

BISHOP OTTER ACADEMY TRUST

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 23rd June 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)
Claire Rivers (CR)

Apologies: Martin Lloyd-Williams (MLW)
Stephen Paynter (SP)

Welcome to all

Declarations of interest

No new interests were declared.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Martin Lloyd, Stephen Paynter was also not in attendance.

Minutes of last meeting

Members reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2022 and approved that they were a true reflection of the meeting.

• **Minutes approved**

Clerk

Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

JBL advised trustees she had met with DE and the clerk to establish a way of working together with a clear work pattern to ensure trustees were confident in the matters being brought to them.

CEO Report

DE confirmed a written report would be brought to future meetings. He suggested a model report from the key will be used as a base. Comments from trustees on the format or content are welcome.

DE noted his thanks to WDC and clerk for their efforts in getting systems and processes in place. The first payroll will take place tomorrow morning.

Strategic Priorities

The strategic priorities show the focus of the core team for the next couple of months.

LH requested capital assets be added to the strategic priorities to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of the premises remains a priority.

• **Add premises to the strategic priorities**

DE

DE noted a school resource management self-assessment will be provided to trustees in the next couple of months. LH suggested priorities are combined into one document for clarity enabling trustees to feel confident in what is being done to achieve them.

CR confirmed she is happy to be a part in developing a trust wide school improvement strategy, and suggested wider stakeholder involvement, such as a teacher and parent. CR is meeting with DE and Andy Lincoln (AL) next week to begin discussions.

TC questioned how the trust wide school improvement strategy will impact St Nicolas and St Mary. DE advised AL will consider his priorities separately with the schools SLT and support from diocese, which will then be presented to the CEO for consideration.

Trustees acknowledged the challenge ahead with the CEO's current and former positions and the importance of clarity in the roles, providing DE with support and guidance.

Training

A schedule of DE's training was noted. DE advised his recent course on Leading Trust Schools Through Inspection was very useful, with current Ofsted inspector in attendance, it offered guidance on what an academy may need to show in comparison to a school.

DE is registered to complete a Church of England NPQ on Executive Leadership and will continue half-termly coaching sessions with Siobhan Denning.

TC is exploring mentoring options for DE to provide peer-to-peer support.

Academy update

St Nicolas & St Mary have joined the trust, starting a new journey with a strong, positive team whom share a strong determination and understanding of the hard work needed to make it successful.

A successful launch celebration event was held on 6 June with trustees, staff and friends of the trust and school in attendance.

LH checked if WDC had all the support and training needed. WDC noted the last couple of weeks had been challenging with banking and payroll difficulties, but noted it was a first, lessons had been learnt on what may be required earlier, which should provide a much smoother onboarding with any future schools. WDC noted support from DE and SLT.

Training will be required on the new finance and HR systems for office staff. WDC to consider any CFO training that could be useful once the systems are in place. WDC to document any lessons learnt.

• **Document lessons learned**

WDC

Valuable support has been provided by BLLP whom use the financial system BOAT is implementing. It is expected the support will continue for ½ - 1 day a term going forward.

CB questioned if any formal communication had gone to St Nicolas & St Mary following the launch. JBL will continue with open communication with the Chair of Governors. DE/JBL to draft a letter to staff and a letter to parents by the end of this term.

Policies

Privacy Notices, First Aid, Capability of staff, Freedom of information publication scheme, Trustee and Governors Allowance, Staff discipline, conduct and grievance

DE noted the policies for approval, highlighting each noted their source and what they were based on for confidence and assistance in the review process. DE also noted the clerk was liaising with the clerk to governors for a gradual transfer of policies.

Trustees suggested also consulting other trusts in the diocese to see if there are any additions we may like to add into our policies as a faith trust.

The trustees approved the following policies:

- Privacy notices
 - For suppliers of goods and services
 - For members, trustees, local governors and other volunteers
- First Aid
- Capability of staff
- Freedom of information publication scheme
- Trustee and governor allowance
- Staff discipline, conduct and grievance

The combined child protection and safeguarding policy and Low level concerns policy will be brought to the July meeting.

DE noted as St Nicolas & St Mary are now part of the trust, they must reference that in their admissions policy. Edit to be considered at the July trustee meeting.

Growth Strategy Inc. Communication Plan

Trustees discussed the growth strategy and communication plan and agreed the next steps would be;

- A communication plan.
- Consider the location the trust will be looking at; with schools that fit and are interested.
- The approach to potential schools.
- Articulate the strengths, uniqueness and what BOAT can offer to schools.
- Make better use of the talent on the board of Trustees.
- Be able to show the resources in and behind BOAT.
- Showcase the components that will make schools feel 'safe'
- Consider how BOAT could work with strong schools that are nervous about feeling left behind.
- Look at what is BOAT - marketing strategy

Matt left the meeting at 1:32pm

CB noted she met with a Chair of Trustees of a Multi Academy Trust in London which provided a very useful discussion around lessons learned, communication and marketing.

CB noted its now the time to talk through marketing and consider our approach to potential schools with a clear vision, with St Nicolas and St Mary's being the trust biggest asset.

CB suggested a Trustee day with staff, trustees and governors together at the beginning of the school year with a clear theme, would be a great way to start off the year.

- **Schedule a trustee day with staff and governors**

Clerk/DE/JBL

Trustees discussed the need for a collective commitment to turn up at trustee meetings, with participation. Meetings to be scheduled for two hours with good notice and clear expectations of the meeting.

- **Bring communication strategy to July meeting**

CB

Risk Register

DE presented the risk register which is based on the charity commission model. The school/s will have their own local risk register.

LH suggested the addition of Premises to the risk register and to identify what will be done in each case to mitigate the risk.

- **Add premises to the risk register**

DE

Board of Trustees

Trustee Training

JBL advised Mike Simmonds will be running Trustee Development Training for trustees in September. The clerk to circulate potential dates and trustees to confirm availability.

- **Confirm availability for Trustee Development Training**

Trustees

The clerk advised Trustees a skills audit would be circulated for completion. Once compiled it will identify any training requirements and can be used to inform future trustee recruitment.

- **Completed skills audit and return to clerk**

Trustees

Finance update

TCAF, Support Grant, EFA funding allocation pack update

The TCAF and support grant have been received. Any unspent monies from the St Andrew's support grant will need to be returned to the DfE.

It was agreed an application for further TCAF funding would not be made on this cycle, it will be considered again in the autumn.

A breakdown of TCAF spend and budgets will be brought to the July meeting.

- **Provide breakdown of TCAF spend at July meeting**

WDC

Audit Committee

Trustees agreed the members of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FARC) to commence from next year are:

- Stephen Paynter (Chair)
- Lesley Hurst
- Matt Davis (TBC)

- **Discuss with MD if he would like to be a committee member of the FARC**

JBL

Further committees to be considered next year, the FARC must be the first to be established as it is required in the Academy Trust Handbook.

Budget Preparation

WDC to provide the budgets with narrative to the July trustee meeting. WDC confirmed some preparatory work has begun on the budgets and there would be current, growth and no growth scenarios presented at the next meeting.

- **Budgets to be presented at the July trustee meeting for approval**

WDC

AOB

There was no other business.

Date of next BOAT meetings

The next trustee meeting is scheduled for Monday, 18th July 2022, 9:30 am – 11:30 am. Clerk to confirm the availability of SP, MD and MLW.

- **Confirm availability of trustees not in attendance for July trustee meeting**

Clerk

2022/23 Planner

The clerk noted the proposed dates for the Board and Committee meetings in 2022-23. Trustees to check and confirm availability to the clerk.

Trustees agreed to move the time of meetings to 6:00pm – 8:00pm, with a mix of face to face and online meetings.

- **Check and confirm availability for the proposed Board and Committee dates for 2022-23**

Trustees

Closing Prayer

The meeting closed in prayer and wise words, and JBL closed the meeting at 2:16pm.



Jenny Barnard-Langston
Chair of Trustees