

**Uttoxeter Learning Trust
Trustees' Board**

Minutes of a meeting of the Trustees' Board held in Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter, on Wednesday, 11 July 2018 at 5.30pm.

Present:

Member and Trustee – Mr S Slater (in the chair)

Trustees – Mrs E Bell, Mrs V Bennett, Mr R Oldham, Rev M Sherwin, Mr L Trigg

Also Present:

Interim Chief Executive Officer – Mrs A Tapp

Clerk to the ULT – Mr R Sheldon

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs P Livesey and Mr T Sutcliffe (Trustees)

90. Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of interest were given from Mr S Slater (DfE consultant), Mrs V Bennett (governor at Hutchinson Memorial CE First School), Rev M Sherwin (governor at All Saints CE First School, Leigh), Mrs A Tapp (headteacher of Picknalls First School).

91. Trustees' Board Minutes:

Minutes of a meeting of the Trustees' Board held on 5 June 2018 had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

That the minutes be received and approved, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 83a (Funding) – Trustees had also noted that a key funding issue for Hutchinson Memorial CE First School was the cost of maintaining an experienced staff team.

92. Matters Arising:

a) Planned Admission Number (Minute 80(c) refers)

Trustees noted that discussions continued between Thomas Alleyne's High School and the local authority regarding its planned admission number.

It was resolved –

That the matter be kept under review and that Trustees recognise that approval to change the planned admission number must come from the Trust Board and not the local authority.

b) Governor Review (Minute 82(b) refers)

The interim chief executive officer reported that, as requested, she had discussed arrangements for undertaking governance reviews with Entrust and had also met with the person to conduct the reviews. She further reported the reviews would include all 7 school governing bodies and governance of the ULT. The first review was currently being undertaken at Ryecroft CE Middle School and the subsequent report would be

circulated to Trustees immediately following completion. All other reviews would be undertaken during the autumn term.

It was resolved –

That Trustees fully support arrangements made for undertaking governance reviews and look forward to receiving the first of the reports following completion of the review at Ryecroft CE Middle School.

c) School Governance (Minute 82(c) refers)

The interim chief executive officer reported that, as requested, the need for all governing bodies to complete a skills audit had been discussed with headteachers and arrangements for this were in hand. The skills audit would be completed through use of the toll kits available through GovernorSpace or the NGA. The interim executive officer was also pleased to report that there no longer any vacancies on the governing body for Picknalls First School.

It was resolved –

That Trustees note the requirement for all governing bodies to complete a skills audit and look forward to receiving the outcomes of the audits in due course.

d) CIF Bids (Minute 83(b) refers)

The chair reported that Finance committee had considered the financial implications for schools in having to make a contribution towards the cost of any agreed project and had subsequently recommended that headteachers be advised to contact the Trust Board should financial support be necessary to ensure that a CIF project could go ahead.

It was resolved –

That Trustees approve the recommendations of the Trust Board for central funds to be used to support CIF projects, if it was clear that a school would struggle to meet the required contribution.

e) Meeting with Local MP (Minute 83(c) refers)

The interim chief executive officer reported that the planned meeting with the local MP had been cancelled but a request had been made for a written response to be given to each of the questions due to have been asked and that the meeting be re-arranged for the autumn term. A response to the request was awaited.

f) Marketing (Minute 83(d) refers)

Mr Oldham reported that the planned second meeting of the marketing group had been postponed and the next meeting was now due to be held early in the autumn term. The group had been aware that funds would be available to help support identified projects.

93. Interim Chief Executive Officer Report:

The interim chief executive officer presented her report on the work of the ULT, a copy of which had been previously circulated. Discussion followed with particular reference to the following matters:

a) Free School

The projected pupil numbers for the proposed free school were extremely low and, on this basis, its opening would likely have very little impact on schools in the ULT. The situation was, however, being kept under review.

b) Pupil Admissions

The interim chief executive officer was to attend the appeals hearing to be held for parents wishing to send their children to Oldfields Hall Middle School, to remind all concerned that places were available at Windsor Park Middle School.

c) Meeting with Unions

A recent meeting had been held with the teaching unions to discuss a range of issues, including in particular staff terms and conditions. It had been noted that the local authority would not be revising its redundancy package any time soon and that as such, arrangements had been made with Insight HR for them to prepare three possible models for a ULT redundancy package for consideration at a future meeting of the Finance committee.

It was resolved –

- i) That Trustees look forward to receiving the various models for a ULT redundancy package and await future recommendations from the Finance committee regarding any proposed changes.
- ii) That the interim chief executive officer be requested to forward the detailed notes of the meeting with the teaching unions to Mrs Bell for her to consider them further on behalf of the Trust Board.

d) Safeguarding

All 7 schools had completed the NSPCC/TES safeguarding audit and headteachers were to meet individually with the LA's safeguarding officer to discuss any relevant to their school.

e) ULT Brochures

Draft copies of two brochures relating to membership of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust were made available at the meeting. One brochure was applicable for all member schools of the ULT and the other to highlight the advantages that becoming an associate member of the ULT would bring to a school. Both brochures had been considered at the recent meeting of the Finance committee and had been revised to take account of those discussions. The Finance committee had also considered the cost to a school of becoming an associate member and had recommended that it provisionally be set at 1% of a school's budget.

The interim chief executive was pleased to further report that a number of schools were already showing an interest in becoming an associate member and the chair of Trustees had met with governors of Richard Clarke First School, Abbots Bromley, the previous evening to discuss associate membership. They had shown real interest in becoming an associate member of the ULT but were unable to meet the 1% payment charge.

Discussion took place regarding the proposed associate membership fee and it was felt that there should be some flexibility in the payment structure to differentiate between academies and local authority schools and for local negotiation as may be required.

Any reduction though in the set associate membership joining fee would need to be reflected in the service level agreement drawn up with those schools.

It was resolved –

- i) That the associate membership fee be set at ½% for LA schools and 1% for existing academies.
- ii) That the chair be authorised to negotiate further with interested schools regarding the proposed charges but that any reduction should be reflected in the subsequent service level agreement.

94. Education Committee Report:

Trustees noted that a meeting of the Education committee had recently been held on 3 July 2018 but that the meeting due to have been held in the first half of the summer term had been cancelled. The committee chair briefly referred to the issues discussed at the meeting, including in particular:

- School performance and flight path monitoring. Unvalidated first school data had been discussed and, whilst outcomes were good, it was agreed that future reports should provide much more detail. It was noted that the local authority offered a service level agreement to provide detailed data analysis, including Fisher family Trust, and could be purchased at a cost of £285 for first schools. The committee had recommended that all first schools should purchase the local authority service level agreement to provide data analysis and that central ULT funds be made available for this purpose.
- Committee terms of reference. It had been agreed to revise the terms of reference to clarify the different roles of the Education committee and Raising Achievement Board in supporting and challenging school performance.
- A safeguarding review had been undertaken at Thomas Alleyne's High School the previous day (10 July) and a copy of the report would be made available to Trustees when received.

Further to discussion around the recent meeting of the Education committee, the interim chief executive officer circulated the three middle schools' KS2 results 2018. Trustees were disappointed to note that the results at two of the schools (Oldfields Hall and Ryecroft) were below the national average. The interim chief executive officer read out statements prepared by each headteacher in response to the results. She also reported that she was to visit the schools early in the autumn term for more detailed discussion around the results.

It was resolved –

- i) That the report of the discussions of the meeting held on 3 July be noted.
- ii) That Trustees approve the use of ULT central funds for the purchase of a data analysis service level agreement between the local authority and each of the first schools.
- iii) That the Education committee should meet with the headteachers and chairs of governors of Oldfields Hall and Ryecroft Middle Schools to seek assurances that appropriate measures were being put in place to bring about required improvement.

95. Finance Committee Report:

Trustees had been previously circulated with minutes of a meeting of the Finance committee held on 23 May 2018 and the committee chair also briefly referred to the issues discussed at a recent meeting held on 5 July 2018, including in particular:

- The five year budget modellers for each of the schools and the ULT consolidated budget. These showed that there were no financial concerns for 2018/2019 but this was not the case for later years. The Finance committee had therefore agreed to meet with each of the schools individually to gain a better understanding of their budgets and to better assess the extent of possible future financial concerns. Given that there were no immediate financial concerns the committee had recommended that the three year budget modellers for the schools, and the ULT consolidated budget 2018/2021 be submitted to the ESFA as required.
- The level of central funds held and the 2 ½% currently paid by the schools were again discussed and it was noted that although the central fund currently had a good level of reserves, without this there would be insufficient funds to cover emergencies especially if there was ever a need to cover absence of any of the leadership team. The committee was to keep this under review.

It was resolved –

- i) That the minutes of the Finance committee meeting held on 23 May 2018 be received and accepted and that the report of the meeting held on 5 July 2018 be received and noted.
- ii) That Trustees approve the recommendation of the committee to submit the three year budget modellers for schools and the ULT consolidated budget 2018/2021 to the ESFA.
- iii) That the chief finance officer be requested to provide a report to show the financial benefits realised by schools as a result of ULT decisions, ie payroll, to help Trustees get a better understanding of how the savings could be offset against any increase in payment to the central fund.

96. ULT School Development Plan Overviews:

Copies of the overview for each School Development Plan had been previously circulated. Discussion followed and, whilst finding the overviews to be helpful, Trustees felt that future overviews should all have a common format and based on Ofsted headings. This would help Trustees focus on individual school targets with a better understanding of plans put in place to ensure that they were achieved. The timing of receipt of the overviews was also discussed.

The interim chief executive officer reported that the overview of school development plans had been shared between schools for the first time and that headteachers had already agreed the need for future overviews to have a common format.

It was resolved –

- i) That the interim chief executive officer be requested to further discuss with headteachers the requirement of a common format for school development plan overviews and that revised copies be circulated early in the autumn term taking account of unvalidated school results.

- ii) That arrangements be made for all future school development plan overviews to be submitted to the Trust Board for consideration at its first meeting of each autumn term.

97. Appointment of Chief Executive Officer:

See confidential appendix (attached).

98. Other Business:

Academy Governor Conference 2018

The chair referred to a governor conference to be held in London on 27 November 2018 and was to examine the latest approaches in delivering outstanding governance through quality leadership and enhancing education standards across all academies. There was a charge for attending the conference but the chair requested approval for both him and the clerk to the ULT to attend. A full report would be prepared following the conference.

It was resolved –

That approval be given for the chair of the Trust Board and the clerk for the ULT to attend the governor conference.

99. Date of Next Meeting:

It was resolved –

That the next meeting of the Trustees' Board be held in Thomas Alleyne's High School on Wednesday, 17 October 2018 at 6.00pm.

The meeting finished at 6.45pm.

Signed.....

Date.....