

CBAT BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Trustees' meeting held on 27th March 2019 at 6:00pm at Marling School

Present: Nigel Riglar (Chair), Helen Cerullo (by phone), Ben Eagle, John Gilbert (until 7.30pm), Emma Gray (Finance Director) (until 7.00pm), Nathan Wolstenholme, Stuart Wilson (Chief Executive Officer) (until 8.00pm).

In Attendance: David Dale (Clerk).

- 1. Welcome and introductions:** There were no additional attendees.
- 2. Apologies:** None received.
- 3. Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the meeting of 4th February 2019

It was proposed by JG, seconded by NW, that these be approved and signed, to be published on the Trust's website. This was **agreed** unanimously.

5. Action point checklist

All actions ongoing or completed. It was noted that action CBAT 098 (Diocesan information) had now been completed. Under action CBAT 099 (LGB Minutes) one Trustee requested that there be a consistent naming convention used to describe the Minutes from the three academy LGBs – **action:** Clerk to address for future agendas.

6. Matters arising

None.

7. Growth opportunities

The CEO updated Trustees on the various growth opportunities for the Trust that were currently being explored. In Stonehouse, the local authority will be asking for expressions of interest for a presumption bid to operate a proposed new primary school to serve a large new housing development west of the town. There is another opportunity at Chesterton, Cirencester. In the south of Gloucester there is an opportunity to bid for a Secondary Free School, the successful bidder will need to demonstrate the case in terms of both the need for places and existing school standards in the local area.

Trustees asked a number of questions covering:

- The preferred location of new schools to join the Trust
- The possibility of links with organisations in the green energy, engineering or health sectors
- The need for any bids to demonstrate the Trust's response to feedback following the Cheltenham bid last year

Trustees noted the current financial position as reported and the actions being taken to monitor and manage it, and agreed that no further action is required at present.

12. LGBs – Minutes of last meetings

Trustees noted the following latest signed LGB Minutes:

- Berkeley Primary School LGB 11th December 2018
- Cam Woodfield Junior School LGB 21st January 2019
- Marling School LGB 27th November 2018.

The Clerk reported that all previous Minutes for the current school year are available on MarVLE for Trustees, and that others will be added as they are agreed and signed.

13. LGB recommendations in line with Scheme of Delegation

The CEO reported a recommendation from Marling School LGB that Trustees be asked to approve a revised staffing plan that would increase staffing costs and lead to a small budget deficit in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Based on current student number forecasts, the school budget would then be in surplus from 2021/22. He explained that the plan reflects changing numbers of 6th Form students, from a relatively low Year 12 cohort now to the potential of increased number in future years reflecting increased applications, including girls. Although it is not possible to forecast the conversion rate of applications to actual numbers with absolute certainty, current models suggest a need to recruit to two additional teaching posts and replace some staff retiring.

Trustees asked questions, and the CEO responded as follows:

- When will student numbers be confirmed? CEO: In late August, once GCSE results are known.
- Is there an option to reduce risk by recruiting teachers on fixed-term contracts? CEO: Yes, but this is not recommended as it would change the nature of applications.
- In terms of accommodation, can the school cope with the increased numbers forecast? CEO: Yes, but we plan to reintroduce some classrooms on our empty East Campus.
- Can the Trust budget cover the short-term deficit, without reducing the resources available to the other schools? CEO: Yes.

Following discussion, Trustees were supportive of the proposal. It was proposed by JG and seconded by BE that the recommendation from Marling LGB be approved. This was **agreed unanimously**.

14. Revised scheme of delegation

The CEO reported back to Trustees on the meeting with those Trustees who had volunteered to help with the detailed review of the scheme of delegation. He explained the rationale for the changes now proposed. Trustees agreed that the revised scheme should go out to consultation with LGBs and Headteachers, before coming back to Trustees for final approval. The CEO thanked those Trustees who had help with this work. **Action: CEO** to send revised scheme of delegation to Chairs and Headteachers.

15. Names and structures of LGBs

The CEO reported on a proposal to change the name of LGBs to School Improvement Boards (SIBs) and for the single Board to manage all business for each academy, without the need for

sub-committees. One advantage would be to give all Governors an overview of the governance of the academy, including finance and HR. Marling Governors have already indicated approval, but with a question about the use of 'improvement'. One Trustee noted that some items of business (e.g. admissions, pay and conditions) would need to be done by a sub-group of the SIB. **Action: CEO to meet BPS and CWJS Governors together to seek their views on the proposed change.**

16. Terms of reference

The CEO stated that there was nothing to report on this yet.

17. Trust policies

The CEO reported that consultation on the Performance Appraisal Policy for Teachers had finished, with some comments received from the ASCL trade union. He is now awaiting a response to these from the Trust's HR adviser and will circulate the final version of this policy to Trustees for approval in due course. Trustees noted this information. **Action: CEO to circulate final version of this policy to Trustees for approval.**

The following policies have all been reviewed, with some minor changes proposed:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Capability
- Code of Conduct for All Adults
- Disciplinary procedure
- Disciplinary rules
- Grievance
- Whistle-blowing.

The Trustees agreed that these policies should go to consultation with staff and trade unions, before coming back to Trustees for final approval. It was noted that once approved these policies will apply to all Trust staff in the three academy schools, including Cam Woodfield Junior School. **Action: CEO to circulate draft policies to staff and trade unions for comment.**

The CEO reported that the current Finance policies have not yet been reviewed, this will be done once any changes to the scheme of delegation have been agreed. The current Finance policies will continue to apply in the meantime. Trustees noted this information.

18. Trustees' decisions under scheme of delegation taken since last meeting

None to report.

19. Regional Schools Commissioner MAT review meeting

The Chair and CEO reported that the meeting with the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) on 28th February to discuss the performance and future plans of the Trust had been very positive. The RSC had commented on the relatively slow growth of MATs in Gloucestershire. The RSC had challenged the position of some Trustees also sitting on academy LGBs, the Chair had explained the situation in relation to Marling School that he was standing down as Chair of the LGB, and that he and other Trustees on the LGB would stand down as members once new Governors have been recruited and are in place.

The MAT review meeting report will be circulated to Trustees once received. *(Post-meeting note – this was circulated to Trustees on 3rd April)*

20. Training for Trustees

The possibility of joint training for Trustees from different MATs had been discussed at a recent meeting of CEOs and FDs, and the CEO asked whether CBAT Trustees might be interested. Trustees said that they would be. **Action: CEO to circulate further information and possible training dates in due course.**

21. Any other business

- i. It was reported that one Trustee had submitted some initial thoughts developing an annual business cycle for the Board to help it manage its broad range of responsibilities and focus on particular themes at relevant times in the school and financial year. This was well received, and would help new Trustees learn about their role and responsibilities. It was agreed that the CEO and Clerk would consider the suggestions, discuss with the Trustee, and bring back to the Board at a future meeting – **action: CEO and Clerk.**
- ii. The CEO reported on plans to introduce a 6 months probationary period for newly appointed teachers, to bring them into line with the same arrangements for newly appointed support staff. This would not require consultation with existing teachers as it would only apply to new teachers starting in September 2019 and later. **Action: CEO to check whether NQTs would be exempt from this.** Trustees asked whether this had been cleared with the Trust's HR adviser, the CEO confirmed that it had. The Chair stated that Trustees were in agreement with the principle of a probationary period for new teachers, but would seek assurance that processes would be in place to ensure that its implementation would be clear and consistent. **Action: CEO to discuss with Headteachers.**

The CEO declared an interest and left the meeting at this point.

- iii. The Chair briefed Trustees that a report would be submitted to Marling School LGB shortly covering the salary scale and terms and conditions of the CEO. There are a number of technical issues covering the link between CEO and Headteacher salary scales, recruitment and retention payments, and pension rights. Trustees asked questions about this and, in the context of the Trust's growth plans, discussed how big the Trust would be before the CEO and FD roles became freestanding (i.e. working full-time for the Trust rather than any individual academy). The Chair explained that if the proposals were agreed by Marling LGB they would put a recommendation to the Board and at this point the report will be shared with Trustees. Trustees would be able to make a decision on the recommendation via email, or if it is necessary to discuss further the issue could come back to the next Board meeting for decision. **Action: Chair to circulate report and recommendation once agreed.**

22. Risk register

No changes reported.

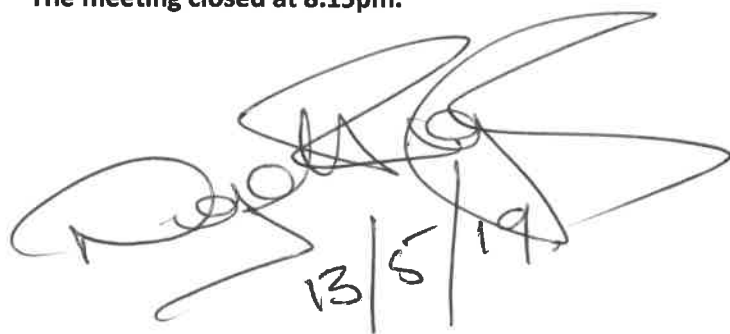
23. Dates of future meetings

The dates for the final two meetings of the current academic year were agreed as:

- Monday 13th May 2019
- Wednesday 3rd July 2019.

It was agreed that the meeting on 13th May will be held at Cam Woodfield Junior School. Trustees requested that they have a brief tour of the school, and meet local Governors for an informal discussion, immediately before the meeting. **Action:** Clerk to contact the Headteacher at CWJS to make appropriate arrangements.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.



A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date 13/5/19 written in a simple, vertical format.