

Minutes of the Meeting of Trustees
Held via Microsoft Teams on
1st August 2022 at 16:00

Present:

Mr Cole Andrew [CAn]	Chair of Trustees/Member
Dr Martin Hanbury [MHa]	Trustee & CEO
Mrs Louise Hutchinson [LHu]	Trustee [part meeting/via Microsoft Teams]
Mr Paul Willoughy [PWj]	Trustee
Mrs Sue Woodgate [SWo]	Trustee

In Attendance:

Mrs E Taylor [ETa]	Just A Sec (Minutes)
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Absent:

Mr Andrew Bent [ABe]	Trustee
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The meeting met its quorum.

Key: **Trustee question/comment** **Response** **Action Required**

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence CAn

welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Non/Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of Non/Pecuniary interests in respect of any of the agenda items.

LHu informed Trustees of her role as a Director for Chatsworth Engage, which would be raised as an item of Any Other Business.

3. Election of Vice Chair

This action had not been progressed outside of the meeting in light of wider Trustee discussions concerning the long term strategy for the Trust and would be carried over to the next meeting.

Action: Election of Vice Chair to be postponed until the meeting on 29th November 2022 at 16:00.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 28th March 2022 were considered.

Approved: The minutes of the meeting on 28th March 2022 were approved as a correct and accurate record.

5. Matters Arising

CAn addressed the following Matters Arising from the meeting on meeting on 28th March 2022:-

- ***MHa to discuss the Vice Chair role with Trustees outside of the meeting*** – item 3 above.
- ***Election of Vice Chair to be postponed until the meeting on 12th July 2022 at 16:00*** – item 3 above.
- ***MHa would invite the Chairs to meet to discuss and plan regular Chairs forum meetings*** – invitations had been issued. A meeting date had not yet been confirmed and would be progressed outside of the meeting.
- ***MHa to instruct the Schools People to complete a review of personnel records to ensure their accuracy and compliance*** - MHa had made contact with the Schools People and this action would be progressed outside of the meeting. MHa confirmed that an HR system would be purchased to store documents which preceded the formation of the Trust in 2016. Ms McRae, Trust Finance and HR Manager, had consolidated documents from 2016 in any event.
- ***MHa to liaise with LHu in regard to the Link Governor-Trustee role in the area of CPD/Training to facilitate finalisation of Link Governor-Trustee roles at the next meeting*** – discussions had taken place with LHu and Trustees discussed the proposed Trustee-Governor Link document, which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

The following Trustee links were agreed and corresponding college/school/Governor links highlighted:- Safeguarding: CAn

Quality of Education: SWo

Finance: ABe Staff

Well-being: LHu

Risk Management: PWi

Governor Link roles had been discussed within Governing Board meetings and would be finalised, subject to Governor availability. Councillor Reynolds, for example, had been a very competent safeguarding Governor but would be undertaking the role of Deputy Mayor next year which may impact her availability.

TQ: Would the school benefit from the recruitment of a Governance Manager to support with Learning and Management.

Further Governor recruitment was required at the school and this would be remained under review.

TQ: Would there be a Trustee Link for CPD and training needs.

MHa was mindful of the potential risk of creating too many roles which may not be sustainable. It was envisaged that this role would fall within the remit of the Staff Wellbeing Link.

LHu noted that in response to Governor training needs at the school, an SLA would be entered into with Salford Governor Services to support new Governors in their roles. Within this, additional training would be available for existing Governors, which would link with completion of the Skills Audits.

- ***ET to include Quality of Education as a standing item within future Trust Board meeting agendas at item 7(c) - completed.***
- ***CAn to meet with the proposed CHSHH LGB Chair when safe to do so – CAn confirmed that this had not yet been completed and would be progressed outside of the meeting.***
- ***CAn to provide overview of key salient points of the Academy Trust Handbook at the meeting on 28th March 2022 at 16:00 – Trustees agreed that it would be more salient to focus upon the government White Paper at this stage.***
- ***ET to include the review of Pay, Performance Management and Appraisal policies and processes within the LGB meeting cycles for Autumn 2022, to be completed by 31st October 2022 for approval by the FAR Committee/Trust board – this action would be carried over to the next meeting.***
- ***ET to include CEO/Headteacher Performance Management Committee within the summer 2022 timetable to ensure that the Committee was in place prior to Autumn 2022 reviews – MHa continued to be supported by Catherine Dellow and a meeting would be scheduled in September 2022 to review the current academic year. Headteacher performance appraisals required completion by 31st December 2022 and Trustees requested that CEO and Headteacher reviews were progressed as quickly as possible. CAn and PWi agreed to form part of the CEO Performance Management Committee. MHa nominated ABe as the third member of the Committee in light of his role of Chair of Finance Committee.***
Action: MHa to confirm acceptance of the nomination to join the CEO Performance Management Committee with ABe.

Trustees agreed that Catherine Dellow and MHa would meet and prepare appraisal documents in draft format in advance of the meeting of the FAR Committee on 20th September 2022. This would inform the completion of senior leader performance management by 29th November 2022. MHa would request that Catherine Dellow provided a copy of her Curriculum Vitae in advance of this meeting.

- **CAn to organise meeting of Designated Safeguarding Leads and Link Governors to ensure the consistency of reporting in regard to safeguarding across the Trust** – CAn confirmed that a very positive safeguarding meeting had taken place with two safeguarding leads. This would be progressed further outside of the meeting.
- **MHa to provide Trustees with the Curriculum Vitae of Catherine Dellow in advance of the next meeting** – this had not been circulated however, MHa highlighted that Catherine was well known to the Trust and CAn and had held MHa to account in regard to completion of the performance management process. Working with Catherine had been positive and stimulating.
- **ET to circulate Annual Trustee Skills Audit to Trustees for return to MHa following completion** – the National Governance Association Skills Audit had been uploaded to the GovernorHub meeting folder.

Action: Trustees to provide completed Annual Trustee Skills Audits to MHa for review and collation by no later than 8th November 2022.

- **MHa to update Trustees in regard to the judgement upon overall effectiveness in September 2022** – MHa confirmed that the most recent meeting of the Quality of Education Working Group had been postponed however, sufficient data remained available from the current academic year to review the judgement in September 2022. This data would be further supplemented by Pupil Progress outturn data. Trustees therefore agreed that the review would take place at the meeting on 29th November 2022. Documents would be circulated to Trustees in advance of the meeting, which would allow Trustees to compare individual student targets with EHCPs. The data could be further broken down into key cohorts, which would include consideration of different Key Stages, should Trustees wish to do so.

Action: ETa to list the judgement upon overall effectiveness as an agenda item for the meeting on 29th November 2022.

6. Items for Any Other Business

An item of Other Business concerning the appointment of two Teaching Assistants [TAs] at Chatsworth Engage was received from LHU and accepted for discussion.

7. Core Reports a) Risk Register

Trustees were referred to the Summer 2022 Risk Register, which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

MHa noted that the requirement to ensure the protection of the Quality of Education [QOE] during the current refinement of the Trust budgets had been recognised. A broad narrative had been prepared, which had been refined by PWi into the current Risk Register.

PWi confirmed that previous Risk Register items had not been amended. The QOE risk had been rated as an high strategic risk. The key issue was one of control. The risk was mitigated by the Senior Leadership Team [SLT] across the Trust working closely with staff members and the quality of the induction and Quality Assurance [QA] programmes. The event was categorised as probable and intolerable. The likelihood would remain probable however, with the benefit of the mitigating actions, in the event of occurrence this would be tolerable.

TQ: Did the risk include the risk of potential Ofsted outcomes.

Potential Ofsted outcomes were not addressed within the QOE risk.

TQ: One of the strengths of the Strategic Plan was the development of leadership across the school, which would be positively reflected within Ofsted outcomes for children. One of the key risks would be to lose the impact of leadership appointments, particularly within the school, and ultimately the loss of effective leaders of education. How could Trustees be assured that this risk would be successfully mitigated.

The Deputy Headteacher roles remained secure with experienced leaders who would be supported to ensure that the strong pastoral elements of their roles continued. The four Assistant Headteacher [AHT] appointments at the school had been excellent. Ms Surrey had secured progression outside the Trust and would leave on excellent terms. Ms Deasey was a strong leader whose work on the assessment and annual review process had been excellent. Ms Connor had successfully led Continued Professional Development [CPD] and attitudinal change across the school from which observable differences had been noted within the students. Ms Donnelly's experience had been particularly evidenced within her work in the area of English as an Additional Language [EAL]

Whilst the risks were acknowledged and the loss of some areas of therapy could not be avoided, the risk was mitigated by the strength of the existing team. MHa remained confident that leaders had developed increased capacity over the course of the current academic year as a consequence of the focus upon curriculum development. This would ensure that leaders were able to absorb increased teaching requirements. MHa would observe, monitor and support this process closely. Teachers would also be encouraged to take ownership of areas of responsibility, for example for Pupil Premium

The input of Mr Wilkinson, Deputy Headteacher, in regard to Schemes of Work [SOWs] would ensure that individual staff members would maintain responsibility for coordinating the model and planning at least one term ahead and ideally longer. The current SOWs were now available until the end of the year and the ultimate aim was to secure a four year cycle to ensure sequenced learning.

TQ: Could Trustees be confident that teaching staff were able to converse confidently in regard to sequences of learning and the good practice which was in place.

MHa considered that it would be appropriate to focus upon the question of how articulately teachers were able to speak about this in the next academic year. SWo agreed to provide support with this area of focus.

Trustees thanked MHa for his excellent responses, which provided clarity in regard to the nature of the QOE risk and the information which would be required to monitor the risk over the next academic year. MHa confirmed that the QOE risk would be reviewed on a flexible two monthly basis to provide clarity and assurance for Trustees.

Action: PWi to include the progression of the strategic development of leadership across the school within mitigation of the QOE risk.

MHa noted that a number of new colleagues would be joining the Trust which included one Early Career Teacher [ECT] and TAs, who would require support, particularly with areas of subject knowledge. MHa would consider this further with Ms Birkinhead outside of the meeting to ensure the continuation of appropriate support, perhaps by the provision of buddying to support the strong induction package which was in place.

TQ: The strategic risks included the risk that the organisation became isolated and inward looking due to it being a specialist provider. One of the current controls was that staff would continue to receive training from external providers. Did the Trust continue links with the GM Moderation Group and The Triad of Schools.

These links had been paused as a consequence of the pandemic however, opportunities were arising to work with partners closely again and MHa would expect these relationships to be progressed. Ms Birkinhead was very keen to maintain these collaborations and had recently forged links with the Manchester Hospital School within the Triad.

Trustees commended the thoroughness of the Risk Register and thanked PWi in particular for his work upon this.

Approved: Trustees approved the Summer 2022 Risk Register and noted that all Risks would be reviewed within the September 2022 meeting of the FAR Committee.

b) Safeguarding

MHa provided Trustees with a verbal update in regard to safeguarding.

Strong safeguarding systems continued to be operated across the Trust. An high quality Trust wide Inset day would take place on 5th September 2022 led by Carolyn Eyre within which all staff members would complete training in adult safeguarding and Child Protection matters to ensure awareness of continuity of need. The Inset day would also be supported by the school nurse which would provide opportunities for general discourse on safeguarding.

MHa and Miss Myers, Deputy Headteacher, would continue to act as Designated Safeguarding Leads. Verbal safeguarding updates would be provided to the Governing Boards, supplemented by annual written safeguarding reports.

c) Quality of Education - deferred

This item would be deferred to the next meeting.

d) Finance

MHa provided Trustees with a verbal update in regard to Finance.

The Budget Forecast Returns had been submitted by the deadline of 26th July 2022. Trustees were thanked for their flexibility in approving the budget documents via email as the decision to approve could not await the current meeting.

Action: ETa to upload approved budget documents to the GovernorHub meeting folder.

The statement for the college funding allocations was consistent with the forecasted funds which was positive. Mr Myers, interim CFO, continued to finalise the year end process which would be completed by 31st August 2021. A meeting had taken place with Jackson Stephens during week commencing 25th July 2022 and key dates had been agreed which would culminate in the Annual General Meeting on 29th November 2022.

e) Estates

MHa provided Trustees with a verbal update in regard to estates.

The work to increase capacity at the Deans site remained on schedule. The budget of £450,000 approved by Salford Local Authority [LA] would fund the creation of five new teaching spaces and an additional staff room. Adjustments had been required to ensure that the budget remained manageable, which included the loss of the proposed new entrance, however, the additional space would benefit the site considerably.

Further expansion would be required in the future to facilitate additional growth. The Wentworth site accommodated higher student numbers and a review of the IT structure would take place following completion of the Deans site project.

MHa had discussed the accommodation challenges impacting the sector with the CEO of Kings Academy Trust, which included the Oakwood Academy. The possibility of hiring additional accommodation for the college in the short term would not be discounted. This would allow the Deans site to accommodate additional students from the school. MHa

would continue to consider alternatives to ensure that the increased student numbers anticipated from Springwood Primary School could be admitted.

f) Governing Boards

CHSHH

Trustees were requested to ratify the appointment of Sandra Moore as a Parent Governor following an unopposed election. Trustees noted that Sandra was employed in the field of special education, knew the school well and would represent a positive addition to the Governing Board.

Approved: Trustees approved the appointment of Sandra Moore as a Parent Governor at the school.

Chatsworth Futures

MHa confirmed that the Governing Board remained strong and had supported the college well during the current academic year. Francine Brower had retired as a Governor at the end of the current academic year and would be sorely missed. Trustees extended their thanks to Francine Brower for the significant support she had provided.

8. Trustee Development Review

Trustees agreed that this action would be updated with the benefit of completed Trustee Skills Audits.

Action: ETa to include Trustee Development Review as an agenda item for the next meeting.

9. Annual Budget for Approval Refer

to item 7(d) above.

10. Strategic Development Plan

Trustees were referred to the following documents, which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

(4a) Strategic Development Plan 22-25

(4b) Strategic Development Plan 22-23 (revised)

MHa confirmed that items which were no longer applicable had been highlighted in red and additions or altered language had been highlighted in yellow for ease of reference.

TQ: Had the Strategic Development Plan been shortened to a 12 month period to reflect the impact of budgetary revisions.

Yes.

Approved: Trustees approved the revisions to the Strategic Development Plan 22-23 (revised), which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

11. Meeting Schedule 22-23

Trustees were referred to the Proposed Governance Meeting Schedule 2022 and the Trustwide Meeting Schedule 21-22, which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

Trustees were informed that the school meeting dates were currently shared on a provisional basis. Significant revisions to these dates were not anticipated and the overall Trust schedule facilitated the submission of mandatory documents to Companies House and the ESFA.

Approved: Trustees approved the Proposed Governance Meeting Schedule 2022 and the Trustwide Meeting Schedule 21-22, which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

12. Trust Options: Growth Criteria

Trustees were referred to the Criteria for Matching Partner Trusts and Vision and Mission documents, which had been circulated via GovernorHub in advance of the meeting.

By way of background, MHa informed Trustees that these documents had been prepared further to discussions within the meeting of the FAR Committee on 12th July 2022. They were prepared as working documents to inform further discussions.

The following criteria were discussed:-

1. The partner has a compatible ethos, vision and mission.

Understanding the priorities of the potential partner Trust would include consideration of their aims and objectives.

2. The partner can demonstrate a strong safeguarding culture.

It was acknowledged that this information may be difficult to capture however, understanding would be informed by staff training information and the support provided to students more broadly to include parent liaison groups, coffee mornings and the range of therapies available. A further relevant consideration would be to understand how well the school was embedded in the local community.

3. The partner has a well-organised and enriching curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils.

This was agreed.

4. The partner values members of staff.

Different permutations of this question had been considered however, ultimately the evidence available for consideration would inform the position.

5. The partner has a proven record of working well with stakeholders.

This question had been deliberately drafted in a broad manner, which would include parents, other Trusts, health agencies, the LA, and international partners by way of example.

Trustees noted that the government White Paper would also inform this question in regard to means of achieving the aspirations of the White Paper in regard to the building and sharing of areas of best practice.

TQ: Why had financial integrity not been included within the criteria for consideration at an early stage. Financial information could be reviewed as a desktop exercise by reference to information within the public domain. The process could take place by way of background to ongoing initial discussions. Ultimately strategic direction would be impacted by finance.

It had been envisaged that this would be addressed as a component of the due diligence process, whereas the current criteria was intended for consideration following initial meetings.

TQ: Would estate considerations form part of the criteria.

Estates would be a relevant consideration. The Trust estates were strong although it was recognised that the Private Finance Initiative [PFI] contract at the school may not be suited to some academies.

Trustees noted that open conversations would be required in regard to financial integrity in order that potential partners understood the financial position and operation of the Trust. Potential partner Trusts may not be fully aware of the nuances of special school funding. Similarly, it may be perceived that the Trust represented a greater financial risk when compared with a mainstream school. These points would need to be understood from an early stage to successfully manage expectations.

MHa questioned whether similar criteria responses should be offered to potential partner Trusts early in the discussion process in the interests of openness and transparency. Trustees did not consider that this would be required at this stage.

Action: MHa to include financial criteria within the Criteria for Matching Partner Trusts and to forward the final version to ETa for circulation.

TQ: How would the acceptance criteria be framed. Would the potential partner Trust be expected to meet all of the criteria.

Trustees would be provided with all qualitative information obtained as a result of the initial information gathering process to assess whether they wished to explore the relationship further. MHa commented that some criteria would potentially be more significant than others. For example, a less developed curriculum may not significantly impact the Trust.

Trustees commented that where possible it would be beneficial to visit schools and meet with staff members to avoid disconnect between the SLT and teaching staff/TA experiences. An alternative would be to share Parent/Pupil/Staff Surveys.

Trustees further acknowledged that considerations may be different depending upon the size of the potential partner Trust.

An extensive process of narrowing down potential partner Trusts had taken place to date. Trustees endorsed the continuation of discussions with the Sovereign Trust, the Omega MAT and the Education and Leadership Trust. Trustees agreed to review the position when further information was available in line with the Criteria for Matching Partner Trusts.

Trustees considered that the evidence section within the criteria document would be useful to ensure triangulation of documentation and discussions with staff members as part of the due diligence process.

Trustees thanked MHa for the significant work which had taken place to secure the growth of the Trust.

Approved: Trustees approved the Criteria for Matching Partner Trusts and Vision and Mission documents.

13. Any Other Business a) Appointment of Two TAs for Chatsworth Engage

MHa provided Trustees with a brief overview of the present position to inform this agenda item.

Approximately four to five years ago Chatsworth Engage was formed as a Company Limited by Guarantee to support those parents who wished for their children to remain together as an adult group after leaving the college. When the provision opened, between five to seven young people were based at the Deans site and other college leavers had joined thereafter.

The possibility of Chatsworth Engage joining the Trust had been discounted due to concerns raised by the ESFA concerning the potential leakage of funds from the education sector into social care. Therefore, the provision transferred from the Deans site into a bespoke venue, which was hired.

The Company was transferred to a Community Interest Company, which facilitated the capacity to draw long term grants and recognised its importance as a social care provision. Salford LA had been very supportive of the provision and Bernadette Hegarty within Adult Social Care had provided assistance with the action plan. LHu's support in regard to quality was recognised, together with the budget management which had been provided by Ms McRae.

LHu confirmed that a Board of Directors had been appointed in October 2022. There were currently 17 members, not all of whom attended the provision on a full-time basis. Expressions of interest had been received from five additional members, which would provide increased income.

In regard to staffing, one senior member of staff would be taking early retirement and a second staff member had resigned. The Trust had provided assistance with the management of staffing to date and the two agency staff who had been appointed had worked very well and were reliable and creative. In the longer term, however, agency staff were very expensive. It was therefore proposed that alongside assuming management of the budget within Chatsworth Engage at the end of August 2022, two TA1s would be appointed for a fixed term 12 month contract to ensure continuity of provision.

The Trust would remain the employer of the two TA1s pursuant to the verbal Service Level Agreement [SLA] which was in place and therefore Trust Board approval was sought.

The TA1 costs would be affordable by reference to the direct payments received from Salford LA and were not dependent upon additional members joining the provision. Should Chatsworth Engage cease to operate, there was a risk that the Trust would remain responsible for six additional members of staff however, this risk remained low further to assurances from MHa that these were high quality staff members who may be accommodated within the expanding Trust provision.

TQ: Did this risk form part of the current Risk Register.

No, however, Trustees were assured that Chatsworth Engage represented a very strong provision which appealed to families and carers and promoted active engagement within the community. One of the risks was that it would not be large enough to accommodate the demand for places. The provision had built an excellent reputation and LHU continued to build support networks within social care, Salford CVS and at least two other successful CICs within the Salford area.

TQ: Did the support provided by staff members employed by the Trust generate costs to the Trust which were not recovered.

With the exception of potential pension exposure, the position was cost neutral due to the recharge of costs.

TQ: Who was responsible for the line management of Chatsworth Engage staff members
MHa line managed the existing four staff members, which would increase to six with the proposed addition of two TA1s.

TQ: In light of the investigation of potential partner Trusts, would it be appropriate to formalise the SLA in writing to ensure transparency.

MHa and LHu had considered this issue in the context of the possibility that Chatsworth Engage may not form part of a new partnership. Whilst HR would continue to be managed by the Trust, alternative HR and Payroll providers would be explored to prepare for possible changes by way of a staged approach.

Action: MHa and LHu to prepare written Chatsworth Engage SLA for approval by Trustees.

Approved: Trustees approved the appointment of two TA1s to be based at the Chatsworth Engage provision.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Trustees noted the date and time of the next meeting, which would take place on 29th November 2022 at 16:00 via Microsoft Teams to accommodate Trustee availability.

Signed.....Date.....
Andrew (Chair of Governors)

Mr Cole

The meeting concluded at 17.55

Summary of actions

Agenda No.	Action	Owner
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3	Election of Vice Chair to be postponed until the meeting on 29 th November 2022 at 16:00.	ETa
5	ETa to include the review of Pay, Performance Management and Appraisal policies and processes within the LGB meeting cycles for Autumn 2022, to be completed by 31 st October 2021 for approval by the FAR Committee/Trust board.	ETa
5	MHa to confirm acceptance of the nomination to join the CEO Performance Management Committee with ABe.	MHa
5	Trustees to provide completed Annual Trustee Skills Audits to MHa for review and collation by no later than 8 th November 2022.	Trustees
5	ETa to list the judgement upon overall effectiveness as an agenda item for the meeting on 29 th November 2022.	ETa
7	PWi to include the progression of the strategic development of leadership across the school within mitigation of the QOE risk.	PWi
8	ETa to include Trustee Development Review as an agenda item for the next meeting.	ETa
12	MHa to include financial criteria within the Criteria for Matching Partner Trusts and to forward the final version to ETa for circulation.	MHa/ETa
13	MHa and LHu to prepare written Chatsworth Engage SLA for approval by Trustees.	MHa/LHu