



Company number 8098956

MINUTES
BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
7TH APRIL 2022

Actions from BTCT Board Meeting on 7th April 2022

Item reference	Action	Person responsible	Date Due
2.1.1	Raise the awareness of the work of the Trust at a follow up meeting with the RSC.	PLE	ASAP



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MINUTES

BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST

BOARD MEETING

7TH APRIL 2022

Meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Taunton and started at 12.30pm

Members:

✓	Andy Berry	(AB)	Chair	<i>Bridgwater & Taunton College</i>
	Alan Belsey	(Abe)		<i>Parent Trustee</i>
✓	Bob Brown	(BB)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Carole Chevalley	(CC)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
✓	Kom Djouba	(KD)		<i>Parent 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>
✓	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>
✓	Tamsyn Grainger	(TG)	<i>Director of Education</i>
✓	Greg Jones	(GJ)	<i>Company Secretary</i>
✓	Mark Thomas	(MT)	<i>Brymore Academy</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>

(✓ In attendance)

The chair welcomed everybody to this face to face meeting.

Item	Description	Action
1	<u>Procedural matters</u>	
1.1	<p>Apologies Apologies were accepted from Alan Belsey, Sid Gibson, Jane Gillespie, & Claire Winson.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that with 8 of the 11 Trustees present that the meeting was quorate (30%).</p>	

Item	Description	Action
1.2	Declarations of Interest None	
1.3	Minutes of the meeting of 3rd February 2022 The minutes of the board meeting of 3rd February 2022 were accepted as a true record.	
1.4	Matters arising 1.4.1 2.1.2 – details of inclusion / exclusions are included in the Trust Leaders report to this meeting.	
1.5	Feedback on Board External Review The Clerk (Greg Jones) gave verbal feedback on the progress of the Governance Review being conducted by The Governance Forum. There will be a feedback and workshop session for all Trustees and Governors on 28 th April with Karl George. Copies of the final reports will be circulated to the Trustees and Governors.	
2.	<u>Trust Leader Reporting</u>	
	<p>2.1 Trust Leaders report The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) highlighted the main points of the Trust Leaders report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <p>2.1.1 MAT review with Regional Schools Commissioner The Chair of Trustees (Andy Berry) and Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) met with Jackie McCarthy the senior team leader for Somerset.</p> <p>Topics included in the discussions were.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances – healthy • School Improvement capacity • Impact of covid-19 • Remote Teaching – Get Ahead programme • Key Stage 1 & 2 outcomes – no comparators over the last 2 years. • White Paper – growth of strong MATs • BTCT to work regionally in the South West. <p>Trustees discussed the capacity and effectiveness of the central team as opposed to the situation at the last review in 2019.</p> <p>It was noted that the Trust needs to continue strategic conversations with the RSC and make sure that they are aware of the current work of the Trust. E.g. The Get Ahead programme.</p> <p>The Trust needs to ensure that there is more self-promotion of its achievements.</p>	


Item	Description	Action
	<p>Action – Raise the awareness of the work of the Trust at a follow up meeting with the RSC.</p> <p>2.1.2 Covid-19 update Staff absence due to covid-19 infections continues and there has been day to day disruptions to year groups due to staff shortages.</p> <p>2.1.3 Short Term Alternative Provision There will be a “Test and Learn” process for Key Stage 3 & 4 internal exclusions over the summer term with live lessons being delivered for Maths, English, and Science to pupils. Feedback will be provided at the end of the summer term.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if these lessons could be offered outside of the Trust? There is no plan to do this. There could be issues with the exam boards that different schools use.</p> <p>2.1.4 School Leadership A number of senior colleagues have moved between schools for professional development along with some new appointments.</p> <p>2.1.5 White Paper / SEND Green Paper Future Trust expansion implied in the White Paper and the position on Alternative Provision and Special Schools will be discussed in detail at the Trust Strategic event following this meeting.</p> <p>2.1.6 Risk Management There are no significant new risks in the Register reviewed at the recent Audit Committee meeting.</p> <p>2.1.7 Bridgwater Exclusions Project In response to the high level of permanent exclusions in the partner schools around Bridgwater 10 additional places have been commissioned at the local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). It was noted that the aim is to avoid the recycling of students around the schools in Bridgwater by allowing schools to purchase places at the Bridge School (PRU) for pupils in danger of permanent exclusion. (Not for single one off incidents)</p> <p>A Trustee noted that the project was as a result of the vision of the Trust Leader and is being supported by the Bridgwater Education Trust with funding for the first year.</p> <p>2.1.8 Financial Position – Month 6 The report still expects that 100% of the budgeted expenditure will be spent. Unexpected grant income is being offset by additional staffing costs.</p> <p>2.1.9 Baroness Barran visit A visit to the West Somerset Opportunity Area schools included a visit to the APEX Centre in Minehead. This was a very positive experience for all involved.</p>	PLE

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	<p>It was noted that this visit has provided an opportunity to engage with the Department of Education with a visit to Parliament to meet with the minister.</p> <p>2.1.10 Dartmoor Multi- Academy Trust The Trust Leader has joined the board of the Dartmoor Academy MAT.</p> <p>2.1.11 Maiden Beech Academy Trustees were pleased that the recent OFSTED inspection rated the school as GOOD. There have been significant improvements since the last report.</p> <p>Changes to the school with its conversion to a Primary School has led to only 5 voluntary redundancies and there is a very good atmosphere in the school.</p> <p>2.1.12 Apex South Opening September 2022.</p> <p>2.1.13 Little Beeches Nursery There has been a slight delay to the building work, but this should not affect the hard opening in September 2022.</p> <p>2.1.14 Community Garden – West Somerset No progress has been made on this project while the Local Authority identify an organisation to lease the land.</p>	
2.2	<p>Director of Education report The Director of Education (Tamsin Grainger) highlighted the main points of the report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <p>The final projected grades for 2021-22 will be available for the board meeting in May 2022.</p> <p>It was noted that the Quality of Education committee continue to monitor progress and attainment in the schools along with APEX West.</p>	
2.3	<p>Maiden Beech Primary Academy The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) noted that details of student numbers, building work and applications have been reported above.</p>	
2.4	<p>West Somerset SEN Base The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) noted that the Trust had requested that a caveat be added to the agreement to include a break clause if Polden Bower joined another Trust. The Local Authority is considering how this can be incorporated into the agreement.</p>	
2.5	<p>Land and Property at Brymore The Trust Leader (Peter Elliott) highlighted details of the two matters relating to property at Brymore.</p> <p>2.5.1 Brymore Lodge</p>	

Item	Description	Action
	<p>The lodge is occupied by the Farm Manger who has approached the Trust with a request to purchase the property and paddock.</p> <p>The property needs some attention and is currently valued at £340k to £360k and the paddock is valued at £20k. An offer has been made of £350k for both.</p> <p>Trustees noted the increasing value of property and the need for more housing in the Cannington area. The paddock has potential for 3/4 houses.</p> <p>There is a risk that if the property is sold and the Farm Manger resigns that there would be a challenge in providing housing for a replacement.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if the job should come with a house? This could be removed from the job advert but that it is advantageous to have the Farm Manager living on site.</p> <p>A Trustee asked how long the current Farm Manager had been in post? 14 years. It was noted that he does a very good job.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the need to obtain best value from any sale and the impact that removing the housing element from the current Farm Managers role would have.</p> <p>It was noted that the work required on the property would have to be factored into any valuation.</p> <p>Trustees also noted the impact on the current Farm Manager if he was not successful in buying the property.</p> <p>The next step will be to seek permission from the ESFA to sell the property.</p> <p>2.5.2 Land off High Street Cannington</p> <p>Trustees noted the contents of the market valuation report with or without planning permission for housing.</p>	
3.	<u>Financial Reporting</u>	
	<p>3.1 2020/21 Financial update</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) highlighted the main points of the Month 6 Management Report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> <p>Revenue</p> <p>There has been additional income and costs, but the estimated outturn is currently a surplus of £300k at the end of the year.</p> <p>Reserves</p> <p>It was noted that this income will be on top of the reserves currently held that are above the reserves policy level.</p> <p>The Finance & Resources committee are reviewing the reserves policy.</p>	

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	<p>KPI's</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the value of supply costs as a percentage of the income? There is an overspend in staffing costs that is coming from the staffing contingency.</p> <p>It was noted that this includes the covid recognition award paid at the end of 2021.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the KPI for staffing costs and noted the trust was above the national average, but that the trust had also made a pay award that was above the nationally recommended level.</p>	
3.2	<p>Capital Projects</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) gave a verbal update on the current capital projects.</p> <p>There is a 3 to 4 week delay on the conversion work at MBA. There is also a delay on installing new play equipment at BCA.</p> <p>The School Condition Allowance for the next academic year will be higher than expected.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the unused sports grant and noted that it should be transferred to reserves rather than carry it forward to next year. It was noted that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted the ability for schools to spend the sports grants over the last two years.</p>	
3.3	<p>Trading Subsidiary</p> <p>The chair of the Trading Company (Richard Hawkins) gave a verbal update on the trading company activities.</p> <p>The subsidiary has had a good first half of the year with a forecasted surplus of between £60k and £63k.</p> <p>The subsidiary will incorporate the activities of the new Little Beeches Nursery from June 2022.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the recommendation from the Auditors to incorporate the activities of the trading company with the main trust accounts? Although this would make any losses less obvious and requires that the Trust keep some money in the subsidiary as a back stop this year. It would not allow the subsidiary to directly employ Nursery and Sports Centre staff.</p> <p>It was agreed that the provision in the Trust accounts for the trading subsidiary will remain while the Nursery finances stabilise over its first year of trading.</p>	
4.	<u>Reports to the Board</u>	
4.1	<p>Finance & Resources Committee</p> <p>Trustees noted the contents of the most recent Finance & Resources committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting</p>	

Item	Description	Action
	4.1 Audit Committee Trustees noted the contents of the most recent Audit committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting	
	4.1 Quality of Education Committee Trustees noted the contents of the most recent Quality of Education committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting	
5.	Policies for Approval	
	5.1 Remote Education (inc Safeguarding) policy Denys Rayner proposed that Trustees approve the Remote Education (inc Safeguarding) policy. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.	
6.	<u>Papers for Information</u>	
	Education White Paper SEND Green Paper	
7.	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
	None	
8.	<u>Next meeting</u>	
	Trust Strategy Event Thursday 12 th May 2022 Microsoft Teams The chair thanked everybody for their participation in what had been a busy agenda with some important decisions made for the development of the trust.	
	<i>The meeting finished at 1.53pm.</i>	

Signed.......... 12th May 2022
 Authorised Signatory for and on behalf of **Bridgwater College Trust**

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.