



Company number 8098956

MINUTES
BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
11 MAY 2023

Actions from BTCT Board Meeting on 11th May 2023

Item reference	Action	Person responsible	Date Due
1.2	Update Declarations of Interest document	GJ	July
1.4	Meet to discuss metrics (see action from March meeting)	NM/MG	July
1.4	External networking feedback and H&S reports to include RIDDOR (see action from March meeting)	NM/	Sept
2	Send document from strategic planning event to potential parent trustees for feedback	PLE	May
4.2.5	Bishop Fleming to be consulted on Reserves Policy recommendations	NM	July
5	Committee meetings need to happen prior to the full Board to ensure flow of effective communication and timely reporting	GJ	July
9	Schedule further meeting of the Board to approve the budget or delay July Board until after publication of pay recommendations.	GJ	July

Meeting held at Bridgwater and Taunton College, meeting started at 5 pm

Members:				
✓	Andy Berry	(AB)	Chair	<i>Bridgwater & Taunton College</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>
v	Sid Gibson	(SG)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
v	Marie Goddard	(MG)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
v	Mike Hodson	(MH)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
☒	Richard Hawkins	(RH)		<i>Independent Trustee</i>
v	Denys Rayner	(DR)	Vice Chair	<i>Independent Trustee</i>
In Attendance:				
✓	Nicola Mould	(NM)		<i>Chief Finance Officer</i>
✓	Tamsin Grainger	(TG)	Joined at 6 pm	<i>Director of Education</i>
✓	Jess Hardie	(JH)		<i>Head of People</i>
☒	Ali Biddles	(AB)		<i>Director of Inclusion</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 Sturt	(AS)		<i>CoG Stanchester</i>
✓	Katy Hockings	(KH)		<i>Minute Taker</i>
✓	Jamie Stewart	(JS)		<i>Prospective Parent Trustee</i>
✓	Claire Wilson	(CWi)		<i>Prospective Parent Trustee</i>
✓	Sian Howard	(SH)		<i>Prospective Parent Trustee</i>
(✓ In attendance) (v = Virtual)				

The chair welcomed everybody to this meeting. JS, CWi and SH were welcomed to the meeting as potential parent trustees. Introductions were made.

Item	Description	Action
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1	<u>Procedural matters</u>	
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1.1	Apologies	
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	Adam Sturt, Denys Rayner(second hour of meeting), Claire Winson, Bob Brown, Greg Jones, Tamsin Grainger (first hour of meeting)	
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	The Clerk confirmed that with 7 of the 10 Trustees present that the meeting was quorate (30%)	
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1.2	Declarations of Interest	
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	A copy of the register of interests was circulated with the papers for this meeting. Noted that there is some updating required to the first page of the document and this will be done prior to the next meeting.	
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		GJ
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Item Description

1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2023 were accepted as a true record. Actions from the last meeting were reviewed.

1.4 Matters arising

1.4.1 External networking feedback and update future health and safety reports to include Riddor are due in September. NM and MG will meet to discuss examples of metrics outside of the meeting.

1.5 Decisions since the last meeting

None

2. Visions and Values

PE provided an update on the work done at the strategic planning residential and collation of the ideas and feedback coming out of that.

Draft proposed three word values – ambitious, collaborative, inclusive. The document circulated with the Board papers contained further detail on the selection of these words and PE outlined the thinking behind this.

PE invited feedback from those present. He reiterated that he is very happy to receive feedback or further discussion by Teams, phone or in person after the meeting.

AB invited thoughts and reflections from those present. He noted the relevance and aptness of the three words, but felt that further work is required on the diagram presented to ensure it captures the way in which delivery and encompassing these values will happen effectively.

CC commented she felt this summary is very good at encapsulating discussion, and agreed that the diagram needs tweaking.

NM commented that the three words will be embraced across the MAT at its core but that individual schools may have their own focus reflecting the different school cultures.

SG agreed the summary was extremely useful. He commented that there is no specific mention of staff within the words and it would be good to include this if at all possible.

DR agreed the values are an accurate reflection, however 'learning' might be reflected to underpin these values in some way. Really important to have a learning focus in everything that we do and continue to learn and grow.

MG noted the huge amount of work that has gone into this to make it a coherent and simple approach. She noted the use of inclusion and inclusive and how this is utilised, and how we use it is perceived externally. PE agreed that this is an important point. PE asked MG to feedback on alternative options for words, as the conversation isn't finalised and the final words are not yet set in stone.

MG noted that it would be useful to include 'equity' as well as 'equality'. Agreed to do so.

CC raised a point around learning and ambition, and whether this could be qualified as both in education and also within students' wider lives as citizens. PE to consider how to incorporate.

PE asked JS, SH and CWi their views. JS commented that what success looks like needs to be quantified and clarified as those with SEN will not necessarily be taking the same routes to success as other students. SG agreed that ambitious could be taken out of the context which it is meant. Success is personal and means something to each individual and ambition may not completely encompass this. Not everyone can be ambitious in the standard understanding of the word. Inclusive is a useful word, as is collaborative. Learning being included would be helpful. CWi commented she likes the word inclusive, important in helping all children feel part of the school environment. PE will send the complete list of words to the potential parent trustees to get feedback.

Action – PE to send list of words to potential parent trustees

MG highlighted the importance of considering who our audience is for the words we select, and what these words mean for them. PE confirmed there are a number of audiences, external stakeholders, staff, potential staff and parents to a lesser degree as they would be led by the individual school their child attends.

CC commented on whether it would be helpful to discuss the words with a group of students to get further feedback and viewpoints.

AB commented that it is important to maintain an individual school ethos and culture and the Trust values sit over this as an overarching set of values across the whole organisation.

MH commented on the potential lack of context of the three words, and perhaps we may need another word or a context. PE said the vision is 'every child achieves', and these words go alongside this. CC suggested 'the Trust is collaborative, ambitious and inclusive'.

AB and PE thanked everyone for their feedback which PE will incorporate within the work and continue to develop.

A further update will be provided at the next meeting.

3. Trust Leader Reporting

3.1 Trust Leaders report

PE report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Teacher recruitment and retention currently challenging, particularly in science but also in languages and computer science. This is an issue across the country at the present time.

Noted key staffing changes.

Inflation pressures continue to affect the financial position. See more detail in financial update.

High rates of student absence, nationally 22% persistent absence, and higher than pre Covid rates. Patterns of absence more prevalent on a Friday and schools across the MAT reflect the national trend.

Consideration of flexible working policy being introduced. Further information in due course.

Safeguarding update provided as well as risk register update.

Update on industrial action. Pay settlement remains unresolved nationally. Publication of pay recommendation will be made in July and timing of F&R

and Board will need to follow this publication in order to approve the budget for next year. MAT schools have been affected to differing degrees by the industrial action.

DR left the meeting.

Educational Strategy for Life in Somerset noted. AB and PE attended the launch event. Expression of willingness to work with the local authority.

Minehead Middle School and Daneshead Middle Schools providing challenges for West Somerset College in terms of student attainment and behaviour. SG commented that differences in expectation in behaviour in different schools is an ongoing challenge.

MAT Awards winner of innovation award at a national level. AB reiterated congratulations to the team on achieving this award.

PE invited questions. There were no further questions raised.

3.2 Director of Education report

TG had given apologies due to the Ofsted Inspection at BCA this week. Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. PE highlighted page one regarding results predictions.

Careers updated provided, full compliance across all schools in the MAT with the Gatsby Benchmark expected shortly.

CC commented on exclusion of year 7 student, one key issue was delay in provision of SEN communications by previous school and that had caused significant issues for the student's education.

AB thanked PE for providing an overview of the report and invited questions. There were no further questions.

4. Financial Reporting

4.1 2022/23 financial update (Month 7)

The Chief Financial Officer (Nic Mould) highlighted the main points of the Month 7 management report circulated with the papers for this meeting.

4.1.1 Summary

- NM gave a context to the budget in relation to the revenue budget being offset by capital income. This had been due to the pay award outcome in 2022. AB highlighted the importance of early accurate prediction for the 2023-24 budget.

4.2.2 Income

- Outperforming £457k against budget. Largely due to additional HN funding and FSM. Much tighter processes and review meetings have supported in performing better than budget in the year to date.

4.2.3 Staff costs

- Additional SEN staffing costs.
- Additional staffing costs within some schools which have been approved by the Trust.
- Review of staffing as a result, some posts put on hold, fixed term contracts reviewed to ensure that staffing costs are controlled.

4.2.4 Non-staffing

- Tight controls on non staffing costs where possible.

4.2.5 Reserves

Four weeks of working capital continues to be the reserve figure. This policy is going to be reviewed to ensure this is the most appropriate amount to be holding in reserve. PE highlighted that with rising costs and cost of living, work will be done to ensure that there is a balanced budget for the next academic year. PE will recommend to F&R Committee next week a review of the reserves policy. MG commented that the financial position of the Trust is on a par with many other trusts, and this is a national issue which is being faced by trusts. SG asked whether Bishop Fleming could be consulted prior to F&R, and PE agreed and asked SG to forward specific questions to pose to Bishop Fleming. MG confirmed that feedback is being given to DfE regarding what schools are experiencing at this time in a financial context. MG asked where budget intelligence is being gathered. PE confirmed CST, CFO forums and groups and various local and regional intelligence to support decisions being made.

Action: Bishop Fleming to be consulted on Reserves Policy recommendations (NM)

4.2 Capital Projects

Capital requests paused at the present time.

Energy grant of £89k received, and looking at how to allocate this.

AB asked whether income is entirely separate to capital within the management accounts. PE confirmed that there has been more revenue spending than capital spend in the current year.

NM provided an overview of capital projects for next year. NM invited questions. There were none.

TG joined the meeting.

4.3 Trading Subsidiary

PE noted that this is outperforming against budget in year. Budget for trading subsidiary showing a surplus for the next academic year. No further meeting of the trading subsidiary group since the last Board. Noted that timings of meetings need to happen prior to the Board.

Action: G to ensure committees meet prior to the full Board each term.

AB invited questions on the finance update. MG asked for a review on additional non teaching staff costs. NM explained that there are some teaching support staff within the non teaching staff, which need to be reallocated to give a true reflection of the position.

5 Reports to the Board**5.1 Audit Committee**

- Feedback on the audit committee was provided at the last meeting and there had not been a further meeting since.

5.2 Finance & Resources Committee

- Due to meet next week.
- SG noted the Committee is incorporating a focus on people into relevant F&R matters in this context.

5.3 Quality of Education Committee

- CC commented on the student voice report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Meeting with students was extremely helpful and useful experience for the Committee.

- PE asked if the student voice could be repeated with primary pupils as well next academic year. CC confirmed she is meeting with TG next week to discuss agendas for next year and this can be incorporated.

6 Policies for Approval

None

7 Papers for Information

School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool Checklist – noted. AB invited questions. There were none.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1 360 Review – AB highlighted that the Chair's 360 appraisal is now open, and those who have not yet completed please do so online.

9. Next meeting

Thursday 6th July 2023

Taunton Campus, Bridgwater & Taunton College

A further meeting of the Board may be required for sign off of the budget given the timing of the publication of the teachers pay award. PE to discuss with AB, GJ and NM and confirm.

Action: schedule a further Board meeting for budget approval, or delay the above meeting for this.

The meeting finished at 6.45 pm

Signed..... 6th July 2023
 Authorised Signatory for and on behalf of **Bridgwater & Taunton 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 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.