

Hope Learning Trust Board of Trustees

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4th November 2020 at 6.00pm
Via Zoom

Present: Tony Myers (Chair of Trustees) David Judson
 Philippa Gowland [from 6.05pm] Ian Thomson
 Karen Osborne [to 7.55pm] Julie McGonigle
 Olivia Seymour

In Attendance: Helen Winn (CEO, Hope Learning Trust)
 Wendy Munro (COO, Hope Learning Trust)
 Helen Dowds (Executive Principal) [to 7.00pm]
 Allyson Buckton (Headteacher, Forest of Galtres Anglican Methodist Primary Academy) [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 Ian Thomson. <i>[Philippa Gowland joined the meeting at 6.05pm]</i></p>	
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies were received, with consent, from Andrew Simpkin. The Chair reported that sadly John Kesterton had resigned from the Board of Trustees. In relation to discussions regarding City of York Council (CYC), Philippa Gowland declared an interest as a CYC employee. In relation to discussions regarding the Diocese of York, Olivia Seymour declared an interest as a Diocesan employee.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2020, Action Plan and Matters Arising</u> Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record. With reference to the Action Plan: 1. It was agreed that a letter should be sent on behalf of the Board from the Chair and CEO to Mr Dawson, thanking him for his support and services to the schools and the Trust during his time as LGC Chair in Scarborough. Completed. 2. The CEO and Chair agreed to liaise and draft a letter on behalf of the Board, highlighting the difficulties around obtaining tests and the added pressure this was putting on schools. The CEO reported that she had discussed the need to write to the DfE regarding issues around testing. However, the situation changed following the meeting and it had been decided it was not appropriate to do so. 3. Trustees agreed to delegate the detail of providing clear explanation regarding staffing expenditure at Baldersby St James to the COO and Finance Director, and subject to this approved the benchmarking document for submission to the ESFA. Completed. 4. The Governance Advisor agreed to add both Trustees to the agendas on Decision Time and forward details of meeting dates for Baldersby St James Completed.</p>	

	There were no other matters arising.	
4.	<p><u>Formal Note of decisions taken using Chair's Action</u></p> <p>The following decision was formally recorded, having been agreed by Chair's Action since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval of Annex 1 of the Safeguarding Policy 	
5.	<p><u>Committee Updates</u></p> <p>Trustees noted the minutes from committee meetings held in October 2020, which had been circulated with the agenda for information.</p> <p><u>Standards Committee (12/10/2020)</u></p> <p>Karen Osborne reported that the committee had been really pleased with the development of a more strategic approach to teaching and learning which would run through all schools as a framework, and which could be implemented from the ground up. Trustees had also been pleased with the way that the CEO was working with headteachers to develop this and get their buy-in. It was noted that this could be evidenced in the most recent minutes from a number of the Local Governing Committees (LGCs).</p> <p>In response to a question about how schools had responded to the framework, the CEO advised that overall the response had been incredibly positive. She noted that for the first half of term, the focus for all schools had been recovery, but from this point the new framework would start to be introduced. The CEO further advised that she was keen for the strategies and key principles to be shaped with feedback from headteachers, to ensure that everyone had a chance to be involved.</p> <p>Trustees were encouraged by these developments, and also the evidence through the minutes that LGCs were taking ownership for standards, asking key questions around this.</p> <p><u>Resources Committee (19/10/2020)</u></p> <p>Ian Thomson reported that the 2019/20 final outturn had been more favourable than anticipated, in part due to the COVID situation and spending which had been budgeted but had not taken place during the last financial year. He noted that accurate forecasting was important, but there were clear reasons for the variances which had occurred.</p> <p>The COO reported that following discussion at the Resources Committee meeting, the Trust's internal auditors were continuing as instructed by Trustees, and reports would be brought back to the committee as soon as possible. It was noted that this would provide the board with assurance to report back to the ESFA for the last financial year as well as the current one.</p> <p><u>Hope Distinctiveness & Personal Development Committee (21/10/20)</u></p> <p>Philippa Gowland reported that the meeting had been very productive, and it had been incredibly helpful to have the additional support and input of Trustees Julie McGonigle and Olivia Seymour on the committee.</p> <p>A detailed review and discussion had been given from the Trust's church schools, with the headteachers of Forest of Galtres and Manor attending the meeting. Trustees had been encouraged about the work which schools were doing to maintain their Christian ethos and continue with acts of worship during the wider school closure and into the autumn term.</p> <p>Philippa reported that work to develop the monitoring process for ethos and personal development across all schools had been put on hold since March due to other priorities. However, she advised that she would be meeting with the CEO to discuss how these issues could be properly monitored across the Trust both as a Board and at LGC level.</p>	

	<p>Philippa also reported that the CEO had been clear on the importance of monitoring and managing staff workload. She noted that from a wellbeing perspective, it was encouraging to be assured that this was a priority for the Trust.</p>	
	<p>5.1 Committee Terms of Reference Terms of reference had been circulated with the agenda for approval. It was noted that Resources and HDPD were unchanged, with minor amendments being made to Standards regarding clarification of membership and attendance.</p> <p>APPROVED: Trustees approved the terms of reference unanimously.</p>	
6.	<u>Updates from Local Governing Committees</u>	
	<p>6.1 Approval of Nominations for LGC Chair The following nominations had been proposed by LGCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Baldersby St James CE Primary - David Potter (new appointment) * Barlby High - Paul Cannovan (re-appointment) * Burton Green-Skelton - Judy MacDermot (re-appointment) * Forest of Galtres - Sue van Hout (re-appointment) * George Pindar-Graham - Alan Richards (approved by the Board 16/09/20) * Manor - Andy Richardson (re-appointment) * Poppleton Ousebank - John Wilkinson (new appointment) * Vale of York - Patrick Looker (re-appointment) <p>APPROVED: Trustees approved the proposed LGC Chair appointments unanimously.</p> <p>ACTION: It was agreed that the Chair should write a letter of thanks and appreciation to Mandy Bowers in recognition of her time as LGC Chair at Poppleton Ousebank Primary.</p>	TM
	<p>6.2 LGC Membership Update Information on proposed governor appointments had been previously distributed. George Pindar-Graham Schools LGC – Phil Rumsey (new appointment)</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approved the above proposals unanimously.</p> <p>Governors noted that new staff and parent governors had been elected for George Pindar-Graham Schools and Barlby High School respectively.</p>	
7.	<p><u>CEO Report</u> The CEO's report had been circulated with the agenda, along with a summary of attendance across the Trust and a breakdown of positive COVID cases by school and year group.</p> <p>Update on the Current Situation in Schools The CEO reported that the rapid adjustments to ways of working along with a constant feeling of the unknown in terms of COVID had resulted in staff across the Trust being exhausted by the end of last term, which was to be expected. She highlighted, however, that all staff in schools and across the Central Team had done a fantastic job in keeping the schools running and making things as safe as possible.</p> <p>The CEO referenced the attendance summary, noting that overall schools had done incredibly well to keep attendance as high as it had been, considerably above the current national average. She noted that staff attendance had also been excellent during this period.</p>	

The CEO advised that the announcement of a further national lockdown being made at the end of half term, had been unsettling, particularly given that schools were expected to stay open as usual. She noted that this had been hard for some staff to process, but they seemed to be coping well. The COO reported that guidance had only just been received today regarding staff who were clinically extremely vulnerable being asked to not come into school. She advised that she was working closely with headteachers and individuals in schools regarding this.

The CEO advised that there was a challenge in terms of attendance for children in a small number of families where a household member was clinically extremely vulnerable, as guidance stated that in this case the child should still attend school. She advised that whilst having a hard line on attendance was important, she proposed looking at this on an individual basis, and if there was a genuine case to be considered, then adjustments should be made to support those families.

Trustees fully supported this proposal, though noted the importance of having clear criteria or a process in place to ensure any case was managed properly.

The CEO agreed that consistency across the Trust in this matter was important. She noted that there were only a very small number of cases where this was a concern, and she advised that the plan would be to work with these families to support learning at home with a view to ultimately building confidence to ensure that children returned to school. It was agreed that regular weekly reviews would be needed in any case.

Trustees thanked the CEO for raising this issue, and agreed that the approach of working with individual families to support and build confidence was the right one.

A question was raised regarding attendance at the two Scarborough schools, with Trustees noting what appeared to be a significant uplift over the last half term and asking if there were any particular reasons for this. Helen Dowds noted that attendance was actually lower than the same scheduled period in 2018/19, though there had been an improvement since the start of term. She advised that to date that there had not been a COVID case resulting in a need for groups of students to self-isolate, which had helped attendance figures. In addition, confidence in the safety of the school environment had increased in the school community, resulting in more children returning to school as the term progressed.

ACTION: In response to a request from Trustees, the CEO agreed to provide an attendance summary with self-isolating cases taken out, in order to show the more general trend in attendance over this period.

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Trustees asked how the Trust was responding to the expectation that students learning remotely had parity of experience with those still in school.

The CEO advised that all schools had done a lot of work on remote learning, but she did not believe that any school nationally could provide a total parity between remote and classroom, even with the best online delivery. She advised that the priority was as far as possible to keep in the key cohorts of exam groups in secondary and early years and pupils learning phonics in primary. The CEO advised that schools were doing their best to ensure quality provision for students learning at home, and all work undertaken in lessons was automatically uploaded to Google Classroom so it could be accessed by all students.

GCSES 2021

The CEO reported that questions around what may happen with GCSEs were a significant of concern for students in Year 11. She advised that the Trust was working to ensure that everything possible was in place to pre-empt what may happen. Mock exams had been timetabled in twice over the year, in the hope that at least one set will take place, and staff were monitoring students carefully in school.

	<p>The CEO reported that the curriculum had also been adjusted accordingly in schools, with specifications in some subjects having been narrowed to allow for the lost learning time earlier in the year. The CEO advised that in the core subjects, secondary schools across the Trust were sitting the same exams, to enable moderation and standardisation. All schools had also completed a comparative judgement for English which would standardise writing with national comparison as well.</p> <p><i>Trustees asked how students in exam year groups were coping since the start of term, and whether there was increased anxiety.</i></p> <p>The CEO advised that feedback had been positive overall. Students seemed to understand that whatever work they did in class during this year may count towards their final results, and they were working hard.</p> <p><i>January 2021 Whole Trust Training Day</i></p> <p>The CEO reported that a joint training day with SALT would take place at the start of the spring term in January, though this would be held virtually rather than physically in school. It was agreed that this was a great opportunity to get schools in both trusts together and focus on teaching and learning. The CEO advised that she would open the day, followed by workshops where staff from all schools could contribute to their specific areas of expertise.</p> <p>The CEO advised that by the start of the spring term it was hoped that the developing curriculum and pedagogical principles would be ready to share at the training day, as it would be great to use that opportunity to launch them.</p> <p>All Trustees were welcome to attend the sessions if they were able to.</p> <p><i>Teaching School Hub Application</i></p> <p>As reported at the last meeting, the Trust had been named as a key partner in the Pathfinder Teaching School Hub application, which had now been submitted. The CEO advised that the outcome of the application would be heard in January 2021 and if successful would present a great opportunity.</p> <p><i>Trustees asked what the implications were for the Teaching School depending on the outcome of the application.</i></p> <p>The CEO advised that if successful, this would open up a network nationally, with a likelihood that Hope would lead on Initial Teacher Training (ITT). She advised that changes in the way teaching schools were funded meant that changes could be needed in terms of organisation if the bid was not successful. The CEO advised that from September, the Teaching School and School Improvement Team had been working much more closely together, bringing together teacher training and workforce development which were both critical aspects moving forward. Both teams were working much more strategically together now, to shape the direction of the Trust development.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>There were no incidents to report. The CEO advised that key to safeguarding at the present time was the monitoring and continued review of school risk assessments. The COO advised that risk assessments were reviewed weekly through regular meetings with headteachers, and spot checks to schools continued to ensure that expected measures were in place and working effectively.</p> <p>The COO advised that regular review was essential, particularly in light of the rapidly changing guidance being issued from the DfE over time. She noted that if the situation was not controlled and managed effectively, there was a risk to the Trust in any future claims which</p>	

could be made for COVID related illness contracted in a school environment. The COO advised that the clear message to headteachers was that the reviews and spot checks were in place to support schools, and to ensure that there was an audit trail of the actions taken to continue to keep staff and students safe.

Trustees expressed their thanks to the CEO, COO, Central Team and everyone working in schools who were putting the necessary arrangements in place to continue to keep staff and students safe. It was agreed that any issue which needed to be flagged up should be shared with the Chair of the Board, in order to evidence Trustee oversight of any required actions being taken.

9. **Academy Admissions**
9.1 Draft Policies 2022/23
 LGCs had put forward proposals for the Published Access Number (PAN) for September 2022 admissions, and these had been circulated for information. It was noted that the consultation period for admissions policies for September 2022 was ongoing, and final versions would be brought for Board approval to the January 2021 meeting.

[NB actual intake numbers for September 2020 have been included retrospectively following the meeting, for reference against PAN.]

School	September 2020 Intake	Proposed PAN for 2022
Baldersby St James	3<1	8
Barlby	110	151
Burton Green	11	30
Forest of Galtres	13	27
George Pindar	138	150
Graham	212	240
Manor	239	240
Poppleton Ousebank	54	60
Skelton	17	20
Vale of York	140	150

APPROVED: Trustees agreed the proposed PAN figures for all schools. It was noted that there were no changes to existing PANs for 2022.

9.4 Manor September 2021 – change to admissions criteria

As discussed and agreed at a previous meeting, Trustees noted the confirmation from the ESFA of the proposed change to the way faith was measured in relation to eligibility criteria for the 2021 admissions policy.

9.3 Amendment to January 2020 minutes relating to changes in PAN at Graham and George Pindar Schools

It was noted that the minutes of 15th January 2020, where approval of the changes to PAN at Graham and George Pindar Schools for September 2021 had been agreed by Trustees, included an error in the figures recorded, which did not match those proposed and agreed. The minutes showed a proposal for 120 at George Pindar School when the actual figure proposed was 150, and 210 at Graham School when the proposed figure was 240.

APPROVED: Trustees agreed the amendment to the minutes of the Board meeting held on 15th January 2020, noting the correct proposed PAN for Graham School (240) and George Pindar School (150) for September 2021.

	With reference to the PAN at Skelton, Trustees raised a concern that this was to remain the same. It was noted that part of the plan when the Trust took on the school was that numbers would increase over time, and this should be something which was being actively pursued.	
10.	<u>Policies for Review / Approval</u> Papers outlining the finalised pay scales for teaching staff (from 1 st September 2020) and support staff (from 1 st April 2020) had been included for ratification. It was noted that these figures had been approved at the previous meeting, subject to there being no further change following the consultation period. It was confirmed that there had been no changes.	
11.	<u>Any Other Business</u> There was no other business to report. <i>[Helen Dowds and Allyson Buckton left the meeting at 7.00pm]</i>	
12.	<u>Confidential Items</u> 12.1 Primary Academy Discussion <i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate confidential minute.</i> 12.2 HLTY-SALT Merger Update <i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate confidential minute.</i> 12.3 Resources Committee Confidential minutes (19/10/2020) <i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate confidential minute.</i>	
13.	<u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings</u> * Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 6pm (Approval of Accounts and Annual Report) * Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 6pm * Wednesday 17th March 2021 at 6pm * Wednesday 19th May 2021 at 6pm * Wednesday 21st July 2021 at 6pm	

The meeting closed at 8.00pm

Signed: Tony Myers Date: 09/12/2020
Tony Myers (Chair of the Trust Board)

Action Points from the Hope Learning Trust Board meeting held on 4th November 2020

	ACTION	AGENDA ITEM	WHO	WHEN
1.	<i>It was agreed that the Chair should write a letter of thanks and appreciation to Mandy Bowers in recognition of her time as LGC Chair at Poppleton Ousebank Primary.</i>	6.1	Tony Myers	15/11/20
2.	<i>In response to a request from Trustees, the CEO agreed to provide an attendance summary with self-isolating cases taken out, in order to show the more general trend in attendance over this period.</i>	7	Helen Winn	16/12/20