



Address:
Waterton Academy Trust
The Grove
Walton
Wakefield
WF2 6LD

Waterton Academy Trust

Minutes of a Trust Board Meeting

DATE:

18 July 2019

TIME:

6pm

LOCATION:

Trust Central Offices

Attendees

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Chair: | B Cook | |
| Trustees | D Dickinson (<i>CEO</i>) | J Shaw (<i>arrived at 6:25pm</i>) |
| | S Johnson | |
| Clerk: | L Clark (<i>MAT Governance Officer</i>) | |
| Apologies: | P Beaman | |

| ITEM | ACTION |
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| <p>1. Welcome</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>2. Apologies for Absence</p> <p>P Beaman's apologies given in advance of the meeting were accepted. It was noted that J Shaw would arrive late to the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>3. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The standing register of declarations of interest was noted. The CEO confirmed that Darren Dickinson (his brother) had undertaken a piece of work for the MAT focussing on a strategy for disadvantaged children, which had been very well received by schools.</p> | |
| <p>4. Minutes of the previous meetings and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes from the Trust Board meeting held on 2 April 2019 and the confidential minutes were considered, approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting. It was noted that all actions had been completed.</p> <p>Trustees were updated that the implementation of the new central software had been difficult, but this would be in place for September.</p> <p>A 'good news' page had been added the website.</p> <p>The Clerk updated Trustees that the feedback received from the Governors' Conference had been excellent. All who attended found it informative, relevant, a valuable use of time, and would recommend to fellow governors. Further feedback will be reviewed and used when planning future conferences, and it was agreed by all that the event would be held next year.</p> <p>The CEO updated the board that the staffing issue identified and considered at the previous meeting had been re-negotiated and settled within the parameters agreed by Trustees.</p> | |

| ITEM | ACTION |
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| <p>5. Summer Review Document</p> | |
| <p>The CEO introduced the report which was available on WES prior to the meeting. Attention was drawn to the Risk Management section – new guidance from the ESFA recommends that Trustees should look to oversee the top ten risks identified, and the operational risk register devolved to the executive. Trustees considered the risks highlighted, the consequences and control measure in measures and were assured that appropriate risks had been identified and suitable control measures were in place.</p> <p>A question was raised relating to IT and how the IT across the schools in the Trust varies, and when will outdated software / lack of resources affect delivery of the curriculum, or staff access to laptops / software etc. The CEO confirmed that an IT strategy is in place but a key restraint is budget. However, the IT contract will soon be up for tender within the relevant framework. It was agreed to include an additional risk on the register around IT.</p> <p>A question was also raised around whether there ought to be a risk identified concerning the property portfolio as the consequences could be significant. It was agreed that this would also be included on the risk register.</p> <p>The Governance update was noted including the extensive piece of work to recruit additional governors across the ASCs, and the review of ASC meetings to reduce formal clerked meetings to three per year to reduce workload for all involved in governance and ensure governors have the time to attend regular monitoring visits and events/activities at the school.</p> <p>The Governance Officer outlined the meeting which had taken place with the CEO and Chair and a potential new Trustee (sourced using the free service provided by Academy Ambassadors). The meeting had been extremely positive and Trustees confirmed that his logistics and business expertise, and his enthusiasm for giving back to the community was highly desirable. They recommended to Members his appointment.</p> <p>Trustees also recommended to Members the appointment of Steve Bates as a Trustee (Currently serving on the Waterton IEB at Kings Meadow).</p> <p>RESOLVED: Under their advisory role as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation, Trustees recommended to Members the appointment of Tony Fitton and Steve Bates as Trustees.</p> <p>It was noted that a further Member had been appointed by Members – Alan Worboys. Trustees commented positively on the additional expertise and skills which the Trust now has on the Members and Trust Board.</p> <p>i) CEO Summary</p> <p>The CEO outlined that the ‘CEO summary’ provides context to the divisional work detailed within the report. An overview of conversions, conversations, system leaders duties and development work and actions was provided. Trustees noted the position with the current conversion and that the Trust was challenging Barnsley LA to meet a conversion date closer to the originally planned date rather than the new proposal of 1st February 2020. Trustees also requested that further work and due</p> | <p>CEO</p> <p>Clerk</p> |

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| <p>diligence is carried out with respect to the Kirklees school and an update provided at the next meeting.</p> <p><i>(J Shaw arrived at 6:25pm)</i></p> <p>The CEO highlighted the positive work ongoing with the LA including the renegotiations of the governor training package. A significant piece of work is ongoing regarding procurement strategies within the relevant frameworks and details of this will be taken to the Hub Board – significant savings have already been realised. Key actions regarding a parent ban, union meeting, and FOI request were outlined and Trustees welcomed the assurance provided.</p> <p>ii) SSIO Summary</p> <p>The Board reviewed the EY (early years) and KS1 current positions, noting that overall it has been a strong year for outcomes, with WPA (Walton) in particular achieving exceptional results. Trustees noted and commented positively that KMA (Kings Meadow) have made exceptional progress as last year outcomes were 8% GLD, and this year 52%. The strategies in place to improve outcomes at NCPA (Normanton Common) and SCS (Sharlston) were highlighted.</p> <p>KS2 Year 6 current positions were reviewed in detail for each school, and it was noted that progress has not been included in the report due to the nature of the calculations – this will be reported in the autumn term when official figures have been released. The overall picture is more positive than last year as six schools returned in line or above national combined, however, it remains a mixed picture. Trustees discussed the success stories including at WPA, NCPA, SCS, WA (Wrenthorpe), AMD (Ackworth Mill Dam), and that KMA had improved significantly from last year's 15% combined to outcomes of 42%. The improvement in maths across the Trust was also discussed including the impact of the maths lead within the school improvement team.</p> <p>It was highlighted how outcomes at CTA (Cherry Tree) had dropped significantly from the last assessment projection, and a strategy was in place to improve accuracy of assessments and effectiveness of leadership in driving the improvements that the school requires. SKA (South Kirkby) and KMA (Kings Meadow) have also been prioritised for focus on improvement.</p> <p>Updates were provided on moderations, attendance and exclusions - overall for the Trust, attendance is in line with the national average, and the EWOs (education welfare officers) are working hard, particularly with the more challenging schools to address low attendance. Persistent absenteeism has reduced – a Trust wide strategy focussing on improving attendance and the work of the EWO has impacted this positively. Trustees raised the importance of ensuring the curriculum is engaging to encourage all children to want to come to school.</p> <p>Exclusions continue to reduce (measured in number of education days lost). The impact of the specialist provision at CTA was highlighted which allows pupils with extremely challenging behaviour to remain in school and access a full curriculum. The increase in exclusion days at WPA was attributable to one child who was then</p> | <p>CEO</p> |

| ITEM | ACTION |
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| <p>transferred temporarily to the provision at CTA, and has now been placed within alternative provision by the local authority.</p> <p>The external accountability / Ofsted cycle and outcomes were reviewed. The recent 'requires improvement' at SKA was discussed – this had been a borderline 'good' but overall it was felt that this was an accurate picture and an action plan is now in place to make the necessary improvements. The 'good' for leadership reflects the positive impact of the Trust on improving outcomes. The 'good' judgement at SCS was commented positively on. Academy classifications were noted as being strong.</p> <p>iii) COO Summary</p> <p>The Board reviewed the COO report. It was highlighted by the CEO that there had been some difficulties with the implementation of the HR and Estates software which has impacted on the ability to report comprehensively on these areas within this report. A question was raised by Trustees regarding the new reports available within the new software and it was discussed that reports to Trustees must be meaningful and user friendly, which highlight key areas / trends / variances / comparisons with previous years etc. The CEO confirmed that this will be the nature of the reports.</p> <p>The summary position of the support staff review was noted including that three schools have undertaken a full staffing review and subsequent re-structure. The improved sickness absence monitoring and associated procedures delivered by the central HR team is having a significant positive impact across the Trust, and long term sickness absence has reduced substantially.</p> <p>Estates compliance is very high and is now fully in place at KMA and WEA. The buildings are safer and better maintained than ever before, due to the continued efforts from the premises team.</p> <p>In response to a questions concerning GDPR data breaches, FOI requests and subject access requests, further details were provided and the significant work involved discussed by Trustees. Trustees were reassured by the procedures in place across the Trust and the support provided to Headteachers when these breaches / requests arise.</p> <p>iv) CFO Summary</p> <p>The CEO began by drawing attention to the general update within the report, and the GAG allocations for 2019-20. It was highlighted that as a Trust and in line with the national picture the overall level of funding has increased due to an increase in pupil numbers, however, some of the schools within the Trust have suffered losses. Trustees reviewed the comparative GAG allocations along with variances in pupil numbers, and the disparity between funding allocations received. A question was raised regarding tracking pupil premium information back to early years' providers to ensure schools had the complete information.</p> <p>Draft budgets had been prepared and the Hub Board Resources Committee had reviewed each in detail in order to recommend ratification to the Hub Board. The Hub</p> | |

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| <p>Board had ratified budgets, including the Return to Balance (RTB) plans which were in production for WPA and AMD. WPA continues to face severe funding challenges, and a small PAN has resulted in financial unsustainability at AMD in its current form. The PAN will therefore be formally increased and a new build to increase classroom capacity to 30 across the school.</p> <p>The RTB plans had been circulated to Trustees and in discussion and questions it was noted that a range of measures have been implemented at WPA to address the budget including additional scrutiny and support from the CFO and AFO, staffing efficiencies including reduction of leadership non-contact time, review of breakfast and after school clubs, SEN additional funding to be requested, and limits of expenditure to be put in place.</p> <p>The reserves were reviewed as outlined within the report, and the current reserves at £782k were noted. Overall the fall in consolidated reserves are mainly due to capital spend which is taking place during the summer holidays, for a range of essential projects such as roofing and toilets. Trustees discussed the consolidation of funding and that some trusts hold all funding centrally – it was agreed that the schools should continue to set budgets based on their own funding.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees ratified the budgets of all schools, including the Return to Balance plans at WPA and AMD.</p> | |
| <p>6. Ratification of Budgets</p> | |
| <p>See detailed discussions within item 5.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees ratified the budgets of all schools, including the Return to Balance plans at WPA and AMD.</p> | |
| <p>7. Policy Review</p> | |
| <p>The CEO indicated that work is being undertaken on the Trust policy review and a synopsis sheet will be provided at the next meeting which will provide an update on the position and the amendments made to policies.</p> <p>The data retention policy with respect to the new converter school was being reviewed as this falls within Barnsley LA and their parameters to retrospectively request data varied from Wakefield LA. Work is ongoing.</p> <p>Trustees welcomed the streamlined process and the work which was being undertaken on policy review.</p> | |
| <p>8. Any other business</p> | |
| <p>The CEO with prior agreement with the Chair indicated there are two items of any other business.</p> <p>8.1 The Trust had been approached by the BBC for an FOI request based upon the schools which were re-brokered following the collapse of WCAT. The Trust had provided the information in the format requested, in a timely, open and transparent manner. Following this the BBC had entered into discussions with the Trust regarding</p> | |

| ITEM | ACTION |
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| <p>KMA and/or WEA appearing on a documentary following the re-brokerage. The CEO had spoken with Heads, and had confirmed that only KMA would be interested and appropriate for the documentary, and the Head was keen to share the success stories and the improvement the school had made.</p> <p>Trustees debated in detail the potential negative or positive impact on reputation of the portrayal of the school and the re-brokerage from WCAT. The CEO confirmed that although there could be discussion and agreement on the tone of the interviews, there was no guarantee on how the school or Trust would be portrayed and there was no editorial right. A query was raised whether a transcript of interviews could be obtained prior to the completion of the documentary.</p> <p>Following a lengthy discussion and the weighing up of potential risks, it was agreed that the success story of the school should be shown, and that as far as possible control measures put in place with the BBC to mitigate against any potentially negative reputational damage or references to the WCAT situation. The CEO will progress discussions with the BBC and update the Trustees.</p> <p>8.2 <i>Confidential item – minutes held separately</i></p> | CEO |
| <p>9. Feedback to/from Hub Board and ASCs</p> | |
| <p>S Johnson, Chair of the Local Hub Board, provided an update from the Hub Board meeting held on 25th June 2019. The feedback from the work undertaken by Darren Dickinson on the disadvantaged children's strategy had been extremely positive.</p> <p>The Hub Board had also challenged the Trust to undertake further work on sports premium and ensuring sports are inclusive, that all schools ensure sport is within their curriculum offer that children are given the opportunity to represent their school or participate in sporting events. The CEO confirmed that a review of sports premium spending is taking place and an overall strategy will be considered.</p> <p>The Hub Board had also raised a challenge in terms of enrichment activities for all and that Governors need to understand what enrichment activities / trips are taking place within their schools to ensure children are given opportunities across all the schools. It was suggested that an enrichment update could be included as part of the Headteacher reports.</p> <p>Trustees thanked S Johnson for his comprehensive feedback, and for the work undertaken by the Hub Board and its Committees.</p> | |
| <p>10. Identification of Confidential Items</p> <p>It was confirmed that a discussion held within an item of any other business (8.2) was confidential and therefore the minutes of these will be held separately.</p> | |
| <p>11. Confirmation of Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> | |
| <p>It was agreed to move the next scheduled meeting of the Trust Board from 17th September to 24th September at 6pm (Clerk to confirm suitability with all Trustees).</p> | Clerk |

MEETING CLOSED 8:15 pm

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Actions from the Trust Board meeting held on 18 July 2019

| Agenda Item N° | Summary of Action | Who? | When? |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|
| 5 | Additional risks to be included on the risk register concerning IT and delivery of the curriculum; property portfolio. | CEO | Before next mtg |
| 5 | Contact Members regarding additional Trustee appointments | Clerk | asap |
| 5 | Complete further due diligence regarding the Kirklees school and provide an update to Trustees | CEO | asap |
| 8.1 | The CEO will progress discussions with the BBC and update the Trustees. | CEO | asap |