



GIRLS' LEARNING TRUST

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting Type	Trust Board
Date:	24 August 2020 at 7.00pm
Venue:	Meeting held via Zoom video conference call
Members:	Hamza Aumeer (HA), Alex Clark (AC), Robert Etchell (RE), Sandy Gillett (SG, Chair), Marie Grant (MG), Malcolm Munro (MM), Nigel Pepper (NP), Jennifer Smith (JS) and Philip Taylor (PT, Vice-Chair)
Others present:	Helen Latham (HL, Director of Finance and Operations) and Andrew Horrod (AH, Clerk)

* denotes member absent from meeting

Item	Item Description and Minute	Action
1	Apologies for absence and declarations of interest	
	There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.	
2	Minutes of the previous meeting	
2.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2020, Parts One and Two, were agreed as correct records for signing by the Chair subject to 'Conditional' in paragraph 5.1 of Part One being altered to 'Condition'.	
2.2	The Board briefly discussed whether more of the content of the Part Two minutes could be in Part One. The Board accepted that there was a balance to be struck between being as transparent as possible and divulging sensitive information. Replying to a question from HA, AH said that he made the initial judgement of what should be included in the Part Two minutes of Board and committee meetings that he covered. The Board agreed to AH's offer to re-edit the 8 July Board minutes so that as much information as possible can be included in the Part One version to go on the GLT websites.	AH
3	Matters arising from the minutes	
3.1	A matters arising sheet had been circulated, containing mostly closed items from the July meeting. The Board noted a couple of small errors in the presentation of information, e.g. JS confirmed that GLT Members had held a meeting earlier this evening, not in July, and she would report back on it under AOB. JS said she would also provide an update later in the meeting on the pending actions shown in items 9.1 and 9.2.	

3.2	<p>Regarding the first item on the Part Two matters arising sheet, it was agreed that there was no action required, this according with the circulated minutes where JS's initials had been removed.</p> <p>There were no other matters arising.</p>	
4	CEO's report	
4.1	<p>JS introduced her report, the focus being the recently issued GCSE and A Level exam results. The report explained the process whereby centre assessed grades had been agreed by the schools, submitted to exam boards and then passed on to Ofqual for moderation. There had been problems with the algorithm used by Ofqual to produce final (calculated) grades during this process. Nationally, this had led to some unfair downgrading with A Level results. The Government had therefore decided that students were to be awarded whichever was higher for each subject: their centre assessed grade or calculated grade. This applied to both A Levels and GCSEs. Throughout the process the centre assessed grades had not changed. JS said that the percentages of centre assessed grades that had been superseded by algorithm/calculated grades during the process were as follows: Carshalton – 54%; Nonsuch – 34%; Wallington – 33%.</p>	
4.2	<p>Full listings of 2020 grades for the GLT schools, by subject and showing performance against targets, were included in the report. JS also reported additional information for Nonsuch: the A Level L3VA score was 0.15 and the GCSE Progress 8 score was 1.25, both therefore achieving positive targets. There was discussion of predicted grades, 'Most Likely Outcomes' and how they contrasted with the grades that the schools had sent to exam boards. JS said it may be worth investigating whether there were any underlying issues in individual subjects where teacher assessed grades were lower than the final calculated grades.</p>	
4.3	<p>JS answered questions regarding BTEC results, appeals and college/university placements. The BTEC results were expected within the next week or so. A significant percentage of students were unhappy with their calculated GCSE and A Level grades. An outline of the grounds for appeal featured at the end of her report. Students were unable to appeal against the centre assessed grades but they could ask their school to check whether there had been maladministration, either by the school or exam board. Richard Booth and Amy Cavilla in particular were under pressure as the process was very time consuming. Richard had contributed to a draft response to parents who may complain about maladministration but none is found, which was appended to JS's report. Students could seek recourse by sitting exams in the Autumn.</p>	
4.4	<p>Regarding progression to college or university, JS said that students who had been turned down 'first time around' could go back to their original preference if they now had the required grades, but many places were now full so deferral was the likely outcome. The CHSG student who had been offered a place at Oxford had secured it but entry was being deferred for a year. Regarding the Oxbridge offers to students at the selective schools, 4 out of 5 WHSG students and 12 out of 14 NHSG students had secured places. It was not possible to say how many GLT students were currently in limbo with placements as several students were waiting for universities to reply. Universities were waiting to see how many students give up their places for this coming</p>	

4.5	<p>September.</p> <p>JS said the same uncertainty was affecting those students who did not wish to go to university, e.g. they were pursuing an apprenticeship. All careers staff have been into school, to assist. She felt that GLT students have been getting sufficient support from their schools and she sympathised with further education establishments who were trying to deal with a rather messy situation. She would provide an update for trustees in September.</p>	JS
4.6	<p>SG thanked JS for her report, which was noted by the Board.</p>	
5	September Full Opening – Risk Assessment and Protocols	
5.1	<p>HL had circulated the GLT Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Protocol documents, duly updated to take into account full reopening of Trust schools the following week. HL advised that the Risk Assessment information was based on documents provided by Action HR and guidance from the Department for Education. Everything in the Protocol was based on Government guidance, together with experience gained during the running of the hub for children of key workers. The Protocol had a number of sections dealing with issues such as minimising risk, communication and raising awareness, the response to an outbreak of infection and operational arrangements going forward. HL said that even the smallest preventative measures would help in terms of reducing the risk of transmission of the virus. There were approximately 400 staff in the Trust, many of whom had been away from school for several months. They were facing an almost entirely new operation. Timetables had been completely rewritten. In summary, she felt that the Trust has done all it can to reduce risks to staff and students. She invited questions from Board members.</p>	
5.2	<p>NP thanked HL for the documents, they were excellent. He asked about the number of cleaning staff in during the day and the GLT staff who were out of school. HL said that each school has four cleaning contractor staff. In terms of GLT staff, the Government’s position was that everyone should be in attendance for the start of term. One challenge was ‘dual running’ whereby staff teach in school but they also have to provide tuition for students who cannot come in. At CHSG staff continue to work on a booklet scheme for student remote learning, while NHSG and WHSG continue to develop their online platforms (FROG). A small number of staff had requested individual risk assessments to help their return to work and/or were clinically vulnerable, and she gave examples.</p>	
5.3	<p>HL replied to other questions from MG and PT. The circulated documents will be constantly reviewed. Currently it was not mandatory for staff or students to wear a face covering but if they wished to do so, the Trust would support them. The Trust’s anti-bullying policy would cover any student-to-student bullying or adverse comments about the wearing of face coverings. Certain activities such as CCF and breakfast club would not be starting immediately. It was possible that a student catching the virus could lead to a teacher having to self-isolate and the Trust will deal with the situation when it arises. Whilst the Trust could only provide a certain level of contingency, extra staff cover was being brought in for the start of term to help deal with such situations. Students were due to return to school on Wednesday 2 September.</p>	
5.4	<p>Resolved: To thank HL for her report and to unanimously agree to the</p>	

	reopening of GLT schools on the basis of arrangements set out in the Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Protocol Documents.	
6	Autumn Term meetings - location	
	JS asked Board members whether they wished to start meeting in person and if so, when? Following brief discussion it was agreed that GLT evening meetings continue to be held via video conferencing for the time being.	
7	Risk Register	
7.1	The latest version of the Risk Register had been circulated together with a draft Covid-19 Risk Register prepared by HL. The latter document picked up the various issues highlighted by Board and committee members in recent months and HL suggested that it be embedded into the main Register in due course. Comments from Board members were invited.	
7.2	The ensuing discussion centred around Covid-19 and the arising of an issue or risk that the Trust could not have anticipated. JS suggested that if such an issue arises then it should be considered in the usual way, i.e. by the Executive Team and, if necessary, escalated to trustees via the working party overseeing arrangements during the pandemic. An extraordinary meeting of this Board would be convened if required. This course of action was accepted, HL agreeing to SG's suggestion that it be formalised through an addition to the Risk Register regarding 'unknown risks'. HL noted that in exceptional circumstances a decision regarding school closure may be taken out of the Trust's hands, in which case it would liaise with the responsible body.	HL
7.3	Arising from a question from MG, JS confirmed that the Risk Assessment and Protocol documents referred to earlier in the meeting would be circulated widely tomorrow, this to include all staff and LGBs.	
7.4	There were no changes to the main Risk Register and the Board agreed HL's proposals regarding the Covid-19 Register.	
8	Any other business and date of next meeting	
8.1	JS gave a summary of the GLT Members' meeting held earlier that evening. The Members had agreed an extension of SG's term of office as a trustee and appointed her as a GLT Member. HA and RE had been appointed 'full' trustees for a four year term.	
8.2	JS was pleased to report the current position with the schools' Sixth Form recruitment for September 2020, as follows: NHSG is retaining 80% of its Year 11 students and has recruited 67 external students; WHSG is retaining approximately 85% of its Year 11 and has 80-90 externals; and CHSG is hoping to retain 45% of its Year 11 (which would be up from 39% last year) and has 16 confirmed externals joining its Sixth Form.	
8.3	HA, MG and MM reported on the membership of their respective LGBs. Arising from a question from PT, the Board noted that membership overall was becoming more diverse, a positive point which JS said she could carry forward to the race advocacy steering group.	
8.4	Resolved: (i) To ratify the appointment of Paran Nandha and Nithya	

8.5	<p>Poornanendan as Appointed Governors on Nonsuch LGB for four years;</p> <p>(ii) To ratify the appointment of Imran Ahmad as an Appointed Governor on Wallington LGB for four years (replacing RE as he is now a trustee);</p> <p>(iii) To note that Paul Harding has resigned from Carshalton LGB, that MM will be writing to Paul to thank him for his service to the governing body/GLT, and that MM will arrange interviews for candidates to fill the LGB's vacancies in due course.</p> <p>SG thanked everyone for their contributions and the Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 23 September at 7pm.</p>	
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The meeting ended at 8.25pm

Signed:

Dated:

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