

Minutes			
Title:	LIFE Multi Academy Trust Board Meeting - Trustees		
Date:	Monday 28 th June 2021	Time:	6.00pm
Chair:	Maria Everley	Location:	Bosworth Academy
Clerk:	Mike Armstrong		

TRUSTEES					
Name	Present /Apologies	Name	Present / Apologies	Name	Present /Apologies
Maria Everley (MEV)	✓	Chris Parkinson (CPA - CEO)	✓	Hatle Mehta (HME)	A
Gareth Williams (GWI)	✓	Hazel Cole (HCO)	✓	Darren Brumby	✓
Liz Warren (LWA)	✓	Andy Smith (ASM)	✓		
David Noble (DNO)	✓	Liam McDonagh (LMcD)	A		

In Attendance					
Name	Present /Apologies	Name	Present / Apologies	Name	Present /Apologies
Mike Armstrong Clerk	✓	Chris Tweedale (CTW)	✓		

Notes of meeting	
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies. Confidentiality Resignations</p>
	<p>The Chair welcomed Trustees to the meeting and reminded them of the confidentiality of the discussions. She welcomed Darren Brumby as a prospective new Director.</p> <p>Apologies: Hatle Mehta and Liam McDonagh.</p> <p>The apologies were accepted.</p> <p>The Chair informed Trustees that David Noble had resigned and this had been forwarded to the Members. Maria Everley announced her resignation which had been forwarded to Members.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None</p>
3	<p>Urgent Items for AOB agreed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>None</p>

4	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting on 10 May 2021.</p>
	<p>The minutes had been circulated.</p> <p>Resolved: The minutes of the meeting on 10 May 2021 and the confidential minutes, were accepted as a true record to be signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Matters arising.</p> <p>All to be covered in the meeting.</p>
5	<p>Finance Budget approval</p>
	<p>ASM stated that the budget for 2021/22 must be submitted to the ESFA in the second half of July 2021. The one year budget plan had been shared with Trustees; the three year plan would be shared in the near future.</p> <p>ASM stated that there may be some minor changes made before final submission which would include the amount of carry forward.</p> <p>He asked for the budget proposal for 2021/22 to be approved within 10% of the budget line or within 5% of the total budget. The budget will be shared prior to submission.</p> <p>The Chair asked that the folder for the documents was made clear.</p> <p>ASM replied that the links on the agenda led to the correct documents.</p> <p>The Clerk said the intention was to add the relevant budget documents into each meeting folder.</p> <p>ASM confirmed he would do that.</p> <p>LWA felt that ASM, as the Chair of Finance, should not be presenting the budget to Trustees as it was difficult for him to comment as a Director and challenge the budgets.</p> <p>ASM replied that this was a fair point but had no solution.</p> <p>He added that there had been discussions about the Finance Meetings which were getting unwieldy as more schools joined the MAT. One suggestion was that separate meetings were held for each hub.</p> <p>The Chair commented that one suggestion was for SMA to prepare the documentation for Trustees.</p> <p>ASM stated that this was possible. The minutes of each finance meeting were available to Trustees.</p> <p>Hazel Cole proposed the budget proposals were approved; this was seconded by Liz Warren.</p> <p>Resolved: The budget proposal was approved unanimously.</p> <p>Investment and Reserves Policy.</p> <p>The Policy had been shared.</p> <p>The Chair proposed the Investment and Reserves Policy was approved. This was seconded by Hazel Cole.</p> <p>Resolved: The Investment and Reserves Policy was approved unanimously.</p> <p>ASM stated that the Condition Improvement Fund money would be received and it was appropriate to invest some of this fund.</p>

	<p>The CEO informed Governors that an SRMA (Schools Resource Management Advisers) review was due in the next few weeks.</p> <p>He felt the only issue for challenge was the size of the reserves. The reserves had been increased by the Ashby Schools in the National Forest Hub joining the MAT. Two schools in the Leicester Forest Hub were recovering from difficulties due to falling roles, leading to a higher financial risk in the hub requiring MAT reserves to cover the risk.</p> <p>The large reserves and the incoming Condition Improvement Fund meant that the MAT Capital Plan needed to be in place quite quickly to demonstrate the MAT had a plan to use the reserves.</p> <p>ASM said the Capital Plan was being worked on within the Finance Committee Meetings.</p> <p>There were no further questions or comments.</p>
6	<p>CEO report and Risk Register Head Teachers reports Risk register</p>
	<p>The risk register and reports from the Head Teachers had been shared.</p> <p>Head Teachers’ reports</p> <p>Bosworth Academy</p> <p>ASM referred to the retirement of the Community Lead and the stated intention of the Head Teacher to replace the role with a Recreation Manager. Discussions had been held about this role being across the MAT, managing lettings in all schools etc.</p> <p>He asked if this would mean there was no requirement for a Recreation Manager in Bosworth or in a Hub.</p> <p>The CEO commented that the MAT was not at the point where complete centralisation of lettings could take place. The structure was moving in that direction for 2021/22 with the appointment of two separate posts and therefore Bosworth does need a short term solution.</p> <p>The Chair commented that the reports were very helpful in explaining how the schools were ensuring that the recovery curriculum was happening.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the comments about improving behaviour in Year 10 and asked how that had been shared across the MAT. She asked if new strategies had been used.</p> <p>The CEO said a mixture of established and new strategies had been used as outlined on the risk register. The risk register includes the impact of Covid on the culture in the schools, where negative influences outside of the school environment have affected learning and behaviour particularly in the more vulnerable schools.</p> <p>He added that this was not of particular concern but the MAT must ensure there was a robust response to behaviour.</p> <p>The Chair stated it was excellent to see the attention given to mental health in the reports. She asked if mental health provision was to be monitored in the future to ensure best practice.</p> <p>The CEO said it would be.</p> <p>He added that each of the schools, in addition to the standard data requested, were looking at what was really valuable to them as an individual school and were monitoring these aspects, such as mental health. These can then be shared across the MAT.</p> <p>The Chair commented that Trustees needed this flexibility of reporting from each school in addition to the standard data.</p>

DNO asked if performance data was to be looked at.

The CEO replied that formal assessments had been completed. The schools were now reporting the data in the same format, as seen in the data reports shared. This gives Trustees the information required to compare the performance of the schools more easily and question how robust the data is from each school.

The Chair asked if there was cross school moderation taking place.

The CEO said there was on going moderation in Year 10 and with the TAGs in Year 11 in the schools.

The CEO added that all schools were doing the GL tests which provide a national comparison and identify any gaps.

He commented that the Countesthorpe exam results would improve as there had been 13 supply teachers in the school. The school was fully staffed in 2021/22 and the cohort of students was reasonably able.

HCO asked if there could be a standards format for reporting attendance, exclusions etc to ensure Trustees can access the data and see the trends more easily.

The CEO replied that the attendance reporting was standard on the drive and could be included in the Headteachers' reports in the same format.

He added that the Headteachers wanted the Trustees to know their school.

LWA commented that she could not know every school and relied on other Trustees to have this knowledge for individual schools

The CEO felt that Link Trustees did not yet have sufficient knowledge of their school to be able to report back robustly enough.

He added that CTW was looking at the standardisation of reporting and the Trustees of Secondary and Primary will look at the key questions. This could be communicated to Trustees.

CTW commented that there were several issues, attendance data was currently completely influenced by the pandemic and this covers other possible attendance issues. As the MAT grows the reports will become longer making it more difficult for Trustees to draw conclusions. It was important for Trustees to understand the educational performance of all the schools. The Trust needs to plan effective reporting mechanisms for the future.

The Chair suggested a working party was set up to look at a simple format for the reporting mechanism. This would enable Trustees to see patterns more easily.

She added that the role of the Link Director needed to be much more robust to enable them to support the CEO in answering questions about the schools.

This was agreed.

ACTION 6.1: CTW and CEO to form a working party to propose a format for reporting to Trustees.

DN asked if success as to be measured in other ways rather than just examination success.

The CEO replied that the Trust measured success in 4 areas: -

1. knowledge and understanding
2. skills
3. attitude
4. values

For areas 3 to 4, ways of measuring success and reporting it were being tried out before they can be standardised.

	<p>The Chair referred to the shared and guided reading issue at Braunstone Frith and asked if there was any potential for using parents over the holiday to do something with their children on reading with the school providing reading support training for parents.</p> <p>The CEO replied that Braunstone had provided online training for parents on how to support their child with reading. This could be repeated. The Trust was in the process of training up sixth formers to provide remote reading support.</p> <p>Risk Register</p> <p>The risk register had been shared.</p> <p>The CEO stated a new risk on the impact of Covid on the most vulnerable schools had been added. Some school have a high number of cases with students frequently being sent home. Some students have had to self isolate up to 5 times in addition to the lockdowns. Masks have been reintroduced. The delta variant has increased the number of contacts who are going on to test positive. The relaxing of social distancing rules in the community is also having an impact on infection rates.</p> <p>The CEO updated Trustees on a teacher misconduct case in the Ashby School and outlined the details. This had been referred to the Teacher Registration Agency in May 2021. The teacher had been suspended in 2016 and resigned in 2017. The case was likely to attract the national press. The TRA report was due to be published in mid July 2021. The teacher had been struck off for life.</p> <p>It was agreed any press release would be shared with Trustees.</p> <p>The CEO asked Trustees to refer any enquiries to the CEO.</p> <p>CTW added that the case had not been declared by the school during the due diligence process.</p> <p>ACTION 6.2: Chair to discuss the non declaration with the Ashby Chair of Governors.</p>
7	<p>COO report</p>
	<p>The COO reported the following points regarding Countesthorpe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A complaint had been published in the Mercury regarding the cost of school uniform. The issue had been dealt with. ● The staffing restructure had been concluded. This was detailed in the Headteacher’s report. ● The budget for 2021/22 had been set. ● The new build was to be handed over on Friday July 3, 2021. <p>There were no questions.</p>
8	<p>MAT development LiFE MAT Charter Ibstock and Ivanhoe</p>
	<p>CTW said that Ibstock and Ivanhoe were on target to join the MAT. Final approval was expected on Thursday 2 July 2021.</p> <p>The CEO stated that the draft LiFE MAT charter had been shared for Trustees approval.</p> <p>Trustees agreed unanimously to approve the charter for publishing on the LiFE MAT website.</p>

	<p>The CEO informed Trustees that he was going to have conversations with The Heads and Governing Bodies of two primary schools about joining the MAT as associates in 2021/22 with a view to becoming full members and increasing the number of primary schools from 2 to 4.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>
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9	<p>Strategic Planning How trustees receive key information Link reports Recruitment Distribution of roles in Trust board Meeting dates for 2021 -22</p>
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	<p>Governance</p> <p>Strategic Planning</p> <p>The Chair commented that the Strategic Planning morning was excellent and inspirational.</p> <p>The CEO stated that the planning day in 2022 would be changed as there were now 8 schools. There would be an expanded speaker provision in the morning followed by cross MAT groups in the afternoon.</p> <p>The Chair asked if Trustees had been informed when the school planning days were being held. The CEO replied that Chairs of Governors were told but not Trustees.</p> <p>The Chair commented that this would improve as the links between Trustees and schools became stronger and there would be an expectation of collaboration between Links and the Governing Bodies.</p> <p>The Chair asked for the Schools’ Strategic Planning wheels to be on the Trustees Drive. Link Trustees should use the planning wheels to look at how the agendas for LGBs were formulated and ensure the structure for monitoring was established at an early stage.</p> <p>ACTION 9.1: CEO to ensure the schools’ Strategic Planning Wheels to be available on the Trustees Drive. ACTION 9.2: Link Trustees to use the planning wheels to monitor LGB agenda.</p> <p>External Review of the Trust Board.</p> <p>LWA had shared information from the Key on the new Academies Handbook and the requirement for an External Review of the Board. CTW recommended that an external Director of Governance could be appointed to carry out a review.</p> <p>The Chair agreed but added she felt the Action Plan formulated by Trustees needed time to be evaluated. She suggested the Action Plan was evaluated and an external review discussed in a Board Meeting towards the end of the Autumn Term with a view to an external review in the Spring Term 2022.</p> <p>This was agreed</p> <p>ACTION 9.3: External review to be discussed in the Autumn Term 2021 meetings, with a view to appointing an external reviewer in the Spring Term 2022. Clerk/Chair to agenda.</p>
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How trustees receive key information

Considered in Item 6 Action 6.1

Link reports.

LWA had shared a visit report for Braunstone Frith.

The Chair noted the move away from committee meetings to all business being done in two LGBs per term. Ashby LGB also followed this structure.

She noted it was not necessary for all schools to follow this pattern.

She suggested this was reviewed to look at the effectiveness of the structure to ensure all business was being covered.

Recruitment.

The Chair stated that numbers of Governors on the LGBs were falling and this needed to be addressed and monitored by Link Governors and CTW.

CTW stated he was in the process of setting up meetings with the Clerks. Recruitment would be discussed if numbers were low.

ACTION 9.4: CTW to report on the number of vacancies on each LGB and lead on recruitment. The process to be started before the end of the Summer Term 2021.

The Chair stated that Clerks should be reporting on the skills required for new Governors. Clerks need advice on where to place adverts for recruitment.

She added that there was a need to recruit to the Trust Board. There was a recruitment pack which can be adapted for LGBs, Trustees or Members. There was also an accompanying letter to be used.

Distribution of roles in Trust Board.

The Chair stated that, in addition to appointing a Chair and Vice Chair on September 6th, 2021, there will need to be other changes as follows.

- Hatle Mehta step up to be Chair of the Finance Committee with support.
- A Safeguarding Trustee to replace DNO will need to be appointed in addition to a
- A new Link Trustee for Countesthorpe to replace CGA.
- LWA to oversee primary education in the Trust, with the possibility of two associate primary schools joining.
- Link Trustee for the Ashby Schools to oversee the age range change.
The Chair recommended this was a single Link Director in the first instance.
- LWA to lead the Chairs of Governors meetings for the Ashby Schools in the National Forest Hub
- HCO to lead the Chairs of Governors meetings in the Leicester Forest Hub.

The Chair suggested a list of the roles required was drawn up for Trustees to express an interest in taking on the roles.

ACTION 9.5: MEV to draw up list of Trustee Roles to share with Trustees.

Meeting dates for 2021 - 22.

	CTW stated he was working with Jo Measom to construct a calendar of LGB and Trust Board meetings.
10	Training
	The Chair informed Trustees that training was available for new Trustees/Governors. Emma Brown will work on a bespoke training package with CTW. She asked Link Trustees to inform The Board of the training required by the LGBs
11	Future agenda items
	Election of Chair/Vice Chair Trustee Roles Recruitment
12	Identification of Confidential Items and Actions
	Teacher misconduct case. Actions outlined
13	Any Other Business
	None
14	Next meeting
	Monday 6 th September 2021.
	Directors board meeting: Finance meeting:
MINUTES AGREED & SIGNED	

Meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.