

# **BISHOP OTTER ACADEMY TRUST**

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 at 12.30pm**

*(Held via Zoom)*

Present: Jenny Barnard-Langston (JBL) – Chair  
Christine Bartley (CB)  
Wendy Cooke (WC)  
Trevor Cristin (TC)  
Matt Davis (MD)  
David Etherton (DE)  
Lesley Hurst (LH)  
Martin Lloyd-Williams (MLW)

Apologies: Stephen Paynter (SP)  
Claire Rivers (CR)

### **Welcome to all**

### **Declarations of interest**

No new interests were declared.

### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Claire Rivers and Stephen Paynter.

### **Minutes of last meeting**

Members reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and approved that they were a true reflection of the meeting.

• **Minutes approved**

**Clerk**

**Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)** - see confidential Part 2 minutes

### **CEO Report**

#### *Report to Diocesan Board of Education*

The report to the Diocesan Board of Education was noted.

#### *Executive Headteacher Report*

Trustees noted the Executive Headteacher report. A new CEO report format will be provided once a school joins the trust.

#### *Financial Management and Governance Self-assessment*

The Financial Management and Governance Self-assessment (FMGS) must be submitted to the DFE after the trust is live. The checklist provides a good overview for trustees on the financial management and governance and what is required to ensure the trust is compliant. A lot of items are green and in place already with some ready to be put in place in the first month. GIAS will be updated once a school has joined and the trust is live.

### **Policies**

*Health & Safety – Accident recording and reporting*

DE advised each school will maintain its Health & Safety policy. The appendices have been updated to provide a reporting method for accidents to the trust in place of the local authority. The trustees agreed to adopt the Health and Safety Appendix A, B and C.

JBL suggested when publishing the policy the Health and Safety introduction and guidance may be better placed in the staff handbook rather than the policy.

#### *School Uniform*

DE advised new requirements on school uniform has been released. He noted the purpose of the policy is to ensure schools are compliant, meet health and safety requirements, ensuring uniform is fit for purpose and meets the affordability requirement, still allowing for the schools to set their own uniform.

JBL suggested the introduction of the policy be amended to ensure clarity that the trust is providing guidance on the legal requirements, still being mindful that each school has its own identity.

CB recommended that such policies should be consulted with the local governing boards before it is brought to trustees for approval and that the policy at trust level should focus on the principals important to uniform rather than specific items.

TC agreed the importance of celebrating each schools individuality with the trust enabling the schools to feel safe by ensuring uniform meets the legal requirements and standards. He agreed it would be beneficial for LGB's to be consulted on the policy.

DE confirmed the policy has gone to the LGB's for consultation.

Trustees agreed the policy subject to:

- Amending the policy to focus on the legal requirements, allowing schools to make their individual choice on their uniform standards.
- Comments from the local governing board.

• **Consult with LGB's on uniform policy and update policy to focus on compliance**

**DE**

#### *Gifts Policy*

DE advised the policy is based on the St Nicolas and St Mary's current gifts policy. He noted the importance of putting systems in place to ensure the schools and trusts funds are spent appropriately but also to ensure leaders are informed of any significant milestones, personal challenges or achievements and be able to send gifts and show genuine care for the staff member.

JBL commented the policy is very prescriptive and asked trustees to be mindful of that when reviewing the policy.

DE advised St Andrew's do not currently have a consistent approach and the Leadership team feel it would be beneficial to have a policy to provide in house guidance on how gifts for staff are managed.

TC recommended the use of the local governing board expertise and suggested further consultation on this policy, with perhaps a regular forum in due course.

Trustees approved the policy subject to comments from the LGB and the policy being broken down into the following three sections:

1. An overarching trust policy.
2. Clear guidance on what a school can accept or receive.
3. Suggested guidance on gifts that schools can chose to follow or not.

#### *Privacy notices*

DE advised the privacy notices is in progress and will be brought to the next trustee meeting.

#### *Combined Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Low Level Concerns Policy*

DE advised the Combined Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Low Level Concerns Policy is in progress and will be brought to the next trustee meeting.

### First Aid

DE advised the First Aid policy is in progress and will be brought to the next trustee meeting.

- **Bring Privacy notices, combined child protection & safeguarding policy and low level concerns policy to be brought to next trustee meeting**

DE

### *Scheme of Delegation including LGB Terms of Reference*

DE advised St Andrews had raised concerns regarding the Scheme of Delegation, following further consultation a new version of the SoD was drafted based on the National Governance Association model, with additional information on finance and the local governing board terms of reference included. Richard Quirk of St Andrews has provided some feedback and the governing Board of St Nicolas and St Mary's will be looking at the revised scheme of delegation this evening. DE highlighted the need for a scheme of delegation to be in place for 1 June.

CB questioned the different color texts in the SoD. DE clarified the green text indicates the additional text added to the model policy to fit with a church school context, such as local governing body membership.

CB felt the terms of reference needed further clarity and suggested looking at other church school trusts for reference. CB commented Appendix 2; Model terms of reference for Local Governing Body would need to be agreed at a local level.

DE suggested the chair of trustees meet with the LGB chairs to discuss further. It was also mentioned trustees would need to consider at what point LGB's would need to reconstitute and implement the new terms of reference.

DE confirmed he has spent an afternoon with senior leaders to provide clarity and explain the scheme of delegation in further detail.

LH highlighted the scheme of delegation must reflect what is in the articles of association.

Trustees discussed the finance-budget setting and if it was clear where responsibilities lay. DE confirmed schools would be able to identify a project with projected costs that would be presented to the trust for approval.

The trustees agreed to await comments from the local governing bodies after their review of the scheme of delegation.

### **External Audit contract**

Four auditors submitted a proposal to perform the trusts external audit. DE noted all four firms quoted for the same service, each with substantial experience of dealing with multi academy trusts.

Trustees agreed to appoint Landau Baker Limited as external auditors for the trust subject to Stephen Paynter's agreement.

- **Check SP in agreement to appointment of Landau Baker Limited as external auditors**

DE

### **Risk Register**

DE advised the risk register will be brought to the next trustee meeting.

- **Compile risk register**

DE

### **Board of Trustees**

*New Trustees*

DE and JBL are in discussions regarding onboarding a trustee from St Andrews.

#### *DBS checks*

All DBS checks are now in place with the exception of MLW and members to provide further details.

#### Trustee Training

The diocese will be scheduling trustee training in the near future.

### Finance update

#### *TCAF, Support Grant, EFA funding allocation pack update*

The TCAF funds are expected to be received very soon.

The support grant of £25k per school has been received. The Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) funding allocation pack for both schools has been received.

#### *BLLP time and use*

Trustees noted the use of BLLP resource. CB asked if we thought we would continue to require the support from BLLP. WC confirmed a few full days support would be required in the first month to ensure all systems are up and running, after this it is expected the advice and support would tail off.

### Staffing

#### *CFO recruitment*

DE confirmed WC had been appointed CFO for the trust after an interview with SP and himself. The role is on a part time basis, with a two year contract. DE and trustees congratulated WC on her appointment.

#### *Other roles: Company Secretary; Data Protection Officer*

DE advised following the appointment of CFO the recruitment for a data protection officer, company secretary and clerk would commence.

JBL asked the current status on HR matters for staff. It was confirmed contracts are currently being closed off. HR modules have been provided by Every which will provide advice, support and contracts. The additional modules were able to be purchased with the TCAF funding.

### AOB

Papers to be circulated 7 days before the meeting.

Trustees to RSVP to Caroline if they can attend the St Nicolas and St Mary's launch event on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June.

- **Send RSVPs for St Nicolas and St Marys launch event**

**Trustees**

### Date of next BOAT meetings

The schedule of meetings and key dates agreed as below:

DATE	MEETING	ATTENDEES
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June at 12:30pm via zoom	Trustee Meeting	All
<b>BOAT ACADEMISATION DATES AND CELEBRATIONS</b>		
Wednesday 1st June 2022 (during half term)	<b>AGREED TARGET DATE FOR ST NICOLAS &amp; ST MARY'S JOINING BOAT</b>	
Monday 6th June 2:00pm tour followed by 2:00pm assembly at St Nics	<b>ST NIC'S JOINING BOAT CELEBRATION</b>	Trustees to confirm availability. LH,TC confirmed attendance.

Friday 1st July	<b>AGREED TARGET DATE FOR ST ANDREW'S JOINING BOAT</b>	
Wednesday 6th July (PM) Approx. 2:00pm-3:30pm at St Andrews	ST ANDREW'S JOINING BOAT <b>CELEBRATION</b>	Trustees to confirm availability.  AD Martin confirmed attendance, CR apologies received.

### Closing Prayer

The meeting closed in prayer and wise words, and JBL closed the meeting at 2:00pm.




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Jenny Barnard-Langston  
Chair of Trustees