



COMMUNITY INCLUSIVE TRUST BOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF THE MEETING 19th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 5:00pm – WARWICK HOUSE, LONG BENNINGTON

Attendees

Stephen Hopkins – Chairman
Jo Slessor – Trustee
Helen Drew-Bradley - Trustee
Bryan Steele – Trustee
Keith Stanton – Trustee
Peter Bell – CEO
Daran Bland – DDOG
Nathan Jeremiah – Guest (Observer)
Ana Hendrickson – Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trust Board (Minutes)

1. WELCOME AND CHECK IN

The Chair to TB welcomed everyone to the meeting.

For the benefit of all present, the invited guest was introduced. The process of Members' appointment to the role of CIT Trustee is underway.

The invited guest provided background context in relation to his current role and expertise.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Rachael Sharpe – Trustee – Work commitments

Julia Lindley-Baker – Trustee – Work commitments

Harpaul Dhindsa – Trustee – Work commitments

Kate Goodman – Trustee – Illness

Pam Powell – Trustee – Illness

Kim Adele-Platts – Trustee – IT issues

Apologies accepted. Quorum met.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None for this meeting.

4. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair to TB noted the Trust's recent investment in new technology/ IT equipment in order to facilitate all hybrid meetings, as discussed and agreed at the July 2023 Board meeting.

5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING- FOR APPROVAL

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record subject to the above-mentioned amendment.

Resolution: The Minutes of the 19th July 2023 full Trust Board meeting were approved as a true and accurate record.

6. ACTION TRACKER - FOR INFORMATION

The 2023-2024 Action Log document was made available on the OnBoard portal for information prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB noted the latest updates to action points 3, 5 and 7.

The F&E Committee Chair highlighted that no changes will be made to the budget already submitted to the DfE/ESFA. Updates may be made to the Trust's projected outturn.

Trustees suggested for all open action points within the above tracker to be rag rated GREEN as all points have been dealt with although not yet completed.

7. LSB REPORTS - SUMMER TERM 22-23 – FOR ASSURANCE

The 2022-23 LSB Consolidated Report V3.0 - Final version updated July 23, LSB Feedback to Trust Board – ELT Responses Summer Term 2023 Completed, Areas for Trust Consideration, Feedback Comments of 5Cs, LSB Assurance Report and the Summary of Red Areas Within Report documents were made available on the OnBoard portal for information prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB advised that sections of the LSB Consolidated report had been saved in a PDF format for ease of access. Information within this report will be scrutinised further at each Board Committee meeting. Concerns raised by LSBs have been addressed by the DDOG as detailed on the LSB Feedback to Trust Board – ELT Responses document.

The DDOG advised that an updated version of the above report, which will include Autumn term data, will be presented at the December Trust Board meeting. The new version sees the introduction of an additional rag rating colour, Purple, to reflect that the LSB has not had the capacity to provide an assurance.

Trustees noted that no information was available in relation to Greenfields Academy.

The DDOG advised that a SOAP report had been submitted late due to capacity issues. Additionally, a resignation from their LSB Chair, due to personal/work commitments, was received.

Trustees were assured that no red ratings had been submitted. Concerns had previously been raised by the LSB Chair around LSB capacity as well as the inability for LSB members, who are CIT employees, to carry out monitoring visits. An interim LSB Chair is now in place, focus will be given to building capacity within this Board.

Trustees requested an update regarding Caythorpe's LSB membership; particularly after the recent resignations of their LSB Chair and Vice Chair and praised the information provided by Bingham LSB regarding the work related to the 5Cs (Culture, Community, Concerns, Communication and Celebration).

The DDOG stated that full membership details will be obtained, and an update will be provided.

The CEO added that full mention will be made, in the next edition of the CEO's blog, regarding the work of Bingham LSB in relation to the 5Cs.

A lengthy discussion took place around LSBs capacity, required commitment, balanced membership, and HTs' assistance with LSB member recruitment as well as ensuring released time for staff members to carry out their governor roles.

The DDOG agreed to remind Headteachers of the above at the next HTs meeting. He suggested for the CIT Team Approach to Governance document to be shared with CIT Headteachers.

ASSURANCE: Trustees were assured that the Trust is responding appropriately to matters raised by the LSBs.

ACTION 1: For the DDOG to obtain full membership details in relation to Caythorpe's LSB; particularly after the recent resignations of their LSB Chair and Vice Chair.

ACTION 2: For the CEO to mention in the next edition of the CEO's blog the work of Bingham's LSB in relation to the 5Cs.

ACTION 3: For the CIT Team Approach to Governance document to be shared with CIT Headteachers.

8. EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMER 2023 RESULTS – FOR ASSURANCE

The KS2 Data Mainstream Primary Schools, 10267759 – Linchfield Academy – 147677 – FINAL PDF and the Exams Results for SEND Pupils July 2023 were made available on the OnBoard portal for information prior to this meeting.

Trustees praised the report from Linchfield Primary's recent Ofsted inspection.

The CEO provided background context in relation to this school, the Ofsted grading at the time of joining the Trust and the recent investment and refurbishment. He praised the achievement of the school.

The Chair to TB indicated that a congratulations letter would be sent to the school's HT on behalf of the Trust Board, acknowledging the hard work and achievements of the school.

The KS2 mainstream data results and the reasons behind them were discussed at length, particularly the areas of Reading and Writing. Schools' locality, changes in school leadership and pupil attendance (culture) were found to be the main contributing factors for the combined results in these areas. Further scrutiny will be carried out by the ES&SG Committee. A query was raised in relation to the figures within the 'Diff to 90%' and their relevance.

As this section of the report is historical and no longer relevant, it was requested for the DoE Mainstream to remove it from this document going forward.

The CEO stated that progress scores fall within the national average parameters. However, additional funding and targeted support will be put in place for those schools that require it.

The CEO praised Ambergate's GCSE's results and noted that all SEMH school curriculums have been aligned. For some CIT SEND schools exam results are cohort dependant.

Trustee comments were welcomed. None made.

ASSURANCE: Trustees were assured that the monitoring and support systems in place are robust.

ACTION 4: For the 2023 column - 'Diff to 90%' section within the KS2 Data Mainstream Primary Schools to be removed.

9. REVIEW OF 22/23 – IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE STATEMENT – FOR INFORMATION

The Governance Impact Statement 2223 Final Version was made available on the OnBoard portal prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB noted that the Governance Impact Statement is not a statutory piece but a document that reflects the work of Board during the academic year. He advised that the above-mentioned document is a first draft and welcomed Trustees input. Comments or suggestions are to be sent electronically to the Clerk to TB within a week from this meeting.

A final document review will be carried out by the Chair and the Clerk to TB on receipt of Trustee input.

The following suggestions were made:

- Note the approval of People Policies (People Committee)
- Note the decoupling of the FA&E Committee and the reasoning behind it
- Note the work around H&S controls, action points and good progress made in this area

ACTION 5: For Trustee input, comments, or suggestions in relation to the Governance Impact Statement to be sent electronically to the Clerk to TB within a week from the date of this meeting.

10. GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTATION FOR 23/24– FOR INFORMATION AND APPROVAL

The SOD Policy Changes template 23-24, CIT Team Approach to Governance v 1st Sep 2023, How the CIT Trust Board get to know the schools, Governance Annual Delivery Plan 23-24 DRAFT and the School Progression Tracker- Full TB documents were made available on the OnBoard portal prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB advised that governance documentation for 2023-24 (Assurances Schedule/ Work plans/ TB meeting schedule/ Terms of Reference/ Policy review schedule) was updated and is now available on the Governance Documentation folder on the Onboard portal. Few changes have taken place particularly due to the decoupling of the FA&E Committee and its implications.

Trustees mentioned the invitation of special interest schools' Trustees to ES&SG meetings (schools' case study agenda section) as previously agreed, also noted that the Audit and Risk TOR is yet to be included within the Board TOR Overview document.

The ES&SG Committee Chair confirmed the currently followed procedure regarding case study schools and their designated Trustee.

The Clerk to TB agreed to review and amend the Board TOR Overview document.

The following documents were discussed:

Scheme of Delegation (SOD)2023-24

The DDOG proceeded to provide context around the minor changes to the SOD Policy, specifically around page 15 (CEO added to review and consultee group when making recommendations to Trust Board to approve appointment of LSB Chairs) and page 17 (Settlement Agreements – amended to reflect CEO approvals flow for settlements below £15K. Settlement Agreements equal or above £15,000 or in excess of three months' salary or where total amount including PILON exceeds 50% of salary to be approved by the People Committee).

The process for the appointment, TB ratification and removal of an LSB Chair were discussed at length.

The DDOG and CS/ Clerk to TB agreed to investigate further regarding the latter matter and to provide an update at the next TB meeting on Dember 12th 2023.

Trustees resolved to approve the changes to the SOD 2023-24 Policy subject to the DDOG's findings and their implications and requested for relevant amendments to be made to the SOD 2023-24 Policy to reflect such process, and for an update to be provided at the next TB meeting on Dember 12th 2023.

How the CIT Trust Board get to know the schools

The Chair to TB advised that the above document was written following on from conversations held at the June 2023 Governance Development Day.

The CEO requested for the CS/Clerk to TB to share the above-mentioned document with the Head of Communications in order for it to be included within the Trust's Communications Policy.

Trustees suggested for CIT schools/ LSBs to invite their relevant link Trustee to special school events and LSB meetings; for LSB Chairs of case study schools to be invited to ES&SG Committee meetings and for LSB members to be invited to attend Board Committee meetings as previously agreed by the Board.

Governance Annual Delivery Plan 2023-24

The DDOG advised that the above document was produced as an outcome of the recent External Review of Governance and its recommendations. It is in draft stages; focus will be given to build the body of actions.

School Progression Tracker

The Chair to TB advised that the above document will be presented at each Trust Board meeting for information and monitoring purposes.

Trustees requested an update with regards to Woodlands Academy's leadership.

The CEO confirmed the recent staffing changes to include the appointment of a central Deputy TDSL who provides support to WDLs three days a week.

The Chair to TB emphasised that Trustee comments or suggestions in relation to the *How the CIT Trust Board get to know the schools*, Governance Annual Delivery Plan, and the CIT Team Approach to Governance are to be sent to the CS/ Clerk to TB within a week from tonight's meeting.

ACTION 6: For the Clerk to TB to review and amend the Board TOR Overview document to ensure the inclusion of the Audit and Risk TOR.

ACTION 7: For the DDOG and CS/ Clerk to TB to investigate further regarding the process for the removal of an LSB Chair, for relevant amendments to be made to the SOD 2023-24 Policy to reflect such process, and for an update to be provided at the next TB meeting on Dember 12th 2023.

ACTION 8: For the CS/Clerk to TB to share the *How the CIT Trust Board get to know the schools* document with the Head of Communications in order for it to be included within the Trust's Communications Policy.

Action 9: For Trustee comments or suggestions in relation to the *How the CIT Trust Board get to know the schools*, Governance Annual Delivery Plan, and the CIT Team Approach to Governance to be sent to the CS/ Clerk to TB within a week from tonight's meeting.

RESOLUTION: Trustees resolved to approve the changes to the SOD 2023-24 Policy subject to the DDOG's findings and their implications.

11. FINANCE MATTERS- FOR ASSURANCE

The KPI Trust Board Report P11, CEP Presentation to Heads 14.7.23 FINAL and the Trust Board Financial Report – P11 documents were made available on the OnBoard portal prior to this meeting.

The CEO noted that Sandon College is outside the parameters of overspending, this is due partly to the imminent merge with Ambergate College (January 2024). Current level of overspend is at 70% but trying to reduce this.

An update on the current position of the Trust was provided.

The expenditure of funds above 3% level of Reserves on financing the delivery of the Strategic Plan, capitalization of staff/ possible impact and income opportunities (to include Stornoway) were discussed at length.

Further details on the financing of the Strategic Plan will be provided at the December 12th 2023 TB meeting.

Trustee comments were welcomed. None made.

ASSURANCE: Trustees were assured that strong financial monitoring controls are in place.

12. FINANCE MATTERS – KPI AREAS FOR REPORTING – FOR RESOLUTION

The *KPI Suggestions for the Board* document was made available on the OnBoard portal prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB highlighted the opportunity for Trustees to review the 2023-24 KPI areas for reporting. He proposed for an open conversation at Trust level approach and for a decision to be made by the F&E Committee going forward.

The CFO has produced the above-mentioned document. Marked with an Asterix are the areas linked to the Trust's strategic priorities for 2023-24.

Staffing spend as a percentage of total income, surplus/deficit as a proportion of total income, GAG/ SEND Funding, and expenditure, IT/ Energy/ Catering and Premises costs as well as Settlement Agreement figures were discussed.

Trustees suggested for an additional KPI area, percentage of total expenditure as well as percentage of total income; and for a comparison to be made against national benchmarks.

Trustees indicated KPI reporting should be kept to a minimum and that focus should be given to the areas marked with an Asterix as these relate to strategy. Further and more detailed KPI information is available to Finance Committee members and the full Board of Trustees.

No further comments made.

ACTION 10: For a decision to be made by the F&E Committee in relation to the 2023-24 KPI areas for reporting.

13. STRATEGIC PLAN – FOR INFORMATION

The Summary CIT Strategic Plan- Mission, Vision and Values 2023-2026 and the Delivery plan Priorities documents were made available on the OnBoard portal prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB advised that the above document is for information purposes only. The CEO will report on the Strategic Plan at every Board meeting.

14. POLICY MATTERS – POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

The Travel and Expenses Policy Sept 2023 and the Travel and Expenses Policy Changes template documents were made available on the OnBoard portal prior to this meeting.

The Chair to TB noted that Governor Expenses and other related Members/Trustee and Staff Expenses policies have been consolidated into one Trust-wide document.

He highlighted the proposed amendments to the Travel and Expenses Policy particularly around the removal of “*up to £40 for valid travel and necessary expenses (per meeting). Any claims over £40 will be taken to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Trust Board for consideration*” from section 16 and its replacement with “*can claim allowances within this policy to cover expenditure necessary to enable them to perform their duties as directed by the Chair of the Trust/Local School Board of which they are a member*”.

A suggestion was made for the addition of the word ‘insurance’ after the word ‘business’ within section 6.3, “it is the individual’s responsibility to ensure that business use on their own motor vehicles is in place, and any additional cost as a result of this is not covered by CIT”

Trustees resolved to adopt the Travel and Expenses Policy Sept 2023 Policy.

RESOLUTION: To adopt the Travel and Expenses Policy Sept 2023 Policy.

15. CLERKING MATTERS

The CS/Clerk to TB reminded Trustees regarding the completion of electronic Declaration of Pecuniary Interest forms for 2023-24. A few DOI forms remain outstanding.

Trustees were encouraged to cast their votes to the current KCSiE 2023 and Trustee CoC Onboard approvals as means of confirming that both documents had been read and understood.

The CS/Clerk to TB requested for Trustees to RSVP to all scheduled governance meetings either via e-mail or via the Onboard portal. This will ensure meetings are quorate and will facilitate the allocation of meeting rooms (TB meetings).

A Safeguarding refresher presentation will be available on the Onboard portal for Trustee completion. This is part of yearly statutory training.

The relevant approval will be opened on the Onboard portal for Trustees to cast their votes as confirmation of training completion.

At this point in the meeting the DDOG provided context in relation to the CIT Training Padlet.

For the benefit of all attendees the above training padlet was shared on screen.

The DDOG advised that the content within this training padlet is based on helpful links to CIT bespoke courses and to online training modules produced by the NGA.

All areas of the CIT Training Padlet were explained in detail (Mandatory, Recommended and Commissioned training). Requests for commissioned training are to be sent via the Clerk to TB.

The CIT Training Padlet is in its final stages of completion. The final version will be available to Trustees and LSB Chairs after October half-term 2023.

16. REVIEW OF MEETING AND CHAIR’S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair to TB thanked everyone for their attendance and good governance work. He advised regarding a possible new Trustee, context was provided.

The Chair to TB has had a conversation with the above-mentioned individual. He fully recommended the appoint to the role of Trustee at the Community Inclusive Trust. He agreed for the relevant CV and individual profile to be made available on the Onboard portal for Trustee voting.

Trustee indicated their agreement with the above.

The DDOG added that an opportunity has risen for the rental of additional ground floor space at Warwick House, Long Bennington in order to expand and integrate the IT Team to the current Central Team location, moving out of Poplar Farm Primary. A resolution from the Trust Board is required for the commitment of funds for the lease of the additional unit. A Resolutions Cover Sheet (RCS) will be uploaded to Onboard for Trustee approval.

Trustees requested for a running statement of funds to be included with any Resolutions Cover Sheet proposal (RCS) going forward, for information and monitoring purposes.

ACTION 11: For a running statement of funds to be included with any Resolutions Cover Sheet proposal (RCS) going forward, for information and monitoring purposes.

Meeting closed at 7:00pm.