



Company number 8098956

MINUTES
BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY 8TH JULY 2021

Actions from BTCT Board Meeting on 8th July 2021.

| Item reference | Action | Person responsible | Date Due |
|----------------|--|--------------------|----------|
| 1.6 | Risk analysis of the Charitable Foundation to the Audit committee. | PLE | 18/11/21 |
| 2.2 | Feedback on the Strategic Plan to Peter Elliott by the September 2021 | ALL | 01/09/21 |
| 4.5 | Report of training programme for 2021/22 and outcomes for 2020/21 to the next Board meeting. | GJ | 14/10/21 |



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MINUTES

BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST

BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY 8TH JULY 2021

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams and started at 5.00pm

Members:

| | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------|----------------------|---|
| ✓ | Andy Berry | (AB) | Chair (until 5.45pm) | <i>Bridgwater & Taunton 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) | | <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> |

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 |
|------------|--|--------|
| 1 | <u>Procedural matters</u> | |
| 1.1 | Apologies None. The Clerk confirmed that with 10 of the 10 Trustees present that the meeting was quorate (30%). (10 later). | |

| Item | Description | Action |
|------|---|------------|
| 1.2 | Declarations of Interest None | |
| 1.3 | Minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes of the meeting of 13th May 2021 were accepted as a true record. | |
| 1.4 | Matters Arising 1.4.1 Training report The Clerk reported that the Local Governing Bodies were meeting to discuss their training requirements for next year. An OFSTED preparation session has already been scheduled for 13 th September 2021. | |
| 1.5 | Scheme of Delegation The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) highlighted the main changes in the updated Scheme of Delegation circulated with the papers for this meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of responsibilities of the Local Governing Bodies. • Delegation of Policy approval. Denys Rayner proposed that Trustees approve the Scheme of Delegation. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present. | |
| 1.6 | Charitable Foundation The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) highlighted the main points of the proposal to form a Charitable Foundation circulated with the papers for this meeting. The purpose of the foundation is to access additional funding to support our wider ambitions to develop inclusion and provide opportunities for children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance The Foundation will be governed by 3 of the existing Trustees and two external trustees with relevant charitable foundation experience. • Staffing The Trust will need to employ a fundraiser with the relevant skills and experience. It was noted that the cost may well be higher than the £20k-£25k included in the proposal but could include an element of performance related pay. • Costs Clarke Willmott (solicitors) will support the setting up of the charitable foundation at an estimated cost of £4.5k - £5.0k. Trustees discussed the cost of a fundraiser and noted that it would take more than one year to get the foundation up and running and that the trust would need to meet the costs. They noted that the role of fundraiser was different to that of a bid writer. Trustees discussed the potential risks from setting up this foundation and decided that the Audit committee should monitor the progress at its meetings. Action – Risk analysis of the Charitable Foundation to the Audit committee. Trustees were re-assured that there will be advice and guidance from external parties. | PLE |

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|------------|---|--------|
| | <p>Trustees were asked to contact the Trust Leader with suggestions of names for the foundation. Such as “The Every Child Foundation”.</p> <p>Andy Berry proposed that trustees approve the recommendations included in the proposal to set up a charitable foundation. Seconded by Sid Gibson and approved by all present.</p> | |
| 2 | <u>Trust Leader Reporting</u> | |
| 2.1 | <p>Trust Leaders Report 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"> • Covid update There has been disruption at Hamp and Stanchester from staff being “pinged” by Track and Trace and having to isolate. • APEX Centres The Trust Leader noted the generosity of Brymore Academy in allowing the APEX leader to start setting up the Apex West centre ahead of taking up the role in September 2021. APEX West is fully staffed for September 2021. The Headteachers panel has allocated the initial 16 places to students from schools within the trust. • Crewkerne and Ilminster Staffing models for September 2022 have been developed and shared with the staff. There still remains two key risks:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Loss of key staff during the academic year. ○ Two legal challenges to the decision to close Misterton and Swanmead schools have been submitted and may lead to the process being stopped. <p>Staff at Maiden Beach Academy have been given a personal training budget to support their reskilling / retraining.</p> • Teacher Assessed Grades All Teacher Assessed Grades have been submitted under the leadership of Vicky Davis (Brymore Academy). The process has established a robust position in case there are any appeals. The A-level and GCSE results will be available on 10th and 12th August which means there could be turbulence from appeals after only 10 days of the summer break for the senior staff in schools. • Risk Management The new format Risk and Issues registers have been reviewed by the Audit Committee. • Finance Month 9 accounts have been reviewed by the Trust chair and Finance & Resources chair. | |

| Item | Description | Action |
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| 2.2 | <p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) highlighted that the Strategic Plan circulated with the papers for this meeting has been updated following the discussions at the Strategic Event held on 8th June.</p> <p>Trustees were asked to provide any feedback to the Trust Leader by email during the summer break prior to approval of the plan at the first meeting in the Autumn term.</p> <p>Action – Feedback on the Strategic Plan to Peter Elliott by the September 2021.</p> | ALL |
| 2.3 | <p>Director of Education report</p> <p>The Director of Education (Tamsin Grainger) highlighted the main points of the report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional KS5 and KS4 results 2020-21 Centre Assessed Grades have been submitted to the exam boards. • Key Stage 5 results A positive picture at West Somerset College with 17.39% of students achieving AAB grades or better. • Key Stage 4 results All schools have made progress. There will be detailed analysis presented to the board at the start of the autumn term. • Exclusions The national upward trend in fixed term exclusions has not been reflected in five of the schools. • Attendance Attendance has been very complicated to monitor with remote learning and isolation. The impact on Progress and Achievement is a concern and the Trust has made this a priority for next year. The Director of Education and Trust Leader will meet half termly to review attendance and exclusion data and the impact of Apex West on exclusions. <p>A Trustee asked if the persistent absenteeism was caused by a small number of pupils? School refusal has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic with a tenfold increase in anxiety amongst pupils. Vulnerable learners who did not attend school during lockdown also had an impact on attendance.</p> <p>A Trustee asked what the expected attendance should be? 97% attendance by a pupil is deemed to be good. The Academy Development Plan target is 96%. The actual attendance is at 94%. Pupils with attendance below 90% are a concern. The Trust is not holding schools to account on attendance over the previous year where Covid-19 has had a huge impact.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the attendance of key groups of pupils? The schools were successful in monitoring the attendance at remote lessons and will have conversations with pupils who are causing concern.</p> <p>The Quality of Education committee have noted that a small number of pupils are persistently absent and have the biggest impact. It was noted that some students preferred to work at home in isolation</p> | |

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| | <p>during the Covid-19 lockdown. Schools have been frustrated by the lack of support for pupils from other organisations.</p> <p>5.45pm – Andy Berry left the meeting and Denys Rayner took the chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement Team Quality assurance mechanisms will be restarted through Growing Great Schools and Growing Great Teachers <p>The Get Ahead programme has been well received across the county and will be expanded to years 5 to 11 next year. Statistics will be provided in a future report.</p> Academy Development Plans The individual Academy Development Plans will be submitted to the Trust Leader and Director of Education by the 8th September for review. | |
| 2.4 | <p>Financial reporting The Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) highlighted the main points of the Month 9 Management report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income There have been no significant changes with a projected surplus of £210k this month. The Government have announced the continuation of Free School meals through the summer break. There is a projected surplus of £407k for the 2020-21 financial year. Key Performance Indicators A target of 81% has been set for staff costs which are currently at 82%. This is caused by the lagged funding that follows the growth in pupil numbers each year. Balance Sheet Asset values are increasing due to the success of Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bids. Cash Flow The closing cash position on 31st August 2021 will be £4m. Capital Expenditure Capital expenditure from the Trust surplus has already been agreed. Reserves Reserves are projected to be £3.2m at the end of August 2021 with an additional £0.5m of CIF income. It was noted that larger Multi Academy Trusts no longer hold 4 weeks expenditure in reserve. Trustees decided that they would not make any changes to the reserves policy at this time. The ring-fenced balance (£229k) of the land sale income at BCA may be called upon to redevelop the Early Years indoor and outdoor provision in the 2021-22 financial year. | |
| 3. | <u>Budget 2021/22</u> | |

| Item | Description | Action |
|------|---|--------|
| 3.1 | <p>Approval of Budget Expenditure 2021/2022</p> <p>The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) introduced the Trust budget for 2021/22 circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <p>He recorded his thanks to the Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) and the Deputy Chief Financial Officer (Ken Rushton) for their work in producing the budget.</p> <p>It was noted that the Finance & Resources committee have reviewed the budget in detail at their most recent meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a small in year revenue surplus in the proposed budget and £0.5m of reserves has been allocated to capital projects. • The 12-month Cashflow position will remain at £4m of cash on hand. • The 5-year pupils forecast is good despite the reduction at MBA so there are no major concerns for the projected income. • Capital expenditure will consist of the £700k School Condition Allowance and £500k from reserves. <p>A Trustee asked if funding for the delivery of Academy Development Plans is included in the budget? Yes – There is £150k at the disposal of the Director of Education to allocate across the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees noted that they are comfortable that there is enough funding allocated for school led improvements.</p> <p>Sid Gibson proposed that trustees approve budget expenditure of £26,729,514.00 for 2021/22. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.</p> | |
| 4. | <u>Reports to the Board</u> | |
| 4.1 | <p>Finance and Resources committee</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"> • Month 9 Management report. • Trust Reserves • 2021/22 Budget analysis Including staffing budget estimate of 81% and £1.2m of Capital Expenditure. <p>Trading Company</p> <p>Richard Hawkins gave an update on the business of the Trading Company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business interruption claim • £14k HAF funding for vulnerable pupils. • Membership / usage rising at the leisure centers. • £342 loss during Month 9. • Overall outturn of £5,700 deficit. This includes £25k of income from summer lets at Brymore. • The Inter-company debt has been reduced to £36k. • The approved budget for 2021/22 has been set to be breakeven but could see a surplus of as much as £63k. • Directors will continue to meet monthly next year to keep the financial position under review. | |
| 4.2 | Audit Committee | |

| Item | Description | Action |
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| | <p>Denys Rayner highlighted the main points of the Audit Committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from RSM (Internal Auditors) continue to impress. • Cyber Security • The Risk Register has a greater focus on the Strategic Aims. • Risk Management Policy • Significant Risks - South Somerset Reorganisation and Brymore Boarding. | |
| 4.3 | <p>Quality of Education</p> <p>Carole Chevalley highlighted the main points of the Quality of Education Committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanchester Academy with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Change in Headteacher • Additional section on the impact of remote learning and the support for pupils now that they are back in school. • Retention of practices established during the Covid-19 lockdown. E.g. retention of online learning for some pupils. • Future plans – Brymore Academy and Academy outcomes / development plans in the Autumn term. | |
| 4.4 | <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Carole Chevalley highlighted the main points of the Safeguarding reports circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation of local and national issues in the reports • Management of key safeguarding issues. • OFSTED report on sexual violence will feature in each Academy Development Plan. <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>A Trustee asked about the changing attitude towards sexual violence? This will make it more difficult for schools to respond to the report. The realistic expectation is that pupils are protected.</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Domestic Violence exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. | |
| 4.5 | <p>Training 2021/22</p> <p>Action – Report of training programme for 2021/22 and outcomes for 2020/21 to the next Board meeting.</p> | GJ |
| 5 | <u>Policies for Approval</u> | |
| 5.1 | <p>Special Educational Needs Policy</p> <p>Small changes in guidance.</p> <p>Carole Chevalley proposed that Trustees approve the Special Education al Needs Policy. Seconded by Jane Gillespie and approved by all present.</p> | |
| 5.2 | <p>Looked After Children Policy</p> <p>New policy.</p> <p>Sid Gibson proposed that Trustee approve the Looked After Children Policy. Seconded by Denys Rayner and approved by all present.</p> | |
| 5.3 | <p>Risk Management Policy</p> <p>New policy to define the risk management process.</p> | |

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| | Denys Rayner proposed that Trustees approve the Risk Management Policy. Seconded by Jane Gillespie and approved by all present. | |
| 5.4 | <p>Homeworking Policy New policy to reflect the homeworking practices established during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if there had been consultation with the Unions? Feedback has been received from UNISON about short-term caring responsibilities of staff.</p> <p>Sid Gibson proposed that Trustees approve the Homeworking Policy. Seconded by Jane Gillespie and approved by all present,</p> | |
| 5.5 | <p>Counselling and Clinical Support policy New policy to reflect the practices established during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about how much counselling there has been? Demand has outstripped supply, and the Trust is looking at recruiting / training a Primary specialist.</p> <p>Trustees noted that it is a good use of the reserves to support this provision.</p> <p>Denys Rayner proposed that trustees approve the Counselling and Clinical Support policy. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.</p> | |
| 5.6 | <p>Complaints Procedure The Clerk reported that the Education Skills Funding Agency had raised a concern that the policy did not comply with Part 7 of the Independent Schools regulations. A highlighted sentence has been added to section 3.7 on page 5.</p> <p>Sid Gibson proposed that Trustees approve the Complaints Procedure. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.</p> | |
| 6. | <u>Papers for Information</u> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academies Trust Handbook Members of the senior team are attending a webinar on the changes during the summer break. | |
| 7. | <u>Any Other Business</u> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) reported that this has been David Hannay's last meeting as he is stepping down as a Trustee. Trustees recorded their thanks to David for all his work during his term as an Independent Trustee. An electronic card and book token have been sent to David. <p>The Vice Chair recorded his thanks to all the Trustees for their commitment and hard work during what has been a challenging year.</p> | |

| Item | Description | Action |
|----------|--|--------|
| 8 | <u>Next meeting</u> | |
| | Thursday 14 th October 2021 <u>5.00pm</u> D10; Bridgwater & Taunton College; Bridgwater Campus | |
| | <i>The meeting finished at 6.43pm</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**

8th July 2021