



GIRLS' LEARNING TRUST

MINUTES OF MEETING – PART ONE

Meeting Type	Trust Board
Date:	29 March 2022 at 7.00pm
Venue:	Meeting held via Zoom video conference call
Members:	Hamza Aumeer (HA), Raeesa Chowdhury (RC), Alex Clark (AC), Robert Etchell (RE), Sandy Gillett (SG, Chair), Marie Grant (MG), Malcolm Munro (MM), Nigel Pepper (NP), Jennifer Smith (JS), Sofia Spiers (SS) and Philip Taylor (PT, Vice-Chair)
Others present:	Andrew Horrod (AH, Clerk) and Helen Latham (HL, Chief Operating Officer)

* denotes member absent from meeting

Item	Item Description and Minute	Action
1	Introduction, apologies for absence and declarations of interest	
1.1	SG said this meeting was to have been held 'in person' but as two of those present had tested positive for Covid-19, it was being held online. She thanked JS for sending trustees a summary of a recently issued Government White Paper.	
1.2	There were no apologies for absence and no declarations of interest.	
2	Minutes of the previous meeting	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2021 were approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.	
3	Matters arising from the minutes	
3.1	A matters arising sheet had been circulated. All of the items had been closed but JS gave a verbal report back on item 4.2 relating to grades at CHSG. She explained that previous Government changes allowed double entry assessment for Year 10 students in English. After taking an exam in the summer, students could re-sit in November (i.e. Year 11) then take the exam in the summer of Year 11. The 'best result' counted. JS said she felt this had had a bearing on grades. In addition CHSG had run the international GCSE. The school had also run separate papers at GCSE for Maths and Statistics; it was the higher of the two grades obtained that had counted. NP thanked JS for this information.	
3.2	In reply to a question from HA, SG said that no progress had been	

	made with the NGA 21 Questions but the Trust Governance Committee would be revisiting the issue in due course.	
4	CEO Report	
4.1	<p>The report contained a summary of events during what had been a very busy term. It had two appendices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A table showing the number of offers made by each secondary school within the London Borough of Sutton, for admission in September 2022. This also included, for each school, numbers of students living inside/outside the Borough and what their preference for that school had been: 1st, 2nd or 3rd. 2) Minutes of the cross-Trust Pupil Premium working party meeting held on 8 March. 	
4.2	<p>JS highlighted key points from her report. Student numbers were included as usual, to provide a point of context. There were the already agreed KPIs for summer exams 2022, the targets being mid-point between actuals for 2019 and 2021. The last two columns in the GCSE table showed Progress 8 and ALPS. JS explained that Progress 8 was a comparison between students and called that because it was a measurement in 8 subjects. The national average score was 0. ALPS was a tool for working out progress and whilst each school had an overall score, there could be an ALPS score for every subject. At A Level there was L3VA, a value added performance system; this was a comparison of what might be expected of students against what they had achieved at GCSE. For Progress 8 and L3VA, positive scores were good; for ALPS, the lower score the better. In general it was difficult to make judgements this year because of Covid.</p>	
4.3	<p>The report included questions put to the three GLT Headteachers about progress with academic performance, together with their responses. Replying to a question from PT about Maths FSMQ, JS said this stood for Free Standing Maths Qualification. It had been offered at Carshalton but this was no longer the case. Nonsuch ran the FSMQ alongside A Level but it was not like an AS Level. IDSR stood for Inspection Data Summary Report, the annual DfE publication that Ofsted used to measure performance and make comparisons between schools. It usually contained a sophisticated set of data but because of Covid there had not been proper data to rely on since 2019. Headteachers had been asked to look back to the IDSR from 2019.</p>	
4.4	<p>Discussion of the responses from the Headteachers, and some other issues raised by trustees, is confidential and a summary is provided in Part Two of these minutes.</p>	
4.5	<p>JS's report included data on the Sixth Forms, Oxbridge entry 2022, staffing and safeguarding. SG asked whether there was data for other colleges and universities. JS said there was, it was normally reported to the first Board meeting of the academic year. There should also be details in the papers for October LGB meetings. PT noted that more Oxbridge offers had been made to Wallington students than Nonsuch students and did JS have any observations? JS said that Wallington had a new Head of Sixth Form and Amy Cavilla had asked her Head of Sixth Form to visit Wallington and link up with her counterpart. It would be interesting to see whether the number of offers made to Wallington students can be sustained.</p>	

4.6	SG thanked JS for her report.	
5	Feedback from the Race Equality Steering Group	
	The minutes of the RESC meeting held on 10 March had been circulated. SG said that two representatives of Nonsuch's Champions of Anti-racism and Equality group (CARE) had given a presentation on the work of the group over the last year. Other agenda items had included reports from Maggie De Souza and Cat Godyn respectively on integration of equality and diversity issues into the curriculum at Nonsuch and Wallington; and a report from Nikki Bhatt, Head of English, on the work being done at Carshalton on handling sensitive issues in curriculum texts. SG said there had been a very interesting discussion on this and replying to a question from NP, she said that the discussion had not included students' views on difficult texts, but that could be a topic for the future. Board members agreed with her that it was an interesting set of RESC minutes.	
6	GLT EDI Statement and Equality Objectives	
6.1	JS had circulated the following documents for approval: GLT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement GLT Equality Objectives 2021-2026	
6.2	JS said these documents had been considered by the policy group of trustees. NP asked whether the documentation should make reference to SEND and PT asked whether the Inclusion Statement had a wider application than students, staff, trustees and governors? JS said the Trust did have policies covering SEND, nevertheless she would consider the points made by NP and PT and amend wording as required. The documents should be published as soon as possible.	
6.3	The Board approved the EDI Statement and Equality Objectives subject to final amendment by JS.	JS
7	Feedback from Finance Committee	
	NP referred to the extra Trust Board meeting on 7 March when decisions had been made on the financing of GLT capital projects. Underpinning the Trust's budgeting process were assumptions regarding inflation and salary rises. There was also concern regarding rising energy costs. Capital projects had been one of the agenda items for the Finance Committee on 17 March. Nothing had changed between 7 and 17 March but the Finance Committee had received a useful update.	
8	Feedback from HR Committee	
8.1	PT summarised three items that had been considered by the HR Committee on 24 February.	
8.2	Firstly there was the Staff Wellbeing Charter, which the Committee had welcomed. Welbee was a staff survey tool backing up the Charter. Secondly, there had been an anomaly with staff pensions arising from the pay freeze for teaching staff, effective September 2021. The Committee had agreed a £1 pay award to teachers who had been affected by the pay freeze, to regularise matters.	

8.3	<p>Lastly there had been concern about the small numbers of staff completing exit questionnaires or taking up the offer of exit interviews. The Committee had agreed a draft letter for staff leaving the GLT, encouraging them to complete the questionnaires and/or be interviewed. The letter was in his name as Chair of the HR Committee.</p>	
9	Feedback from the LGBs	
	<p>Wallington – 24 January</p>	
9.1	<p>HA said the minutes of the meeting were not available yet but amongst the items considered by the LGB had been the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To welcome two new governors to their first meeting. • To note a return to more normal school life; whilst the Christmas concert had been held online, face to face events had included prize-giving. • To receive updates on the SDP and Pupil Premium, and to approve careers access and exam recording policies. 	
	<p>Nonsuch – 7 February</p>	
9.2	<p>The minutes of the meeting had been made available on Trust Governor. MG said the two new Staff Governors had attended their first meeting. Agenda items had included a presentation on CARE from two Sixth Form representatives and a summary of the SEN review – in carrying out the review, the lead from Cheam High School had been impressed with provision at NHSG. It was pleasing that two students with SEN had received offers of places at Oxbridge.</p>	
	<p>Carshalton – 27 January</p>	
9.3	<p>The minutes of the meeting had been made available via Trust Governor. MM said the LGB had recruited a new Parent Governor, with one governor vacancy to fill. The LGB had received various updates at the meeting, for example six governors had stayed for lunch during a visit to the school. CHSG's production of 'Matilda' with two full casts had been outstanding, the school hall had been packed for the evening performances. A dummy run of the production had been given to a local primary school. Other positive news was that CHSG students had won a couple of local football and netball tournaments.</p>	
10	Feedback from Audit and Risk Committee	
10.1	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November had been made available via Trust Governor. RE summarised key points from the 1 March meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kreston Reeves were being kept on for one more year to carry our internal scrutiny, coterminous with the external auditor's contract. The Committee was looking for internal audit to scope safeguarding gaps, it was important to have an audit trail on this issue. • There had been a discussion regarding lack of data (as mentioned by JS earlier in the meeting). • Also discussion about the Risk Register. HL said the Committee does not have its own section of the Register but one purpose of Audit and Risk is to carry out some work for the Trust Board; hence the main Risk Register entry can be supervised by the 	

	<p>Committee and the Board also has the opportunity to provide input.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note there have been increased cyber security attacks since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. 	
10.2	RE thanked those trustees who had attended yesterday's CHSG capital project working party meeting.	
11	Feedback from Governance Committee	
11.1	SG referred to the expiry of terms of office of MG and MM as trustees, on 31 March. In anticipation of this, permission had been obtained from Members via Tony Hyams-Parish for them to continue as trustees: MG until the end of the year and MM for a bit longer.	
11.2	SG mentioned the revised GLT Articles of Association. Trustee appointments were not renewed indefinitely and 10 years was the ideal total term of office, although this could be extended if there were practical difficulties. The Trust would explore further the appointment of a 'governance professional', separate to the Independent Clerk role.	
12	GLT Risk Management Policy	
12.1	HL introduced this item. She said the Policy had been circulated following consideration of a draft by the policy group. The Policy was for the Board's approval and then implementation next term. It referred to the Risk Register and included a sample of the new format. Each committee would receive and monitor its own Register, the other main change being in the final column, where the lead for that committee will report back on what has been done. The new format was now being brought in and at its next meeting the Board would have only its own Register.	
12.2	The GLT Risk Management Policy was approved, with a review in three years time.	
13	GLT Critical Incident Management Procedure - update	
13.1	HL said the circulated Critical Incident Management Procedures document was for noting, not approval. The document's content had been reduced so a version could be placed in Cloud storage. She screen-shared the document, highlighting the decision making framework and the general file, which listed various documents that were available in sub-folders. The finance section included disaster recovery, the premises section included floor plans for each GLT school. There were also Trust contact details, roles and responsibilities.	
13.2	HL said the document needed updating. It was in a reduced form to be compliant with GDPR. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Trust plus Headteachers would have full access. JS and Nicky Owen would administer the document. Replying to a question from MG about possible annual testing of procedures, HL said that this had been discussed with the Headteachers in January. The Heads and their senior leadership teams had not had the capacity to undertake a role-play exercise over the last couple of years, due to Covid, but this would be actioned as soon as time allowed.	
13.3	SG thanked HL, the Board noting that the document was reviewed every three years.	

14	Update on Chief Operating Officer recruitment	
14.1	JS gave a verbal update, further to minute 4 of the February Board meeting. JS said the initial stages of recruitment of a new COO had been delegated to a small group of trustees. They had decided to go with a recruitment agency and the advertisement was now live – she would send the link to all trustees. Following the closing date for applications of 22 April, the group will draw up a long list of candidates. On 6 May MM and RE will join the group to carry out the shortlisting. Other trustees would be brought in to help with the first round of interviews, week commencing 23 May. Formal panel interviews were scheduled for 6 June. It was hoped that the Trust will be able to announce an appointment a week later.	JS
14.2	JS also reported that she had sought joint Chairs' approval from SG, PT and NP to regrade the post of Head of Finance, with some extra duties. Hamish Lungany currently occupied the post and with effect from 1 April Hamish would become Director of Finance.	
14.3	SG thanked JS for the updates.	
15	Risk Register	
	The latest version of the Risk Register had been circulated. Board members agreed that no changes were required.	
16	Any other business and date of next meeting	
16.1	SG said this was Helen Latham's last evening meeting before leaving the GLT for a new post. It was a pity that this meeting could not be held 'in person' as had originally been intended, but a gift and card for Helen would follow. SG paid tribute to Helen's work and range of skills and asked NP to give a resume of her 10 year career with WHSG, NWET and GLT. NP highlighted, amongst other achievements, how instrumental Helen had been in the formation of the multi academy trust and her work on the Condition Improvement Fund bids. He greatly appreciated her assistance to him as Chair of the Finance Committee. On behalf of all those present, he thanked Helen for all her work with the Trust and wished her well for the future. Helen responded, thanking NP and other trustees for their support. She was looking forward to her new post with Future Academies and would stay in touch.	
16.2	The next Board meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 19 July – 7pm at WHSG.	

The meeting ended at 8.48pm

Signed:

Dated:

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