

Hope Learning Trust Board of Trustees' Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24th October 2018 at 5.30pm at Vale of York Academy

Present:

Tony Myers (Chair of Trustees)	Mike Ferguson
Ian Thomson	Olivia Seymour [from 6.35pm]
Karen Osborne	David Judson
Philippa Gowland [from 6.00pm]	Andrew Simpkin [from 5.40pm to 7.40pm]

In Attendance:

Brian Crosby (CEO, Hope Learning Trust)
 Wendy Munro (COO, Hope Learning Trust) [to 7.00pm]
 Simon Bryan-Smith (Finance Director, Hope Learning Trust) [to 7.05pm]
 Katherine Humpleby (Secondary School Improvement Lead) [to 7.00pm]
 Allyson Buckton (Headteacher, Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary Academy) [to 7.50pm]
 Simon Barber (Principal, Manor CE Academy) [to 7.50pm]
 Helen Dowds (Principal, Vale of York Academy) [from 5.45pm to 7.00pm]
 Jess Swarbrick (Governance Advisor & Clerk)

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome & Opening Prayer</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which opened with a prayer led by Mike Ferguson.</p> <p>It was noted that item 9, CEO Report, would be brought forward to allow Trust Officers to leave following this discussion.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies were received, with consent, from Jackie Doyle-Brett. Late apologies were also received from Olivia Seymour. Julie McGonigle was absent.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Appointment of Vice-Chair of the Trust Board</u> Carried forward from the previous meeting. Trustees approved the proposal to appoint the Sub-Committee Chairs (Ian Thomson, Karen Osborne and Jackie Doyle-Brett) as joint Vice-Chairs of the Trust Board.</p> <p>[Andrew Simpkin joined the meeting at 5.40pm]</p>	
4.	<p><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2018, Action Plan and Matters Arising</u> Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.</p> <p>With reference to Action Plan:</p> <p>1. Ensure regular reporting on breakdown of RE data for Manor CE Academy In place, ongoing.</p> <p>2. Speak to Primary and Secondary School Improvement Leads about the best way to report on SIAMS SEF within the School on a Page report Not completed. Katherine Humpleby agreed to contact Olivia Seymour to discuss this further.</p>	KH / OS

	<p>3. <i>Arrange drop in sessions for staff and governors to meet with Trustees</i> The COO reported that dates had been booked for the Trustee primary school visits before Christmas. She advised that the intention was to arrange staff drop-in sessions following Trustee involvement in the trust-wide staff training day on 7th January 2019.</p> <p>4. <i>Send out Strategy Meeting invitation with details of structure and remit of the session</i> Completed. It was noted that a summary of the Strategy Evening discussion had been circulated with the agenda for information.</p> <p>There were no other matters arising.</p>	
9.	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>The CEO presented his report, which had been previously distributed. Format including general update plus specific items for discussion/decision. The report included a general update, and a summary of key strategic decisions where further discussion was required.</p> <p>9.1 General Update</p> <p><i>HR Provision</i> An update was provided on HR provision for the Trust, following the departure of the HR Director. The CEO advised that strategic support and policy development would now be provided through AVEC, with an HR consultant being brought in to work on discrete pieces of work as required to support the HR Officer.</p> <p><i>Quality Assurance Reviews</i> Trustees noted the proposed quality assurance reviews, which would be timetabled across the year for schools in order to quality assure provision. It was noted that this had been discussed in detail at the Standards Committee. Ms Osborne reported that the Standards Committee had also discussed the need for safeguarding audits for all schools, and had strongly recommended that this should be paid for through central funds. She explained that the committee had felt it was the Trust's responsibility to ensure that safeguarding was right in all schools.</p> <p>The CEO advised that generally, where schools were asked to carry out audits such as these, they would be asked to pay for it out of their own budget, as there was no allocation in the central fund. He added that he would discuss this further with the Finance Director, but if funding was to come from the central budget it would need to be taken from reserves.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that the important point was that the audits were completed in a suitable timeframe without obstacles. It was further agreed that safeguarding was central to all schools and the Trust. Ms Humpleby reported that audits for secondary schools had been booked in for the autumn term, and she had asked the company undertaking the reviews to provide availability for primary audits as well.</p> <p>Ms Buckton advised that North Yorkshire schools were already required to complete a robust safeguarding audit through the LA every two years, and questioned whether this would be replaced by the audit commissioned through the Trust. Trustees noted that the key issue was ensuring consistency of practice across all schools.</p> <p><i>[Helen Dowds joined the meeting at 5.45pm]</i></p> <p><i>Leadership Recruitment</i> Trustees asked to what extent the information on leadership was in the public domain, and what plans were in place to ensure that the local community around Vale of York were suitably assured about the proposed changes. The CEO advised that the Trust were mindful of potential</p>	BC / SBS

concerns about changes to leadership at Vale of York, and the questions which would be raised. He advised that the LGC Chair had drafted a letter to go out to all parents regarding this, and staff had been kept informed of the changes as well. He added that the Trust had also discussed the rationale for the changes with the LA, and they were supportive.

9.2 Scarborough Update

The CEO provided a summary of the Scarborough support work over the last year. He highlighted the key “red lines” which had been set out by the Board of Trustees, and provided an update on progress made against these.

i) Joint Governance Arrangements

The CEO advised that an Interim Executive Board (IEB) was now in place across both schools, and he and Ms Dowds (Strategic Lead) were both members. He advised that there were currently two key North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) officers on the board, though this was likely to change post-conversion. It was noted that the current chair, Malcolm Dawson, was a paid consultant. The CEO advised that he would recommend that he continued in this position post-conversion on an interim basis, to provide consistency and effectiveness.

ii) Providing additional funds for developing the school improvement arm of the Trust

It was noted that the MIDIF grant of £366k was being utilised to develop the school improvement team for the Trust. The CEO advised that this funding was provided for one year, and had a number of conditions attached to it, including an analysis of an integrated curriculum financial plan. This funding had also enabled the appointment of a Director for Welfare, who had been appointed the previous week and would start in January 2019. The CEO reported that funding had also been received from the Opportunity Board. He advised that although this was not as high as had been anticipated, it had been used to commission the appointment of a Science Lead and other developments which would increase aspiration across the region.

It was noted that this funding was non-recurring, though this was always a risk with government grants. The CEO advised that the development of the school improvement team had also benefited other secondary schools in the Trust, particularly Vale of York and Barlby, in terms of the support from the subject directors and School Improvement Lead.

iii) Funding for improvement of the building stock of the two schools

Trustees noted that the original conditions survey had identified a significant number of issues for both Scarborough schools, which was a considerable financial risk without additional funding to deal with these. The CEO advised that The Graham School had two sites, though on conversion, the Trust would only take on one of these. He further advised that a £2m new build had been signed off for the school, and NYCC had worked to ensure that the funding would be provided for this. The CEO advised that work on this development had already begun.

The COO reported that a significant amount of work had been done over the past year applying for funding from local and central government to support the work which had been identified through the condition survey. She advised that the Trust were now working with the DfE directly to put in an emergency grant application to the Minister for Education.

[Philippa Gowland joined the meeting at 6.00pm]

The COO reported that this grant would be in the region of £3.5m. She advised that the indication was that it would be provided to the Trust for them to decide where the priorities lay, and would not be split evenly between the two sites. The COO advised that the Trust were currently awaiting a formal offer of this grant, though this was expected imminently. The CEO advised that there was no guarantee that any further funding would be provided beyond this grant.

The COO advised that the expected £3.5m grant would not cover the cost of all of the work which needed doing across both schools, and this would need to be prioritised according to the highest level of need. **Trustees noted that until there was a formal guarantee that the Trust would receive this money, the agreement to convert could not go ahead.**

Trustees asked whether there were any liabilities arising from the condition survey which would not be covered by the grant. The COO advised that the Trust would take the high-risk issues and deal with these first. In response to a question about whether there was enough in the grant to cover these, the COO advised that she believed that there would be, though the cost of work had not yet been confirmed and this also remained a risk. She highlighted that both schools had asbestos buildings, one of which was a significant concern. The COO advised that the risk could be reduced with this initial funding, though not eliminated.

Trustees raised a concern regarding the fact that any future grants were not guaranteed. The Finance Director advised that the trigger for automatic capital funding each year would be reached in terms of pupil numbers if the Scarborough schools joined the Trust. He advised that this would provide around £250k per year for the Trust to invest in capital projects. In addition, the Finance Director advised that the Scarborough schools would bring in around £300k-400k through the 5% toplice. Trustees noted that the capital funding would be for all schools in the Trust, not just those in Scarborough.

The CEO advised that the Trust could also expect a significant level of reserves from the two Scarborough schools on conversion, which was also critical. He further advised, however, that this had not been confirmed as changes to legislation gave Local Authorities the ability to retain the reserves of schools converting to academy status. The Finance Director advised that this legislation had not been invoked since it was brought in, but it could be. **Trustees agreed that the reserves for both schools would also be a red line to the conversion process, and this could not go ahead if it was not transferred.** The CEO noted that having this a red line from Trustees would support his position with the DfE in negotiations.

The Chair asked Trustees if they were happy to proceed with the conversion process on the basis of the £3.5m government grant and reserves being received.

Trustees agreed that ethically, it was the right thing to do to take the Scarborough schools into the Trust, in terms of improving the education and development of the students. However, it was also agreed that the existing students and schools within the Trust needed to be taken into account when considering the financial risks involved.

It was noted that if the Scarborough schools joined the Trust, this would mean that the pupil number threshold to automatically trigger capital funding which would benefit all schools would be reached. In addition, it was noted that the funding to develop the school improvement team had also benefited the other schools, not just those in Scarborough, and the toplice which would be brought in from the Scarborough schools would also contribute to further development for the Trust.

Trustees asked again whether there was certainty that there would be enough in the £3.5m grant to cover everything that was a high risk. It was agreed that if this could be confirmed, it would provide assurance to mitigate the risk.

The COO advised that she felt the grant would cover the cost of addressing the high priorities on both sites, and with good management other risks could be reduced significantly.

[Olivia Seymour joined the meeting at 6.35pm]

Following significant discussion, Trustees agreed that they were happy to proceed with the conversion process, subject to the confirmation of the £3.5m grant and guarantee of the transfer of reserves from both schools. It was also agreed that it needed to be made clear to the central and local authorities that the limited resources provided would only allow the Trust to address high priority issues, and any further development would not be possible without income from future grants.

iv) Support by the North Yorkshire LA for the improvement of behaviour in the two schools and the development of alternative provisions for those for whom main stream provision is very difficult

The CEO advised that behaviour in both schools was a significant concern, and had been identified as a key area for development. He advised that NYCC had stated that they were unhappy with the current level of exclusions in the school, whilst the Trust argued that in order to ensure quality of teaching and learning, there was a clear need to manage behaviour.

The CEO advised that there was significant pressure on both school leadership teams at this point, and he strongly recommended the Trust's need to support them in their approach to behaviour management.

Trustees asked what was required that was not already in place, in terms of support. The CEO advised that he felt a clear indication was needed from Trustees that the conversion to bring both schools into the Trust would happen as soon as possible, ideally on 1st January 2019. He noted, however, that this date may need to be pushed back so that both schools converted at the same time.

It was noted that the initial position when support work began last year, was that the Trust would work with the relevant authorities to put in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) for excluded students. However, NYCC had in fact reduced the size of the PRU provision in the area. The CEO advised that it was not the intention of the Trust to work against the LA in this situation, but he emphasised the need to improve behaviour in the classroom. Trustees agreed the need to have solutions for the young people in the schools, but also the need to enforce clear behaviour expectations. This would also provide support to staff to improve morale.

Trustees asked whether there was a cost implication to exclusions currently. Ms Dowds advised that this was currently the AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit) funding. She emphasised the importance of enhancing the provision available for students excluded from school, and advised that the Trust were in discussions with a provider in Hull who were keen to run a programme in Scarborough which may support this.

Trustees unanimously approved the proposal to move as quickly as possible towards conversion of the two Scarborough schools to join the Trust.

9.3 Development of Primary Strategy

Following on from the recent Strategy and Vision Evening, it was noted that agreement had been reached that the Trust should continue their work with the primary schools and that an increased commitment was needed to developing these further.

The CEO advised that he would like Trustees' approval to commission an external expert, with experience of a mixed-phase Trust, to undertake a review and make recommendations. In addition, he requested permission to bring in an expert from the NGA to conduct a review of governance, and to help create a structure for the Trust moving forward.

The CEO advised that he expected these reviews to take place during the autumn term, with a

	<p>report being brought to Trustees by January 2019 at the latest. He advised that this would allow further discussion and strategic decisions to be made for implementation in September 2019. It was noted that these reviews would be commissioned from central funds.</p> <p>Trustees approved the proposal unanimously. The CEO agreed to look at availability of colleagues to undertake the reviews, and to draft terms of reference. He agreed to forward these draft terms of reference to all Trustees for feedback by Friday 9th November.</p> <p><i>[Wendy Munro, Katherine Humpleby and Helen Dowds left the meeting at 7.00pm]</i></p>	BC
5.	<u>Committee Updates</u>	
	<p>5.1 Resources Committee Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 1st October, which had been previously distributed.</p>	
	<p>5.2 Standards Committee Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 8th October, which had been previously distributed.</p>	
	<p>5.3 Church Schools Scrutiny Committee There was no meeting to report.</p>	
	<p>5.4 Chairs' Committee (15th October 2018) The CEO reported that a discussion had taken place about the levels of delegation in place for LGCs, and whether this was appropriate. He advised that there had been a divergence of opinion on this matter amongst LGC chairs. It was noted that further discussion about the role of the LGC and how this would change as the Trust expanded, would be partly addressed through the proposed governance review.</p>	
	<p>5.5 Headteacher/Principal Updates There were no updates to report</p>	
	<p>5.6 Committee Terms of Reference Previously distributed. Trustees approved the terms of reference for the Standards and Resources Committees, which had been reviewed by each committee.</p>	
	<p>5.7 CEO Performance Management Group Membership The Chair advised that two Trustees were required to join the CEO Performance Management Group. He advised that he would provide an update on membership when he had received confirmation from Trustees about joining this group.</p>	TM
6.	<p><u>Updates to Model Funding Agreement</u> Previously distributed. Trustees approved the updated Model Funding Agreement (March 2018) from the DfE and noted the summary of changes to the previous agreement.</p> <p><i>[Simon Bryan-Smith left the meeting at 7.05pm]</i></p>	
7.	<p><u>Updates from Local Governing Committees</u> All LGC minutes had been circulated with the agenda for information.</p>	
	<p>7.1 Nominations for LGC Chairs LGC Chair nominations had been previously distributed. The Chair advised that all but one of the nominations were for re-appointment. He reported that he and the CEO had met with the nominated Chair for Poppleton Ousebank Primary Academy, as this was a new appointment. The</p>	

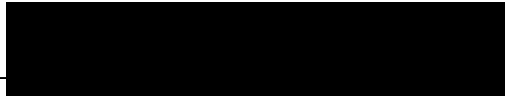
	<p>Chair advised that this had been a constructive meeting setting out expectations of accountability and challenge in the role of Chair, and he was happy to support the appointment.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that in future, it would be helpful to have a pen portrait and short statement from all nominees, not just new appointments, to support the decision making process. The Governance Advisor agreed to ensure this was in place for the following year.</p> <p>It was also agreed that an induction pack for new Trustees and governors would be helpful, including information about the governance structure and membership of LGCs. The Governance Advisor agreed to look at the development of this with the Trust's Executive Assistant. It was noted that the Governance Handbook was currently being updated by ThreeFour, and could be used as the basis for this information.</p> <p>Trustees approved the LGC Chair nominations as follows: Baldersby St James CE Primary Academy – Alex Little Barlby High School – Paul Cannovan Burton Green Primary Academy – Steve Cooke Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary Academy – Sue van Hout Manor CE Academy – Andrew Richardson Poppleton Ousebank Primary Academy – Amanda Bowers Vale of York Academy – John Kesterton</p>	<p>JS</p> <p>JS / JR</p>
	<p>7.2 Items Raised by LGCs for the attention of the Board of Trustees Previously distributed. It was agreed that the issues raised related to communication between the Board of Trustees and LGCs. Trustees agreed that more clarity was needed on the reporting mechanism and structure for questions raised on both sides and how these should be responded to.</p> <p>It was noted that LGC agendas all included an item on HLT Updates. The Governance Advisor explained that an update from the Central Team was requested before each round of LGC meetings, though this had not been available in advance for some of the LGC meetings in September. Trustees suggested that this would also be the right place to include any issues raised by the Board for the attention of the LGCs.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that there was still an issue of communication, and there needed to be more recognition by the Board of challenges raised by governors. It was agreed that this should be addressed as part of the wider governance review, in order to develop a clear structure for communication, challenge and response.</p> <p>With reference to the items raised for this meeting, the CEO agreed to address the issues from Forest of Galtres and respond to the chair of governors directly.</p> <p>With reference to the issue raised by Burton Green, the Chair advised that he had sent a response to the chair of governors to address this.</p>	
	<p>7.3 LGC Membership Updates (including proposals for governor appointments) Previously distributed. Trustees approved the re-appointment of Joan Lock at Burton Green Primary Academy.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Diocesan Update</u> Trustees noted the update from the Diocese, which had been previously distributed for information.</p>	

10.	<p><u>Correspondence from Central Government</u></p> <p>Trustees noted the contents of the letter from Eileen Milner, Chief Executive of the ESFA, which had been circulated to all academy trust accounting officers in September 2018.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Safeguarding (standing item)</u></p> <p>It was noted that the Standards Committee had discussed the need for all Trustees to complete the basic online safeguarding training, which was also a requirement of governors. The Governance Advisor agreed to circulate a link to this training.</p> <p>A question was raised regarding templates used to raise any significant safeguarding issues in an appropriate way. It was agreed that clarity around the expectations of reporting should be taken to the Standards Committee for further discussion.</p>	<p>JS</p> <p>Standards Cttee</p>
12.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p><u>12.1 Admissions Policies</u></p> <p>Draft admissions policies for all schools except Barlby High School had been circulated for information. It was noted that these policies related to the 2020/21 intake, and were currently in a consultation period until 7th December. The policies would be brought back for final approval to the next Board meeting on 19th December.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the Trust was the admissions authority for all its schools. However, the Trust had chosen to continue to work through the LA in which the schools were based to support admissions arrangements. It was noted that Manor, as a former VA school, had a policy unique to the school, which had been developed in consultation with the Diocese.</p> <p>It was noted that the draft policies would also be discussed by LGCs at their November meetings. Trustees discussed what level of expectation was required from LGCs in terms of reviewing the policies. It was agreed that this would need to include assurance that the proposed intake numbers were correct and viable.</p> <p>It was noted that Barlby High School were proposing to amend their admissions policy to include places for children of staff within the allocation criteria. Trustees recognised that any changes to admissions policies would be a decision for the Board, not for the individual school. In addition, it was proposed that if such a change was to be made, this should be consistent across all of the Trust's schools.</p> <p><i>[Andrew Simpkin left the meeting at 7.40pm]</i></p> <p>A question was raised as to whether it was possible to have a reference to other Trust schools within each of the policies, to provide more of a uniform approach. It was agreed that there should be a core element which would sit across all schools, with procedures beneath this specific to individual settings.</p> <p>The CEO agreed to look at developing a sense of commonality across the admissions policies, in response to concerns raised by Trustees.</p> <p><i>[Allyson Buckton and Simon Barber left the meeting at 7.50pm]</i></p>	<p>BC</p>
13.	<p><u>Confidentiality</u></p> <p>The confidential minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on 19th September 2018 were</p>	

	agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.	
14.	<p><u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>Wednesday 19th December 2018, 5.30pm (Annual Report and Accounts)</p> <p>Wednesday 16th January 2019, 5.00pm (AGM – Trustees invited to attend)</p> <p>Wednesday 13th March 2019, 5.30pm</p> <p>Wednesday 22nd May 2019, 5.30pm</p> <p>Wednesday 17th July 2019, 5.30pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.55pm

Signed:



Tony Myers (Chair of the Trust Board)

Date: 19/12/18

Action Points from the Hope Learning Trust Board meeting held on 24th October 2018

	<i>ACTION</i>	<i>AGENDA ITEM</i>	<i>WHO</i>	<i>WHEN</i>
1.	Work with Olivia Seymour on the best way to display SIAMS SEF reporting within School on a Page	4(2)	Katherine Humpleby	19/12/18
2.	Look at potential to fund school safeguarding audits from central budget	9	Brian Crosby / Simon Bryan-Smith	19/12/18
3.	Arrange external reviews for primaries and governance and circulate draft terms of reference to all Trustees	9	Brian Crosby	09/11/18
4.	Update on CEO Performance Management Group membership when confirmed	5.7	Tony Myers	19/12/18
5.	Include pen portrait/summary for all LGC Chair nominations with proposals	7.1	Jess Swarbrick	Sept 2019
6.	Develop induction pack for new governors/trustees	7.1	Jess Swarbrick / Jerri Ryder	Spring 2019
7.	Circulate safeguarding training link to all Trustees	11	Jess Swarbrick	ASAP
8.	Discussion on templates for safeguarding reporting	11	Standards Cttee	Dec 2018
9.	Look at potential to develop commonality across admissions policies	12.1	Brian Crosby	01/12/18

Items for the next agenda:

- * Admissions Policy Approval (2020/21)
- * Final Accounts and Annual Report
- * Governance and Primary Strategy Review Reports