



Company number 8098956

MINUTES
BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
2ND FEBRUARY 2023

Actions from BTCT Board Meeting on 2nd February 2023

| Item reference | Action | Person responsible | Date Due |
|----------------|---|--------------------|----------|
| 1.2 | Circulate the register of interests to all Trustees to make changes. | GJ | ASAP |
| 3.1.3 | Reforecast the budget for discussion at the Strategic Planning event. To include key metrics / percentages relating to staffing, contact time, per pupil. etc. . Separate out different levels of staffing for Apex, Speech and Language, Educational Psychologist, etc. | NM | 16/03/23 |
| | | | |
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Company number 8098956

MINUTES

BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST

BOARD MEETING

2ND FEBRUARY 2023

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams and started at 5.00pm

Members:

| | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------|---------------|---|
| ✓ | Andy Berry | (AB) | Chair | <i>Bridgwater & Taunton College</i> |
| ✓ | Bob Brown | (BB) | (from 5.17pm) | <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> |
| ✓ | Marie Goddard | (MG) | | <i>Independent Trustee</i> |
| ✓ | Mike Hodson | (MH) | | <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> |
| ✓ | Jess Hardie | (JH) | <i>Head of People</i> |
| ✓ | Greg Jones | (GJ) | <i>Company Secretary</i> |
| | Mark Thomas | (MT) | <i>Brymore Academy</i> |
| ✓ | Sam Reilly | (SR) | <i>CoG BCA</i> |
| ✓ | Jason Gunningham | (JG) | <i>CoG Brymore</i> |
| | Siobhan Gallagher | (SG) | <i>CoG Hamp</i> |
| ✓ | Martina Forster | (MF) | <i>CoG WSC</i> |
| ✓ | Claire Winson | (CW) | <i>CoG OPS</i> |
| | Adam Strutt | (AS) | <i>CoG Stanchester</i> |

(✓ In attendance) (v = Virtual)

The chair welcomed everybody to this meeting.

He welcomed Jess Hardie the new Head of People for the trust to her first meeting of the Board.
All those present introduced themselves.

| Item | Description | Action |
|----------|----------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | <u>Procedural matters</u> | |

1.1 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Richard Hawkins

The Clerk confirmed that with 8 of the 10 Trustees present that the meeting was quorate (30%)

| Item | Description | Action |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 1.2 | Declarations of Interest A copy of the register of interests was circulated with the papers for this meeting. Some Trustees noted that their interests needed updating. Action – Circulate the register of interests to all Trustees to make changes. | GJ |
| 1.3 | Minutes of the previous meeting The minutes and confidential minutes of the board meeting of 1 st December 2022 were accepted as a true record. | |
| 1.4 | Matters arising None | |
| 1.5 | Decisions since the last meeting None | |

2. Trust Leader Reporting

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.

2.1.1 Risk Management

The Risk Register updated in January 2023 was circulated with the papers for this meeting.

Increasing Risks

- Recruitment and retention
- Inflation
- Attendance
- Headteacher burnout

See report below

- Effective Safeguarding

The Trust Safeguarding Lead (Sally Power) is off sick and is likely to be for some time. The Trust Director of Inclusion (Ali Biddles) is filling in to cover the safeguarding role.

A Trustee asked what was the mitigation for the support of safeguarding in the schools? Sally Power did not have an operational role in the schools. Safeguarding is carried out by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and their deputies. Sally's role was to carry out spot checks, metrics, and policy reviews.

Day to Day safeguarding operations in the school are unaffected.

Reducing Risks

- Suspensions and Exclusions
- Trading Company performance
- Additional funding

5.17pm Bob Brown joined the meeting

| Item | Description | Action |
|-------|--|--------|
| 2.1.2 | <p>Industrial Action/Union update</p> <p>The first day of industrial action was on Wednesday 1st February. All the primary phases were open for teaching and learning or childcare.</p> <p>Free school meals were provided for all children in school or packed lunches were sent home.</p> <p>56 of 950 employees were on strike which was fewer than expected.</p> <p>Pupils were encouraged to use online tuition and or the Get Ahead programme if necessary.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>A Trustee asked if the recent generous pay awards made by the trust was reflected in the relationship with the unions?</p> <p>The trust has good relationships with the local union representatives and the staff survey results have reflected good employee relationships.</p> </div> <p>It was noted that there are 3 more days of disruption planned.</p> | |
| 2.1.3 | <p>Schools</p> <p>Otterhampton Primary school/Maiden Beech Primary Academy</p> <p>Following on from the board's decision to merge leadership and governance functions in these two small Primary schools, Claire Winson was appointed as the chair of governors for the Small Schools LGB.</p> <p>It was noted that there was no opposition to the decision to merge the LGB's.</p> <p>MBPA are pleased to have attracted 35% of the 54 children across the Crewkerne area to start in September 2023.</p> <p>Hamp Academy</p> <p>The school is waiting to hear whether or not the deputy headteacher has been head-hunted by a special school in Devon.</p> <p>Bridgwater College Academy</p> <p>Additional support is being provided to the Executive Leadership Team to combat the pressure and stress on senior leaders of running this very large school.</p> <p>The leadership structure for 2023/24 is being reviewed.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>A Trustee asked about the length of this support and its impact on the school budget? The trust has committed to 4 terms of support until July 2024. The role is almost cost neutral as they have replaced another position in the trust.</p> </div> <p>West Somerset College</p> <p>A new deputy headteacher has been appointed from the United States.</p> | |
| 2.1.4 | <p>SEN Resources Base – West Somerset College</p> <p>Trustees were reminded that the Board had taken the decision 18 months ago to offer a lease to the Local Authority for a SEN base</p> | |

| Item | Description | Action |
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at WSC.

There has followed some lengthy negotiations after which no agreement on the term of the lease has been reached.

The Trust Leader and Chair met with the LA to discuss the option of the trust running the base. This has been approved by the Regional Schools Directors office and plans are being drawn up to open the base in September 2024.

Trustees discussed that it was pleasing that the RSD's team see BTCT as a "strong trust".

A Trustee asked about where the students for the base will come from and how they are funded? Pupils are funded individually according to their identified needs. Transport is provided directly by the Local Authority separately to the student funding.

Students will range from Year 5 upwards.

A Trustee asked about the skills / specialisms needed to staff the base? The trust will use the capacity and experience gained during the development of the Apex centres to deliver this project.

Third party support will be sought if required.

This will be part of an extended discussion at the Strategic Planning event.

2.1.5 ELT Action plans

The plans circulated with the papers for this meeting run until the end of August 2023.

The key actions have been linked to the 3-year strategic plan and are included in the relevant plan to make sure there is an identified owner.

It was noted that these are operational plans and that it was very useful for Trustees to see the actions.

Future reports will be RAG rated to allow Trustees to monitor progress of the actions.

A Trustee asked about the costs associated with the actions? Some costs have been included in the current budget or are covered by additional grant funding. There are some actions that have not yet been costed.

Trustees discussed the challenges of the current financial climate on the budget and that the implementation of a new financial system needed to be looked at closely before proceeding.

2.1.6 Central Team Structure

Trustees reviewed the Organogram circulated with the papers for this meeting.

A Trustee asked about the role of the Culture and Ethos lead? This is to provide support to the senior leaders in any of the

| Item | Description | Action |
|------|---|--------|
| | <p>schools for Behaviour, Culture and Ethos. They are currently support at BCA.</p> <p>This is a deployable resource from the central team with a very broad / flexible remit..</p> | |
| | <p>2.1.7 Flexible Working Pilot</p> <p>The pilot will be launched in September 2023 for a trial period until December 2023.</p> <p>It is aimed at the Senior Leaders in the bigger schools to help deal with the issue of burnout. Each leader will be allocated a period of time to work offsite that is unique to each school.</p> <p>Central Team colleague will be allocated to cover capacity in schools where required.</p> | |
| | <p>2.2 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> <p>2.2.1 Ensure the curriculum offer in each school is exceptional, challenging and diverse facilitating students making great progress.</p> <p>All the schools in the trust are now rated as “Good” by OFSTED. The Academy Development Plan (ADP) at Stanchester reflects the current Self Evaluation (SEF) to work towards Good in all areas.</p> <p>School improvement visits have been undertaken on themed and group outcomes in the foundation subjects.</p> <p>The Curriculum Development Team have made a fantastic start and are already having impact in the Secondary schools. New capacity has been added to improve the Primary curriculum.</p> <p>A Trustee asked what our self-assessments impact on the OFSTED outcomes. If we aspire to Good, we will never get to Outstanding? There are ambitions to get to outstanding in 3 of the schools (MBPA, OPS and Brymore). There is a focus on the Quality of Education under the new OFSTED framework.</p> <p>There are ambitions for areas of Outstanding at BCA and Hamp but they are unlikely to get an overall outstanding rating in OFSTED’s eyes.</p> <p>Work is continuing at STN and WSC to push to the next level.</p> <p>2.2.2 Deliver an exceptional primary school at Maiden beech Primary Academy</p> <p>The Quality of Education committee will be reviewing the curriculum at MBPA at their next meeting.</p> <p>2.2.3 Ensure that every teacher is an outstanding practitioner.</p> <p>95% of teachers currently have a personal growth plan which will be 100% by March 2023.</p> | |

| Item | Description | Action |
|------|--|--------|
| | <p>A paper on the principals of Great Teaching has been shared with the executive teams.</p> <p>Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has been centralised to provide more effective teacher development.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about the wellbeing of Early Career Teachers in terms of their retention? The trust does this well along with that of the Middle Leaders.</p> <p>The Professional Insights programme is now up and running.</p> <p>2.2.4 Expand the reach and impact of our online teaching provision, exploiting the benefits of our out of hours teaching and catch-up.</p> <p>Aspire is a trust wide programme for students in years 9 and 10 that have potential to apply for Oxbridge or Russel Group universities.</p> <p>2.3 Organisational Structure</p> <p>See above.</p> | |

3. Financial Reporting

3.1 **2022/23 financial update (Month 3)**

The Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) highlighted the main points of the Month 3 management report circulated with the papers for this meeting. She noted that the production of the Month 4 report had been delayed by the roll out of the new payroll as part of the iTrent system.

3.1.1 **Summary**

- The deficit of £129k is higher than the budgeted figure of £41k.
- Staffing costs are higher than budgeted due to additional posts and the cost of replacing staff at a higher pay scale.
- The Year-to-date outturn is positive = £37k which is £181k above the budgeted deficit.

3.1.2 **Income**

- Year to date income exceeds the budget by £181k due to government grant income.

3.1.3 **Staff costs**

- Staffing is £59k over budget so far this year.
- The Supply budget has been overspent on roles to support senior leadership teams in some schools.
- The incremental rises for staff progression is higher this year for staff on the main and upper pay scale.

A Trustee asked what the percentage of the budget is on staffing? Staffing was at 85% for Q1 but has been reduced by a £800k grant.

Trustees discussed why staffing is above the 80% target. They noted that there were a lot of non-classroom staff involved in the Apex centers and central Team. Additional funding from

| Item | Description | Action |
|------|--|-----------|
| | the government and Special Educational Needs will help mitigate the extra staff costs. | |
| | <p>Action – Reforecast the budget for discussion at the Strategic Planning event. To include key metrics / percentages relating to staffing, contact time, per pupil. etc. Separate out different levels of staffing for Apex, Speech and Language, Educational Psychologist, etc.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>A Trustee asked about the teacher's non-contact ratio? Non-contact time is 10%, which is not generous because of the financial pressure on the curriculum.</p> </div> <p>Trustees discussed the unknown variables that are beyond the trusts control that will impact on next year's budget. Inflation, Pay Awards, etc.</p> <p>The Finance & Resources committee will undertake greater scrutiny on staffing at their future meetings.</p> | NM |
| | <p>3.1.4 Non-staffing The timing of invoices meant that expenditure exceeded the budget by £91k. Hardship funding received last year is now being spent to support families with Uniform etc.</p> <p>3.1.5 Cashflow The closing cashflow position at 31/08/23 is projected to be £3.7m</p> <p>3.1.6 Reserves The reserves are at £2,272k which is £46k above the 4 weeks reserves policy.</p> <p>3.1.7 Capital Expenditure Trustees reviewed the £250k of capital projects that have been agreed in principle.</p> <p>£190k of funding has been received for energy related projects that is time limited and must be spent soon.</p> | |
| | <p>3.2 Capital Projects See above.</p> | |
| | <p>3.3 Trading Subsidiary Trustees noted the contents of the BTCT Trading month 4 report circulated with the papers for this meeting.</p> | |

4 Reports to the Board

- 4.1 Quality of Education Committee**
The chair of the Quality of Education Committee (Carole Chevalley) highlighted the main points of the committee minutes circulated with the papers for this meeting.
- Student Involvement / Voice.

| Item | Description | Action |
|------|---|--------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations for pupil voice at LGB and Board. No permanent representation on LGB's or Boards. Next Steps Chairs of Local Governing Bodies to discuss the role of Pupil voice at Academy level. <i>The clerk has sent the paper to the LGB administrator for inclusion on their next meeting agendas.</i> The QofE committee will include Secondary Pupil Voice at its next meeting. | |

4.2 SEND Trustee report

The SEND Trustee (Marie Goddard) highlighted the main points of the SEND report circulated with the papers for this meeting.

- This was the first meeting of the SEND Trustee with the trust Director of Inclusion (Ali Biddles)
- The SEND questions tie in well with the ELT Action Plan.
- The follow up with Stanchester was from an earlier QofE meeting.
- The trust has a strong capacity to support schools such as Brymore.

5 Policies for Approval

5.1 Redundancy & Redeployment Policy

Andy Berry proposed that Trustees approve the Redundancy & Redeployment Policy. Seconded by Carole Chevalley and approved by all present.

6 Papers for Information

6.1 Trust Inclusion training

Trustees reviewed the purpose of this training and indicated that they may like to take part in the online sessions.

The clerk circulated the invitation email for the spring and summer sessions to all Trustees and Governors.

A Trustee asked if the trust had considered selling the training to other authorities to raise funds and cover costs? The trust is publicly funded, and all training is provided free of charge.

Projects like this are used to show that BTCT is a strong trust supporting other educational organisations.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Land at Cannington

The trust has received a valuation of land at Cannington from a developer of £1.3m.

The Finance & Resources committee will review the future use of this land by the trust that may include another Apex center.


| Item | Description | Action |
|------------|---|--------|
| 7.2 | Awards The trust has been nominated for two awards at the National MAT awards. Medium sized Mat of the year MAT Innovation award The Trust Leader will be taking a complete cross section of the trust staff to the awards. Trustees noted that this was a great opportunity to showcase the work of the trust. | |
| 7.3 | Mock Interviews Trustees were asked to help with Mock Interviews for secondary students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brymore Academy – Tuesday 7th March • Stanchester Academy – Monday 24th April | |

9. Next meeting

Tuesday 28th February – Extraordinary Board meeting. MS Teams

The next full Board meeting will be during the Strategic Planning event.
Friday 17th March at 9.00am
Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster

The meeting finished at 6.54pm

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

2nd February 2023

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 BTCT 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.