

CBAT BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Trustees' meeting held on 30th September 2020 at 4:00pm via videoconference

Present: Nigel Riglar (Chair), Graham Ayre, Debbie Bird, John Gilbert, Emma Gray (Finance Director), Barbara Green, Ruth Hollier, Stuart Wilson (Chief Executive Officer, joined at 5.25pm).

In Attendance: David Dale (Clerk).

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no additional attendees.

2. Apologies received and accepted:

SW had indicated that he would be late joining the meeting due to interviews at Berkeley Primary School (BPS). It was agreed to defer agenda items 8, 9 and 10 until his arrival.

3. Declarations of Interest:

There were no new declarations.

4. Minutes of the meetings of 6th July and 18th August 2020

6th July (regular meeting): it was **proposed** by DB, and **seconded** by RH, that these be approved and signed, to be published on the Trust's website. This was **agreed** unanimously.

18th August (extraordinary meeting): it was **proposed** by DB, and **seconded** by RH, that these be approved and signed, to be published on the Trust's website. This was **agreed** unanimously.

5. Action point checklist

165 – SDB minutes: Trustees discussed arrangements for them to receive the minutes from the three School Development Boards (SDBs) in a timely and consistent manner. It was agreed that it is good practice for SDB minutes to be published on school websites. **Action: Clerk** to contact SDB Clerks to check progress with publication of minutes. Board agendas could then include links to published minutes on the schools' websites, only confidential items would need to be reported separately.

166 – GDPR and IT policies: EG clarified that the correct policies were in circulation and would be reviewed next term for approval by Trustees.

All other actions were ongoing or completed.

6. Matters arising

Composition of the Board: it was noted that there are currently 8 Trustees and 2 vacancies. A skills audit had been carried out in September 2019 and the results of this had helped inform the recruitment process when RH and BG had been appointed. It was noted that the skills audit should be repeated at an appropriate interval. **Action: Clerk** to report back to the next meeting, for Trustees to consider any outstanding issues and identify any skills gaps on the Board.

7. Trustee appointments and resignations

There had been no resignations or appointments since the 6th July meeting.

8. CBAT Strategic Plan review

This item was discussed later in the meeting when SW had joined.

The CEO referred to the updated version of the Strategic Plan circulated in advance of the meeting and reminded Trustees that they had agreed the broad headings and objectives in July. He had since developed the detailed actions under each of them, and invited questions and comments from Trustees. The following matters were raised:

- Vertical teams (SP1.3) – how will they work together and overlap? The CEO said that this was focussed on the transition from primary to secondary, and would involve supportive peer reviews between schools. DB offered to share some e-learning tools.
Action: DB to share.
- Centralised IT service (SP2.4) – NR suggested a clearer statement of a robust and resilient IT service following the recent malware attack (item 12 below), and to include data management here.
- The need to publicise the Strategic Plan across the Trust, once finalised.

Action: CEO to make final amendments to the Strategic Plan to reflect the comments and discussion here, then to circulate to Trustees for approval.

9. Trust growth opportunities

This item was discussed later in the meeting when SW had joined.

The CEO explained the DfE model to move to Teaching School Hubs and the implications for CETA. We plan to submit a bid ourselves for one of the two Gloucestershire Areas with the support of existing Teaching Schools; but would also be supporting the bids of both Balcarras (Cheltenham, Stroud and Cotswolds) and Pates (Gloucester, Forest of Dean and Tewkesbury). That way we hope to be a part of the delivery of the successful bids and maintain and extend some of CETA's work. Trustees commented that the work of CETA has been important for the local development of teachers and support staff and this seems a good strategy and has their support.

Future opportunities – the CEO had a discussion recently with the RSC's office to look at local opportunities for growth. They discussed free schools, sponsoring opportunities, government policy with regard to SATs as well as the place of CBAT in the local school improvement strategy. SW outlined these discussions.

The CEO explained that slower than anticipated growth of CBAT does have a potential impact on succession planning and affects our ability to hang on to good staff who may have been waiting for emerging opportunities.

Diocese – there has not yet been an opportunity to bring a Diocese school into the trust so we have not yet converted to mixed articles.

10. School updates

This item was discussed later in the meeting when SW had joined.

The CEO referred to the Headteachers' reports circulated in advance of the meeting and asked if there were any specific questions.

Trustees noted the sad death of the former Caretaker at CWJS and asked that their condolences be sent to his family.

Trustees commended the Name It to Tame It initiative at CWJS, giving pupils regular opportunities to express their feelings and raise any worries

Trustees asked a number of questions about the impact of closure and lockdown in each school in terms of learning and the wellbeing of pupils and staff. The CEO reported that it has been a difficult period and had had different impacts in each school, but overall pupils are in good spirits and glad to be back in school, and attendance is high. Pupils have adopted good habits in the first 5 weeks back. There is more caution in the classroom, practical dynamics are more complex. The schools all have good plans in place. In MS teachers are moving between classrooms much more than before and, because of this and staggered break times, teachers have less interaction with each other and the SLT is looking for ways to bring them together physically in small groups or online.

The CEO said that his main concern about the impacts of closure and lockdown was that progress inequalities had increased. It is hoped that the DfE will amend the exam process for next summer to support recovery.

He reported that interviews are in progress for the Deputy Headteacher post at BPS, candidates have been shortlisted from a full Day 1 programme for the final interviews tomorrow.

11. Health, safety and wellbeing

The FD reported that Covid risk assessments are being actively monitored and managed across the three schools. No pupils or staff had tested positive for the virus so far since September. Support staff had returned to their workplace in June. It is recognised that staff will feel anxious, and they are being supported by the schools and by each other, but they accept that they must be in school when the pupils are.

Confidential minute – not for publication – see page 6.

12. Data protection and privacy (GDPR)

The FD reported that this will be a standing item on the Board's agenda in future. She is taking part in GDPR training throughout the year. Overall, the Trust is in a strong position and compliant with GDPR requirements. There is some work to do to ensure that we can evidence that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Trustees asked a number of questions about the implications of the UK leaving the EU, and the volume of SAR requests.

In response to a question about CBAT information held by Trustees in their personal email accounts it was agreed that now Trustees all have secure CBAT email accounts they should delete all CBAT correspondence and information from their personal email accounts. **Action: All Trustees** to review their personal email accounts and delete all CBAT correspondence and information.

The FD reported on a malware attack on schools' IT systems in mid-September, as reported in the news media. This had been a significant issue for BPS where the contract with the external IT provider had not been renewed at the end of August and it was subsequently discovered that the provider had not taken adequate steps to protect and back up data. This breach has been reported to the ICO, the DfE, and other authorities as required. Some management information had been lost, but anything web-based is secure (including safeguarding data). The MS IT team had done a good job at containing the impact of the incident and putting in place measures to guard against any future attack.

Trustees asked a number of questions about the incident including business continuity planning,

insurance cover, the potential liability of the previous IT provider. Summarising the discussion, the Chair said that Trustees were reassured that future risks had been minimised and that a higher level of security is now in place. They will take a close interest in this going forward, wanting to be sighted on all the main risks and mitigating actions. **Action: FD** to liaise with ICO and provide any further information requested.

13. Finance

In respect of the 2019/20 budget the FD reported that final outturn figures are not yet available but all the indications are that budgets will be balanced across the board. The Trust's external auditors will be undertaking the annual audit in the week commencing 5th October. The FD will share the audit plan with Trustees and provide the relevant pro-formas for them to complete and return. **Actions: Clerk** to circulate Audit Plan and declaration of interest forms, **all Trustees** to complete and return the related parties form and declaration of interest form.

In respect of the Trust's previous decision to set up a Risk and Audit Committee it was noted that the CEO had approached someone to become the independent member of the Committee. The updated terms of reference will be recirculated for Trustees to approve before the first meeting of the Committee takes place. **Action: Clerk** to circulate updated terms of reference for approval, and then liaise with GA and JG to arrange for the Committee to meet.

14. Centralising IT services

This had already been raised under item 12 above. The FD said that the MS IT team had recruited an additional Technician and now had the capacity to provide a service across the three schools. The position would be reviewed in April 2021.

Trustees discussed this and agreed that this would be an important decision for them to take. They asked for a full report in due course with different options set out and a preferred option identified. The report should the insurance and business continuity issues discussed earlier. **Action: FD** to report back in due course.

15. School Development Boards – minutes of last meetings

Trustees noted the minutes of SDB meetings as circulated in advance.

16. SDB recommendations for consideration in line with Scheme of Delegation

None since the last Board meeting, this was noted.

17. Trust policies

(i) Teachers' pay scales: the FD showed Trustees the national teachers' pay scales reflecting the pay award to be implemented from 1st September 2020, subject to Parliamentary ratification. The Trust continues to adopt national pay scales, and the additional costs had been anticipated and are included in the approved budget. Trustees asked for further explanation of the different grades and responsibility allowances, this was given.

It was **proposed** by RH and **seconded** by GA that the Teachers' pay scales as set out be approved for 2020/21. This was **agreed** unanimously.

(ii) Support staff pay scales: the FD showed Trustees the details of the support staff pay award, to be backdated to 1st April 2020. The Trust continues to adopt national pay scales, and additional costs of 2.5 % had been anticipated and are included in the approved budget. The award of 2.75% was slightly higher than this but could be accommodated.

It was **proposed** by JG and **seconded** by GA that the support staff pay scales as set out be

approved. This was **agreed** unanimously.

(iii) Early retirement of teachers: the CEO explained that this is simply to confirm that the Trust's policy is to follow national guidance on this matter. Trustees noted some minor corrections to be made in the wording of the document.

It was **proposed** by BG and **seconded** by RH that the Early retirement of teachers policy be approved. This was **agreed** unanimously.

(iv) Election of Staff and Parent Governors: the CEO explained that this is simply to standardise existing practices and have a consistent policy across the Trust's schools.

It was **proposed** by BG and **seconded** by RH that the Election of Staff and Parent Governors Policy be approved. This was **agreed** unanimously.

18. Trustees' decisions under Scheme of Delegation since last meeting

The Clerk reminded Trustees of the decision of the decision taken remotely since the last meeting to approve the Trust's revised Complaints Policy. This was noted.

19. Risk register

A technical issue prevented the FD from screen sharing the updated risk register. The FD reported on a recent meeting with the auditor to look at internal assurance, the auditor had commented on the good format and layout of the risk register and had suggested some fine tuning. **Action:** FD to amend the risk register in light of the auditor's comments and then share it with Trustees.

20. Any other business

(i) CIF bids: MS is awaiting ESFA response to its resubmitted bid. An emergency bid has been submitted for East Campus roof timber repairs. The BPS bid for funding to replace windows had not been successful but the school had gone ahead using school funds and the new windows had been fitted successfully. CWJS are appealing against their unsuccessful bid for replacement of toilets.

(ii) Broadband capacity: the CEO reported that MS was planning to increase capacity from 100MB to 1,000MB in order to facilitate more remote teaching and learning in future if required. Trustees asked about the cost of this work, and whether similar work is needed at BPS and CWJS. The CEO said that the cost of installation is approximately £1,000 and that there will be a small increase in the monthly rental cost. Existing broadband capacity at the primary schools is adequate.

21. Date of next meeting

- Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at 4.00pm (virtual)

The meeting closed at 6.25pm.



2nd December 2020