



Company number 8098956

MINUTES
BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
26TH MARCH 2020

Actions from BCT Board Meeting on 26th March 2020.

Item reference	Action	Person responsible	Date Due
3	Ask the Premises Manager about "Deep Cleaning" arrangements for areas in use to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.	PLE	ASAP
3	The CEO will provide regular Email updates to the Board.	PLE	



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MINUTES
BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
26TH MARCH 2020

Meeting was held via Skype and started at 8.00am

Members:

✓	Andy Berry	(ABe)	Chair	<i>Bridgwater College</i>
✓	Bob Brown	(BB)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Carole Chevalley	(CC)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Peter Elliott	(PLE)		<i>CEO</i>
✓	Sid Gibson	(SG)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Jane Gillespie	(JG)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	David Hannay	(DH)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Richard Hawkins	(RH)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Denys Rayner	(DR)	Vice Chair	<i>Independent Trustee</i>
	Bex Sinclair	(BS)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Heather Strawbridge	(HS)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>

In Attendance:

✓	Nicola Mould	(NM)	<i>Chief Finance Officer</i>
✓	Tamsin Grainger	(TG)	<i>Director of Education</i>
✓	Greg Jones	(GJ)	<i>Company Secretary</i>
✓	Jason Gunningham	(JG)	<i>CoG Brymore</i>
✓	Sam Reilly	(SR)	<i>CoG Hamp</i>
✓	Claire Winson	(CW)	<i>CoG OPS</i>
	Simon Darley	(SD)	<i>CoG Stanchester</i>
✓	Martina Forster	(MF)	<i>CoG WSC</i>
✓	Mike Hodson	(MH)	<i>CoG BCA</i>

(✓ In attendance)

The chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

He noted that during the period of the Covid-19 lockdown that all meetings will be held virtually and thanked everybody for their attendance via Skype.

The Clerk noted that Trustees had approved a Protocol for taking part in Electronic Meetings circulated on 20th March 2020

Item	Description	Action
1	Procedural matters	
1.1	Apologies	
	Apologies were accepted from Bex Sinclair.	
	Simon Darley was also unable to attend.	

Item	Description	Action
	The Clerk confirmed that with 10 of the 11 Trustees present that the meeting was quorate (30%).	
1.2	Declarations of Interest None	
1.3	Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting on 19th March 2020. These minutes were circulated as a record of the first Covid-19 meeting held by this committee of the Board. It was noted that the Audit Committee will act to Support the CEO in decision making where necessary. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting	
1.4	Matters Arising	
1.4.1	3.2 Circulate decision electronically – The minutes of this meeting with decision highlighted were circulated to all members of the committee and approval was received for the decisions made. These minutes were then circulated to all Board members for information.	
1.4.2	3.2.4 BCTC Sports and Leisure losses – See financial update below.	
1.4.3	3.2.4 Review of Cashflow position – See financial update below.	
1.4.4	3.2.4 Monthly Management Accounts – See financial update below.	
1.4.5	3.2.5 Mark Thomas has been included in the invitations to Board meetings.	

2 CEO Update

Peter Elliott gave a verbal update on the current situation of the Trust and its Schools.

2.1.1 Schools update

The Headteachers have worked very hard to ensure that Schools are open for Key Workers. The initial ambition was to open from 7am to 7pm, but that has been revised as a result of feedback from parents.

Brymore is not required to be open at the moment, as there is no care need there at all.

Otterhampton Primary School has 2 children who need care for 2-3 days a week.

Bridgwater College Academy has 15-16 children a day.

Demand is not as great as expected and the daily rotas are being adjusted accordingly.

Vulnerable children are receiving 2 telephone calls a week.

Where this is not possible (or no answer) Adrian Darby is visiting

Item	Description	Action
	households to observe children (even if this is through the window of their house).	
	A telephone counselling service is being offered through 2 qualified counsellors.	
	There are between 40 and 50 students who have no internet connectivity. (They may have Broadband in their house; but no device to access it on). Schools are looking at lending out laptops that are currently not being used in their school.	
	Daily Student numbers are being reported to the CEO. (and the DfE)	
	The Director of Education is working on an Online Teaching Program for students.	
	The Remote Access servers are “creaking” under the strain of all the home working. The IT team are undertaking some upgrade work to keep the servers operational.	
	Trustees noted that it was important to be able to support students at home.	

2.1.2 Human Resources update

The HR team are updating the state of the workforce on a daily basis. This is being shared with the Local Authority in case staff are needed to support another School.

Staff who are not funded through the General Annual Grant (GAG) are being moved to the Governments Furlough Scheme instead of having to lay them off.
This includes; Sports Centre; Music Tuition; and Boarding staff and some casual staff.

A Trustee asked how much remuneration the furloughed staff will receive? They are paid 80% of their salary.

These staff will be paid as normal next month (as paid in arrears) and then move onto the Furlough Scheme.

A Trustee asked what is happening about Pension contributions?
Details of this are not available from the HMRC yet.

A Trustee asked how many Teachers have raised issues about their own safety? The Trust sent out guidelines to all staff last week stating that staff must make their own decision about self-isolation etc.

Colleagues who are themselves not vulnerable but live with a vulnerable person may be required to attend work if required. The Trust is making adjustments for this on an individual basis where possible.

Item	Description	Action
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All recruitment has been paused, but people due to start in April will start as scheduled. It was noted that there may be a “scramble” for staff in September, but this will be looked at in real time.

A Trustee asked about pupils at Brymore if they needed looking after? The Headteacher is in touch with all parents and will open the School if required.

There is a mechanism in place for staff wellbeing through the normal management structure.

TG reported that the Head of Staff Development will be providing twice weekly Staff Development opportunities through online seminars, papers, and follow up discussion sessions.

Trustees asked that the CEO passed on their thanks to all the staff.

2.1.3 Financial update

All invoices are currently being approved by the CEO so that he can keep an eye on expenditure. Although this has slowed up the process it has stopped departments using up their budget or buying ahead for next year.

The Finance Team have been diverted into the task (1000 pupils) of purchasing Free School Meal vouchers. This has meant that the Monthly Management Accounts are about 10 days behind schedule. (The Accounts meeting will be rescheduled for early April)

Refunds have been issued for Summer term boarding fees where requested or carried over to the Autumn term.

The Trust will renegotiate their Gas and Electricity contracts to make some savings due to the reduction in energy costs.

The Finance Director noted that the higher cash reserves mean that the Trust is not in any immediate risk.

Free School Meals are costing £22k a week.
Boarding refunds could be as much as £420k

The Trading Companies are being reforecast and will be showing a loss for this year.

A Trustee asked if the Free School Meal vouchers will be continuing through the Easter holidays? The Trust has provided 4 weeks' worth of on-line vouchers to each eligible pupil in the first instance. These are for the nearest Supermarket to each school and will provide certainty for parents.

Item	Description	Action
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3. Urgent Matters

A Trustee asked about if any special cleaning arrangements were in place in the Schools? Parts of the sites have been closed and other areas are being cleaned daily. The CEO will ask the Premises Manager about "Deep Cleaning" arrangements for areas still in use to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.

PLE

The "Moth balled" areas will be deep cleaned once the Cleaning staff are able to. (Currently under Government lockdown)

Trustees discussed the role of the Audit Committee in supporting the CEO. They may be required to meet if necessary.

The Board will meet if a significant decision is required.

The CEO will provide regular Email updates to the Board

PLE

4 Next meetings

The next meeting of the Board on from 2nd April 2020 has been scheduled to

Thursday 30th April 2020

8.00am

Via Skype for Business

The meeting finished at 8.38am.

I certify that this is a true, complete and up-to-date copy of the resolutions passed at a duly convened and quorate meeting of the Board of BCT and that the resolutions set out above have not been revoked, rescinded, amended or varied in any manner and remain in full force and effect as at today's date.