



MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Present:

Mr K Bannister	(KB)	Trustee
Mr J Everard	(JE)	Trustee, Vice-Chair of Trustees, Chair of Pay Committee
Ms J Finch	(JF)	Trustee
Mr M Howell	(MH)	Trustee, Chair of Audit and Strategic Development Committee
Mr M Judd	(MJ)	Trustee
Mr E Judge	(EJ)	Trustee
Mr P Nagle	(PN)	Trustee, Chair of Trustees
Ms L Smart	(LS)	Trustee
Mr C Wakefield	(CWA)	Executive Principal
Mr S Watterston	(SW)	Trustee

In attendance:

Mr T Bailey	(TB)	Observer
Mr T Baster	(TBA)	Interim Joint Head of Academy
Mrs R Clark	(RCL)	Interim Joint Head of Academy
Mrs K Redmond	(KRE)	Clerk to Trustees
Mr R Scott	(RSC)	Director of Finance and Premises

Apologies:

Mrs C Whitaker	(CDW)	Trustee, Chair of HR Committee
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This group was quorate for the purpose of resolutions

Item	Topic	Minute
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	NOTED.
2.	Appointments and Resignations	<p>a) Trustees considered the appointment of Mr T Bailey. PN advised that following the resignation of Mr Stead, it was agreed to appoint a Trustee with financial expertise. PN and a nominated group of Trustees have held engagement sessions with Mr Bailey and recommended his appointment to the Board of Trustees. Mr Bailey's appointment as Trustee was proposed by EJ, seconded by MH AGREED unanimously.</p> <p>b) Trustees NOTED the resignation of Mr M Chaplin with effect from 8 January 2021. Trustees thanked Mr Chaplin for his contribution to the academy over the last three years.</p>

3.	Declaration of Business Interests	There were no new declarations of business interests and no Trustee recorded any conflict of interest with the items on the agenda or the receipt or giving of any gifts or hospitality since the last meeting.
4.	Approval of Financial Accounts: 2019-20	<p>RSC thanked Trustees for their patience with the extended audit period this year and confirmed that the submission date had been extended to 31 January 2021 by the Department for Education (DfE).</p> <p>RS referred to the circulated Report to the Board and Financial Statements and NOTED in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the audit and field work were conducted virtually due to Covid-19 lockdown measures b) the audit normally takes two weeks but had taken many months due to the complications of conducting the audit remotely and the impact of Covid-19 absence by audit staff c) MH, CWA and RSC had held an Audit Committee last week to receive the audit findings from the auditors d) the financial position is confirmed and the outcome confirms the reporting presented to the Board of Trustees throughout the year and is within £20,000 of predictions e) there is a substantial section within the accounts relating to financial impact that Covid-19 has had. This is a requirement by DfE who are very interested in the significant impact across the education sector f) the outright cost of the IT infrastructure which has had an impact in the reserves within the accounts on page 33. As discussed, that was a controlled drop for a capital purchase and this will be recouped in future years g) the academy comprises two companies; Plume Academy and a trading subsidiary for income such as lettings, catering etc. The presented accounts are a consolidated set of accounts and brings together the Plume Academy and the subsidiary into one set of accounts. <p>RSC referred to the recommendations of the Report on page 22 and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. three recommendations are a recap from last year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o preparing a prepayment schedule as there was not an opportunity to complete it during lockdown. RSC confirmed that it is in place and ready to use o chasing bad debts in the trading subsidiary which stopped in lockdown. Auditors recognised that steps had been taken and changed these to low level due to the impact of lockdown and will be completed next year

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o cashless catering which had been implemented. <p>ii. Recommendations from the 2019-20 audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Regularity and Fixed Assets – RSC advised that obtaining necessary authorisation signatures on paper invoices was difficult during lockdown and had evidence of email authorisation. This should not be an issue when out of lockdown. o Recognition of income – RSC agreed that this would be implemented; should be using internal transfer of funds rather than listing as physical income eg for reprographic charges to departments. <p>RSC advised that he will create an action plan for the Finance and Premises Committee to monitor progress.</p> <p>CWA advised that the feedback meeting demonstrated only low level concerns and, in the most difficult of years, were of no detriment to the quality set of accounts. CWA thanked MH for his continued rigorous challenge and support.</p> <p>PN referred to the detailed information regarding the management of Covid-19 measures and stated that it brilliantly articulated how well the academy had managed the situation and its impact. PN thanked RSC and staff on behalf of the Board of Trustees for all their efforts in the most complex of years.</p> <p>MH also thanked RSC and advised that there were no major concerns or actions. MH was confident the actions would have been completed if it were not for lockdown. MH advised that he had thoroughly reviewed the report with CWA and RSC and recommended them to Trustees for approval.</p> <p>Trustees AGREED unanimously to recommend the Financial Accounts for approval by the Academy Trust.</p>
5.	Chair's Impact Summary for Autumn Term 2020/21	Trustees received and NOTED the Impact Summary for the Autumn Term.
6.	Policies for ratification following Chair's Action approval	<p>Trustees NOTED the following policies which had been APPROVED by Chair's Action due to the urgency required under Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>CWA advised that these addendums are based on model documents from Essex County Council and are updates to the original policies produced at the start of the lockdown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Child Protection Addendum Policy for the further national lockdown – 10 January 2021. b) Attendance Policy Coronavirus Addendum – 14 January 2021

		<p>c) Behaviour Policy Addendum Coronavirus – 26 January 2021.</p> <p>EJ proposed adoption of the above policies, seconded by JE and AGREED unanimously.</p>
7	Policies for approval	<p>Trustees received the following policies:</p> <p>a) Remote Education Policy</p> <p>CWA thanked his staff for the enormous efforts in ensuring a comprehensive remote learning platform was available at a moment's notice and wanted to formally note his thanks for the support from Trustees, parents, carers and students. PN commended CWA and his staff for ensuring the students were supported in such an excellent way and especially with continuing remotely with events such as parents consultation and Jack Petchey Awards.</p> <p>TBA advised that there had now been three lockdowns and on each occasion government requirements had changed and increased. The Remote Education Policy is an outline of core principles on the approach the academy takes for lockdown learning. A second document accompanies it which is updated and shared with parents explaining exactly what the nature and exact of the provision will be. This is available on the website and is linked to ensure there is clarity between the two documents. The policy will be updated for any further lockdown. JE proposed adoption of the policy, seconded by SW and AGREED unanimously.</p> <p>b) Temporary Homeworking Policy</p> <p>CWA advised this is a new policy which has been developed during the lockdown period by Sarah Freeman (SFR), Director of HR.</p> <p>PN questioned whether there was a risk assessment in place for those working at home. MH advised that the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) provides advice on protecting homeworkers, lone workers, stress and mental health. EJ advised that his workplace had carried out risk assessments for all homeworking staff and issues were being raised.</p> <p>CWA advised that appropriate policies are in place including Code of Conduct and training is available for all staff via Handsam. Staff are also supported by rigorous line management to monitor their wellbeing.</p> <p>CWA agreed to discuss risk assessments further with SFR and will revert to EJ and MH if further advice is required. CWA reassured Trustees that mental health</p>

		<p>awareness is high on the agenda for the senior leadership team and is constantly monitored for both staff and students.</p> <p>EJ questioned whether risk assessments were in place for vulnerable staff. CWA confirmed that these were in place for both staff and students. There had also been meetings and discussions with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff from the first lockdown.</p> <p>Following the above discussion, the policy was proposed by MH, seconded by JE and AGREED unanimously subject to further review by CWA and SFR regarding risk assessments.</p>
8	Any Other Business	There were no matters of Any Other Business.
9	Confirmation of confidential items	None.
10	Date of next meeting	<p>Date of next meetings:</p> <p>24 March 2021</p> <p>7 July 2021</p>

Meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Actions

Date of Meeting/ Item number	Topic	Minute	Completed
27.01.21 Agenda item 4	Financial Statements 2019-20 Actions	RSC to create an action plan for the Finance and Premises Committee to monitor progress.	
27.01.21 Agenda item 7	Risk Assessments for Homeworkers	CWA and SFR to consider risk assessment and consult with MH and EJ if further advice is required.	