



Company No.: 08036395

MINUTES

Non-Confidential Minutes of the Eden Academy Board of Trustees, held via Zoom on Wednesday 7th October 2020 starting at 6:30pm

Attendance:

Barry Nolan	BN	Trustee (Chair) & Academy Member
Brian Eaton	BE	Trustee
Helen Milner	HM	Trustee
Jamie Clarke	JC	Trustee (Deputy Chair)
Mari Ladu	ML	Trustee
Mary Canavan	MC	Trustee
Vicky Collis	VC	Trustee
Also present		
Keith Holroyd	KJH	Governance and Policy Officer - Clerk
Paul Van Walwyk ¹	PVW	Director for Central Services and Schools
Susan Douglas	SD	CEO & Accounting Officer

Apologies:

Angela St. John	ASJ	Trustee
Karen Deacon	KD	Trustee

The meeting was declared quorate

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
1/2020-21	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies and the Board's acceptance or rejection for any absences</p> <p>KJH welcomed Trustees to the first meeting of the school year and PVW to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from ASJ and KD</p> <p>Trustees noted that Mirvette Russo had stood down from the Board since the last meeting.</p>	

¹ For items 1 and 2

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
2/2020-21	<p>Introduction to the Director for Central Services and School</p> <p>The Trustees and PVW introduced themselves. PVW briefed Trustees on his background and what he is currently working on in his role.</p> <p>PVW explained that he is excited by the challenges presented at the Trust and particularly welcomes the approach that puts our children and young people at the centre of everything we do.</p> <p>Trustees and PVW discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PVW's early thoughts on Eden and what are the challenges we face including responding to the pace of change, how well we embed therapies as part of our core delivery, our culture and how schools should approach Ofsted inspections. • What support the Board and Trustees can offer him and the executive team. <p>How can VC/HM best act as an interface between the staff and the Board including how best we use the data and information we produce in as many formats and places as possible and involve the practitioners (staff should know the quality of education in their school) the questions asked by Trustees, focussing on outcomes and making our pupils ready for the outside world.</p>	
3/2020-21	<p>Declaration of interests and offer/receipt of gifts or hospitality</p> <p>There were no new declarations.</p>	
4/2020-21	<p>Election of the Chair</p> <p>Trustees unanimously re-elected BN as Chair.</p>	
5/2020-21	<p>Election of the Deputy-Chair</p> <p>Trustees unanimously re-elected JC as Deputy-Chair.</p>	
6/2020-21	<p>Appointment of the Clerk to the Board of Trustees</p> <p>Trustees confirmed KJH's appointment as Clerk to the Board of Trustees.</p>	
7/2020-21	<p>Items of any other business</p> <p>None for this meeting.</p>	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
8/2020-21	<p>Board approval of the minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 26th August 2020 were approved.</p> <p>All actions had been completed.</p>	
9/2020-21	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>None for this meeting.</p>	
10/2020-21	<p>CEO report</p> <p><i>Confidential minutes also refer.</i></p> <p>SD introduced her report and updated Trustees on some key elements, including how the reporting structure to the Board works in relation to Trustee portfolios and committees and the way improvement plans are going to be RAG rated this year.</p> <p>SD informed Trustees that it had been really positive start to the year with excellent attendance from pupils and staff. Trustees discussed both the legal and the schools' position in terms of the small number of parents who are still nervous of sending their children in and the steps the schools are taking to reassure and support them. Trustees also considered the communication process with parents and staff in the event of a positive case.</p> <p>The Board discussed the difficulties being experienced in relation to the availability of testing. SD explained that the situation has improved since the start of term when schools were experiencing significant problems.</p> <p>Trustees considered the tipping points where a lack of available staff may require further bubble or whole-school closures.</p> <p>BE informed Trustees that having been in James Rennie School this week for Assistant Head interviews, he had not felt the Covid-secure arrangements to be overwhelming for pupils or staff.</p> <p>Trustees discussed any additional cost implications of supporting home-schooling, how additional costs related to Covid were being recorded and steps being taken to lobby for the recoupment of additional costs, particularly in relation to PPE.</p>	

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Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
11/2020-21	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p><i>Confidential minutes also refer.</i></p> <p>ML updated Trustees on recent activity including the changes to the safeguarding policy which is on this Board agenda for ratification. Trustees discussed the changes to the reporting arrangements for agency staff and the additional level of complexity this involves for school leaders.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the safeguarding training for Trustees, Members and LAB/Committee members and whether this covered off the signing of the Part 2 of the guidance. KJH briefed Trustees on the plans for updating and rolling out the online training for these groups and that this year it was being made mandatory within the Trust for all those in these groups to complete the training.</p> <p>Action: Confirm with Lisa Hatcher and Andrew Sanders whether Trustees etc, were required to sign the declaration on the complying with the guidance and whether this would be included in the online training.</p> <p>ML briefed Trustees on the changes to vetting procedures where staff change roles within the Trust.</p>	KJH
12/2020-21	<p>Finance</p> <p>BN updated Trustees on the position regarding cash balances across the Trust as reported at the recent Finance Committee meeting, budget projections, and annual pay awards. Trustees discussed the position regarding the three schools currently predicting an in-year deficit. Trustees noted the current budget projections for 2020-21 and the frustration felt by schools and the Finance Committee in relation to the funding arrangements in place at some of our Local Authorities which made it difficult to set budgets on a predictable basis.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the impact of Covid on school budgets and shared the concerns expressed by SD regarding the disproportionate implications on small schools, particularly in relation to PPE. Trustees discussed to what extent the additional Covid costs had been factored into the current budgets. It was agreed that these costs would be reported in more detail to the next Finance Committee meeting.</p> <p>Action: Discuss with the Director of Finance & Operations (SP) the detail of the additional costs being incurred by schools in relation to Covid, how these were being factored into school budgets and how these will be reported at the Finance Committee meeting.</p>	JC

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
13/2020-21	<p>Eden response to changes in the 2020 Academies Financial Handbook</p> <p>Trustees considered the paper submitted by SP and KJH in relation to the significant areas of change in this year's Academies Financial Handbook. Trustees noted that many of the requirements were already in hand and that actions had been identified in relation to the others. They also noted the Finance Committee's request for appropriate updates on progress on these actions.</p>	
14/2020-21	<p>Asset management, ICT & GDPR</p> <p><i>Confidential minutes also refer.</i></p> <p>SD updated Trustees the current CIF bids at Alexandra, Moorcroft and James Rennie Schools. Trustees were also briefed on the progress on the work to build additional classrooms at Moorcroft, which has been predominantly funded by a grant from LB Hillingdon and should be ready for occupation by the end of November. Until such times as these additional classrooms were ready, there are a number of Moorcroft pupils being educated at Grangewood by Moorcroft staff. The additional advantage of this had been that it facilitated a better transition for these pupils who missed the normal arrangements at the end of the summer term due to Covid.</p> <p>Trustees noted that we are investing in some fogging machines for all schools to make it easier to clean large areas.</p> <p>Following the Board's ratification of the ICT Strategy at its June meeting. Work is underway on the implementation. The new servers required for the cloud move have been purchased and are in the process of being built and the roll out will start with Grangewood school.</p>	
15/2020-21	<p>Free School Update</p> <p><i>Confidential minutes also refer.</i></p> <p>Trustees noted the update provided in the CEO's report.</p>	
16/2020-21	<p>Remunerations Committee</p> <p><i>Confidential minutes refer</i></p>	
17/2020-21	<p>Risk register</p> <p>KJH briefed Trustees on the new format for the Risk Register which brings together all the various strands and registers in relation to Trust-wide, Covid, Free Schools Project and individual school-based risks.</p> <p>Trustees welcomed the new format and the level of detail it provided. Trustees noted the comments from the Audit and</p>	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	Risk Committee who had also reviewed this at their last meeting.	
18/2020-21	<p>Annual administration</p> <p>KJH briefed Trustees on the current position with the annual returns. All Trustees have returned their annual declaration of interests and these have been published on the main Eden website as required. Response rates across all Members, Trustees, Committee and LAB members for the various annual returns was now c.80%. BN confirmed that arrangements are in place to chase up any outstanding returns.</p> <p>KJH confirmed that all required updates to Companies House and the DfE's GIAS service had been completed in relation to Trustee changes since the last meeting.</p>	
19/2020-21	<p>Feedback from LAB Liaison</p> <p>SD, HM and MC briefed Trustees on the recent meeting where LAB Chairs had discussed parental engagement and agreed that this would be a focus for LABs this year.</p> <p>Trustees also noted the recruitment activities underway at a number of the LABs.</p> <p>BN thanked MC for stepping in to support Moorcroft School LAB which means that we now have Trustee or Member involvement on all LABs.</p> <p>Trustees noted that LAB Chairs had been encouraged to remind LAB members of the importance of supporting request for panel members and agreed that the planned panel training for LAB members should also be available to Trustees.</p>	

Ref.	Ratification items	Action
R1/2020-21	<p>Governance Charter incorporating the Scheme of Delegation 2020-21</p> <p>Trustees ratified the charter subject to the following amendments to the Scheme of Delegation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assignment of responsibilities for HT/HoS appointment to be amended and confirmed with SD • Gill Kennedy is a member of the Hexham Priority LAB, not James Rennie • Update the name of the old Audit Committee to Audit & Risk Committee across the document <p>BN advised Trustees that he would be embarking on a new recruitment round and asked Trustees to consider their networks for potential candidates.</p>	

Ref.	Ratification items	Action
	Action: Consider personal and business networks and inform BN of any potential Trustee candidates.	All Trustees
R2/2020-21	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Trustees ratified the policy.	
R3/2020-21	Improvement plans Trustees ratified the plans.	
R4/2020-21	Local Offer Trustees ratified the document.	
R5/2020-21	Entitlement to remote learning policy SD briefed Trustees on the latest Secretary of State directive on remote learning and confirmed that this didn't change the draft policy presented for ratification as it already accorded with the directive. Trustees ratified the policy.	
R6/2020-21	Update of the medium-term strategy Trustees ratified the document.	

Ref.	Information Items	Action
I1/2020-21	Safer recruitment Policy Trustees noted the policy which has been adopted from Schools' HR and scrutinised by the safeguarding hub.	
I2/2020-21	Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Trustees noted the model policy from Schools' HR.	
I3/2020-21	Charging & remissions policy Trustees noted the policy previously ratified by the Finance Committee.	
I4/2020-21	Counter Fraud Policy Trustees noted the policy previously ratified by the Finance Committee.	

There are confidential minutes for this meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:20pm

The Eden Academy Trust is a charitable company, limited
by guarantee, registered in England and Wales
Register number: 08036395
Registered office: Grangewood School, Fore Street,
Eastcote, Pinner HA5 2JQ

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ACTION SUMMARY

Agenda item x/2020-21		Action	Who
11	Safeguarding	Confirm with Lisa Hatcher and Andrew Sanders whether Trustees etc, were required to sign the declaration on the complying with the guidance and whether this would be included in the online training	KJH
12	Finance	Discuss with the Director of Finance & Operations (SP) the detail of the additional costs being incurred by schools in relation to Covid, how these were being factored into school budgets and how these will be reported at the Finance Committee meeting	JC
R1	Governance Charter incorporating the Scheme of Delegation 2020-21	Consider personal and business networks and inform BN of any potential Trustee candidates.	All Trustees

DECISION SUMMARY

Agenda item x/2020-21		Decision
4	Election of the Chair	Trustees unanimously re-elected BN as Chair
5	Election of the Deputy-Chair	Trustees unanimously re-elected JC as Deputy-Chair
6	Appointment of the Clerk to the Board of Trustees	Trustees confirmed KJH's appointment as Clerk to the Board of Trustees
12	Finance	Additional costs related to Covid would be reported in more detail to the next Finance Committee meeting
19	Feedback from LAB Liaison	The planned panel training for LAB members should also be available to Trustees.
R1	Governance Charter incorporating the Scheme of Delegation 2020-21	Trustees ratified the charter subject to the following amendments to the Scheme of Delegation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assignment of responsibilities for HT/HoS appointment to be amended and confirmed with SD • Gill Kennedy is a member of the Hexham Priority LAB, not James Rennie • Update the name of the old Audit Committee to Audit & Risk Committee across the document
R2	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	Trustees ratified the policy.
R3	Improvement plans	Trustees ratified the plans.

Agenda item x/2020-21		Decision
R4	Local Offer	Trustees ratified the document.
R5	Entitlement to remote learning policy	Trustees ratified the policy.
R6	Update of the medium-term strategy	Trustees ratified the document.