

BEST Trustees' Meeting

15th May 2019, 15:00-17:20

Room 914, Block 20, SWA

Attendees

Ilona Bond (IB), Paul Walker (PW), David Shelvey (DS), Tony Sanderson (TS), Alan Lee (AL), Claire Mycock (CM), David Morgan (DM) and Craig Smith (CS)

Minute taker: Yvonne Humphryes (YH)

Approval of Trustees minutes: Previous minutes (13.3.19) approved and signed

Notification of any perceived conflicts of interest: DS declared that he has been appointed Chair of Children Services Scrutiny Committee for Central Bedfordshire Council.

Monthly cash flow and management accounts: The monthly cash flow and management accounts for BEST are received on a monthly basis by IB, PW, DS and AL on behalf of the board of Trustees, all of whom confirmed that they are happy with the accounts and are satisfied that the Trust is financially sound.

Previous Actions

Action: LSA budget to be discussed at the Finance Committee on 12th June 2019

Action: YH to review safer recruitment training options for Trustees and present findings at the next meeting.

Trustees commended the SWA U15 and U18 rugby teams for winning the finals at Twickenham.

Two Tier

Trustees discussed the decision that Henlow Academy (HA) have taken to move towards an extended secondary model as per their consultation which will run until 11th June. This is a unilateral move outside the agreed and co-ordinated cluster approach.

If approved the decision would introduce a further 150 pupil places in 2020 into a situation that already possesses 161 surplus places. This would have significant negative consequences on the finances and curriculum offerings at some of our schools. Furthermore, such decisions would limit options available to Robert Bloomfield Academy, a three times 'outstanding' middle school.

AL on behalf of the Trust has already written to the CBC to ask whether, if successful, they are intending to fund the proposed changes required to enable HA to extend its age range.

Decision: The Board of Trustees approved a letter written by AL opposing the Henlow proposal. Furthermore, AL will be discussing next steps with the Executive Team at their meeting tomorrow; Principals will be asked to write to their communities to explain what is happening and the potential impact this will have on their schools.

Governance Handbook

AL advised the Board that he has contacted the LGBs and invited comment for the 2019-20 edition of the Governance handbook. No comments have been received; this is perhaps explained by the fact that in September 2019 this will be the 4th edition to be produced.

Decision: All Trustees supported the proposed changes to the BEST handbook/practices as identified by AL to address the changes that have been made to the DfE Governance Handbook, March 2019.

Decision: The Trustees agreed to keep the 'core operating principle' to have outcomes in the top 20% nationally, as oppose to 'all BEST schools being good or better' which was agreed at the last Board meeting. BEST schools aspire to continual improvement.

AL advised that he'd like to create the handbook slightly differently this year, in that it's one book that can be

separated out into several independent documents. AL presented the Trustees with a completed Grid for the scheme of delegation; this is a different format to previous years but one that the Trustees prefer and approved.

Governor Mark

Progress with preparation for Governor Mark discussed. AL presented key themes sheet. GM have sent potential question areas. Action: AL to produce a Briefing Sheet.

Decision: All Trustees agreed that they would like to take part in the Governor Mark assessments on 18th June. Supporting documents are available for Trustees to view on Governor Hub.

RSC Approach – Houghton Regis Academy (HRA)

BEST have been approached by the DfE to support HRA with school improvement. AW the BEST Director of Education is keen to support the school and has responded to the DfE to advise accordingly; we await their response.

PBA Update

- The 2019 temporary build is on target against programme.
- A Vice Principal has been appointed.
- The PBA Principal is interviewing for teachers on Friday and hopes to make three appointments.
- 50 pupil places have been offered for the 2019 intake; a further 5 late applications have been received today. CS feels this is indicative of the work that has taken place since November 2018 to engage with the PBA community.
- A strong LGB has been formed and includes three parent governors.
- The planning permission for the 2020 permanent build has been submitted; subject to planning approval building works will commence on 5th September 2019.
- CBC needs to agree the Heads of Terms for funds to be released from the DfE.

ICT Procurement

Details of the process followed and ICT presentations/offering were shared with Trustees via email who confirmed that they supported the decision of the ICT Board to appoint Partnership Education.

Partnership Education will be awarded the contract subject to no objections; the cooling off period ends on Monday. One of the seven providers has asked for feedback.

Policies for approval

Capability Policy (Seeking approval for union consultation)

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Capability Policy subject to the inclusion of the central team staff as the proposed policy only references school based staff.

Leave of Absence Policy (Seeking approval for union consultation)

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Leave of Absence policy.

Safeguarding Policy

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the safeguarding policy subject to clearer wording around who needs to attend the bi-annual approved safeguarding training course.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Policy

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the FOI policy subject to ensuring reference to a 'subject access request' (SAR) - of which the current process resides within the GDPR policy. **Decision:** Final step after CEO decision is ICO.

Complaints Policy

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Complaints policy with a 3 step process: 1.Informal 2.formal 3.Panel.

AOB

AL is chairing a disciplinary hearing on behalf of NM next week; NM is unable to chair as he is a witness.

Action: Policies to be reviewed for political references. Party Political Protocols to be discussed next meeting.

Date of the next Trustees' meeting: 18th June 2019

J. Bowel 18/6/19