

Trustees Board Minutes

Meeting	Trustees Board	Date	Wednesday, 20 th September 2022
Location	Executive Boardroom, Broadstairs College	Time	2.00 pm
Membership	Tammy Mitchell (CEO), Graham Razey (GR), Peter Troke (PT) , Bernadette Lax (BL), Peter Goldsack (PG), Chris Argent (CA), Michael Ashley (MA), Alan Horton (AH); Barbara Conroy (BC)		
In Attendance	Chris Legg, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Kerry Hickmott, Director of Business Support (KH) Claire Edgeworth, Executive Support Officer (CE)		

	ITEM	COMMENTS	ACTION
1	Appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees Board	This item was deemed confidential and will form Part A Confidential Minutes	
2	Welcome and apologies for absence	There were no apologies noted.	
3	Declarations of Interest	There were no additional declarations to the meeting other than those declared as standing items.	
4	Minutes of the meeting held 13 th July 22 including any confidential minutes	The minutes from the meeting held on 13 th July 2022 had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. The minutes and confidential minutes were reviewed and PG advised that in Item 6 this should read "Trustees queried results whilst others not above average". Minutes to be amended to reflect this.	

		<p>The Minutes and Confidential Minutes were approved as an accurate record with this one amendment. The signing of the minutes will be undertaken by the Chair following the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Minutes from the meeting held 13th July 2022.</p>	
5	Matters arising not covered by this agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DoG had written to the new Trustees congratulating them on their appointment as Trustees. • Scheme of Delegation The final version of the Scheme of Delegations still needs to be sent to the Trustees. Minute Clerk to send in the absence of the DoG. <p>This item in Matters Arising was deemed confidential and will form Part A of the minutes.</p>	CE
6	Secondary Education Provision	This item was deemed confidential and will form Part A Confidential Minutes	
7	CEO's Report	<p>Trust Strategic Improvement Plan 2022-2023</p> <p>The Improvement Plan was circulated prior to the meeting and the CEO asked for any comments or questions.</p> <p>The Trustees felt the plan was ambitious and acknowledged the difficulty of finding new solutions to entrenched problems. Three schools have implemented the Attendance Action Plan and this needs to be the priority in each school. The CEO had been looking at a pilot project around disadvantaged children and spoke to the Regional Director, who contacted the National Director to see if any deprived area has their attendance right, but there wasn't any.</p> <p>The CEO advised that we are trying to get the message out that if children attend school they will be warm and fed, and Briary, Bysing Wood and East Stour have built relationships with their local supermarkets and one school is offering toast to parents in the morning. The Chair advised that there have been discussions regarding the pressures on finance for schools and</p>	

		<p>we need to look at how schools pay to keep the children warm and fed, and the Trustees acknowledged the challenges ahead.</p> <p>Trust Leadership Development Programme 2022-2023 The Leadership Development Programme was shared with the Trustees prior to the meeting. The Trustees acknowledged that there were some good names facilitating the training and the CEO advised they are working in conjunction with the Group CPD programme.. CA, Chair of the Finance Committee, queried if the Trustees could have a voice on the Strategic Finance Workshop and the CEO advised she would welcome this. The Minute Clerk to send the information on the workshops to Board members.</p> <p>ACTION – Minute Clerk to forward the Strategic Finance Workshop information to CA.</p>	CE
8	Director of Governance Report	<p>KH presented the DoG's report in her absence.</p> <p>There is a requirement to review the membership of the RAC and Finance Committee due to recent changes within the Trustee Board. The Trustees agreed the following:</p> <p>RAC Committee – PG (Chair), PT, AH Finance Committee – CA (Chair), MA , GR</p> <p>NOTED – The Trustee Visit Feedback Form from the visit to Bysing Wood.</p> <p>Trustees requested the School Improvement Plan be circulated prior to a school visit.. The CEO will arrange for this to be added to the intranet and emailed round.</p> <p>ACTION – CEO to arrange for School Improvement Plan to be circulated prior to Trustee school visits.</p>	CEO
9	CFO's papers:	<p>Academies Financial Handbook 2022-2023</p> <p>The CFO circulated the changes and the handbook prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The CFO advised there are minimal changes.</p>	


		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We no longer need to submit a Budget Forecast Return Outturn in May each year. 2. Clarification that prior approval of staff severance payments only applies to non-statutory or non-contractual payments. 3. Confirmation that Trusts will be able to enter into indemnities which are in the normal course of business without seeking approval. 4. Extending the scope of paragraph 5.57 from dioceses to all religious authorities, confirming when the 'at cost' requirement is met. <p>Financial Regulations The CFO advised that there are no changes to the Financial Regulations.</p> <p>Financial Returns 2022-2023 The CFO advised that as mentioned above we now only have to submit one return.</p> <p>Financial returns and statements must be submitted by 31st December to the ESFA. Finance and Audit Committees will receive them at the end of November and the CFO will distribute to the Headteachers for sharing with their LGBs. The Trustees queried if the audit timetable allows enough time for management to respond and the CFO advised the Auditors are aware of previous shortcomings in this regard.</p> <p>The Trustees queried when we will be advised whether the schools will receive any help with the fuel costs and the Chair advised that only the Trusts who do not have good reserves will receive any support. The CFO advised that the pooling reserves is permitted but we do not do this and the CEO agreed that we are clear with our reserves and the Headteachers and LGBs are on board with this.</p>	
10	Policy Report	<p>The EKC Schools Trust policies had been shared with the Trustees and any changes highlighted for 2022/2023. The following policies were brought to the meeting for ratification by the Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission Policy • Charges and Remission Policy • Staff Code of Conduct 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Policy • Data Protection Policy • Disciplinary Policy • Equality and Diversity Policy • Grievance Policy • Health and Safety & Premises Policy • Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy • Whistle Blowing Policy • Risk Management Policy <p>The Pay Policy was brought to the meeting to ratify the contents but not the pay scales. The pay scales will be in line with the Teachers Pay and Conditions Policy once it has been published. The Trustees are asked to approve the Pay Policy but this will be brought back to the meeting in December to note it has been updated for the minutes.</p> <p>The CEO advised we are able to go outside the national pay rise but we have no appetite to change this. Support staff pay will be reviewed to move away from KCC support staff ranges, as they do not support our retention. This will be reviewed once the next two schools have come through the TUPE process. The CEO will present a paper later in the year.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RATIFIED – All EKC School Trust Policies were agreed.</p>	DoG
11	Feedback from CEO's Review (CEO not present)	<p>The CEO, CFO left the meeting.</p> <p>GR and BL met with the CEO to set her annual objectives. The CEO is clear where she wishes the Trust to go and has a clear focus on the here and now, plus the future. The CEO noted the challenges in some schools regarding the results and the CEO has a clear eye on improvement and how she wishes to achieve this. It is noted that Headteachers have a variety of experience and the CEO has clear plans and is aware of the improvements needed and there is a challenging year ahead. Operational and financial aspects will be challenging and the CEO discussed secondary and what that means as a leader, her span of control and how secondary could manage to run with a portfolio. In the meeting they discussed the CEO's control over the schools and as the Trust grows this could be unmanageable. The CEO has a</p>	

		<p>mentor and this will carry on and she wishes to gain more knowledge and expertise around secondary schools.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice Chair acknowledged in the Review that the Trust is doing well and is making positive strides and anything that needed addressing, has been addressed.</p> <p>The Trustees queried if additional support had been discussed in line with the Trust growth and the Chair advised that the plan was for additional support to be added when we had 10 schools, however if we took on a secondary school this could be earlier but we would not have the funding until we reached 10 schools.</p> <p>The Chair advised the CEO is currently in discussion with 3 further schools and these are at various stages and as soon as White Paper goes through, a number of schools will consider their position. The CEO has appointed a Director of Operations to the Group and alongside this she has reduced the volume of EKC Group work. The CFO is dedicating more of his time to ensure the finances are where we want them to be. It was acknowledged that the CEO would be unable to manage 10 + Headteachers and it would be a Trust decision on the way forward. The Trustees queried if we might come to a point where we will need to manage secondary and primary separately and the Chair advised it could be managed with two deputies primary and secondary or the CEO and a Deputy CEO. The Trustees discussed that a secondary lead would be a crucial appointment and might need to consider this as early as possible, as they would have to give notice to their current employers. The Chair advised that the Trustees would meet to look at all the options once the outcome is known.</p> <p>The Trustees queried whether the CEO was happy in her role and wish to stay and the Chair advised the CEO is enjoying the challenge.</p>	
12	Any Other Business	CA queried if we were to get to the next stage for the free school, whether Trustees could support the CEO and Chair. The Trustees agreed if we got through to the next round then we could ask for volunteers to form a working group to help move things forward.	

13	Matters Considered Confidential	Items 1 and 6 were considered confidential and will form Part A – Confidential Minutes.	
	Date and time of next meeting	Tuesday, 6 th December 2022 at 2 p.m.	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4 pm .

Signed:  Print: **GRAHAM LAZEY** Dated: **6 DECEMBER 2022**