



Venture Multi Academy Trust.

Meeting Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting.

Monday 24th May 2021, held via Zoom.

Company Number: 7535379

	<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. Joined at agenda point 4 until agenda point 9.</p>	
	<p>In attendance: Sam Newman- Clerk Jo Long- COO Kirsty Hitchens- Deputy Head</p>	

Item		Action
1.	<p>Apologies, welcome and quorum The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that the meeting was quorate within the terms of reference for Venture MAT. No apologies were received from IR.</p>	
2.	<p>Declaration of business and pecuniary interest No declarations were identified for any agenda points.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting BoT(22/03/2021) TLA LGB(26/04/2021) SIS LGB (11/05/2021) Minutes from the previous meetings were circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair asked if all trustees were happy that they were a true representation of the meeting. All Trustees agreed that they were a true representation of the meeting and the chair will sign off at school. Matters arising from the last meeting: Clerk to ensure there is an agenda point of correspondence from the LGB's to Trustees for every meeting. SN Plans for reserves will be looked at by COO and CEO and reviewed in June at the next F and GP meeting. WJ/JL</p>	

	<p>COO to make changes to complaints policy as requested by trustees. Wording could be 'trustees are monitoring complaints procedure' instead. JL</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Latest Budget Monitoring Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ICT additional spend (£12k) <p>Relevant papers were distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>TLA update- The report was sent out last week and the Clerk requested questions ahead of the meeting, no questions have come from the Trustees beforehand. A Trustee questioned if the management report would be talked through at the meeting? Answer: No, it was handed out before the meeting for any questions, due to no questions coming back it was not necessary to go through in detail. Clerk noted the thanks from the Trustees for the COO (Chief Operating Officer) and BSO's (Business Support Officer) fantastic work on the spreadsheet, it was laid out fantastically. COO highlighted the maintenance budget with a predicted overspend of £4000, which has now risen to £8000. Site manager has received 3 quotes for the fire alarms upgrade, with the lowest and preferred quote being with Duchy Alarms at £7495, and the intruder alarms upgrade quote being £3709 with Waldons. A Trustee questioned if the systems were proprietary? In his previous experiences within the sector the Trustee explained that he had sometimes found that a supplier's quote would have low installation costs, however extremely large annual maintenance costs. Answer: The COO explained that she had had a contractual obligations discussion with the Site Manager today, he will seek clarification and the COO will report back to the Trustees via email the annual maintenance costs and whether or not it is proprietary. There were also some additional small repairs and works needing to be done, however the COO assured the Trustees that this would not affect reserves. The additional money would predominantly come from the staffing line. The site team would be looking to get the contractors in during the Summer holidays to start the work. There were also 3 quotes for a decorator to paint the outside fascias, the quotes differed vastly, with the cheapest being approximately £2000 and the most expensive being approximately £18000, the site manager decided to go with the cheapest quote, however because of the large difference in price has had to ensure there was no expectation of lots of pre work to be done by our site team. A trustee challenged whether he had the relevant documentation due to the low quote. Answer: Yes, he did have the correct documentation. A Trustee questioned if that price would include any scaffolding costs if needed. Answer: No scaffolding would be needed for the job. The COO asked if all Trustees were happy to agree to the overspend. Trustees agreed to the overspend as long as they had clarification for the proprietary aspect and the annual maintenance costs. AH joined the meeting. Another line for attention was for the £12000 planned overspend within the IT budget, covering a multitude of things which the IT Manager originally put forward as part of the budget for next year, however it was deemed better to do it during this financial year. The school would then be ready for starting in</p>	<p>JL</p>

	<p>September and whilst the school had under-spends it seemed the logical option. Included in the overspend would be items such as replacement laptops, a new hall projector, new ipads and additional chromebooks for staff as well as a new wireless network.</p> <p>The COO expressed that the overspend would not come from reserves, however needed to clarify with Trustees that they would be happy to spend the additional money. The money has come from the staffing line where the school has saved due to non replacement of staff, retired colleagues.</p> <p>The COO asked if trustees were happy for that to happen?</p> <p>Answer: All trustees agreed to the overspend.</p> <p>ARB funding line has additional income of £41000 from the start of year, this was largely due to the LA (Local Authority) commissioning additional places and top up funding that each additional child attracts. The ARB staff budget line is overspending is £22000 as a consequence of employing additional staff to cover the increase in pupils. A full costing exercise has been undertaken to compare full year ARB income with all expenditure, not just direct staffing costs to ensure that all ARB income is spent in year.</p> <p>Capital budget for TLA is showing an underspend, this was due to a large purchase of chromebooks last year which were delayed in delivery, since then has been diverted through the pupil premium budget line- £35000 and the surplus will go back to reserves at year end.</p> <p>A Trustee challenged the wraparound provision's projected deficit and asked why.</p> <p>Answer: The way wraparound is running isn't cost effective- the income is not covering the cost currently, with the school having to do breakfast club in bubble groups, not being able to have food the school has lost a lot of people that would have used it previously, however numbers are picking up and the Head is hopeful that during the summer term the numbers will continue to grow.</p> <p>A Trustee challenged if it would be the same for after school wrap around care?</p> <p>Answer: Yes.</p> <p>The school has also been looking at an after school wrap-around facility for nursery children, and also an increase in pricing which hasn't moved for a considerable length of time.</p> <p>SIS update-</p> <p>The COO explained that there had been additional spending since that report, which was currently approximately £5000. £2000 has been spent on outdoor learning provision, plus another £2000 for replacement nursery equipment. £1000 is for additional equipment for the reception class to be able to accommodate 30 children instead of the 18 it currently has.</p>	
5.	<p>CEO Update (Inc. Safeguarding, Health & Safety)</p> <p>Relevant papers were distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>No big changes in headline figures.</p> <p>SEN (Special Educational Needs) and PP (Pupil Premium) are fairly stable, attendance at both schools remain good, persistent absence has fallen in both schools with no covid changes.</p> <p>No exclusions at SIS and 1 extra exclusion at TLA, which resulted in a 2 day fixed term due to a child that had physically hurt another child.</p> <p>1 child at dual reg at a PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) from TLA</p> <p>Covid working is getting better, with staff continuing to test twice a week, with all staff offered a vaccine.</p> <p>Head discussed the standards and assessment updates.</p> <p>JD temporarily left the meeting.</p>	

	<p>Tutoring budget has £8000 left, the school is awaiting what levels of funding will be offered for the following year.</p> <p>Safeguarding update- TLA high number of concerns, operation encompass- 53 reports to date this year. Pastoral team is currently coping.</p> <p>SIS- no change, pastoral work at normal levels.</p> <p>Section 175/154 report has been sent to County Council- quality of feedback is sparse, nothing specific to work on. Currently awaiting detailed feedback.</p> <p>A Trustee challenged the CEO comments made about Social Services not up to scratch- highlighting the difficulties that the school has experienced during the lockdown and questioned whether it is likely to reverse or to be used as an excuse to rely heavily on schools going forward?</p> <p>Answer: They have very heavy workloads currently, so they are relying on schools a lot. There is a specific case at TLA where there were many missed opportunities which could have stopped the impact from happening. CEO will form an action plan when we get the feedback, WJ will bring it to Trustees and Governors.</p> <p>JD rejoined the meeting.</p> <p>NG is training to be a mental health leader.</p> <p>A Trustee questioned if there were any numbers to compare to regarding this?</p> <p>Answer: No, I would say comparable data is from the number of concerns made by staff.</p> <p>Social media is playing a big part in this.</p> <p>Staffing update- The CEO and COO are costing ready for the budget meeting at the end of June.</p> <p>TA line at TLA is high due to the amount of EHCP that requires 121's. Rest are slightly below.</p> <p>After the round of interviews for the ARB teacher position, with 17 applicants being shortlisted to 6, it was agreed that there was such a vast amount of expertise the school would invest in 2 teachers and cancelled the TA vacancies. It is a new model for TLA, and will be reviewed constantly to check the sustainability.</p> <p>Reception- 5 EHCP for TLA next year, an additional 2 could still potentially come. If there are 7 EHCP's, they may all require 121 TA support. It was agreed that the school would invest in a third teacher for 1 year in Reception classes. Not sustainable year on year, but will be monitored.</p> <p>MW assistant head at TLA back in with her keeping in touch days.</p> <p>SIS staffing update-</p> <p>2 TA resignations, 1 was known about, she was wanting to work with older children which wasn't possible at SIS. Replaced already with a member of staff from the nursery, now the nursery has a vacancy.</p> <p>Premises update- Reception playground works have started, struggling to gain quotes as people are too busy to come and look, will get to trustees as soon as we get them in.</p> <p>Standards and assessments- encouraging figures, children catching up quickly. TLA and SIS are doing a series of reading and maths tests weekly, showing the speed of progress.</p> <p>TLA- Key marker broad statements that the cohort are working near age related levels etc. It is showing confidence that they are improving and getting back to the age related level.</p> <p>Maths tests-</p> <p>Individual scores as they go up through the weeks, children are working back at where they were in November. That is not the whole picture with maths though.</p> <p>Benchmark is the end of June/ beginning of July, standardised tests are comparable against a big cohort of children across the country.</p> <p>No questions around assessments.</p>	<p>WJ</p>
--	--	-----------

	<p>TQ- IWe need to stop comparing to last years, they are not behind, they have made fab progress, accelerated progress, they are not behind they are with the rest of the country.</p> <p>Answer: Agreed, they missed routine structure and practice. Only a few that will struggle again having been knocked further back.</p>	
6.	<p>COO Update (Inc. Data Protection)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fire & Intruder Alarm upgrade (quotes) <p>Relevant papers were distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Talked through in detail during agenda point 4.</p> <p>Standard KPIs on overall financial position. Carry forward £1.2m.</p> <p>Cost of Staff as % of total core funding (Inc. GAG, Pupil Premium, SEN, Pay & Pension Grant) is 77% for SIS and 79% TLA.</p> <p>As previously discussed, the SIS expansion, we have been informed, would be considered a significant change, therefore would mean consulting with LA about increasing spaces, as well as the RSC (Regional Schools Commissioner), due to the fact that SIS is a 'requires improvement' it would not be fast tracked.</p> <p>Data protection- The termly review meeting is scheduled for 18th May. No breaches or incidents recorded.</p> <p>GDPR training has been allocated to Trustees on the IHASCO training system. All staff have also been assigned this training.</p>	
7.	<p>MAT Growth</p> <p>CEO included a newsletter from RSS into the folder, which follows on from news from Gavin Williamson on extension of Academies programme and eagerness to get everyone on board by 2025.</p> <p>Key questions are around SAT's etc, also the reason why the government is pushing it, 35-40% across the country are academies. South West (Cornwall are 80%) already academised, therefore ahead of the rest of the Country currently. 57 schools from April onwards which are still maintained across the County.</p> <p>Whilst there is no imminent danger for Venture MAT, it would make sense to write to the RSC now and explain our position currently, the Diocese will also support us with this.</p> <p>If trustees are happy, the CEO will write to the RSC regarding expansion and if they are happy to support us.</p> <p>Trustees agreed for the letter to be written to the RSC.</p> <p>A Trustee expressed the need to continue to spread the great work that the MAT does.</p> <p>A Trustee also expressed her thoughts on how to give the MAT extra exposure with things such as: pictures, social media, newspapers.</p>	WJ/JL
8.	<p>Trade Union Relationship</p> <p>JL and WJ met with two of the teaching unions on 23/3/21 to begin to build a positive working relationship and establish a mutually agreeable way forward. A representative from Browne Jacobson was also in attendance. JL stated that the meeting was a positive one with some sensible suggestions that were to be presented to Trustees for consideration.</p> <p>The first was for the MAT to understand the purpose of the Trade Union Facilities Fund and contribute to this in 21/22, at a cost of £1.5 per pupil (approx £800).</p> <p>A Trustee questioned whether this was something that the MAT had to do?</p>	

	<p>Answer: No, even if we don't pay into the facilities fund, members will still be represented if needed. However, without internal trade union representatives, support would need to be given by reps in other schools or regional reps and the facilities fund is there to reimburse those schools for releasing their staff to undertake union activities and to train reps to the levels required to support members. If a staff member at Venture chose to become a rep, we are legally required to ensure they are released for union work and we would want to be reimbursed for their time and so it only seems fair to contribute.</p> <p>Following a full discussion, Trustees agreed to sign up to the Facilities fund for 21/22.</p> <p>The next proposal is that the establishment of a committee to consider policy changes etc. and to fulfil the requirement for us to consult seems like a sensible approach. The MAT doesn't have any union representatives at the moment but our understanding is that the unions have written to members in school.</p> <p>Should any staff member wish to become a union representative, they would need training to give them the knowledge and skills to do this and would take some time. The cost of this training would be paid for by the unions.</p> <p>A Trustee challenged that he would like to think the MAT has a good relationship with staff already without union reps.</p> <p>Answer: Yes, we do, however we do need to consult staff and unions on changes to certain policies and at present, the union aspect of this is difficult due to the lack of a committee with this remit. Any member of staff who wants to become a rep can do so at any time.</p> <p>A Trustee asked - If no one within the school takes up being a rep how will it move on?</p> <p>Answer- It would fall to local/regional union reps.</p> <p>A Trustee asked - Is there any idea of how many of the staff are members of a union?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, an anonymous survey was carried out from which the COO had 76 responses. 41 are not in a union.</p> <p>The majority of teachers are in a union, the majority of teaching assistants are not.</p> <p>Following a full discussion, it was felt that further questions need to be asked about the establishment of a committee and how future consultation will work if no internal union reps are appointed.</p> <p>JL/WJ will feed back to the unions what has been discussed and seek clarity on this issue.</p>	JL/WJ
9.	<p>Policies Relevant papers were distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equality and Diversity Policy ● Risk Management Policy ● Charging and Remissions <p>All changes were in red ink, these were all noted as very minor changes. Are all Trustees happy to adopt?</p> <p>Answer: Yes.</p>	
10.	<p>Questions/ comments from the LGB's. There were no comments or questions from the LGB. CEO explained that the Summer Term monitoring visits had started and would be complete by the 18th June.</p>	

11.	Confidential items It was agreed that part of agenda item 4 was to be kept confidential. Part 2 of minutes.	
12.	Date and time of next meeting The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 12th July at Trevithick Learning Academy. It was discussed for virtual versus face to face. It has been agreed that the next meeting will be face to face, however moving forward will now be a blended approach, with some virtual meetings and some face to face.	

Agenda point.	Summary of actions.	Who
4	COO will report back to the Trustees via email the annual maintenance costs and whether or not it is proprietary.	JL
5	Form an action plan when we get the feedback regarding the 175/154, WJ will bring it to Trustees and Governors.	WJ
6	CEO will write to the RSC regarding expansion and if they are happy to support us.	WJ/JL
8	JL/WJ will feed back to the unions what has been discussed and seek clarity on this issue.	WJ/JL

Meeting closed by Chair at 19:31pm

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.