

**Anglian Learning
Trust Board
Meeting Minutes**



22 May 2023

Trustees Present

Claire Lawton (CL Chair), Jon Culpin (JC CEO), David Lamkin (DL), Richard Cowling (RC), Sue O’Farrell (SO), Ken Murphy (KM), Helen Pain (HP), Carin Taylor (CT), Pauline Ball (PB), Alasdair Pitt (AP) and John Morgan (JM)

Others Present

Prue Rayner (PR Director of Primary Education), Duncan Cooper (DC Director of Secondary Education), Charity Main (CM COO), Helena Marsh (HM Principal at LVC), Jonathan Russell (JR Principal at SVC), Malcolm Trobe (MT CST Consultant), Adam Marham (AM shadow CST consultant) and Kerrie Jones (KJ Head of Governance Support, Compliance and Risk)

	ITEM	ACTION
1.	Acceptance of Apologies for Absence There were no apologies.	
2.	Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items There were no declarations of interest.	
3	Agree minutes of last meeting and Matters arising not on this agenda The minutes from 28/2/23 were agreed as a true record and signed electronically.	
4.	Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy (HM/JR) Associated papers: Presentation Strategic Group Purpose and Direction Strategic Group Feedback Template EDI Objectives EDI Heads Survey Results HM and JR explained the importance of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and its relationship to the Trust vision and values. EDI should be a ‘golden thread’ running through everything we do, creating a sense of belonging. The EDI Strategic network is one of a number of cross-Trust groups established to respond to emerging concerns in society. The draft EDI objectives set by the group cover the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum • Culture • Leadership and Governance • HR They discussed the complexities of achieving these and explained progress so far. A 2-year action plan is in place with the aim of embedding these aspirations and objectives by the end of the year. Questions were invited: Q <i>Are you confident that such extensive plans can be implemented in 2 years?</i>	

Chair’s signature..... *Claire LSC*

	<p>A We have already achieved a lot but need to ensure the strategy stays on track and is carried forward. With regards HR this is being absorbed within the new HR strategy.</p> <p>Q <i>Do you have an estimate of the impact on curriculum time by adding things?</i></p> <p>A This is a refinement rather than an addition</p> <p>Q <i>What risk are we reducing by this activity?</i></p> <p>A Challenging behaviour and insufficient staffing are key challenges and EDI strategy speaks to both of those.</p> <p>Q <i>Do you feel you have the resources you need to take the actions forward; do you need any additional support in the future?</i></p> <p>A Support for some areas sits with the central team. We are confident for curriculum in schools, but the area of culture is rather nebulous and may be more difficult. By year 2 we hope to have established the framework and some administrative support would be helpful. We also need to consider how to harness support from the primary schools as they are not currently represented on the strategic group.</p> <p>Trustees were very supportive of the work and endorsed the strategy. They noted that it is not always possible to measure outcomes, but it is important to keep dialogue going. HM and JR will keep the Board updated with progress.</p> <p>The Board and CEO thanked HM and JR for their presentation and all their work on this.</p> <p><i>[09:30 HM and JR left]</i></p>	
5.	Growth update (JC)	
	This item is recorded as confidential minute.	
6.	Evolution of the Trust-led System (JC)	
	<p>Associated Papers: Trust Quality Descriptions East of England trust development statements Trust QA Framework CST Building Strong Trusts Overview of Regulatory & Commissioning Review</p> <p>JC summarised the development of the Trust sector and current landscape. He explained recommendations from the academies commissioning and regulatory review and noted that the Fens and East Cambridgeshire are priority areas for improvement.</p> <p>Trust Quality Descriptors had been shared with the Board and Trustees were asked to reflect on our ability to demonstrate excellence against these descriptors, to consider areas we are less confident about and consider the role of governance and the executive.</p> <p>Trustees discussed in small groups and had some initial reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The descriptors are quite nebulous • There are difficulties assessing and measuring in some areas • Limited funding is a challenge to putting some things in place • Suggested a GAP analysis <p>JC noted that the Executive Summaries provide evidence that can be used but some are difficult to achieve in the current climate.</p> <p>Trustees discussed whether we need to grow to be sustainable and whether growth would in fact provide any answers to the challenging financial situation. It was noted that our standing with the DfE may mean we have no choice but to grow.</p>	Further discussions next meeting July meeting

	<p>Q <i>Should we be considering hub structures?</i> A We are exploring possibilities.</p>	
7.	<p>Risk Update (CM)</p> <p>Associated papers: Risk Update</p> <p>At its last meeting the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the Annual Report on Risk Management Reviewed the Trust's risk appetite Reviewed draft changes to the Risk Management policy Agreed a review of the organisation of risk management as outlined below. <p>The risk strategy has not been successfully embedded in schools and therefore the following changes are being proposed to improve the process and empower leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To add compliance risks such as estates and GDPR to a corporate operational risk register School leaders to identify their 3 or 4 key risks – 'the things that keep them up at night'. This will link to the blueprints and help LGB oversight of risk <p>Trustees discussed the proposed changes and highlighted that risks will need to align and that other areas must not be missed. It was confirmed that alignment will come by way of the blueprints and that since compliance risks sit with the central team, audits and actions will be used to hold leaders to account.</p> <p>The Board noted the Annual Report on Risk Management and agreed the proposed changes to organisation of risk management. They endorsed the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's view that risk appetite is unchanged.</p> <p>They also agreed to delegate approval of any necessary revisions to the Risk Management Policy to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.</p>	
8.	<p>Finance Update (CM)</p> <p>Associated papers: Period 7 Management Accounts Period 7 Forecast Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management accounts Trustees considered the management accounts which had been scrutinised by the Finance, Estates and Operations Committee. The committee noted the complexities of the budget with changing income and expenditure. Budget Update This had been looked at in detail by the Finance, Estates and Operations Committee. The budgeting process has been very challenging, and the finance team has been working hard to reduce the projected deficit. Current prediction is for a £1.1m deficit, using the offered pay award and current energy estimates as baseline assumptions. As noted by the committee, holding 30 months of reserves will be difficult to achieve. <p>Q <i>Do you have a sense of where other trusts are sitting?</i> A It is difficult to know exactly, but most say their reserves will be significantly eroded.</p> <p>Q <i>It might be helpful to know if large MATs are faring better to help understand whether growth will improve things.</i> A We assume that adding a large secondary school would bring in additional money.</p>	

	Trustees noted the potential risk associated with a late announcement on the pay award.	
9.	Academy Performance Overview (DC/PR)	
	<p>PR confirmed that the picture for the primary schools is positive with leaders working together and sharing expertise. Shared events bring all the primaries together. The QA approach is being reviewed and innovative solutions for leadership being explored. PR provided a brief update for each of the schools, highlighting any issues.</p> <p>DC explained that the secondary schools are also working well together and seeing the benefits of collaborative working. The peer review process is being developed with Whole Education. And the Creativity Collaborative is informing practice. There are a number of of staff vacancies. DC provided a brief update for each of the schools, highlighting any issues.</p>	
10.	Governance Update (KJ)	
	<p>KJ reminded Trustees of the CST external review of Governance and explained that a booking sheet for 1-1 discussions with MT will be circulated. There will also be a link to a survey and all were asked to complete.</p> <p>1 nomination for Chair of Trustees had been received. So far there have been no nominations for Vice Chair; Trustees were urged to consider putting themselves forward.</p>	Trustees to book discussions and complete surveys
11.	Committee reports	
	<p>Associated papers: <i>Committee Summary Reports</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People & Culture • Audit and Risk Assurance • FEOC <p>Trustees had received the summary reports. Full minutes can be found in the Board Team.</p>	
12.	Complaints Policy (KJ)	
	<p>Associated papers: Complaints Policy</p> <p>The policy has been updated to reduce the number of stages to 3, to provide clarity around timings for making and escalating complaints and to separate out parental complaints from others.</p> <p>The updated policy was approved by the Board.</p>	
13.	AOB	
	There was no other business.	
13.	Date time and venue of next meeting	
	<p>11 July 2023 9am at Marleigh Primary</p> <p>Meeting ended at 11:08</p>	

Items for Future Meetings	
Meeting	Item
Board 11/7/23	Trust Quality Assurance

Action Log			
ITEM	ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10	CST review discussion meeting sign up	asap	all
10	CST review survey completion	7 June	all

Chair's signature..... *Clare LSC*