



Company number 8098956

**MINUTES**  
**BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
**THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

**Actions from BTCT Board Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021.**

Item reference	Action	Person responsible	Date Due
3.2	Add number of attendees to the training report.	GSJ	08/07/21

**Actions from BTCT Board Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

6.	The chair will forward an example board self-assessment questionnaire to the clerk.	AB→GJ	ASAP
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Company number 8098956

# MINUTES

## BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST

### BOARD MEETING

#### THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams and started at 5.00pm

**Members:**

✓	Andy Berry	(AB)	Chair	<i>Bridgwater College</i>
✓	Bob Brown	(BB)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Carole Chevalley	(CC)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Peter Elliott	(PLE)		<i>Trust Leader</i>
✓	Sid Gibson	(SG)	(from 5.22pm)	<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Jane Gillespie	(JG)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Marie Goddard	(MG)		<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>
✓	Mike Hodson	(MH)	<i>CoG BCA</i>
✓	Jason Gunningham	(JG)	<i>CoG Brymore</i>
✓	Sam Reilly	(SR)	<i>CoG Hamp</i>
✓	Martina Forster	(MF)	<i>CoG WSC</i>
✓	Claire Winson	(CW)	<i>CoG OPS</i>
✓	Mike Robbins	(MR)	<i>CoG Stanchester</i>
✓	Jonathan James	(JJ)	<i>CoG Maiden Beech</i>
✓	Mark Thomas	(MS)	<i>Headteacher Brymore</i>

(✓ In attendance)

The chair welcomed everybody to this virtual meeting.

Item	Description	Action
<b>1</b>	<b><u>Procedural matters</u></b>	
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Apologies</b> Apologies were accepted from Heather Strawbridge, Bex Sinclair, and Tamsin Grainger.	

Item	Description	Action
	The Clerk confirmed that with 9 of the 12 Trustees present that the meeting was quorate (30%). (10 later).	
1.2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> None	
1.3	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting.</b>  <b>The minutes of the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 were accepted as a true record.</b>	
1.4	<b>Matters Arising</b>  <b>1.4.1 Trust Strategic Planning event</b> There will be a socially distanced Strategic Planning event on Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 from midday to 4.00pm at Bridgwater & Taunton College, Advanced Engineering Centre, Bridgwater Campus.	
2	<b><u>Trust Leader Reporting</u></b>	
2.1	<p><b>Trust Leaders Report</b> Peter Elliott (Trust Leader) highlighted the main points of his Trust Leaders report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Covid update</b> There have been 2 confirmed positive Lateral Flow tests at West Somerset College. Both were then tested negative using PCR tests.  Restrictions have been lifted on movements around the school sites and no Covid-19 related issues have been reported by the Headteachers. </li> <li> <b>APEX Centre</b> Michelle Craig (SENCo at Brymore) has been appointed as the Leader of the Apex Centre. The Centre is on track to open on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 with Animal and Art therapy as part of the offer. Publicity material will highlight the work of the centre to the local community. </li> <li> <b>Speech and Language support</b> An appointment has been made of a senior Speech and Language therapist who will start work at the start of June 2021.. </li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>A Trustee asked if the Speech and Language Therapist will be sharing their skills with the Teachers and other staff?</b> They will be providing training and support to individuals and groups of staff. Interventions will be delivered using Talk Boost.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>A Trustee asked about the provision of counselling to students across the Trust?</b> Helen Moore has been appointed as the Trust Counselling Lead, to develop a Trust wide counselling team. The team will be able to provide urgent support to people in crisis.</p> </div> <p>Trustees noted that it was good to see the investment in the Apex Centre, Speech and Language, and Counselling support. The noted that this has come about through the Trusts ability to offer these central services through pooling of the school General Annual Grants.</p>	

Item	Description	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Finance</b>            The Finance &amp; Resources committee have reviewed the first draft of the 2021/22 budget along with the 5-year forecast. There do not appear to be any financial challenges for next year on the horizon.         </li> <li> <b>South Somerset School re-organisation</b>            The Trust Leader noted the three key risks from the re-organisation resulting from the conversion of Maiden Beech Academy from a Middle School to a Primary School.           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Capital development</b> – The site and resources (Tables, chairs, toilets...) will be too big for the younger age group of pupils attending the School. The Local Authority Capital Team will be developing and funding the project to re-equip the School.            The redundant buildings will give the Trust an opportunity to offer other services from the site.         </li> <li> <b>Potential redundancy costs</b> – There are 40 to 45 posts at risk from the remodelling to a Primary School. All unavoidable redundancy costs will be met by the Local Authority.         </li> <li> <b>Revenue income</b> – The Trust Leader referred Trustees to the separate paper setting out the funding that will be provided for the school when the numbers drop to as low as 80 pupils in September 2022. It was noted that the School will be funded for more than the actual numbers over the initial years as actual numbers grow.         </li> </ol> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <b>A Trustee asked if the Local Authority had carried out due diligence on the planned outcomes of the changes in South Somerset?</b> The Trust does not know the answer to this question.         </div> </li> </ul> <p><b>5.22pm – Sid Gibson joined the meeting</b></p> <p>Trustees discussed the agreement that the Local Authority has asked the Trust to sign. It will be referred to the Trust's Solicitors for advice. Trustees were concerned about Paragraph 7 that effectively punishes the Trust if it goes against the spirit of the agreement; by for example it was to "Bus local pupils to Stanchester – rather than them going to Wadham".</p> <p>The Chair noted that the Trust had spent a lot of time negotiating with the Local Authority to pressurise them to fund Maiden Beech Academy properly over the transformation period.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the fight they had put up on Maiden Beech's account until the decision was made about the re-organisation, and now this stage was over they were moving forward together.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <b>A Trustee asked if the Trust had considered the option of Maiden Beech Academy leaving the Trust?</b> The Diocese did not want Wadham to join our trust. Future expansion will include more Primary Schools and the Trust has capacity to deliver an outstanding education at the new school.     </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Risk Management</b>            A new style Risk Register will be reviewed by the Audit Committee at their next meeting.         </li> </ul>	

Item	Description	Action
2.2	<p><b>Significant Change Request for Maiden Beech Academy</b> Trustees felt assured that they are now able to proceed with the Significant Change Request for the conversion of Maiden Beech Academy to a Primary School to the Regional Schools Commissioner. (see Trust Leaders report above)</p> <p><b>Andy Berry proposed that Trustees approve the submission of the Significant Change Request for Maiden Beech Academy to the Regional Schools Commissioner. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.</b></p> <p>The chair thanked the Trust Leader for his commitment to the Maiden Beech Academy and the education of children in Crewkerne during the whole process.</p>	
2.3	<p><b>Financial reporting</b> The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) highlighted the main points of the Month 7 management report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Income</b> The variance of a £75k deficit is due to the additional costs incurred at this time of the financial cycle. Exam fees are paid and then a credit for the exams not taken is received 1 year in arrears. </li> <li> <b>Expenditure</b> The £308k expenditure from the High Needs income will flow through and balance later in the year. There is a potential £70k saving on supply and training costs. </li> <li> <b>Forecast</b> A detailed review has been carried out of each Schools finance's and estimated spend. Although schools incurred extra expenditure for Covid-19 there has also been significant savings for supply, training etc leading to an estimated surplus of £0.5m at the end of the financial year. Curriculum ordering ceases on the 10<sup>th</sup> June to give time to process the invoices before the end of term. </li> <li> <b>Balance Sheet</b> The depreciation shown on the Balance Sheet is based on the previous year's figure and will be updated as part of the end of year review. </li> <li> <b>Reserves</b> The net reserves do not include the School Condition Allowance, which will inform next year's Capital Expenditure budget. </li> </ul> <p><b>A Trustee asked if the proposed capital expenditure will reduce the overall reserves?</b> Reserves are expected to be £2.8m at the end of the 2020/21 financial year.</p> <p>The School Condition Allowance will be £637k. There are restrictions on its expenditure, but it can include specific estates and premises salaries. premises work is set out in the 5-year rolling programme and will be discussed in detail at the next Finance &amp; Resources committee meeting.</p>	
3.	<b><u>Brymore Academy</u></b>	
3.1	<p><b><u>Boarding Fees 2021/22</u></b> The Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) highlighted the main points of the Board Fees proposal circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p>	

Item	Description	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table s1 &amp; 2 highlight the income and expenditure leading to the loss in boarding over the previous and current year.</li> <li>Table 3 sets out the estimated boarding costs for 2021/22 that should include an 8% return to the Trust. It was noted that there had been no return over the last 2 years and that the proposed 2.7% rise in boarding fees will exceed an 8% return that will go some way to make up for the losses.</li> <li>Boarding funds are restricted to expenditure on boarding related items and are reported separately within the accounts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Carole Chevalley proposed that Trustee approve a 2.7% rise in Boarding Fees for 2021/22. Seconded by Denys Rayner and approved by all present.</b></p> <p>It was noted that the approval of Boarding Fee increases could be delegated to the Finance &amp; Resources committee under the review of the Scheme of Delegation currently taking place.</p> <p>The Headteacher has been involved at all stages so that he is prepared for any push back from parents.</p>	
3.2	<p><b><u>Swimming Pool Refurbishment</u></b></p> <p>The Trust Leader noted that the swimming pool at Brymore is no longer compliant with regulations and cannot currently be used. The proposal circulated with the papers for this meeting and discussed in detail at the recent Finance &amp; Resources committee meeting sets out the cost of the work required to bring the pool back into use. It was noted that it would be an additional resource for summer lets using the school.</p> <p>The Finance &amp; Resources committee recommend that the Board allocate funds from the expected surplus this year to this project and avoid the Trusts reserves appearing to increase as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>A Trustee asked if the proposal include the option to install Solar powered heating?</b> The expenditure of the extra £64k would make the pool more appealing to the users.</p> <p>The Trust Leader noted that the extra cost was affordable.</p> <p><b>Denys Rayner proposed that Trustees approve expenditure of £240,119.00 for the swimming pool refurbishment, and £64,998.00 for the Solar Heating. Seconded by David Hannay and approved by all present.</b></p>	
4.	<b><u>Reports to the Board</u></b>	
4.1	<p><b>Finance and Resources committee</b></p> <p>Sid Gibson highlighted the main points of the Finance and Resources Committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Month 7 Management accounts.</li> <li>Brymore Boarding Fee increase.</li> <li>Brymore swimming pool refurbishment.</li> <li>Draft Trust Budget 2021/22</li> <li>Capital Expenditure Budget 2021/22</li> </ul> <p>Next meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June to review the budget that is set for approval by the Board on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021.</p>	

Item	Description	Action
	<p><b>Trading Company</b> Richard Hawkins gave an update on the business of the Trading Company. The Board have just met and reviewed the potential loss this year with a predicted surplus of £60k next year (when Leisure Centers have been fully open). The Board are content to let the loss roll over to a surplus next year.</p> <p><b>A Trustee asked about the Mission Statement for the Leisure Centers to provide services to the local community?</b> This will be discussed at the forthcoming Board Strategic Planning event.</p>	
5	<b><u>Policies for Approval</u></b>	
5.1	<p><b>Complaints Procedure</b> The Clerk highlighted that the Complaints Procedure circulated with the papers for this meeting was updated based on experiences of its application over the last year.</p> <p>Trustees noted that it should include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A statement that it does not apply to complaints about exclusions. These should follow the statutory guidance.</li> <li>• updated deadlines for responses by the Schools / Trust.</li> <li>• Provision for an online process when necessary.</li> </ul> <p><b>Andy Berry proposed that Trustees approve the Complaints Procedure subject to the above changes. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.</b></p>	
4.2	<p><b>Relationships and Sex Education Policy</b> This policy has been updated to bring into line with the new guidance from April 2021.</p> <p><b>Jane Gillespie proposed that Trustees approve the Relationships and Sex Education Policy. Seconded by Andy Berry and approved by all present.</b></p>	
5.	<b><u>Papers for Information</u></b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clerks Briefing</b> Trustees noted the contents of the Clerks Briefing notes.</li> <li>• <b>School Resource Management Self-Assessment Checklist</b> Trustees discussed the inclusion of Key Performance Indicators of the effectiveness of the Board in its annual review. E.g Board attendance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action – The chair will forward self-assessment questionnaire to the clerk.</b></p>	<b>AB→GJ</b>
6.	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b>	
	<p>The Chair thanked everybody for their work this term. He also thanked the CEO, Senior Leaders, Chairs of the LGB's, and School Leaders on behalf of all the Trustees.</p>	

Item	Description	Action
<b>8</b>	<b><u>Next meeting</u></b>	
	Strategic Planning Event – Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> June; Midday to 4.00pm See above for details.  Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 <b>5.00pm</b> Via Microsoft Teams	
	<i>The meeting finished at 6.45pm</i>	

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.



Signed.....  
Authorised Signatory for and on behalf of **Bridgwater College Trust**

8<sup>th</sup> July 2021