

# Minutes - Board of Directors

<b>Version:</b>	Approved	
<b>Issue Date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2018	
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2018	
<b>Location:</b>	Bristol Brunel Academy	
<b>Time:</b>	4.00pm	
<b>Chair:</b>	Jane Harrington (JH)	Chair of the Board
<b>Members:</b>	Airlie Fife (AFi)	Director
	Ron Ritchie (RR)	Director
	Pete Franklin (PF)	Director
	Guy Keith-Miller (GKM)	Director
	William Liew (WL)	Director
	Norman Pascal (NP)	Director
	Iwan James (IJ) [by telephone]	Director
	Nicky McAllister (NM)	Director
<b>Attendees:</b>	Steve Taylor (ST)	CEO
	Dan Nicholls (DN)	Executive Director of Education
	Peter Price (PP) [by telephone]	Member of the CLF
	Sally Apps (SA)	Executive Principal
	Sarah Lovell (SL)	Finance Director
	Ian Payne (IP)	HR Director
	Susie Weaver (SW)	Interim Executive Principal
	Alison Fletcher (AFL)	Director of CLF Institute
	Bryony Green (BG)	Director of Corporate Services
	Wendy Hellin (WH)	Clerk
	Adrian Coleman (ACo)	Observer
<b>Apologies:</b>	Anthony Cherry (AC)	Director
	Jon Gould (JG)	Director
	Su Coombes (SC)	Director
	Mandy Milsom (MM)	Executive Principal

## Minutes

Item	Description	Led By
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions, Administration, Apologies</b>	
1.1	JH welcomed everyone to the meeting. Adrian Coleman was introduced to the board. Apologies are recorded above.	
1.2	PP and IJ are joining the meeting by telephone.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest</b>	
2.1	No declarations were made.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Strategic and Educational Updates</b>	
3.1	CEO / EDE Updates – HWA, JCA, SA, FVA, DSSB	
3.1.1	Flag A is provided by way of update and was also shared with the Executive Scrutiny committee on Monday.	

3.1.2	The document also formed the basis of the review meeting with Brian Hooper this week. The review meeting focussed on HWA during the morning and the afternoon was spent reviewing updates around progress and data. The day was very positive and there was evidence of progress at HWA. The data shows some rapid improvement at FVA. The impact of the change of leadership at JCA and SA was also discussed. The letter from Brian Hooper in response to the visit will be shared with the board when available. JH reported that Brian Hooper had confidence in the direction of travel and was keen for this to be relayed to the board.	
3.1.3	DN highlighted key areas of the report and provided an update on the 4 academies most at risk.	
3.1.4	<b>FVA</b> FVA received a visit from Bethan Owen, a consultant with a DfE background, last week and attended the Primary Academy Review meeting with SW.	
3.1.5	<b>JCA</b> The in-residence programme started several weeks ago. The review of that programme will take place next week. In the interim, Mary Massey took part in an informal visit last week and looked at the Ready to Lean system. There was a focus on recognising where the children's needs are not being met. Mary Massey scrutinised the implementation of that policy as well as the Hub, SEND voice and student voice. Very helpful feedback has been received which indicates that the appropriate plans are now in place and have been appropriately implemented. There is a strong sense of team within the SLT and they are focusing on the right areas.	
3.1.6	<b>SA</b> Rebecca Curtis has been in post for 5 weeks. Bethan Owen attended the recent Academy Review Meeting. SW is working with Rebecca Curtis on the short, medium and long term priority list. Year 6 has had a massive amount of support from the CLF Institute, pan federation and externally. Rebecca Curtis is responding well and her urgency is clear.	
3.1.7	<b>HWA</b> Brian Hooper has identified that the leadership at HWA are taking effective action. The mock exams at HWA have the strongest results of any academy, however there are a very high number of high previous attaining students at HWA so this is in part to be expected. Predictions are -0.4 to -0.3 for progress 8. Ready to Learn has now been in place for a couple of terms and there is a new approach to teaching and learning.	
	<b>Questions from the board (bold) and Executive team responses</b>	
3.1.8	<b>There is a huge gender gap for year 6 at FVA, what is happening there?</b>	
3.1.9	The cohort at FVA is very small with each child contributing 5% towards results. There is a focus on every single child and their individual learning journey. Year 6 is the final legacy cohort. The progress story will be strong but the gender gap will remain.	
3.1.10	<b>What is being done to ensure those children catch up?</b>	
3.1.11	Every child in year 6 has very a very specific learning plan.	
3.1.12	<b>The gender issue has been raised before on a number of occasions and there is some concern now that there is a bigger issue regarding the needs of boys. Is this the case?</b>	

3.1.13	The gender issue was raised last year but it was not one of our top five pan federation areas of focus. This year it is. We are seeking to develop some pan federation strategies to reduce the gap. It is rare we talk about individual children at board level but year 6 at FVA is very unusual due to cohort size. It might be more relevant to compare the gender gap of other year 6 cohorts. We will have an agenda item at the March meeting to focus on the gender gap across the trust.	DN
3.1.14	<b>Is governance at HWA stronger?</b>	
3.1.15	There are some concerns but the Academy Council is on an improvement journey. Jon Gould has now chaired two meetings and a new Academy Councillor started this week. Chairs across academies are feeling more confident following training around Ofsted. The focus at the COAC meetings is on the right things and Chairs receive good support from EPs.	
3.1.16	The final column of the risk table at page 6 of the education report at Flag A shows the relative risk around the performance of the Academy Council and the Chair and shows that over time there is more confidence there.	
	<b>End of Questions</b>	
3.2	DfE/Ofsted contact and CLF Institute review since 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	
3.2.1	Brian Hooper and Jo Thomas visited this week. A discussion took place around the growing confidence of the RSC team around the federation's capacity in relation to Millpond.	
3.2.2	CLF review reports have been circulated via Executive Scrutiny. Reviews have been planned in over the remainder of this academic year for HWA, JCA, Post 16, WFA, BBA and BMA. Mary Massey has looked at SEND provision at SA.	
3.3	<b>Changes to roles and responsibilities</b>	
3.3.1	Page 12 of the education report shows the most recent version of the corporate roles and responsibilities diagram. There are two colleagues identified on there who have a focus to drive the boys' improvement agenda. DN reported that there is also a term 5 quality assurance focus for boys. The board requested that a named safeguarding lead is in place to cover MMs absence. Steve Bane is covering the role in the interim with support from SW. Afi is the link Director for safeguarding and regularly has meetings with SB and MM/SW. ST will ensure the table is updated for the next board meeting.	ST
3.4	<b>Associate EP role and interim Primary EP</b>	
3.4.1	A job description for the Associate EP role has been written. At present there is nobody in that role due to SW stepping up to cover MM.	
3.5	<b>Other Updates</b>	
3.5.1	FNN is taking place tonight with a focus on course content for KS4.	
3.5.2	The board asked if Art, Music and Drama now have less priority in a MAT. DN explained how Progress 8 can narrow the curriculum. There is still breadth in years 7 and 8. A discussion took place about how extra curricula activities can ensure there is still a broad and balanced experience for students in these subject. The board asked for further information on the breadth of the extra curriculum provision. This will be provided at the next board meeting.	DN
3.5.3	South Gloucestershire schools were the worst performing in the region last year. There has been some negative media attention regarding this and the board should be aware of that. The CLF is already well engaged in some collaborative work.	
3.5.4	Discussions with Bristol LA to move Post 16 to one permanent site are still in progress.	

<b>4</b>	<b>Finance</b>	
4.1	<b>Finance Report</b>	
4.1.1	The finance report is included at Flag B for information.	
4.2	<b>Reserves Policy</b>	
4.2.1	<p>SL spoke to the Reserves Policy at Flag C and highlighted the following main changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum balance of £4m and a maximum balance of £10m has been introduced;</li> <li>• Reserves can only be used for specific expenditure as detailed in the policy;</li> <li>• If the minimum balance of reserves of £4m is exceeded by £750k, a maximum amount of £750k will be made available each academic year for reserves requests;</li> <li>• These requests will be approved by a reserves committee consisting of SL, BG, DN and 2 Principals on a rotating basis (Principals will not be permitted to review their own business cases);</li> <li>• All reserves (restricted, unrestricted and capital funds) across the CLF are pooled centrally with the exception of the restricted funds of the private finance initiative (PFI) academies;</li> <li>• There is also provision of access to emergency reserves.</li> </ul>	
4.2.2	WL confirmed that the FEG have reviewed the policy in depth and that it has been benchmarked. WL asked that a line be added to state that academies are not permitted to go into deficit.	<b>SL</b>
4.2.3	NM asked if the reserves that have built up specifically at MPA for furnishing the new build will be ring fenced. SL confirmed that some of the fund for MPA will be ring fenced to ensure the building is kitted out to the appropriate level.	
4.2.3	The board asked if the Principals had been consulted on the decision; some academies have considerable reserves, some have very little. SL has discussed the policy with the majority of Principals. There were some concerns but following further discussions Principals are now fully on board.	
4.2.4	The board asked for reassurance that reserves cannot be used for recurring costs. SL explained that for short term non-current staffing costs, these would only be approved on the basis of fixed term contracts being in place.	
4.2.5	The board asked that some detail be included in the policy to provide clarity around what constitutes emergency use. SL will add this to the policy.	<b>SL</b>
4.2.6	The board asked if recovery plans would still operate for individual academies where needed. SL confirmed this was the case.	
4.2.7	The board asked that the final approval for use of the £750k reserves sit with FEG. SL will make this change to the policy.	
4.2.8	<i>The board approved the Reserves Policy subject to the amendments agreed.</i>	
<b>5</b>	<b>HR</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Update to Job Evaluation</b>	
5.1.1	IP reported that the cost of pay protection has been investigated further. Page 4 of the Job Evaluation report at Flag D shows the detail. The figures shown are predictions only	
5.1.2	The board asked if implementation of the policy would risk opening the federation up to future pay arrangements. IP said that it would be implemented carefully following legal advice and would be subject to regular annual reviews. The aim is to	

	have all staff as closely aligned as possible. Following further discussion the board approved the policy and granted IP permission to proceed.	
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Gender Pay Report</b>	
5.2.1	IP spoke to the Gender Pay report at Flag E and highlighted key areas. The figures detailed will be published on the website in March. It is not yet known how the media might react to these declarations from MATs. RR suggested some benchmarking is carried across the sector to see where the CLF sits.	IP
5.2.2	The next step is to produce a strategy for closing the gap.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Operational Issues</b>	
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Admissions Policies</b>	
6.1.1	BG spoke to the tabled paper on admissions as at Flag F. Further to the agreement to enter consultation at the last board meeting, this paper summarises the outcome of consultation and requests board approval to determine admissions policies that have changed.	
6.1.2	The policy with significant change is that of JCA. There was a challenge from the schools adjudicator around the logistics of the Non Verbal Reasoning Test (NVRT). In order to comply with the Schools Admissions Code significant changes to the current processes need to be implemented. These are complex, costly and may potential disadvantage vulnerable families. The proposal is to remove the need for NVRT and move to random selection. Some analysis has been carried out and it is envisaged that in terms of spread of ability, the intake is unlikely to change substantially.	
6.1.3	JH requested that, given the document was tabled, Directors take 48 hours to review the document and feedback concerns to JH. <i>If there are no objections, the policy will be deemed as approved and the admissions arrangements determined.</i>	
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Request for delegation – cleaning contract</b>	
6.2.1	As detailed at the November Operations Report, the federation is reviewing the cleaning provision in order to ensure compliance and value for money. A company called Tenet have helped develop the ITT, have audited the sites and provided expert advice. Presentations were made by 4 companies yesterday and there is a preferred supplier. Delegation is requested for 2 Directors to review the outcome from the ITT, determine sites to include and approve the appointment of a contractor. <i>The board delegated this to PF. AC will be approached. RR will step in if AC is not available.</i>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Professional Services Clusters</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Update on cluster project</b>	
7.1.1	PP, IJ, PF and SW left the meeting.	
7.1.2	BG provided an updated as attached as Annex A.	
7.1.3	A discussion took place about the best time to review the governance model. ST said the current model of governance was appropriate for the number of academies. There will be a health check of the structure at each stage to ensure it is still appropriate and fit for purpose. JH proposed a fuller discussion on governance structures at the March meeting.	WH
7.1.4	The Delegated Authority Framework specifies that where partial delegation is made to two Directors, these will be agreed at the start of the academic year. As this has not yet been actioned, it was agreed this would be done at the March meeting.	BG
<b>8</b>	<b>Other Urgent Business</b>	
8.1	No other urgent business was raised.	

9	Any Other Business	
9.1	The draft agenda for the meeting of 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2018 is included at Flag G.	
10	Close of Meeting	
10.1	The meeting closed at 18.30 hrs.	

Approved by the Chair of the Board, Jane Harrington:

