

HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST

Minutes for Meeting of Board of Trustees

6:00pm, Thursday 7 September 2017

In attendance: Simon Kitchman (SKi), David Hartland (DH) Graeme Atkins (GA), Tony Brown (TB), Jonathan Holmes (JH), Barbara Hignett (BH), Sarah Kemp (SKe), Patrick Ferguson (PF)

Also attending: Charlotte Gaines (CG, Clerk to Governors), James Andriot (Acting Head of School)

Part 1 Classified Non-Confidential

1) Apologies

No apologies for non-attendance were received.

2) Election of Chair

Simon Kitchman was elected as Chair of the Trust Board (proposed by SKe).

3) Election of Vice Chair

David Hartland was elected as Vice-Chair of the Trust Board (proposed by SKe)

4) Declaration of Pecuniary, Business or Personal Interests

No declarations of pecuniary, business or personal interest were made in addition to those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

SKi questioned how frequently the register of interest should be updated. CG will clarify. Trustees were asked to update CG with any changes on an ongoing basis.

CG

5) Minutes of previous meeting Part 1

The Minutes of the following meeting, having been circulated to Trustees, were discussed :

- Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 21 July 2017 – Part 1

JH commented that the minutes should explicitly state that all consultation responses will be shared with all Trustees, as this intention was stated at the meeting and will be happening. Trustees agreed the minutes should be adopted as a true record subject to the additional note.

CG

Matters arising

GA thanked all the Trustees who were able to attend recent occasions with staff at HMS and QEHS. Trustees' thanks have been passed to the staff for all of their hard work.

The Executive Head Teacher's report, which will include details of extra-curricular and enrichment activities for the preceding year, will be circulated before the first meetings of the monitoring committees.

GA advised that SS will inform staff of the new benefits available under the staff absence insurance contract. SKi requested that staff be made aware that the benefits are not at an additional cost to the school.

6) Trustee Membership update

SKi advised that the Board currently has three potential vacancies. Work is underway to recruit a Trustee with HR skills. Two potential candidates have been identified.

Trustees discussed how recruitment should move forward. TB commented that vacancies should be filled if suitable applicants are available. DH commented that it is difficult to ensure membership of committees with the current number of Trustees.

JH suggested that wider applications should be invited, as per approach adopted previously, with skills set requirements to be specified. TB asked if the Board needed a Trustee with knowledge of property. Trustees agreed that this was now less pressing than had previously been the case, given support from S2E.

Trustees discussed the application process for Trustees. SKe commented that a decision was needed regarding how many Trustees to appoint and suggested that Trustees should be mindful of the gender balance. Trustees agreed to advertise and that the number of appointments should depend on the skills of the applicants. SKi agreed to draft wording then circulate for comment.

SKi

DH made the point that any selection should be mindful of how things were left with those who have previously expressed interest. GA advised that appropriate contact would be made with relevant individuals during the recruitment process.

GA/SKi/CG

7) Committee Membership

SKi advised that BH has joined the HMS Monitoring Committee and commented that there was an opportunity for Trustees to change or join groups. SKe suggested that membership decisions should be delayed until the appointment of new Trustees.

8) Terms of reference

SKi advised that the Trust Board is currently operating under the pre-conversion Terms of Reference, with none in place for the Monitoring Committees. GA has drafted revised terms which have been circulated to the Trust Board.

PF asked if Terms were intended for the safeguarding group. GA outlined existing arrangements for this group, which comprises the Executive Headteacher, the lead safeguarding Trustee (JH) and others by invitation depending on areas of focus. It was agreed that these should be formalised. GA will send draft to JH for consideration before circulation to wider Trust Board.

GA

GA advised that he had referred to the DFE's governance and academies financial handbooks, the Ofsted evaluation schedule and the Trust's Scheme of Delegation when drafting the various Terms. Since circulation of drafts, Sarah Sparke had brought GA's attention to details in the Articles around the issue of quorum. It was agreed that GA should revise the relevant section in the original drafts to align with the Articles. GA to then circulate final versions.

GA

BH queried the spending limits specified for the Finance and Audit Committee. GA explained that these were in line with the Scheme of Delegation but could be re-visited. SKe suggested that new any new Trustees should be appointed to committees e.g. to increase the QEHS monitoring committee from three to four non-executive Trustees and to spread the workload. Trustees agreed to revisit committee membership once Trustees have been appointed.

9) QEHS exam results

JA gave an update on this summer's exam results, referring to the paper he had circulated earlier. SKi commented that Trustees are pleased with the headline figures and asked for thanks to be passed to staff.

GA

JA tabled a separate paper summarising outcomes in Science where attainment is down on the previous year, although JA advised that consideration be given to progress measures when they come out later this term before full conclusions are drawn.

Discussion followed about routes for students in Science i.e. triple or core/additional, in light of suggestion that attainment outcomes might appear better if more were entered for core/additional rather than triple. PF commented that it was important that decisions here should be taken in the best interests of each individual student, including having high aspiration, rather than how these played out in headline figures. GA agreed but shared the view of one of the Curriculum Leaders that some who gained Ds rather than Cs at triple would have gained Cs in core/additional. JA to reflect on most appropriate approach for this year, with the Curriculum Team and relevant CLs.

GA advised that a more detailed consideration of the results will be undertaken in the monitoring committees. It is intended that the SIP will look at actions that have taken place in Science since her last visit and would report to Trustees on the extent to which improvements are being made.

JA noted that there have been notable improvements in Biology and Chemistry outcomes at A level, with Physics performing in line with what had been targeted. JH suggested looking into the extent to which students made use of private tuition. SKi commented that it would be difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from this and made reference to recent research undertaken by the Sutton Trust SKi to send details to Trustees.

SKi

JA went onto outline outcomes for disadvantaged students, where the in-school attainment gap remains, although there may be a reduction in the gap with national others, which will become clearer when that data is made available. Discussion then followed about intentions to enable better DP attainment going forward. GA outlined intentions and explained appointment of Katie Innes onto the SLT with a specific remit around DPs.

JA also identified SEND and LAPs as areas of focus for the year ahead.

JA went on to summarise Y13 attainment, which is very positive. TB questioned how many high schools are now doing 3 A levels. JA advised that more are moving towards 3.

SKi asked about the policy for retention of year 12-13. JA advised students are not excluded, however in order to progress in the same subject they must achieve a D or above.

SKe questioned which subjects would be running next year. GA advised that the curriculum

will be discussed at the October meeting.

TB questioned whether any students were trading up following their results

10) Changes to Academies Financial Handbook

SS had circulated a table of responses to requirements under the Academies Financial Handbook. SKi suggested that these be considered by the Finance and Audit Committee. Trustees agreed.

11) Letter to Accounting Officer

SS had circulated a letter to the Accounting Officer from the ESFA regarding academy sector financial returns. Trustees noted the contents of the letter.

FAC

12) Urgent business with agreement of Chair

JH advised that he was unable to attend the meeting scheduled for 20 September and asked for the date to be re-considered. Trustees discussed the timing of the meeting. GA advised that one relatively pressing issue was the need to enable those considering a place at HMs for their child in September 2018 (to be decided by them by the end of October, to be clear that their child would not be without a school at the end of Year 5.

GA suggested that Trustees send their availability for weeks commencing 18 September and 25 September to CG by Friday 8 September with a view to trying to establish a date at which all could attend. If unable to identify such a date then we would proceed with 20 September. Trustees agreed.

13) Close and confirm date of next meeting

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded.

Date of next meeting to be determined.

Trustees moved onto Part 2 of the agenda.

All