



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

Waterton Academy Trust

Minutes of an Extraordinary Trust Board Meeting

DATE:

25th August 2020

TIME:

6pm

LOCATION:

Held via video conferencing
(Microsoft Teams)

Attendees

Chair:	B Cook	
Trustees	S Bates	S Johnson (<i>from 6.20pm</i>)
	P Beaman	J Shaw
	D Dickinson (<i>CEO</i>)	L Rowlinson-Brown
	A Goudie	
Clerk:	L Clark (<i>MAT Governance Officer</i>)	
Apologies:		

ITEM	ACTION
<p>1. Welcome and confirmation of appointment of new Trustee; L Rowlinson-Brown</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, including L Rowlinson-Brown who has now been formally appointed by the Members of the Trust as a Trustee. Brief introductions were made.</p> <p>All were in agreement that meetings should continue to be held using Microsoft Teams in the current circumstances, and the positives of video meetings were highlighted.</p>	
<p>2. Apologies for Absence</p> <p>It was noted that S Johnson was running late at work but would join shortly.</p>	
<p>3. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The standing register of declarations of interest was noted.</p>	
<p>4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th July 2020 and matters arising</p> <p>Trustees reviewed and approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2020. It was agreed these would be signed in person by the Chair once restrictions had been lifted.</p> <p>Actions from the meetings had been undertaken and it was agreed that all had been completed in a timely manner.</p>	LC

ITEM	ACTION
<p>In response to a question it was confirmed that work is progressing well with the new single tenancy and as part of this WES (portal) will be contained within Office 365.</p>	
<p>5. Preparation and readiness for September 2020</p>	
<p>The Chair introduced the item and the CEO provided a brief summary with regards to the September return to school. The fluidity of the situation and changing guidelines were recognised by all, including the press conference today with regards to the use of facemasks in secondary schools. Guidance now stated that children above age 12 should wear facemasks in shops etc., but that has now been recommended in certain areas and circumstances within secondary schools. It is not within the guidance that primary school pupils or staff wear facemasks. However, the Trust awaits for further clarity on this before providing communications to parents.</p> <p>The CEO explained that much of the work has been completed in readiness for the return in September, and that all updated risk assessments are in place and all but two have been signed off by the CEO. A significant piece of work is required for the Wrenthorpe Pre-School risk assessment but in response to questions it was confirmed that there is time to complete the required work and as the pre-school is attached to Wrenthorpe Academy (WA), practices are shared and there are no concerns over the practice which will take place – it is the detail and format of the risk assessment which requires the work to ensure continuity. The other risk assessment requiring sign off is at Charlston (SCS) as there had been a structural failing and remedial work is being undertaken. The CEO confirmed that all risk assessments are rigorous, robust and up to date in line with current guidance, and will be shared via WES and school websites. All schools have undergone a deep clean. The CEO will be conducting a walk around with the Trust Estates Manager to ensure everything is in place.</p> <p>In response to questions it was confirmed that the pre-school at Wrenthorpe is classed as one bubble. It will be likely that the before and after school club (early birds and night owls) may need to be held at the school rather than the pre-school building due to ‘bubbles.’ However, further work across the Trust is being undertaken with regards to wraparound care in general and how this can be implemented due to complications with the mixing of bubbles.</p> <p>A question was asked about how the risk assessments / communications are shared with unions and stakeholders and the CEO explained that information is shared with staff and then with unions for comment. Given the fluidity of the situation, government guidance will be cross-referenced and any amendments recorded and shared with Trustees in due course.</p> <p><i>(S Johnson joined the meeting at 6:20pm)</i></p> <p>A strategy is being implemented for the central team to maintain a mixture of working from home and in the office, and the possibility of holding socially distanced meetings in the Centre for Excellence.</p>	

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<p>In discussion and through questions it was noted that the Trust does not foresee an issue with staff travelling abroad and being required to quarantine as to date there are no Headteachers or teachers who this will apply to in September. There is the possibility of a small number of support staff who this may apply to but it is not a significant issue. All staff are expected back in schools in September and the Trust is following the guidance that this includes those who have been previously shielding.</p> <p>Contingency planning to provide continuity of education should there be local lockdowns or situations where schools close completely or to specific year groups is being designed and put in place. The delivery of a remote curriculum continues to be a significant piece of work for the School Improvement Team particularly for the first two weeks in September, and the Centre for Excellence has a suite which will allow for virtual lessons, and the single tenancy is almost in place.</p> <p>A query was raised whether the Trust had enough facemasks should guidance be updated to include primary school staff to wear them. The CEO confirmed that currently the required number would not be available. S Johnson confirmed that if material is acquired then he can arrange production. It was confirmed that parents would be required to wear a facemask if entering the school reception area. A policy will also be required for the removal, storage and management of facemask – L Rowlinson-Brown indicated she can share practice and policy from her workplace.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that feedback from Headteachers and staff to date indicates that there is a positive feeling across the Trust about the return to school in September, and HR have been working closely with staff who have concerns or have raised queries about their own individual circumstances. There are likely to be some concerns possibly from those who have been shielding or from those who have family members who have been shielding, but HR will continue to provide support on a case-by-case basis. In response to a question it was noted that evidence from a doctor would be required for a member of staff not to return to work.</p> <p>An update was provided by a number of Trustees in relation to their companies which are not returning to their office space, in particular large banking and insurance companies. The CEO reiterated that a strategy was in place regarding the central team and working smartly and efficiently using a blended approach of working at home and in the office.</p> <p>Trustees thanked the CEO for the comprehensive update.</p>	
<p>6. CEO Headline Update</p>	
<p>The CEO provided an update to Trustees on the large projects which have continued to be developed including the work at Ackworth Mill Dam (AMD) to build additional classroom space which has been accelerated following initial delays and is back on schedule for the return of pupils. The Centre for Excellence project is on schedule and looking very good and a virtual tour will be prepared for Trustees in the autumn term. Further detail was provided regarding the structural failing at SCS and the process undertaken by the CEO and Trust Estate Teams to make a claim to the insurance company. There has been difficulty in determining the cause of the fault</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>and a second opinion was sought. An appeal is now in place following a review by the risk assessor. Given the time taken and the potential cost of the work dependant on the decision by the insurance company, emergency arrangements have been put in place to accommodate pupils in September. Trustees will be updated on this matter.</p> <p>Work on the IT single tenancy and websites / email addresses is all going very well and a detailed update will be provided to Trustees in the autumn term. A tender process involving Trustees has taken place to appoint a partner for the apprenticeships status. The Trust is on schedule to welcome the first cohort of teaching assistants in October, and this work is deemed as crucial to upskill the workforce to deliver a successful catch up curriculum. It was also noted that all premises compliance work has been completed, and deep cleans carried out.</p> <p>There was a discussion surrounding the work being undertaken on behaviour and the behaviour policy. Children will have been in a range of home environments and the policy will need to be supportive but robust. Teachers are very aware of this and will work closely with the children. Teacher assessments will also be undertaken and will be in a different format due to the absence from school, and will be dependant on the year group (some year groups returned in June).</p> <p>The CEO explained that support was in place for Headteachers and that the summer has provided some opportunity to recharge after what has been an extremely challenging period. There is also additional support in place for the interim Headteacher at Normanton Junior (NJA) and the CESO will work closely with him. The CEO has met with the Chair of NJA who is very positive about the work the Trust have undertaken. A timeline is in place for interviews for the permanent role in the spring term.</p>	
<p>7. Any Other Business</p> <p><i>A discussion was deemed as confidential and moved to the set of confidential minutes</i></p> <p>Trustees noted experiences from the corporate world regarding refreshing senior management by reviewing personal development, career goals, and to create renewed enthusiasm and produce stronger outcomes, and a discussion was held about whether this was appropriate or viable in the school sector. It was felt that although this is a sensitive matter and there was likely to be mixed opinion it is something to possibly explore, whether that include secondments or other ways of working, and some would thrive on the challenge of moving to a new school within the Trust. The CEO confirmed that there is a piece of work across the Trust on succession planning and this could be incorporated in but it would take further thought.</p> <p>There was also a discussion where it was noted that staff wellbeing and mental health will continue to be a key focus for the Trust.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>8. Feedback to / from Hub Board and ASCs – Questions, Concerns, Comments Communication regarding the significant work undertaken on each risk assessment and the return to school in September.</p>	
<p>9. Identification of Confidential Items A discussion under item 7 was deemed as confidential and moved to the set of confidential minutes.</p>	
<p>10. Confirmation of Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>13th October 2020 6pm – Autumn Trust Board meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that Trust Board meetings will continue to be held using Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>A discussion took place about the AGM and whether to hold this virtually or whether it would be possible to accommodate a socially distanced AGM at the Centre for Excellence. It was felt that if Members and Trustees could meet with Auditors and the Trust SLT, and the AGM be streamed live from the Centre to ensure Headteachers and stakeholders could attend virtually, this would be the preferred approach. The most current guidance will be adhered to at all times, so a final decision will be made closer to the time once a date has been finalised.</p> <p><i>(the Chair lost connection from the meeting at 7:20pm)</i></p> <p>Trustees thanked the CEO for all the hard work to date, and commented extremely positively on the significant work which went into the Trust safely opening schools to the specified year groups from June.</p>	DD/ LC

MEETING CLOSED 7:30pm

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Actions from the Trust Board meeting held on 25 August 2020

Agenda Item N°	Summary of Action	Who?	When?
4	Sign the previous minutes at an appropriate time	Chair	When possible
10	Publish a date for the AGM	DD / LC	asap