



GIRLS' LEARNING TRUST

MINUTES OF MEETING - PART ONE

Meeting Type	Trust Board
Date:	8 July 2020 at 7.00pm
Venue:	Meeting held via Zoom video conference call
Members:	Hamza Aumeer (HA), Alex Clark (AC), Robert Etchell (RE), Sandy Gillett (SG, Chair), Marie Grant (MG), *Malcolm Munro (MM), Nigel Pepper (NP), Jennifer Smith (JS) and Philip Taylor (PT, Vice-Chair)
Others present:	Helen Latham (HL, Director of Finance and Operations) and Andrew Horrod (AH, Clerk)

* denotes member absent from meeting

Item	Item Description and Minute	Action
1	Apologies for absence and declarations of interest	
	Apologies for absence were received from MM. There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Minutes of previous Trust Board meetings	
2.1	Taking into account the corrections circulated prior to the meeting by AH, the following were approved as correct records for signing by the Chair: - minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2020, Parts One and Two; - minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020 Parts One and Two.	
2.2	The Board agreed SG's proposal that in future the minutes of its meetings be 'taken as read' if no suggested amendments have been received from members prior to the following meeting.	
3	Matters arising from the minutes	
3.1	A matters arising sheet containing a mix of open and closed items from the March and June meetings had been circulated. The various updates were noted, there being brief comment on items from the March meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">HL said there was nothing to add to item 3.3 regarding the reappointment of Action HR for a further 12 months and their health and safety reporting.Replying to a question from PT on item 8.2, JS confirmed that all	

	<p>LGBs are meeting twice in late June/July.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On item 1.2 (Part Two) and the mission statement for CHSG, JS said she had spoken with MM and Headteacher Moe Devenney. As MM was unable to be present this evening, she suggested the matter be included on the next Board agenda. 	JS
3.2	The Board agreed to PT's request that there be a separate matters arising sheet for Part Two minutes of GLT meetings.	JS
4	CEO's report	
4.1	JS introduced her report, noting the extraordinary nature of the Summer Term due to the impact of Coronavirus/Covid-19. Her report set out the ways in which staff and students continued to adapt. Discussion of some issues is summarised in Part Two of these minutes.	
4.2	JS said that remote working had generally gone well but KS3 students had received less attention than Years 10 and 12, for example, because of the need to prioritise public exam classes. Feedback from a survey of KS3 parents had generally been positive and the results were shown in statistical form in an appendix to her report. The Board noted that significant percentages of parents felt they had insufficient knowledge about the home learning curriculum to support their daughters. JS said it is usually the case that at KS3 parents are less clear about what is required, in contrast to GCSE where there are published specifications.	
4.2	IT equipment had been supplied as a priority to students taking exams next year. JS said she felt that the Trust needs to improve matters for KS3 students next term. More generally, it had become evident that too much work had been issued at the start of lockdown; students are expected to do 2-4 hours of home working per day. Regarding student progress, staff were optimistic that students will catch up and the curriculum could be reduced if required. She did not get a sense that this would be a 'lost generation', which was an unhelpful term.	
4.3	JS took the Board through other sections of her report. Under academic performance, the figures on pages 3-4 included the best possible predictions for GCSE and A Level results this Summer. Ofqual had made it clear that grades have to make statistical sense. She suggested that the Trust waits to see what happens next month. Until then centre assessed grades could not be revealed to anyone including trustees and governors. The Board will review the position with exam results at its extra meeting on 24 August.	
4.4	Other sections of the report detailed issues to do with university entry, recruitment to the Sixth Form, student welfare and HR matters including staff turnover. Despite the challenges posed by school closure, all GLT schools were fully staffed for September. There were some observations about university placements, for example HA highlighted the number of Oxbridge offers to WHSG students: 18 in 2018 but only 5 in 2019 and 4 this year. He was aware however that a significant number of students wishing to study Medicine are going to places other than Cambridge or Oxford. JS corrected this year's column for CHSG in her report: the very welcome, first ever Oxbridge offer to a CHSG student was from Oxford, not Cambridge. She would take forward PT's request that totals be provided for figures in the HR tables, as per reporting at HR Committee.	JS
4.5	The report was noted and SG recorded her thanks on behalf of all	

	trustees for the work that staff were doing during such difficult times.	
5	Feedback from Trust Finance Committee and approval of the 2020/21 Budget	
5.1	NP introduced this item. On 30 June the Trust Finance Committee had considered the GLT's budget for 2020/21 and its medium term plan (MTP, the 3 year forecast up to 2022/23). The report to that meeting had been circulated to Board members. The Committee had been informed that the Trust had been successful with a Conditional Improvement Fund bid and it would be receiving a grant of £430k. Following the meeting he had discussed a few changes to the budget with HL, taking this welcome news into account. Accordingly a slightly revised report had been circulated for this evening's meeting. HL said the key change was that the CIF grant of £430k had been incorporated as additional income for 2019/20 and would be carried forward in reserves. The grant would be put towards the costs of the major WHSG canteen project. The forecast spend on this project had been increased by £350k in 2021/22 and £150k in 2022/23 (Years 2 & 3 of the MTP). The canteen project was at an early stage and money assigned to it remained subject to change following further discussion at Finance Committee. The budget amendment ensured that forecast GLT reserves (excluding School Fund) were in excess of £1million throughout the 3 year period. The Trust did not need to include School Fund now in the amended version.	
5.2	NP said reserves were in a healthy position, the Trust had contingency for Covid-19 and the budget could be recommended to the Board for approval. HL outlined what should be recorded in terms of that approval, as shown in the resolution below. There were no questions from Board members and SG thanked NP and HL for their work on the budget.	
5.3	Resolved: (i) To approve the revised GLT budget for 2020/21; (ii) To record that the Trust Board has reviewed the Medium Term Plan for the purposes of the ESFA.	
6	IT update	
	HL gave a verbal update. She had met today with the schools' digital champions with a view to having wider standardisation of IT equipment for September, so that teachers can move between classes more easily. There was a more general focus now on the operation of schools in September and a plan was being drawn up for Premises and IT. Replying to a question from RE about IT staff, HL said that the Trust had just recruited a technician. The IT team was one down on its establishment but she had just authorised Peter Creaser to recruit two agency staff for September. The costs will be drawn from the 2020/21 contingency budget.	
7	Feedback from Trust Committees (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)	
7.1	<u>HR Committee – 10 June</u> The minutes had been circulated with the Trust Board agenda pack. PT advised that it had been a short meeting, the only item he wished to highlight was that the wellbeing working party is being asked to run another survey of staff wellbeing.	

7.2	<p><u>Governance Committee – 22 June</u></p> <p>SG said that MM had joined in with the meeting and much of the discussion had been confidential. The Part One minutes had been circulated. The Committee had discussed governance structure, e.g. her appointment as a GLT Member was recommended to the Members, for the next time they meet. It had also considered whether LGB Chairs should be on the HR Committee. It was felt that whilst the idea had some merit, it was better if other LGB members served on the Committee. Other issues discussed by the Governance Committee were the boosting of the GLT Induction Protocol, another briefing seminar for trustees/governors in the Autumn Term and the new Race Advocacy Group.</p>	
7.3	<p>It was noted that the GLT Members usually had a meeting (the AGM) in December but SG and HA agreed that a meeting was needed before then and AH said he would take the matter forward. SG highlighted that her term of office as a trustee was due to expire at the end of August 2020.</p>	AH
7.4	<p><u>Carshalton LGB - 12 June</u></p> <p>There was no update given MM's absence.</p>	
7.5	<p><u>Nonsuch LGB – 24 June</u></p> <p>MG said the meeting had been productive with very good interaction; all governors had attended and contributed. The LGB had received updates on issues arising during school closure and Sunita Mohan had led the thanks to Amy Cavilla and her staff for all the work they were doing. SG said she thought the Nonsuch staff video for students had been very good. JS added that the Open Day video for prospective applicants to NHSG and WHSG would go live tomorrow.</p>	
7.6	<p><u>Wallington LGB – 17 June</u></p> <p>HA said that following the cancellation of the April round of LGB meetings, Wallington governors had held an informal meeting on 17 June. A more formal LGB meeting will take place tomorrow.</p>	
8	Admissions update	
	<p>JS reported that the Admissions Committee for the selective schools had not met this term but she and NP had discussed current issues. She had prepared a short, confidential briefing note for this evening's meeting on entry tests in the Autumn, for 2021 admission. The Board noted its contents and that JS will advise trustees and governors of when the tests are to take place.</p>	JS
9	New governor induction protocols	
9.1	<p>This item linked to discussion at the recent Governance Committee meeting. To support the item, the following extracts from the GLT Governance Handbook had been circulated: the responsibilities of LGBs, from the scheme of delegation, and the Induction Protocol for new trustees and governors, with some suggested changes. The Board endorsed the changes, AC suggesting however that the buddy system run for 12 months, not 6; this was agreed. HA said that the Protocol had</p>	JS

9.2	<p>guided the induction of the three newest governors to Wallington LGB. They had received training in February just before the Covid-19 lockdown and he would obtain feedback at tomorrow's LGB meeting.</p> <p>JS said there was nothing in the GLT Articles of Association or Governance Handbook regarding the appointment process for Appointed Governors. She suggested that she and SG look at these documents with a view to drafting suitable additions. Parent and Staff Governors were elected and the schools had processes in place. JS's suggestion was agreed.</p>	SG/JS
10	GLT Race Advocacy Group	
10.1	<p>JS introduced her paper on proposed terms of reference for a race equality steering group. This built on discussions at last month's Board and Governance Committee meetings. Since those meetings she had discussed ideas with the Executive Group and received useful feedback from individual governors and trustees. It was also proposed to establish race advocacy groups in each GLT school, to be chaired by a race equality coordinator. Board members were invited to comment on and approve the proposals.</p>	JS
10.2	<p>The Board welcomed the inclusion of a student representative on the steering group. This was likely to be a Sixth Former/ member of a student leadership team. There could be a prefect for race advocacy. PT suggested that as each school will have its own race advocacy group, attendance of student representatives at the steering group could be by rotation. HA expressed interest in being a member of the steering group.</p>	
10.3	<p>Board members agreed the proposals in principle. JS thanked them for their input and said she would develop the proposals further, including an initial meeting of the steering group before the end of term if possible.</p>	
11	September planning update	
	<p>SG invited JS and HL to give an update on preparations for the reopening of GLT schools to all students in September. HL reported that arrangements included reconfiguration of classrooms, a new cleaning regime and putting the catering contract back on track. JS said she wanted trustees to be aware of the impact of changes on staff, for example they will need to help maintain designated zones or 'bubbles'. Everyone has to be prepared for a return to online learning if there is a significant second spike to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Other points mentioned during the discussion are included in Part Two of these minutes. At the end of the discussion, JS proposed that there be a letter thanking all staff for their response to the Covid-19 pandemic, to be signed by SG on behalf of the Board. This was agreed, the letter to also convey the thanks of the LGBs.</p>	JS/SG
12	Risk Register	
12.1	<p>The latest version of the Risk Register had been circulated. The Board's section of the Register now included an entry for the risks posed by Covid-19. SG highlighted a suggestion made by NP earlier in the meeting, to include something in the Register about school reopening in September.</p>	

12.2	NP noted that as a result of recent meetings there will be additions to the Finance Committee and Governance Committee sections of the Register.	
12.3	<p>There was discussion of the Board's overall responsibility for the Risk Register and some of the entries within it. A question was raised as to whether possible changes to the curriculum due to the impact of Covid-19 warranted a raising of the probability score of 1 within the relevant LGB entries (linked to education delivery and standards, item 5 of the Trust Board entry). HL made the point that the LGBs/Chairs own their respective sections of the Register, which are recorded at Trust Board. A similar question was raised regarding IT, that the Board is responsible for this but it does not have a Risk Register entry for IT? AC commented on display screen assessment and staff potentially looking at screens for long periods. Schools need to carry out risk assessments but the Trust Board has some responsibility. Whilst this may not require a specific entry in the Risk Register, it came under health and safety, for which the Board has overall responsibility. HL made the point that the Trust Board's section of the Register has several headings, providing an overview of matters which are largely delegated to committees. Nevertheless IT was an area with large risks and it could be referenced within current item 12. HA made the point that the ESFA's Academies Financial Handbook makes it clear that trust boards have overall responsibility for risk management. This had been highlighted within one of the changes being brought in by the latest version of the Handbook and the GLT should follow it.</p>	HL
12.4	SG thanked everyone for their input.	
13	Any other business and date of next meeting	
13.1	JS advised the Board that due to Transport for London's weakened financial position, free public transport for 11-18 year olds may be stopped. Despite general encouragement of walking and cycling to school, some students lived too far away for these to be practical options. RE noted that this was a London concession, Surrey children did not benefit from free transport.	
13.2	RE said that in becoming a trustee, he had to resign as a governor of Wallington LGB. HA said he had this noted for mentioning at the LGB meeting tomorrow.	
13.3	The next Board meeting was scheduled for Monday 24 August at 7pm.	

The meeting ended at 9.00pm

Signed:

Dated:

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