

**Hope Learning Trust Board of Trustees**

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 5.30pm  
at Vale of York Academy

**Present:** Tony Myers (Chair of Trustees) David Judson  
 Philippa Gowland [from 5.43pm] Ian Thomson  
 John Kesterton [from 5.40pm] Andrew Simpkin  
 Olivia Seymour Julie McGonigle  
 Karen Osborne [to 8.21pm]

**In Attendance:** Brian Crosby (CEO, Hope Learning Trust)  
 Wendy Munro (COO, Hope Learning Trust) [to 7.30pm]  
 Simon Bryan-Smith (Finance Director, Hope Learning Trust)  
 Allyson Buckton (Headteacher, Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary) [to 6.42pm]  
 Helen Dowds (Executive Principal, George Pindar and Graham Schools) [to 6.42pm]  
 Jess Swarbrick (Governance Advisor & Clerk)

		Action
1.	<b><u>Welcome &amp; Opening Prayer</u></b> The meeting opened with a prayer, led by Ian Thomson.	
2.	<b><u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u></b> Apologies were received, with consent, from Dee Cooley. Late apologies were also received, with consent, from John Kesterton.  There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<b><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020, Action Plan and Matters Arising</u></b> 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. Advise LGCs on requested changes to RAG rating highlights – to include an update column Completed.  2. Circulate updated Safeguarding Policy to Trustees for next meeting The COO advised that there had been a delay in the updates to the safeguarding policy, due to the Director of Behaviour being seconded to The Graham School as Vice Principal. It was agreed that the policy should be reviewed by the Distinctiveness Committee (HDPD) at their next meeting on 27 <sup>th</sup> April before being brought to the Full Board for approval in May. The COO confirmed that all schools in the Trust had existing safeguarding policies in place.  There were no other matters arising.	
4.	<b><u>Committee Updates</u></b>	
	<b><u>4.1 Resources Committee</u></b> Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2020, which had been previously distributed for information.	
	<b><u>4.2 Standards Committee</u></b> Trustees noted the minutes from the meeting held on 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020, which had been previously distributed for information.	

	<p>Trustees noted the budgetary constraints at Barlby High School which meant that they were unable to buy into the PIXL software used by all other secondary schools in the Trust. Trustees further noted that this issue had been raised a number of months previously, with a request from the Standards Committee for a business case to be submitted to Resources for the cost to be covered from the central budget.</p> <p><i>[John Kesterton joined the meeting at 5.40pm]</i></p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u> The CEO agreed to discuss the submission of a business case for covering the cost of PIXL for Barlby High School from the central budget. Trustees requested that this be reported back and implemented before the next meeting.</b></p> <p>With reference to the minutes, Trustees noted that it had been reported that attendance at George Pindar School had improved, though this was not what had been discussed during a Trustee visit to the school the previous week. Helen Dowds confirmed that attendance at George Pindar School remained a significant issue and was still well below national average. She added, however, that attendance in Year 11 had improved.</p> <p><i>[Philippa Gowland joined the meeting at 5.43pm]</i></p> <p>A question was raised regarding the Vale of York report, specifically relating to the current Year 11 being the first cohort to complete a three year Key Stage 4 (KS4). Trustees noted that in the recent due diligence exercise for Project East, the three year KS4 was highlighted as a potential risk and asked for clarification on the Trust’s position.</p> <p>The CEO advised that the secondary curriculum review had discussed this issue, and had felt there was a strong argument to continue with a three year KS4 across all of the Trust’s secondary schools. He further advised, however, that it was recognised that there needed to be clear justification for this decision to demonstrate in the event of an inspection. This needed to be articulated and understood by all staff, not just senior leadership.</p> <p><b><u>AGREED:</u> It was agreed that the Standards Committee should discuss the rationale and narrative for this decision to ensure that they were assured it was as robust as possible. Helen Dowds advised that she would be able to feed back to the committee on this matter following the next stage of the curriculum review.</b></p>	BC
	<p><b><i>4.3 Hope Distinctiveness and Personal Development Committee</i></b></p> <p>Philippa Gowland provided a verbal update from the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020. It was noted that draft minutes from the meeting would be circulated to all Trustees as soon as they were finalised.</p> <p>Philippa reported that the committee had reviewed the church school overview reports, and had been encouraged by the strengths and positive practice being reported. Trustees had discussed continued concerns regarding Baldersby St James, and the need to further strengthen governance in the school, particularly as it was within the SIAMS inspection window. It was noted that these concerns would feed into discussions later in the meeting regarding development of the primary strategy.</p> <p>Philippa reported that Trustees had raised a number of questions for clarification for governors to consider before the next meeting in terms of strategies and their impact.</p> <p>The committee had also discussed the first draft of a report template for monitoring of personal development and wellbeing. The CEO had agreed to work on this with school leaders and bring back for further review to the next meeting. Philippa advised that Trustees wanted to ensure that</p>	

	<p>LGCs were clear on the extended remit of the committee, and she would be working with the Governance Advisor to produce a paper outlining this to be sent to all governors.</p> <p>Philippa reported that the committee had also discussed wellbeing and mental health for students, particularly relating to challenges at Manor with students in Year 11. Trustees had requested a review of this issue across the Trust, to try and identify any patterns and to consider what support could be put in place to address this.</p> <p>Finally, Philippa reported that Trustees had agreed the importance of capturing and celebrating positive news and practice in the Trust's schools, and the value of school newsletters in promoting this. Trustees had asked that copies of all school newsletters be circulated to Trustees for information.</p>	
	<p><b>4.4 Chairs' Committee</b> A verbal update was provided from the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p>The CEO reported that the primary review had been discussed, with some concern being raised by LGC Chairs regarding the changing of governance structures and sharing of resources. He noted that there had not been any significant objection to the proposals, though the workload and capacity of those in volunteer positions had been raised.</p> <p>It was noted that the Trust Board and Standards Committee Chairs had also attended this meeting. Karen Osborne noted the engagement from the LGC Chairs, and suggested that it would be beneficial to hold more regular meetings of this sort, with Trustee attendance, in order to promote and encourage communication and engagement.</p> <p>Karen further reported that from the meeting it was clear that there was still a lack of understanding of the assurance model. She advised that more work was needed to support governors in the purpose and benefits of this.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u> It was agreed that the Standards, Resources and Trust Board Chairs should discuss ways of developing governor understanding of the assurance model and move this forward.</b></p>	<p>KO, IT, TM</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b><u>Updates from Local Governing Committees</u></b></p>	
	<p><b>5.1 LGC Minutes – RAG rated highlights</b> Trustees noted the RAG rated highlights from LGCs, which had been previously distributed.</p> <p><b>Barlby High School</b> Trustees noted the governors' report that the school was currently in the Ofsted window, and discussed ways in which the Board could support this.</p> <p>Trustees proposed that Barlby be considered as a priority at the next Standards Committee meeting (relating to rationale around the three year KS4 discussed earlier in the meeting), and also the next HDPD Committee meeting. The constraints on the budget that the school was experiencing were noted again. Trustees agreed that if any support could be provided from the central budget for Barlby, which could alleviate the financial pressure and allow the Principal to continue to focus on raising standards, then this should be done. The CEO advised that he did not believe there were any significant concerns about Barlby. However, Trustees recognised that if governors had rated this as RED then this was a concern which would need to be investigated to see where more support could be provided.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u> The CEO agreed to flag up the concerns of governors and the offer of support, and to report back via email on key issues which Trustees should be aware of relating to Barlby.</b></p>	<p>BC</p>

	<p><b>George Pindar/Graham Schools</b> Helen Dowds noted that due to the timing of both LGC and Board meetings, the draft minutes from the last Scarborough LGC meeting had been circulated to Trustees, which differed significantly from the final version. She noted, in particular, that a number of other points had been highlighted on the RAG rating in the final minutes which were not in the draft.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u> The Governance Advisor agreed to circulate the final version of the Scarborough LGC minutes to Trustees for information.</b></p> <p><b>Burton Green Primary</b> Trustees noted governors’ anticipation that the school would move from five to six classes in September. A question was raised about ensuring there was enough pupil demand for this to be able to happen.</p> <p><b>Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary</b> With reference to the outstanding debt from Stillington Primary for Headteacher support, Trustees requested that the Finance Director investigate and resolve this.</p>	JS
	<p><b>5.2 LGC Membership Update (to include proposals for appointment/re-appointment)</b> Information on proposed governor appointments and re-appointments had been previously distributed.</p> <p><b>Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary School</b> – Campbell Robertson (new appointment) <b>Burton Green Primary School</b> – Susan Faulds (new appointment) <b>Graham School / George Pindar School</b> - Mandy Gething (new appointment)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the above proposals unanimously.</b></p> <p>Trustees also noted the following governor appointments:</p> <p><b>Manor CE Academy</b> – Richard Nihil (new parent appointment)</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Trust Development Plan Update</u></b> The CEO reported that there were no significant issues to report, and good progress was being made on all identified areas on the development plan. He advised that the plan had also been reviewed at the Chairs’ Committee meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> February.</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>CEO Report</u></b> Trustees noted the CEO’s report, which had been previously distributed. Comments and questions were invited.</p> <p>Trustees noted the report regarding issues of recruitment and retention around the Vice Principal position at The Graham School. It was noted that the Trust Director of Behaviour and Welfare was currently seconded to this role, and was making a significant impact in the school. It was noted that for this level of leadership, Trustees would be involved in the recruitment process.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the importance of ensuring a robust selection process moving forward. Whilst recognising the challenges in recruitment to the area, it was agreed that there had to be a clear benchmark of expectations, with both external and internal appointments.</p> <p>Trustees noted the reference to the press in Scarborough and Selby running negative articles about the Trust’s schools in those areas, and asked whether any action had been taken to try and mitigate this situation. The CEO advised that the Principal of Barlby High had invited the press into the school, but this offer had been declined. Helen Dowds also reported that positive news</p>	

	<p>stories were being sent into the press for both of the Scarborough Schools, and she was working with the Trust's marketing partners on positive promotion.</p> <p>Commenting on the recent Trustee visit to Scarborough, concerns were raised that the Alternative Provision units in both schools were not a sustainable environment. Trustees agreed that the sooner the permanent premises were completed the better. The COO advised that work was continuing on this project as fast as possible, and she expected this to be completed and open to students in September 2020. In response to a question regarding capacity, Helen Dowds advised that ideally additional funding was needed to provide more places in the alternative provision. She advised that the Trust were waiting to hear from the Opportunities Board whether funding would be provided for an additional year for the facility.</p> <p>Trustees noted that there was a lot to celebrate within the CEO's Report, and agreed the importance of recognising this, and encouraging all staff and students within the Trust to continue their work to strive for improvement.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><b><u>Safeguarding (standing item)</u></b></p> <p>Dee Cooley, Safeguarding Trustee, was unable to attend the meeting but sent a brief update. She reported that she had visited Manor CE Academy on 6<sup>th</sup> March, and had received a good welcome from the Principal and Vice Principal for Behaviour and Welfare. She had reviewed documents including the school's safeguarding audit, policies and Prevent risk assessment, and had been assured in terms of the safeguarding measures in place.</p> <p>Dee reported that in terms of the LGC minutes, she would suggest ensuring a clear record of governor and trustee safeguarding training, and ensuring that all had read the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.</p> <p>It was noted that Katherine Humpleby, Secondary School Improvement Lead, would be organising a virtual meeting with Dee and LGC safeguarding leads in April. Dee had highlighted the need to develop a mechanism where she could receive safeguarding link governor monitoring visit notes.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p><b>9.1 Training Days for 2020/21</b> Trust-wide training days for 2020/21 had been included on the agenda, and were noted for information.</p> <p><b>9.2 Governor Capacity in Scarborough</b> The Chair highlighted a current issue with governor availability in Scarborough to review fixed term exclusions, as a significant number of panels were currently outstanding.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u> Trustees were asked to advise the Executive Assistant for the Trust of their availability to support this issue as a matter of urgency.</b></p> <p>With reference to longer time capacity on the LGC, it was noted that the LGC Chair was actively working to seek and recruit new governors.</p> <p><b>9.3 Letter from ESFA</b> The Chair reported that he had received a letter from the ESFA regarding a complaint referred to them regarding Barlby High School. He advised that he had responded to this, and was currently waiting to hear from the ESFA whether this response had been accepted.</p> <p><b>9.4 Advice on Coronavirus</b> Trustees noted the advice from Public Health England regarding COVID-19, which had been circulated for information. The Chair advised that the Trust continued to keep informed and would be acting on advice issued from Public Health England.</p>	<p>All</p>

	<p><b>9.5 Mental Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>Trustees noted that governors at Poppleton Ousebank Primary had raised the question of whether the Trust had a policy in place for mental health and wellbeing of staff. The COO agreed that this was something which needed to be developed, and she was working with North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) who provided the Occupational Health Service for the Trust. She advised that NYCC wished to define a service to go into schools for staff, and were keen to work with the Trust on the development of this.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u> It was agreed that this issue should be picked up and reviewed by the HDPD Committee.</b></p> <p><i>[Allyson Buckton and Helen Dowds left the meeting at 6.42pm]</i></p>	JS
10.	<p><b><u>Items / Actions to be reported to Local Governing Committees</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Trustees discussed the need for further work to be done on ensuring a clear understanding of the assurance model, and training and support for governors in this. The Chair of the Board, Standards Chair and Resources Chair would be looking at how to take this forward.</li> <li>* Trustees received assurance from the CEO that all key priorities on the Trust Development Plan were on track and good progress was being made.</li> <li>* A number of new governor appointments were approved for Burton Green, Forest of Galtres and George Pindar/Graham LGCs.</li> <li>* Trustees agreed the importance of recognising the many things to celebrate in terms of achievements and developments, and encouraged all staff and students within the Trust to continue their work to strive for further improvement.</li> <li>* It was noted that the Safeguarding Trustee would be meeting with all Safeguarding Link Governors.</li> </ul>	
11.	<p><b><u>Confidential Items</u></b></p>	
	<p><b><u>11.1 Confidential minutes from the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020</u></b></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><b><u>11.2 Project East</u></b></p> <p><i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate, confidential minute.</i></p>	
	<p><b><u>11.3 Primary Strategy</u></b></p> <p><i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate, confidential minute.</i></p>	
12.	<p><b><u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings</u></b></p> <p>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 5.30pm  Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 5.30pm</p>	

*The meeting closed at 8.25pm*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Tony Myers \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 \_\_\_\_\_  
Tony Myers (Chair of the Trust Board)

### Action Points from the Hope Learning Trust Board meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020

	<i>ACTION</i>	<i>AGENDA ITEM</i>	<i>WHO</i>	<i>WHEN</i>
1.	<i>Discuss production of a business case for covering the cost of PIXL for Barlby High from the central budget, and report back to Trustees on implementation of this</i>	4.2	Brian Crosby	04/04/2020
2.	<i>Standards, Resources and Trust Board Chairs should discuss ways of developing governor understanding of the assurance model and move this forward</i>	4.4	Karen Osborne, Ian Thomson, Tony Myers	31/04/2020
3.	<i>Flag up concerns of Trustees relating to support for Barlby, and report back on key issues via email before the next meeting</i>	5.1	Brian Crosby	04/04/2020
4.	<i>Circulate final Scarborough LGC minutes to Trustees</i>	5.1	Jess Swarbrick	04/04/2020
5.	<i>Advise Executive Assistant of capacity to support fixed term exclusion reviews in Scarborough</i>	9.2	All Trustees	16/03/2020
6.	<i>Include development of staff wellbeing policy on next HDPD agenda</i>	9.5	Jess Swarbrick	01/04/2020

**Items for the next agenda:**

- \* Updated Safeguarding Policy
- \* Update on training for LGCs on assurance model, roles and responsibilities (May 2020)

**Items for future agendas:**

- \* Self-Review template for LGCs
- \* Trust Board Self-Review (July 2020)