

Hope Learning Trust Board of Trustees

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th January 2020 at 5.30pm
at Vale of York Academy

Present: Tony Myers (Chair of Trustees) David Judson
 Philippa Gowland Ian Thomson
 John Kesterton Andrew Simpkin
 Olivia Seymour Julie McGonigle
 Dee Cooley

In Attendance: Brian Crosby (CEO, Hope Learning Trust)
 Wendy Munro (COO, Hope Learning Trust)
 Simon Bryan-Smith (Finance Director, Hope Learning Trust)
 Allyson Buckton (Headteacher, Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary) [to 7pm]
 Helen Dowds (Executive Principal, George Pindar and Graham Schools) [to 7pm]
 Jess Swarbrick (Governance Advisor & Clerk)

		Action
1.	<u>Welcome & Opening Prayer</u> The meeting opened with a prayer, led by Ian Thomson.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies were received, with consent, from Karen Osborne. Andrew Simpkin declared an interest in item 10 relating to discussion and decision on capital spending for the Scarborough schools due to his employment at Portakabin. Philippa Gowland declared a potential interest in relation to discussions regarding negotiations about land for Manor's expansion (item 6, CEO Report) due to her employment at City of York Council (CYC).	
3.	<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2019, 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. With reference to the Action Plan: 1. Update Oversight Report to Members with noted amendments Completed. 2. Amendment to SIAMS self-evaluation judgement questions in HDPD terms of reference Completed. 3. Circulate details of 6 th January training day to all Trustees Completed.	
4.	<u>Committee Updates</u>	
	<u>4.1 Resources Committee</u> Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 25 th November 2019, which had been previously distributed for information.	
	<u>4.2 Standards Committee</u> Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 16 th December 2019, which had been previously distributed for information.	

	<p>The CEO reported that he would be working with the Governance Advisor and School Improvement Leads to review the structure of reporting to the Standards Committee, in order to ensure this was concise and focused. He noted that there had been some frustrations about the volume of information being presented at the last meeting. It was further noted that a review of the number of officers attending Standards Committee meetings would also be useful. If officers came only to certain meetings to present specific reports, rather than being expected to attend every meeting, it was agreed that this would be a more effective use of time and resources.</p>	
	<p>4.3 Hope Distinctiveness and Personal Development Committee Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 2nd December 2019, which had been previously distributed for information.</p> <p>Philippa Gowland reported that the meeting had focused on Baldersby St James, with Allyson Buckton attending to provide an update to Trustees on the school. Trustees had scrutinised the Church School Oversight Report, based on a template produced by the Diocese of York. Both Philippa and Allyson agreed that this was a useful document to support discussion, and helped to focus on key aspects for monitoring and scrutiny.</p> <p>Philippa highlighted the continued issue for the committee of lack of Trustee members. The CEO noted that he and the Chair were hoping to meet with a potential new Trustee who would join this committee. It was noted that Philippa was currently acting as chair for the committee, but had not been formally appointed. Following a discussion, Philippa agreed to formally take on the role of committee chair.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees agreed to appoint Philippa Gowland as Chair of the Hope Distinctiveness and Personal Development Committee and expressed their gratitude to Philippa for stepping into this position.</p>	
	<p>4.4 Chairs' Committee There was no meeting to report.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Updates from Local Governing Committees</u></p>	
	<p>5.1 LGC Membership Update (to include proposals for appointment/re-appointment) Information on proposed governor appointments and re-appointments had been previously distributed.</p> <p>Skelton Primary School – Christopher Linfoot (re-appointment)</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the re-appointment of Christopher Linfoot for a four year term.</p>	
	<p>5.2 LGC Minutes – RAG rated highlights Trustees noted the RAG rated highlights from LGCs, which had been previously distributed. It was agreed that whilst the process was improving, there was still work to be done to move towards ensuring LGCs were clear on the key strategic issues to highlight to the Board, as some points raised were still on an operational level. It was noted that there were also still inconsistencies in the level of ratings according to each school. Trustees agreed that there was still a need for governor training and development on their understanding of the assurance model.</p> <p>The CEO advised that he would be reviewing this with the Governance Advisor, as part of the wider piece of work around reporting to Trustees noted in the Standards Committee update.</p> <p>AGREED: Trustees discussed how issues raised should be tracked throughout the year. It was agreed that any issues highlighted as red or amber should remain on the RAG rating for the next meeting, with an additional column to show when or whether this had been resolved.</p>	

	<p>ACTION: The Governance Advisor agreed to communicate this requirement to the LGCs for their next meetings.</p>	<p>JS</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>CEO Report</u> The CEO invited questions and comments on his report, which had been previously distributed.</p> <p><i>Trust-wide Training Day – Monday 6th January 2020</i> It was noted that the day had been very positively received, with secondary, primary and support staff all attending trust-wide training sessions. Five Trustees had attended the session, and the CEO noted that this had been very much appreciated by staff.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees expressed their thanks to Katherine Humpleby, Shan Brough-Jones and the Central Team for their work in organising the training day.</p> <p><i>Primary Provision</i> <i>Skelton</i> Trustees noted from the CEO’s report that Ash Atherton, Headteacher at Burton Green would have authority over Skelton Primary as well from January 2020, line managing the Head of School. He noted that staff at Skelton had been positive about the development, and Ash had been tasked with bringing about rapid transformation to the school environment. It was noted that leadership cover for Burton Green when Ash was out of school, was being provided through York Schools and Academy Board (YSAB) funding. A former local headteacher would be providing this leadership at Burton Green for two days’ per week.</p> <p>CHALLENGE: Trustees asked how staff at Burton Green had responded. The CEO advised that some staff were nervous about the Headteacher being out of school for two days per week, particularly as the Deputy Headteacher was currently on maternity leave. However, he assured Trustees that the situation was being carefully monitored, to ensure that the improvement which had taken place at Burton Green was not affected by these developments.</p> <p><i>Baldersby St James</i> The CEO and Trustees formally noted their thanks to Allyson Buckton and Steff Brown for the continued support and work with Baldersby St James.</p> <p>The CEO advised that there were currently five governors on the LGC, rather than two as he had originally believed at the time of writing his report. However, there were concerns about the effectiveness of governance at the school. He therefore asked Trustees to approve a proposal to appoint an experienced governor from elsewhere in the Trust as interim chair to support the LGC. He advised that he would be approaching Sue van Hout, Chair of Forest of Galtres LGC in the first instance, to ask if she would be willing to take on this role for the rest of the academic year.</p> <p>APPROVED: Trustees approved the need to appoint an interim effective Chair for Baldersby St James LGC, noting in principle their approval of Sue van Hout taking on this role. It was noted, however, that this appointment would be subject to Sue’s agreement on the matter, following a discussion with the CEO.</p> <p><i>Secondary Provision</i> With reference to the proposed expansion at Manor, the CEO confirmed that his report should read an increase to 250 per year group by 2022. He also clarified that there were two planned phases, with the first needing to be completed and ready to open in September 2021, and the second planned by 2024. The COO noted that phase two was still provisional at this point.</p> <p>The CEO reported that he, the COO and Ian Thomson in his role as Resources Committee Chair, had met with North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) to discuss the potential purchase of the fields to the west of the current site. He noted that the Trust would be seeking clarification as to whether the valuation provided by NYCC was based on the same criteria as that of CYC, and compared like with like. The COO noted that further negotiations and discussions were progressing on this matter.</p>	

	<p>CHALLENGE: Trustees asked whether the proposed expansion at Manor would have any impact on the balance of catchment between Manor and Vale of York.</p> <p>The CEO clarified that the proposal for expansion had been put forward by CYC as a result of major building developments around Manor, rather than to draw away any intake from other local schools.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Risk Register (standing item)</u></p> <p>The COO reported that the updated risk register would be presented to Trustees at the next Resources Committee meeting on 3rd February.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Safeguarding (standing item)</u></p> <p>There were no issues to report.</p> <p>NOTED: Dee Cooley reported that she would be meeting with Katherine Humpleby on 17th January to discuss her role as Safeguarding Trustees, and to look at priorities and mechanisms for reporting.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Policy Approval</u></p> <p>9.1 Admissions Policies 2021-22 – final approval following public consultation.</p> <p>Draft admission policies had been agreed by Trustees at their meeting on 23rd October 2019. Following a public consultation period, and with the exception of the proposals noted below for PAN reduction in Scarborough, there had been no other comments received.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the 2021-22 admissions policies for all schools in the Trust.</p> <p>9.1.1 Proposed reduction of PAN at Graham and George Pindar Schools</p> <p>A formal proposal to reduce the PAN to 210 at Graham School and 120 at George Pindar School had been agreed by Trustees at their meeting on 23rd October 2019. Following a public consultation period, objections had been received by NYCC to this proposal – copies of these objections along with a paper and recommendation by Helen Dowds, Executive Principal, had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Helen advised that there was a strong case for the proposed reduction, given that this still placed PAN above the actual numbers coming through. She further advised that PAN was subject to annual review, and the Trust would consider any need to raise PAN in the future at the next review point.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees agreed the proposed reduction of PAN set out above at the Graham and George Pindar Schools, and would continue to review this on an annual basis.</p> <p>9.2 SEND Policy</p> <p>Previously distributed. It was noted that this policy had been recommended for approval by the Standards Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the policy unanimously.</p> <p>9.3 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy</p> <p>Previously distributed. It was noted that whilst this was an overarching policy for the Trust, there was still a need for schools to take ownership of the policy at local level, contextualising where necessary for their setting.</p> <p>A discussion followed regarding both the policy and the need for clarification on the role of the Safeguarding Trustee and Safeguarding Governors. Specifically, the following issues were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to clarify an expectation that LGCs would ensure all staff signed to declare their receipt and understanding of the policy. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The potential re-ordering of some sections to ensure that key information about actions for staff to take was more prominent at the front of the policy, with descriptors following. - Specific reference to the DfE’s Keeping Children Safe in Education, which was updated on an annual basis. <p>Dee reported that she would raise these questions during her meeting with Katherine on 17th January, in looking at clarifying the monitoring responsibilities for Safeguarding Governors in each school. She noted that the detail and information within the policy was sound, but it was important as stated above for schools to contextualise this where necessary, in order to take ownership.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the policy, subject to clarification and amendments in relation to the comments noted above.</p> <p>ACTION: The COO agreed that an updated version of the policy would be circulated to Trustees for the next meeting.</p> <p>9.4 Amendments to Trust Complaints Procedure</p> <p>The COO advised that the DfE had written to the Principal at Barlby High School to highlight a number of points which were missing from the Trust’s Complaints Procedure. The DfE had indicated that this put the Trust at risk of non-compliance in relation to its funding agreement.</p> <p>The COO reported that she had reviewed the document with the Governance Advisor, and they were satisfied that the points highlighted were in fact already present in the Complaints Procedure, but were not as clear as they could be. Therefore a number of proposed amendments were tabled which would clarify these points, by using more specific terminology as set out by the DfE.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the proposed amendments unanimously.</p>	WM
10.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>10.1 Approval for Capital Works in Scarborough</p> <p>A report from the COO on DfE Capital Funding Projects in Scarborough had been previously distributed, along with tender documentation for information.</p> <p>The COO advised that funding had been received in principle from the DfE as part of the conversion agreement for the two Scarborough schools. As part of this, the DfE had scrutinised and approved the projects. However, due to the level of total expenditure, Trustee approval was required to go ahead with the work.</p> <p>CHALLENGE: A concern was raised regarding the proposed tender price, with ground risk sitting wholly with the Trust, not the contractor. Trustees proposed that no contract was awarded until the level of any contingency funding needed to address potential issues was clarified. The COO confirmed that the contract would not be placed until confirmation had been received about potential areas of risk. She added that there was a contingency fund in place, and the DfE had confirmed the Trust could reallocate this to support these capital projects if necessary. She advised that in this capacity, any risk was presently contained within the existing funding.</p> <p>CHALLENGE: Trustees asked what level of flexibility was available to increase contingency if the risk went above what was currently in place. The COO advised that if the risk reached a level outside of existing available funding, this would be brought back to Trustees.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the proposed expenditure based on the recommendation from the COO, subject to the contract award including the risk items as contractor not Trust items.</p>	

	<p>10.3 Trustee / Member Visits to Schools</p> <p>In response to a question from Trustees, the CEO confirmed that the Trust would be organising a number of Trustee/Member visits to school in the spring term. He advised that Liz Andrews-Wilson, Executive Assistant, would be circulating potential dates to Trustees very soon.</p> <p><i>[Helen Dowds and Allyson Buckton left the meeting at 7.00pm]</i></p>	
11.	<p><u>Items / Actions to be reported to Local Governing Committees</u></p> <p>* Trustees discussed the RAG rating reporting mechanism from LGC minutes. It was agreed that this was developing well, though more training would be helpful on the purpose of the assurance model. It was also agreed that an additional column should be added to future reports, to provide updates on action taken on key points raised, and whether these were ongoing or closed off.</p> <p>* Trustees received a report from the CEO on developments to support leadership capacity across the Trust. It was noted that the Headteacher at Burton Green was working to support Skelton Primary for two days per week from January 2020.</p> <p>* Trustees approved the final admissions policies for 2021/22, including the proposals to reduce PAN in the George Pindar and Graham Schools. It was noted that PAN was subject to annual review.</p> <p>* Trustees also approved the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy for the Trust. It was agreed, however, that further changes and clarifications were needed on the policy, and the Safeguarding Trustee agreed to raise these in her next meeting with the Secondary School Improvement Lead.</p> <p>* Trustees approved a number of minor amendments to the Trust Complaints Procedure.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Confidential Items</u></p>	
	<p>12.1 Confidential minutes from the meeting held on 11th December 2019</p> <p>Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.</p> <p>All actions had been completed.</p>	
	<p>12.2 Primary Strategy</p> <p><i>This item has been recorded as a separate, confidential minute.</i></p>	
	<p>12.3 Report on CEO Performance Management Review</p> <p>The Chair reported that the CEO Performance Management Group had met to review targets from the previous year, and had agreed targets for 2019/20.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>Wednesday 11th March 2020 at 5.30pm Wednesday 20th May 2020 at 5.30pm Wednesday 15th July 2020 at 5.30pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed: Tony Myers Date: 11/03/2020
Tony Myers (Chair of the Trust Board)

Action Points from the Hope Learning Trust Board meeting held on 15th January 2020

	<i>ACTION</i>	<i>AGENDA ITEM</i>	<i>WHO</i>	<i>WHEN</i>
1.	<i>Advise LGCs on requested changes to RAG rating highlights – to include an update column</i>	5.2	<i>Jess Swarbrick</i>	<i>ASAP</i>
2.	<i>Circulate updated Safeguarding Policy to Trustees for next meeting</i>	9.3	<i>Wendy Munro</i>	<i>04/03/20</i>

Items for the next agenda:

- * Report on Pupil Premium project
- * Update Safeguarding Policy

Items for future agendas:

- * Update on training for LGCs on assurance model, roles and responsibilities (May 2020)
- * Self-Review template for LGCs
- * Skills Audit
- * Trust Board Self-Review (July 2020)