

THE BAY LEARNING TRUST
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
held at 4.30pm on Thursday 19 July 2018 at Ripley St Thomas CE Academy

Present: Prof J Crewdson (Chair), Rev Canon P Ballard, Mrs D Cheetham, Mr M Dudfield, Mrs J Garnett, Revd M Gisbourne, Mrs N Gomersall, Mrs E Nicholls (CEO), Mr R Webb, Cllr Mrs V Wilson

In Attendance: Mr A McKinnell (Director of Business & Finance), Mr G Gomersall (Director of Operations), Mrs J Rees (Clerk)

1. The meeting opened with prayer.

2. **APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs J Watson. There were no declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda.

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

This was the last meeting for Revd Gisbourne who has been appointed as a Canon at Ripon Cathedral. The appropriate authorities to be informed of his resignation from the Board.

Mr M Dudfield was welcomed to the Board. Mr Dudfield is currently the Chair of Governors at Carnforth High School and has a background in law.

4. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 March 2018, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

5. **MATTERS ARISING**

Skills Audit of the Directors: A Skills Audit form, based on the one used by Ripley St Thomas Governors, was circulated. Directors were asked to complete the form and return it to Mrs Rees.

Academies Financial Handbook Governing Board Assessment of Compliance Form: The completed form had been circulated. This document had been presented to the Finance and Resources committee. This Trust is compliant.

Seven Principles of Public Life A document showing the seven principles of public life had been circulated. It is important for Directors to be aware of the key elements.

6. **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

a) Quality and Standards

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2018

The Board noted and accepted the minutes of the meeting which had been held on 26 June 2018.

The KS4 dashboard showing the attainment and progress of Ripley St Thomas, Carnforth and Morecambe, was circulated. The document provides an overview of the key performance indicators of the schools in the MAT and gives an initial starting point for future comparison of a number of key areas that the Board should be considering. The dashboards are considered initially by the Quality and Standards Committee together with any plans and actions that need to be taken in the light of the information. Mrs Garnett asked whether the Trust would expected to help raise

ACTION

AMK

Directors

standards within a given time if results were below average. Mrs Nicholls confirmed that the expectation would be to improve things as rapidly as possible.

There was discussion over the levels used to distinguish between high and low prior attainment. The DfE doesn't publish a clear definition of low and high ability. It is important that all the schools in the Trust used the same measures for effective comparison.

Prof Crewdson read out the letter received from Bishop Julian thanking the Board of Directors for all they are doing to support good education in Lancaster, Morecambe and Carnforth.

b) Finance and Resources

The Board noted and accepted the minutes of the meeting which had been held on 28 June 2018, although the date at the top of the minutes had been incorrectly recorded and will need to be amended. The finances are in a good position, slightly better than originally forecast at the beginning of the year. There are no concerns, but the Board need to be aware that the school funding regime is such that schools will be squeezed financially year on year. We still don't know what the teachers' pay settlement or teachers' pension contributions will be.

JR

c) Audit

The Board noted and accepted the minutes of the meeting which had been held on 3 July 2018. GDPR had generated the most discussion at the meeting. It was advised that all Trust communication should be via a Bay Learning Trust email account, rather than to a personal email account. Trust email accounts have been set up for all directors and individual documents were circulated giving the relevant details. Mr Gomersall confirmed that there is nothing to stop Directors setting up an automatic forward to a different account. Instructions on how to do this will be sent out. Directors should note, however, that any replies should be sent from the BLT email address.

GG

The Board confirmed that Mr Gomersall should be the named Data Protection Officer and that Mr McKinnell should be his deputy.

7. CEO REPORT AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mrs Nicholls's report which had been circulated was discussed.

Mrs Garnett asked how large we wanted the Trust to become. Mrs Nicholls reported that the DfE now wants MATs to merge; schools are no longer able to form a MAT. However, our main issue is geography – we are keen that no school should be more than 40 minutes away. An optimum number of pupils would be 5000. The BLT will be very close to that figure with Ripley, Carnforth, Morecambe, [REDACTED], and the two primary schools in the Trust.

Mrs Nicholls has been to an open evening at Morecambe which was attended by approx. 30 parents. There was no hostility at all; parents were very pleased that somebody was coming in to help the school. Mr Webb asked about the staffing reductions of 25% at Morecambe. Mrs Nicholls explained that overstaffing had been the major problem with over 90% of the school's budget on these costs (compared to the recommended level of 74%). Ripley is a much larger school but has far fewer teachers. Morecambe is still overstaffed despite the reduction from 101 to 76 teachers. The school would have been £1.6million in deficit if the changes hadn't been made. No compulsory redundancies have been made.

The Board noted the Development Plan for the year ahead. Mrs Nicholls was pleased to report that Mr Mike Cladingbowl had been appointed as the School Improvement partner. Mr Cladingbowl is the CEO at Knutsford MAT. He will spend a day with each Headteacher every term.

A part-time Trust Administrator has been appointed. Lyndsey Winston is a trained solicitor and is the chair of Governors at Hornby St Margaret's CE Primary. A part-time HR and payroll administrator has also been appointed, as we are taking on the payroll for both Carnforth and Morecambe. Both appointments are from September.

Mrs Nicholls was thanked for her report.

8. TRUST BUDGET

a) Ripley

The Board received the budget for Ripley. This was a worst case scenario budget which includes a 2% pay award for all staff, an increase in teachers' pension liability from 16.5% to 20% and increases in energy costs of up to 30%. The deficit of £57,000 would be covered by Reserves. The 3 year plan was formally approved.

b) Carnforth

Carnforth's budget was circulated. This includes the 2% staff pay award and increases in teachers' Pension contributions, as for Ripley. Beyond next year is very difficult to plan for. We cannot submit a deficit budget. Mr McKinnell's suggestion for budget purposes was to show that savings will be made in staffing over years 2 and 3 to produce a balanced budget. Canon Ballard suggested that this be amended so that there shows a deficit budget of £31,216 in 2019-20 (which would be covered by their reserves), rather than a balanced budget for Year 2. On that basis, the 3 year plan was approved by the Board.

c) Central Costs

The Board noted and approved the central costs budget which included income and expenditure from Carnforth and Ripley.

AMK

9. POLICIES

The following policies were reviewed and approved:

Complaints Policy

Redundancy Policy

Risk Management Policy

Social Media Policy - para 9.7 to be amended to read "... content of their postings ..."

- para 9.15 to be amended to read "not to have any direct ..."

Whistleblowing Policy

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10. APPOINTMENT OF DATA PROTECTION OFFICER

This item was covered under item 6c).

11. GOVERNOR TRAINING

Training will be dependent on what Directors identify as priorities.

12. AOB

A copy of the article which had been printed in the Lancaster Guardian and the Visitor newspapers regarding the Bay Learning Trust was circulated.

13. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The schedule of meetings for 2018-19 was circulated.

Prof Crewdson thanked Revd Gisbourne for all he had done for the Governors at Ripley and for his help in establishing the MAT.

ACTION

The meeting closed with The Grace at 5.40pm

I confirm that the minutes have been agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

Signed.....(Chair)

Date