

# Anglian Learning Trust Board Meeting Minutes



15 December 2020

## Trustees Present

Claire Lawton (CL Chair), Jon Culpin (JC CEO), David Lamkin (DL), Richard Cowling (RC), Sue Speller (SS), Ken Murphy (KM), June Cannie (MJC), Helen Abrahams (HA) and John Morgan (JM)

## Others Present

Prue Rayner (PR Executive Primary HT), Duncan Cooper (DPC DCEO), Charity Main (CM Finance Director) and Kerrie Jones (KJ Clerk)

	ITEM	ACTION
1.	<b>Acceptance of Apologies for Absence</b> There were no apologies.	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items</b> There were no declarations of interest.	
3	<b>Agree minutes of last meeting and Matters arising not on this agenda</b> The minutes were agreed as a true record and will be signed when face to face meetings resume.	
4.	<b>Icknield Primary School: outcome of due diligence</b> This item is recorded as a confidential minute.	
5.	<b>Trust Self Evaluation and improvement Plan 2020-23</b> The following two documents had been shared with the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust self-evaluation form (TSEF)</li> <li>Trust Strategic Improvement Plan (TSIP)</li> </ul> The TSEF is an operational document which provides context for the TSIP and a point of reference for Ofsted. The TSIP has details of high level objectives and will evolve over time as teachers take increased ownership of the plan. <b>Q How will you prioritise objectives if it cannot all be achieved?</b> <b>A</b> We would look to prioritise areas that will have the biggest impact. SEND is the emerging pressure and the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated gaps. Improvement at Howard, and building of the Marleigh Primary School would also be key priorities <b>Q Can you tell us more about changes to the curriculum?</b> <b>A</b> We have a group of deputies and leaders who have been working on the curriculum, focussing on key concepts and mapping the central spine of the curriculum with flexibility around the key areas. We aim to develop training around this central core. <b>Q Is your plan to have a broad collaboration?</b> <b>A</b> Yes, we have a collective vision of the Trust, giving ownership of Trust direction to staff. Our future executive leaders can be developed from our existing staff. We are working to involve staff in Trust development activities and already seeing a positive response.	Spring term – JC will align areas with committees for review as standing items.

	<p><b>Q</b> <i>Is the long term aim for all in Anglian Learning to align their curricula or is there room for divergence?</i></p> <p><b>A</b> We understand that schools have different contexts so there will be differences, but much is the same in each school and therefore a shared curriculum makes sense.</p> <p>Trustees thanked JC and the executive leaders for the preparation of these documents which reflect the direction of the trust.</p> <p>Trustees approved the Trust Strategic Improvement Plan</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Annual accounts and annual report (CM)</b>	
	<p>The Annual Accounts and Annual Report had been presented to the Audit and Risk Committee by Price Bailey.</p> <p>The committee agreed to recommend them for approval by the Trust Board.</p> <p>The version that had been shared with Trustees has since been edited and finalised.</p> <p>CM reported that there were no high priority matters raised. It was noted that all audit work had been completed remotely.</p> <p>Trustees resolved to approve the Annual Accounts and Annual Report. The accounts will now be signed by the Chair and Accounting Officer and submitted to the ESFA by 31 December 2020.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Delegation of mid-year budget review</b>	
	<p>The Period 2 accounts were presented. This is the first version using the new IMP planner. The forecast outturn deficit is £507k against a budget of £622k. However, it is still early to be forecasting year-end position.</p> <p>As part of the budget setting process Trustees agreed to a mid-year review of the 20/21 budget. This will take place after the February half term. It was acknowledged that there are still likely to be uncertainties.</p> <p>Trustees approved delegation of the mid-year budget review to the Finance, Estates and Operations Committee who will agree any amendments.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>CEO Monthly Update: Trustee questions</b>	
	<p>The CEO's monthly update had been previously circulated to Trustees. JC provided some recent updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JFAN had a recent Ofsted monitoring visit to review safeguarding, attendance and curriculum. A positive outcome letter has been received.</li> <li>• The HSE are investigating an anonymous complaint about one of Anglian Learning's schools. The risk assessment and any relevant information has been forwarded and AL is confident that all appropriate procedures are in place.</li> <li>• Bottisham VC is experiencing a high level of positive Covid-19 cases and consequent self-isolations. The school has worked with the Trust, LA and Public Health England and received positive feedback on its procedures: cases appear to be due to community transmission or asymptomatic super spreaders.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are concerns around returning in January and everyone is prepared to move to remote learning if necessary.</li> </ul> <p>Trustees thanked all those involved in dealing with the procedures around responding to Covid-19 cases and in particular Claudine Bateman and Sarah Golding.</p>	<p>JC to convey this to staff</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p>	
	<p>The recent internal audit on risk management has identified a number of actions that need to be taken with regards management of risk. This will be looked at in detail in the spring term. The Every system will be used to link risk registers across the Trust.</p> <p>A full review of risks will take place in the spring term but some recommendations on changes to the very high risks were brought to the Board. These are detailed in the associated report cover sheet and include downgrading of likelihood of risk to the following:</p> <p>EDU 4    4 → 3  FIN 12    4 → 3  OP 7      4 → 3  HR 4      4 → 2  GR 1      4 → 3  LEA 4     4 → 3  (IT 11    to be unchanged until IT audit rather than 6 → 4 )</p> <p>Trustees acknowledged progress at LGBs and had a number of questions around the other risks:</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>Are we confident all disadvantaged pupils have IT access?</i>  <b>A</b> The primary schools have analysed the level of engagement and are providing alternatives where appropriate. Secondary schools have worked to identify those with IT access issues but we are no longer certain that all students at BVC have access currently due to so many isolations</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>Does this mean that should schools be closed again we are not sure that all pupils will have appropriate access to remote learning?</i>  <b>A</b> This is still a high risk though is more under control than at the start of the pandemic with systems for monitoring students at home well developed</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>Given the ongoing issues with EPM why do we continue to use them as our personnel provider?</i>  <b>A</b> We are looking at alternatives but moving the payroll is a huge risk. We are engaging directly with the CEO of EPM and have issued a formal warning. KO and CM hold weekly meetings with EPM. KO is implementing HR monitoring software which will inform any decision around payroll.</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>It would be unrealistic to maintain that level of monitoring of EPM - given the long history of issues should we have a plan to move?</i>  <b>A</b> The move would carry a high level of risk in terms of payroll and data. The new system that KO is implementing needs to be up and running in the first instance.</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>With regards IT risk, is it internal changes that are having an impact as the external risk has probably not changed?</i>  <b>A</b> Yes, internal changes have been put in place to mitigate the risk. However, it was agreed that the risk likelihood score will be unchanged until the internal IT audit</p> <p>Trustees noted the changes to the risk register.</p>	

<b>10. Teachers pay award</b>		
	Trustees formally approved the Teachers' Pay Award which they had previously agreed by email.	
<b>11. Committee Minutes</b>		
	Minutes from most of the Committee meetings had been shared with all Trustees; Audit and Risk meeting minutes to follow.	
<b>12. Governance Documents</b>		
	Trustees approved the revised terms of reference for the Board and its committees and the Code of Conduct for Trustees and Governors. It was noted that the Audit and Risk Committee ToR will be subject to further review in the next few months.  Trustees asked why there are separate Codes of Conduct for Trustees and Governors; JC will review this.	JC to examine necessity for separate codes of conduct
<b>13. Whistleblowing and Complaints</b>		
	The termly report had been shared with Trustees. JC clarified that BVC has not supplied information for the report and this has not been pursued at the moment to avoid putting additional pressure on senior leaders  There have been more complaints received this term, several related to the pandemic.  Trustees asked if the complaint that had been made directly to the HSE about one of the schools would be included in this report. However, it was clarified that only complaints that have been processed via the AL Complaints Policy are included.	JC to amend the report to reflect this
<b>14. AOB</b>		
	Trustees had approved a number of Trust Governor appointments recently by email. It was clarified that at Meadow Primary School LGB, Steve Jordan should serve as an Associate Member whilst he is being employed for 1:1 tutoring, moving to Trust appointed governor once his employment status is terminated in March.  CL thanked Trustees for their contributions and commitment during a very difficult year. On behalf of the Trust Board she thanked JC and the Executive Team for the enormous amount of work they have put in which is very much appreciated.	
<b>15. Date time and venue of next meeting</b>		
	23 Feb 2021.  Meeting ended at 9.50am.	

<b>Action Log</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
5	Align areas of TSIP with committees for review as standing items.	Spring term	JC
8	Convey Trustees appreciation to staff for work around dealing with Covid cases		JC
12	Examine necessity for separate codes of conduct		JC
13	Amend whistleblowing and complaints report to reflect situation at BVC	asap	JC