

Minutes of the Uffculme Academy Trust Board Meeting held at 14.30 on 9th July 2020.

Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Julia Adamson	JA	Lorraine Heath – Chief Executive Officer	LHE
Emma Fielding	EF	Jill Larcombe	JL
Max Graesser	MG	Shaun Vickery	SV

Apologies / Absence (reason if required)	Initials	In Attendance	Initials
Sue Brewer – Work Commitments	SB	Paula Holbrook – Head of Business Support, US & UPS	PH
Jenny Sutton - Work Commitments	JS	Paula Gibson – Clerk	PG

Signed as a correct record of the meeting:

Date:.....

1. Welcome and Apologies

EF welcomed Directors to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Brewer (SB) and Jenny Sutton (JS).

The meeting was quorate.

Dave Tucker, Chair of Governors at Neroche Primary School tendered his apologies for this meeting and looked forward to meeting the Directors in the new Academic year.

LHE explained that John Akers had stood down from the UAT Board of Directors for health reasons. LHE received interest from a potential Director, and his details have been circulated to the Members - he has been invited to attend the September 2020 meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes from Previous Meeting

EF signed these as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting held on the 6th March and 7th May 2020.

Update on outstanding actions -

Agenda Item	Update
Contact other Trusts to look at systems for LGC's to feedback to Directors	Agenda item regarding UAT Calendar
Circulate to schools for publication the draft version of the Flexible Working Policy and the Equalities policy	Complete
Update on HA action plan	Ongoing – See matters arising and to be an agenda item for December 2020
Ragged version of the Strategic Plan to be circulated	Agenda Item
CLA Policy - to include a para confirming the LGC Safeguarding Link have overview for CLA students	Complete
Safeguarding Link Governor Terms of Reference to be reviewed	Ongoing

4. Matters Arising

Update on the Holyrood Academy Action Plan

- The planned additional INSET day has been postponed to the new Academic year.
- The Behaviour Policy has been rewritten
- There has been a review of roles and Jonathan Black, new Deputy Head will focus on Pastoral and Behaviour alongside universal needs and Sam Davison, Senior Deputy Head / DSL, will now focus upon Safeguarding and targeted / specialist support

- An Early Help Team has been created with specialists in SEMH, Safeguarding and Behaviour / Investigations
- LHE gave brief details of the Somerset LA recent SEND Ofsted Inspection which was not favourable
- JL has met with Sam Davison, DSL and Kate Yamada, Local Governor Safeguarding, to discuss the Safeguarding review

Directors will virtually meet in August to review the new Exclusion Policy and the Schools Risk Assessment's for September.

5. Finance Update

The information was circulated in advance of the meeting and Directors had previously received the budget monitoring report.

PH explained the In Year position, predicted outturn and the actual Year to Date figures which included the commitments to year end. Budget variances were circulated and explained, and Directors were reassured that the larger variance at US was due to movement from revenue to capital.

Directors were pleased with this budget information, but were mindful of the financial constraints in Years 2 and 3.

PH circulated the Consolidated Report – this was explained as the worst-case scenario as income was likely to increase and did not take into account staff turnover and positive actions to reduce costs. Directors **ASKED** if this information included staff pay rises, and it was confirmed that it had taken this into account and had also removed known budget reductions such as the Year 7 catch up funding.

Directors unanimously **APPROVED** the 2020/21 budget, noting that the DfE only required one-year budget submission rather than the usual three-year budget submission. Further work will now take place on the budgets for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

LHE explained that there is likely to be some catch up funding available, but that the format of this is not yet known.

Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) Bids

The Trust were only successful in two of the seven bids, which were for electrical works at AVA and roofing works at UPS. Some applications will be appealed, such as electrical works at HA and possibly additional classrooms at UPS. LHE explained that very few South West schools had been successful in their CIF bids.

HA is to receive capital funds for expansion and this will be for a new teaching block, new dining hall and refurbishment of some teaching spaces. The PAN will then increase from 232 to 250 in 2021.

On completion of Neroche Primary School joining the Trust, capital monies will become available to bid for.

Finance Policy and Procedures

This had been circulated in advance of the meeting and detailed the required changes discussed at previous meetings.

Directors **APPROVED** the policy.

Directors thanked PH and she left the meeting at 15.10pm

6. Personnel Update

A confidential minute was held.

Phil Wilson has been appointed as Deputy Head at Axe Valley Academy, and he will focus upon Teaching and Learning. LHE now has confidence in the staff responsible for T&L at all schools.

Ben Brook has been appointed as Trust Director of Finance and Resources – LHE gave some background information to those Directors who had not met him at interview. Mr Brook is due to start on the 1st September 2020.

A confidential minute was held.

LHE explained the initial plans for a new central Trust Office – Directors were in agreement that the Trust required some independent space away from the schools.

A confidential minute was held.

7. CEO Report

Strategic Plan

This had been circulated in advance of the meeting and had been updated and annotated with progress made. LHE explained that the Heads had worked together and had provided mutual support for each other. Areas that had been marked in red were mainly related to bringing teams together and this will recommence in 2020/21.

Directors **ASKED** that more emphasis be placed on digital learning – LHE agreed that the online offer and the provision of high quality remote teaching and learning needs to be included. This had not been consistently approached across the Trust schools and that some work was required in the upskilling for some teachers and online platforms. Directors were mindful of the needs to ensure provision for disadvantaged students.

LHE explained that the Trust received only 29 laptops and 13 routers from the DfE, when the Trust has over 3000 students in its cohort. This figure is likely to have been based upon Year 10 students In Care, so had been distributed across the secondary schools based upon student numbers.

Any Catch-up funding made available maybe used to purchase text books and digital devices to support student learning.

Directors **DISCUSSED** the advantages of blended learning and the possibility of lecture style lead lessons and small group lessons to then focus on support and dynamic model learning.

Directors thanked LHE for the update and **RECOGNISED** the progress made on the strategic plan.

Academy Improvement Plans (AIP)

UPS have shared and discussed theirs with their LGC, HA is in draft and AVA and US is still being worked upon.

This will be an agenda item for the December meeting.

8. Local Governance Committee Reports

These reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Directors agreed that the "risks and concerns" content of this reports were useful in bringing to their attention particular issues.

US

- Directors **AGREED** to the appointment of Caroline Wigley to another term of office, noting that this was for four years. Her appointment as Chair was also agreed for the 2020/21 academic year.
- Directors were saddened to hear of the death of a colleague, paid tribute to Mr Cameron, and thanked AB for his support of the school community at such a difficult time.

UPS

- Directors were informed of the issues regarding the lack of engagement from a Parent Governor and JL will meet with this Governor on the 10th July 2020. It was noted that Governors were bound by the Code of Conduct, but that clarity in the process to remove Governors needed to be made clear in the Terms of Reference / Scheme of Delegation.

AVA

- Directors were informed that Jerry Walden, Chair has decided to stand down at the end of the academic year, after many years of involvement with AVA. JL has **AGREED** to assist in the interim.
- Directors **AGREED** to the appointment of Mark Lees as a new community Governor and were impressed by his application which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

HA

- Directors were pleased to hear of the significant progress made this year, noting the impact of the new Chair.
- Directors **DISCUSSED** the risks and concerns identified in their report – recognising their frustrations with the Local Authority.
- LHE explained that lack of timely information received from Avon and Somerset Police in relation to serious Safeguarding concerns of domestic violence – Dave MacCormick has written a letter of complaint and Directors **AGREED** to follow up if necessary.
- Directors **AGREED** to the appointment of the new Staff Governors, Izzy Hamilton, Kathleen Lemon and Sue Watson.

Directors **INSISTED** that LHE and the Heads had a three week break over the summer term and **ASKED** that this be communicated to them alongside their thanks for their significant efforts this academic year.

9. Business Items

2020/21 Governance Calendar

This was circulated in advance of the meeting.

LHE explained her proposal to remove the Chairs committee and invite the Chairs to the full Board meetings. This would be trialled for one year and Chairs would have no voting rights.

Directors **AGREED** to this proposal

EF left at 16.01pm.

Scheme of Delegation

Directors **AGREED** to the amendments subject to confirmation that no further changes were necessary following updates to the Academies Financial Handbook.

Action: LHE

Terms of Reference

Directors held detailed discussions about the content of this document and ASKED LHE to review and reference the need for internal / external audits

Action: LHE

Directors **REITERATED** the procedural point that LGC's elected their own Chair and that Directors appointed them, to allow for the veto of unsuitable nominations.

Directors **REQUESTED** that the Code of Conduct be referenced in both the ToR and SoD and that the procedures removal of Governance professionals at all levels be made clear

Action: Clerk

Directors **REQUESTED** that a definition of attendance be included in the both the ToR and SoD to allow of attendance and voting rights at meetings by virtual methods.

Directors **AGREED** the Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference subject to these changes.

Directors / LGC Meeting

Directors **AGREED** that a date for meeting all local governors was needed and that this could be combined with the permanent exclusion training. LHE is to investigate a trainer and dates.

10. Policies

Directors **AGREED** to the Whistleblowing Policy as previously circulated.

Action: Clerk to circulate to schools for implementation

Directors **DISCUSSED** in detail the "Further Guidance in relation to Covid Related Staff Absence" document circulated and **AGREED** subject to confirmation from Browne Jacobson.

11. Any Other Business

JL is to participate in Governance Leadership Training – all thanked her for her interest and support and wished to be informed of relevant information.

The meeting closed at 16.39pm

Date of next meeting

Virtual meeting in August 2020 – date to be confirmed

ACTIONS

Agenda item	Action	Who	Deadline
9	Review and reference the Terms of Reference with the need for internal / external audits	LHE	
9	Code of Conduct be referenced in both the ToR and SoD, including the procedures removal of Governance professionals at all levels.	Clerk	Complete
9	A definition of attendance be included in the both the ToR and SoD to allow of attendance and voting rights at meetings by virtual methods.	Clerk	Complete
10	Whistleblowing Policy – to be circulated to all schools for implementation	Clerk	By end of school term