



Venture Multi Academy Trust.
Meeting Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting.
Monday 22nd March 2021, held via Zoom.

	<p>Present: Philip Robinson- (PR) Chair of the Trust Board Julia Dodson (JD) Vice Chair Will Johnson (WJ) CEO of Venture MAT and Head Teacher at TLA Ben Jones (BJ) Trustee Harry Hart (HH) Trustee Alan Honeybone (AH) Trustee</p>	
	<p>In attendance: Sam Newman- Clerk Jo Long- COO Kirsty Hitchens- Deputy Head Belinda Burton- BSO</p>	

Item		Actions
1.	<p>Apologies, welcome and quorum Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, no apologies received from IR.</p>	
2.	<p>Declaration of business and pecuniary interest Nothing to declare.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes and Matters arising from the last meeting. TLA LGB (08/02/2021) SIS LGB (10/03/2021) Minutes were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising- WJ to seek feedback from the primary school that decided to join another MAT. Clerk to ensure the Chair has trustees contact details. Discuss in detail the 4 year plan for SIS at the next meeting. Parent governor vacancy to be posted online and emailed out to all parents 26.01.21.</p> <p>Chair asked Trustees if they were all happy that the minutes from the previous meetings were a true and accurate representation of the meeting? Trustees agreed.</p>	

	<p>The Chair asked if everyone had had a chance to look at the minutes from the SIS meeting, and if anyone had any comments? No trustees had questions at this point.</p> <p>The Chair then questioned the comment in the minutes referring to Camel Valley mental health worker being based at SIS one day a week, and asked the CEO if he could elaborate?</p> <p>Answer: CEO explained it's an approach around driving for mental health support, the school had the opportunity to have someone based at SIS to help coordinate local work, noting that it would be a distinct advantage to having them in school, TLA will also be looking at supporting this at their school.</p> <p>CEO did explain that it would be more low level mental health work for families that are struggling.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if they would get feedback?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, the school will, which will in turn be passed on to the trustees, we need to look at the benefits of having them based in the school, will the Council agree to this for a good period of time.</p> <p>A trustee challenged agenda point 9 (Safeguarding) where the HoS quotes that he was anticipating a rise in pastoral concerns after lockdown, and there are some early signs of this already.</p> <p>Answer: CEO explained that this was down to vulnerable children, some with significant issues however these families are returning after lockdown, and are currently receiving good provision.</p> <p>A trustee asked if there were any questions from either LGB?</p> <p>Answer: No, not at present.</p> <p>The trustee then questioned why it was that in both sets of minutes there was no heading for this, expressing that it would be a good idea to have this as an agenda point at the meetings, even if there were no questions, it would still be good to know this has been asked and noted.</p> <p>Answer: Clerk to manage this.</p> <p>SIS building work due to start next week.</p> <p>A governor on the TLA LGB is looking at the ARB budget, a meeting has already happened with that link governor, the ARB (as previously discussed) is increasing from 25 to 30 pupils. The link governor will support managing that move to full capacity. CEO has been through the plan with the governor, to update the trustees: the staffing plan is in place and will start next week.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there were other comments for the LGB's?</p> <p>Answer: No.</p> <p>CEO informed trustees of 2 new TLA governors, 1 parent who was the ideal candidate for the role, and number 2 was great for a community governor, working with CAMHS. Great skill sets from both, this was to be an agenda point further into the meeting.</p>	<p>SN</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Latest Budget Monitoring Report</p> <p>BSO asked if everyone was happy with the report, and did trustees have any questions?</p> <p>Answer: Trustees were happy with the report, and did not have any challenge.</p> <p>BSO focus points were the increases at TLA on staffing and SIS growth funding.</p> <p>No red flags at all, no issues that need addressing, just need to ensure we keep on top of it, savings, curriculum expenditure, looking at which budgets will underspend versus which will overspend.</p> <p>It was also noted that we would see an impact from the government decisions in the way they have changed pupil premium funding in schools going forward, previously it was based on the census in January of each academic year, however now it has become the October census from the</p>	

	<p>previous year.</p> <p>TLA admin staff did a huge push on FSM applications between October and January, with an extra 10-15 pupils added to the list, unfortunately there were significantly less children on the October census due to not having applied for FSM, parents were still on the furlough scheme etc, lockdown came after this, it will impact quite significantly, especially for TLA.</p> <p>A trustee questioned if the schools were given guidelines as to why it was changed?</p> <p>Answer: Officially the reason was because it would bring everything into line, streamlining the process and everything would then be allocated on the same basis.</p> <p>CEO stated that the school will need to be pushing for this before September each year, potentially looking at sending them to the new pupils' parents before starting the academic year. TLA is set to lose approximately £20,000. It will affect budget planning for April, next year will also be affected by it. Hopefully funding will go back up for April 2022.</p> <p>A trustee asked if it was not like LAG funding? Assuming this is a snapshot and it won't catch up?</p> <p>Answer: Correct.</p> <p>The next focus point will be the FSM that was provided during lockdown, term time, we are able to claim it back, however they have not published how to claim back as yet. This stands to be approximately £15,000 for TLA.</p> <p>Last to discuss is SIS growth funding, which has started to come through. It is now included in their figures, the additional funding equates to £35427. We have already received 7/12 of it. Any questions?</p> <p>Answer: No.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>CEO Update (Inc. Safeguarding, Health & Safety)</p> <p>Key to report: We are open back and running as a full school at TLA and SIS. Attendance rate at both is very high, close to 100%</p> <p>Atmosphere has been lovely at schools.</p> <p>No reports for covid cases at either school. Shielding is finishing 31st March, notified both schools' shielders, no concerns from anyone.</p> <p>Trustee asked how that would affect the governors/ trustees being able to access the school?</p> <p>Answer: CEO explained that for now they would still need to stay away. Bubble work will still remain, only when restrictions have been lifted will we return to normal, then trustees and governors will again be permitted to enter the premises.</p> <p>Important meetings can now be face to face.</p> <p>Wrap around care has begun again, meeting the need for working parents.</p> <p>Week 1 catch up learning tutor group will finish next week, then we will reassess and target another group for next term.</p> <p>Safeguarding provisions- Police reports, this year to date have seen 38 incidents, normal year is around 13.</p> <p>Attendance is excellent, the full curriculum is running, and academic baselines have been redone, it's difficult to tell who is on track currently. Careful writing samples have seen regression in basic handwriting and grammar, not so much the vocabulary.</p> <p>A national data pilot was launched focusing around year 5 children and has noted 22 months of regression, we don't believe we're seeing quite as severe as that here.</p> <p>Average ability readers are looking at 4 months to a year regression, lower ability can show up to 2 years regression, we believe these are temporary and easily helped to get back on track. We have already started to reassess and are confident we will see enormous progression</p>	

5.2	<p>through the summer term. Confident the progress will be fast, unfortunately there is no comparable data.</p> <p>A trustee expressed concern that year 6 children have missed half of year 5 and year 6, and questioned if secondary schools were liaising with primaries to allow support, stronger transition?</p> <p>Answer: CEO agreed that the year 6's were the year group that had potentially lost the most learning, there is always a natural academic push for focusing them to sats on a normal year, without that being there the motivation is visibly less, with children struggling to get back on board. Secondary schools have looked at Nexus: doing tests differently this year, there's nothing else yet. Awaiting any updates from secondary schools.</p> <p>A trustee questioned safeguarding and team teach for ARB, and wondered if the rest of the teachers in the school fulfill their team teach?</p> <p>Answer: Relevant staff from main school get involved with the ARB training, whilst covid has been ongoing, all update training was put on hold. Long term, we will be looking at investing in training the trainer, the ARB Manager is signed on for the training the trainer part.</p> <p>The trustee wanted to ensure the staff were covered.</p> <p>CEO stated that they were, the right people have the right training.</p> <p>Staffing updates:</p> <p>TLA site assistant advert will close on Friday, interviews will happen next week, all temp contracts have now been notified, and we have signed a fixed term contract in ARB for 1 teacher.</p> <p>Temporary maternity leave post in the ARB will now be advertised as a full time teacher post, aiming at the early years provision, which will go up on Friday.</p> <p>SIS we will look at staffing structures.</p> <p>Looking at longevity in the HoS, small school headship is tough, headship management time will be looked at to ensure he is given enough time (not teaching) to be able to support his role.</p> <p>Year 2 / 3 class which will only have 22 (part of 4 year plan) will not have TA support.</p> <p>It will be costed and taken to the F and GP meeting in June.</p> <p>We will look to invest in HoS at SIS, maintain as long as possible, look at the budget and ensure the head can do the job efficiently in the time he has got.</p> <p>Next steps will be to measure how we are doing, what we want to keep from lockdown (IT provision) learning from lockdown.</p> <p>Fundamental priorities, we have made a good start, we're only now getting back to some of the other priorities, wider curriculum etc.</p>	
6. 6.1	<p>COO Update</p> <p>Finance:</p> <p>Finance budget for 20/21 uploaded monthly, happy to go through at any time with any trustee wanting to, the F, GP and Audit Committee have been through this report in detail on the 10th march, as well as reviewing financial benchmarking.</p> <p>That has now been submitted to the DfE, and was submitted in time for the deadline. KPI maintaining a sound financial position, we are in a very strong position, reserves of £1.2m.</p> <p>We need to be sure we are keeping a level of reserve reasonable from questions and protecting funds for any mishaps unforeseen, all the while spending all income. Plans for reserves will be looked at by COO and CEO and reviewed in June at the next F and GP meeting.</p> <p>Budget for 21/22: Received General Annual Grant (GAG)</p> <p>TLA is £2.1m.</p> <p>SIS is £308,816.</p> <p>Pupil numbers were taken from October 2020.</p>	

<p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>Teachers pay grant and pay grant have now been incorporated into the GAG, there is no separate grant.</p> <p>3 year projection both GAG are looking lower for next year, some pay awards will not be as high as we thought they would be. There is no growth. With a high level of reserves COO is not concerned, however needs to remain cautious.</p> <p>Pupil premium funding is likely to take a hit in both schools. Hopeful that SIS isn't massively affected.</p> <p>TLA will need to look at how to allocate spending.</p> <p>Any questions?</p> <p>Answer: No.</p> <p>One trustee congratulated the team on the sound position they are currently in.</p> <p>A trustee asked if the leaders would be looking at provisions?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, a project prior to lockdown was development of the reception teaching space, and will be looking at moving forward with the plan soon.</p> <p>It is linked to our school improvement plan.</p> <p>We do have a spend plan, which takes a huge amount of money with some big spend projects.</p> <p>Premises update. The Premises Manager has been looking at both sites and creating priority projects, when we set the budget we then know what needs doing, as discussed previously will be the replacement of intruder and fire alarms.</p> <p>HH offered any help needed with this project, had decided to sell the business so will not have any conflicts of interests.</p> <p>Canopy work is starting at SIS, it was discussed at the F,GP and Audit meeting, accomodation and the potential of splitting classrooms, with an approximate cost of £70,000, we've enquired with the DfE and Diocese. HoS has spoken with the Diocese to see whether they would consider it with it being their premises.</p> <p>HR update:</p> <p>Part time site assistant will start on 10th May.</p> <p>A member of the teaching staff who is currently part time has requested to return full time from Easter, this has been agreed and we will re-issue a full time contract.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Data Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progress against audit report actions ● Appointment of Lead Trustee (See Role Description) <p>Last meeting we received an audit report from a data protection officer which highlighted areas to improve. All required actions have been put into a table for ease of monitoring and colour coded to reflect the status. Amber areas have not yet been completed but are in progress. Green areas are fully complete. 3 areas were green.</p> <p>Amber - It has been recommended by the DPO that the Trust has a GDPR lead trustee. It would not be for a trustee to do the job, but would be a link between themselves and the school, and would provide greater scrutiny of GDPR issues.</p> <p>The role description was shared which states the areas the lead trustee should be scrutinising, COO asked for a trustee who was happy to take on the role.</p> <p>Ben Jones was happy to volunteer.</p> <p>COO thanked him for volunteering, and will share reports with him going forward.</p> <p>All remaining trustees were asked if they were happy to appoint Ben as the lead trustee for GDPR?</p> <p>All trustees agreed and Ben was appointed. This action point is now</p>	

	<p>complete.</p> <p>Complete - KPIs indicators for data protection were agreed at the last meeting.</p> <p>Complete - Review date set for Impact assessments which should be reviewed annually. Will be done in August/Sept each year.</p> <p>2 others outstanding: The record of processing activity log, which will be looked at on 26th April when JL meets with the DPO. Overarching policy on how the trust manages records from creation, storage to destruction. Queried with DPO, we currently have a retention schedule and Information Security policy and don't want to duplicate.</p> <p>Complete - How we remind parents that they can review contact preferences. Office have a plan in place for this and an annual reminder will be sent. COO asked trustees if they had any further questions? Answer: No.</p>	
8.	<p>Governor Recruitment Update</p> <p>CEO informed trustees of 2 new governor candidates, the first being Krystal Warren who had been elected by the parents, and Joe Parma who would need to be formally appointed by trustees at this meeting, it was noted that both candidates DBS's had come back so this wouldn't be subject to waiting on them.</p> <p>Chair asked if trustees were happy to appoint Joe as the newest Community governor for the TLA LGB? Trustees agreed and Joe was appointed as a Community governor, official start dates for both were 22/03/2021.</p>	
9.	<p>Policies:</p> <p>Complaints Policy (update)</p> <p>The DfE contacted us to inform us that our policy was incorrect. It was noted that an independent member would be on the hearing panel, however it wasn't in our policy, it has now been updated by COO. trustees need to ratify the policy. All highlighted in yellow were the changes.</p> <p>A trustee questioned point 9- monitoring arrangements, is this new? Answer: No, we keep a record of complaints and what stage they were settled at, this was more that trustees were informed of any complaints, that's the way a trustee would monitor.</p> <p>A trustee then challenged a section which stated trustees were to monitor the effectiveness, and questioned how they were able do that? Will would highlight and report to you as trustees. The trustee highlighted the fact that the word effectiveness is a strange word to have there.</p> <p>Answer: COO stated that trustees will know about all official complaints, the CEO said that he understood how this could be misunderstood by having the word 'effectiveness', for 2 aspects, whether they are resolved at the right stage, or if complaints are about the same things (how effective is the process) After discussion it was agreed that the word 'effective' would be removed from that sentence in the complaints policy. Chair asked, is everyone happy to adopt with the changes? Yes, all trustees agreed to adopt.</p>	
10.	Confidential items	

	Agenda item 10 is to remain confidential.	
11.	Date and time of next meeting Monday 24th May at 5pm via Zoom.	

Agenda point.	Summary of actions.	Who.
3.	Clerk to ensure there is an agenda point of correspondence from the LGB's to Trustees for every meeting.	SN
6.	Plans for reserves will be looked at by COO and CEO and reviewed in June at the next F and GP meeting.	WJ/JL
9.	COO to make changes to complaints policy as requested by trustees. Wording could be 'trustees are monitoring complaints procedure' instead.	JL

Meeting closed by Chair at 6:47pm.

Signed as an accurate record.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Please note that these are draft minutes until signed off by the Chair at the next meeting.