber Security and Financial Controls. The implementation of the actions and feedback given are underway. It is very positive with the level of investigations much higher.</p> <p>Discussions took place on the possibility of introducing Gag Pooling into the MAT. Investigations on how gag pooling might work are ongoing and it is expected this will be a 12 month process of research including looking at other Trusts who already have gag pooling established. CG explained to Trustees what Gag pooling is and how it would work.</p> <p>A CIF bid update was shared , noting the successful receipt of bids totalling approximately £1million which is excellent news.</p>	

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<p>Discussions took place on the current significant cash reserves held by the Trust and how we can get the best return. Following the FAR meeting, committee members received a demonstration of an investment platform that could work well.</p> <p>Q: Has the investment platform now been implemented? A: The FAR Committee have asked for a full demonstration at the November meeting, and the relevant personnel involved with this platform will be attending.</p> <p>CG noted the platform seems like a good system in principle. This is not an area the Committee and Trust has researched in detail in the past, but as this is public money, we need to review whether we should be holding funds in accounts without a good return, when these funds could be better used elsewhere.</p>	
<p>9. CEO REPORT</p>	
<p>The CEO report has been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting via the GVO portal.</p> <p>SV explained the report includes how the Trust is performing using teacher assessment along with formal testing at the end of the last academic year. The data comparison detailed has used our 2019 results which were the last ones published. No actual exams or formal testing took place as we didn't feel it appropriate based on how much school children had missed. The focus on children's' return to school has been on mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The CEO commented that reviewing the results, we can see the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children is growing and the closing of these gaps is a focus for schools and included within the Trust priority plan.</p> <p>Q: Have we got any idea of what the national data figures would be in comparison? A: No we haven't as no information is available or published.</p> <p>The Chair commented that at the recent Members meeting, one of our Members works in another Trust in the Wakefield area and was asked the same question. He stated that it is not possible to compare data as all schools have been impacted so differently with Covid. He commented that schools should start again from September with our own teacher assessments and establish baselines from this information.</p> <p>KP noted the main focus would be addressing the gaps and understanding the plans for how the Trust is going to do this. KP also recognised the difficulty of predicting data and the expectations at this point. SV noted there will be no published data, so we will still be unable to compare the Trust results against any national figures.</p> <p>SV reported that Kirstie Stubbs has been appointed as Deputy CEO of the Trust and will be joining in January 2022. All of our HTs have visited her school which looks amazing and HTs were able to observe the excellent practice in action at the school and consider what good practices could be implemented within the Trust. We are looking forward to her joining us.</p> <p>Annabel Berry as the Safeguarding & Inclusion lead for the Trust is working really well and is seconded from her HT role at Towngate, one day per week.</p> <p>CEO visits to each school are taking place and it is working really well. The Trust Estates Manager visits at the start of the day alongside the Premises Manager and the HT. The central team Business Operations Officer then attends reviewing back office work taking place in school. SV noted she has the opportunity to observe teaching and learning and asked if Trustees would be interested in joining these visits during the Spring term.</p>	

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<p>Kirklees LA have purchased approximately £6000 of support for a school that is currently in sitting in the Ofsted window. Should this school go into special measures, it may be that they would join the Trust.</p> <p>The Trust development plan has been shared with Trustees, detailing Trust priorities for this academic year.</p>	
<p>10. CHIEF OPERATION OFFICER'S VERBAL REPORT</p>	
<p>The COO report had been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting and includes a finance update.</p> <p>TF highlighted the new analytical reports detailed in the COO report now being produced on a monthly basis for HR. It is interesting to show how over the last two years the transactional HR work has increased by 28%. The changes have been mainly in variations in adapting the ways of working due to Covid. This has impacted the central HR function in the work we have had to complete.</p> <p>The new data report included on page 3 will, moving forward include overtime payments from each school as we felt we had not had enough control in this area. Training with HTs and SBOs has been undertaken on what is acceptable for requests for overtime and this will be monitored on a monthly basis.</p> <p>We have had one case of long term sickness absence to manage this year which is excellent. The staff member has now resigned. The SBOs are to focus on short-term absence within school. We are still managing the Covid situation across the Trust as not all staff have had both vaccines yet, which continues to mean longer term isolation.</p> <p>The recruitment of Kickstart workers continues, and we currently have 22 vacancies. We have had some successes in this area. The Premises kickstart worker appointed has now got a full time permanent role in a secondary school, as an example.</p> <p>Premises</p> <p>TF reported that along with TJ she has been working with the Trust Estates Manager on the capital plans for the MAT which is proving to be a big piece of work. We are looking at the highest priorities of work required across the Trust but are not yet in a position to report this to Trustees. On completion, the plans will be taken to the FAR Committee for review in line with budget spends.</p> <p>The four successful CIF projects are all now underway or completed and are currently waiting to hear our appeals submissions, totally £1.5million.</p> <p>EVERY compliance system is being trialled at two schools and will be launched across all Trust schools from October half-term. This will ensure we are managing compliance at the highest level. The system is being demonstrated to the HTs and SBOs alongside the Premises Managers in November. This will enable all schools to log any school issues on the system with the HTs and central team having oversight. Once the system is fully embedded we will be producing a rag rated report shared with Trustees on a regular basis for compliance.</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>The CFO shared an overview of the finance update included within the COO report, explaining the current position on reserves at 31 July standing at just over £2million. The reserves position at the end of August 2021 is still being calculated.</p>	

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<p>TJ commented that some savings have been made due to the pandemic and whilst the reserves position is positive, we now need to look at our capital plans.</p> <p>TJ explained that the role of Dave Galley (DG), Finance Officer within the central team has had a change in focus of his role. DG will now be visiting each school on a monthly basis reviewing the budget positions and management accounts with the SBO and HT. This will give the HTs confidence to spend some of their allocations. Education budgets have been divided this year, and some curriculum leaders now have their own budget allocation which will include some CPD for subject leads. We want to encourage the schools to spend for the children.</p> <p>The finance update has included the three-year forecast.</p> <p>Training sessions for SBOs have taken place to ensure that they are confident in all aspects of finance. So far this has included month end procedures and housekeeping, budgeting and financial reporting. We can see this is having an already having an impact.</p> <p>TF explained that the Trust has now introduced a new process whereby schools will need to produce a business case for extra expenditure in schools. As an example, if a school wished to recruit a new role into school, a business case would need to be submitted to the central team for approval. This would include the current budget position and the expected impact of such a recruitment on the budget. Three business cases have been submitted so far.</p> <p>Q: Is there a tendency to recruit Early Career Teachers (ECTs) or should we be looking at employing more experienced teachers?</p> <p>A: Yes I do think there is a tendency. We tend to recruit ECTs who are students that have moved through our system e.g. on work placements and have been trained by us. We are not always appointing to leadership roles.</p> <p>The Chair commented as long as we are continuing to recruit the right calibre of teachers.</p> <p>SV noted she agrees that we do need to ensure we continue to look at what we spend on buildings against the spend on our staffing with teaching and learning. TJ commented, we need to know that we have the right structures in place in terms of staffing as we must ensure we spend our reserves wisely.</p>	
<p>12. PEOPLE STRATEGY</p>	
<p>IPMAT Our People Strategy 2021 document has been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>TF confirmed that the information detailed in the People Strategy 2021 document is included as part of the Trust three year plan. TF shared an overview of the document, noting there are three key strands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment & Retention – strategies and consistency for all recruitment. • Talent management and succession planning • Health & wellbeing of staff – developing a school and Trust focus, combining on a focus on both our children and our staff. <p>An employee survey is to take place later this year, which has been budgeted for as we are wanting feedback from staff on how we are performing as a Trust. KP noted this was an excellent document.</p>	

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<p>Q: How do we monitor and measure against these strands? A: A good point. In terms of recruitment and retention we will have data available, and we intend to complete exit interviews. We will look at how we grow our own staff in terms of talent. Wellbeing can be measured from the employee survey. All link into the Trust strategic plan.</p>	
13. RISK MANAGEMENT	
<p>TF explained that the key for managing Risk Management should be a focus on training for Trustees and the central team. It has been difficult to find the right training company, but we have recently met with the RPA who has provided us with a contact. We have now had conversations with this provider. They will be sending a proposal to provide the right level of training, and we are hopeful.</p> <p>Once the proposal has been received this will be shared with Trustees, who will be invited to attend the workshops at the Maypole Centre, particularly those Trustees who have volunteered to be involved in Risk Management.</p> <p>Q: Should we open this training to Members? A: We would like to keep into Trustees only at the current time.</p>	
14. TRUSTEES' AUDIT 2021-22	
<p>The Chair explained that the next Trust skills audit through the annual strategic cycle will be taken to the next Chairs meeting. This is for the Trust as a whole, rather than individual Governors on local governing boards.</p>	
15. POLICY REVIEW	
<p>The following policies were ratified during the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPMAT Associate Staff Probationary Periods Sept 2021 IPMAT Complaints Procedure Sept 2021 IPMAT Data Protection Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Data Retention Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT DBS Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Death of a child or member of the community Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Equality & Diversity Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Family Leave Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT FOI Publication Scheme Sept 2021 IPMAT Health & Safety Policy Statement Sept 2021 IPMAT Leave of Absence Policy Part A Sept 2021 IPMAT Leave of Absence Policy Part B Sept 2021 IPMAT Lone Workers Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Safer Recruitment & Vetting Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Shared Parental Leave Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Staff Attendance Management Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Staff Code of Conduct Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Volunteer Agreement Sept 2021 IPMAT Wellbeing Policy Sept 2021 IPMAT Whistleblowing Code of Practice Sept 2021 	

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ITEM	ACTION
<p>16. AOB</p> <p>The next meeting for Trustees is on 30 November 2021 at 4.30pm to accept the Trust accounts. This will take place via Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>Trustees were reminded that a meeting has been organised for 19 October 2021, where the Executive HT from South Hiendley & Grove Lea Primaries will be joining to share an overview of both schools. The Chair commented that in the Spring term, we will aim to have a face to face meeting in a school involving Trustees, HT, SLT and Governors. Trustees agreed this proposal.</p>	
MEETING CLOSE TIME: 6.25 PM	

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR: 

DATE: 05.10.2021