

BEST Trustees' Meeting

26 June 2020, 9:30-11:30

Virtual meeting via Google Meet



Attendees

Chair: Ilona Bond (IB), **Vice Chair:** Paul Walker (PW), **CEO:** Alan Lee (AL), David Shelvey (DS), Tony Sanderson (TS), Claire Mycock (CM), David Morgan (DM), Craig Smith (CS), Alison Wilshaw (AW) and Nafia Baust (NB)

Guest: Amy Leonard (Amy) - PR Consultant to discuss the Shefford/Stotfold 2tier consultation

Minute taker: Yvonne Humphries (YH)

Notification of any perceived conflicts of interest: DS declared that he is the Chair of Overview and Children Services Scrutiny Committee for Central Bedfordshire Council.

Two Tier update

IB welcomed Amy to the meeting.

Amy provided an overview to BEST's Shefford/Stotfold 2tier consultation:

- An article regarding the 2tier consultation and the five CBC pledges made to BEST has been published in the local press
- Principals have written to their communities to encourage completion of the BEST questionnaire. As at 24 June 701 responses have been received – the consultation closes on 30 June 2020
- 80:20 split in favour of moving from three to two tier schooling
- 85% of respondents share concerns around insufficient places within the all-through secondary phase
- A large proportion of the responses have come from the Robert Bloomfield and Samuel Whitbread community.

Next steps:

- BEST will present a statement at the next CBC Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny committee
- Responses/comments will be reviewed and a letter distributed to the parental/carer community week commencing 13 July 2020.
- An article will be published with the local press
- Next term hold open evening with parents to address common themes
- AL is keen to address changes and any staff concerns at the September training days

AL expressed concern around how much information will be available. Amy recommended regular updates, even to say there has been no updates, to avoid stakeholders assuming information is being held back.

AL advised that CBC have only committed to providing facilities comparable to other primary schools of a similar size. Trustees are keen to ensure that any new build does not offer a lesser standard in both quality and facilities than is currently available at Robert Bloomfield Academy.

Amy left the meeting.

Previous Actions:

Trustee and RBA LGB Chair recruitment carried forward to next term.

The legalities of changing the constitution of BEST and its two subsidiaries could prove expensive. AL proposed amending the Articles of Association with the professional advice of Tom Wainwright. **Decision:** Trustees supported the option to amend the AoA. **Action:** AL to discuss proposal to amend AoA with BEST Nursery Director.

Approval of Trustees' minutes: Trustees' meeting minutes 15 May 2020 and Extra-ordinary meeting minutes 29 May 2020 and 16 June 2020 approved and to be signed electronically.

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, DM 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.

Finance Committee Update

A copy of the Finance and Audit Committee meeting minutes were distributed to the trustees and DM, who stood in as Chair on behalf of DS, provided a verbal summary:

- Risk register reviewed
- The ESFA do not require a three forecast this year
- Budgets reviewed and approved - some subject to caveats
- Future forecasting needs to include two tier costs
- NB to review the pros and cons for pooling GAG funds and will feedback to the committee in November
- Travel and Subsistence Policy approved
- The central finance team continue to cover staff shortages and training trust-wide, should the workload increase and/or become unsustainable, appointing a bursar may need considering.

Performance Committee Update

CM as Chair of the committee made the decision to cancel the Performance Committee Meeting scheduled to take place on 12 June owing to COVID-19, as no new data was available since the Performance Committee meeting held in February.

AW shared with trustees and talked them through the new BEST Data Dashboard; the data is live and will be enhanced to eventually include attendance and exclusion data.

The KS4 and KS5 results have been through rigorous internal and external validation and the marks are now with the individual examination boards for approval/final marks. Samuel Whitbread have shown a quarter of mark increase on last years' data. AW feels a personnel restructure, external reviews and a willingness to work with the BEST School Improvement team has played a part.

Trustees discussed concerns in relation to the grades of disadvantaged pupils across BEST – this needs reviewing.

Owing to COVID-19 there is no 'Progress' benchmark available this year – trustees discussed whether BEST should be reviewing this. All BEST schools should be adopting a culture and ethos of believing that they can be in the top 20%.

Trustees were pleased with the clarity and presentation of the data and thanked AW for her work in producing the dashboard.

Chairs' Forum Update

A copy of the Chairs' Forum Committee meeting minutes was distributed to the trustees for their perusal and IB as Chair of the committee provided a verbal summary:

- Discussed acknowledging themselves as BEST schools and being supportive of each school within the trust
- Discussed importance of working with and championing BEST, not just their individual schools
- In readiness for moving towards two tier, a standardised model has been introduced in this years' BGHB. LGBs are to work towards the model this year with a view to implementing the model fully in 2021-22. There was a discussion regarding the number of LGB members - this should be about the quality not quantity.

Two Tier Delivery Model

Trustees reviewed a high level delivery model to look at what needs to happen to get BEST schools ready for transitioning to two-tier by 2023. **Action:** CS to include a section on HR/Staff and Well-being.

Approval of BEST Governance Handbook

Action: YH to schedule a Trustee Meeting prior to the AGM and amend the meeting schedule accordingly

YH advised of the relevant changes required in line with the updated Academies Financial Handbook – the BGHB will be updated accordingly.

Trustees discussed whether the aspiration to achieve outcomes within the top 20% nationally should be included within the vision. **Decision:** The aspiration should be an ethos, not the vision.

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the 2020-21 BGHB. AL was commended on the quality of the BGHB.

Review and approval of Policies

Admissions Policy:

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the proposed changes to the 2022-23 admissions policy.

Complaints Policy:

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the complaints policy subject to amending 'Complaints Committee' within section 3.3 to 'Review Panel' to ensure consistency throughout the policy.

Staff Code of Conduct:

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

Action: Head of School to be removed from the back page.

GDPR Policy:

DM questioned whether it was correct that the policy does not apply to the dead. CS advised yes.

*'The GDPR only applies to information which relates to an identifiable living individual. Information relating to a deceased person does not constitute personal data and therefore is not subject to the GDPR.'*¹

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the GDPR Policy.

Privacy notices:

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Privacy notices.

Trade Union Recognition Agreement:

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Trade Union Recognition Agreement.

Equality Statement:

Decision: Trustees unanimously approved the Equality Statement.

Decision: Equality is to be a core area within BEST that needs consistency across the whole trust. BEST will work with an expert to enable this to happen.

Matters Arising

- Safeguarding: With the exception of SCA, LVA and GHA, all schools are using CPOMs.
- GDPR: One reportable incident. Reported to ICO who have closed the case - no further action required.

CS asked for 'Matters Arising' to be amended to 'Compliance' and to include Health and Safety going forward.

BTed Update

The BTed committee have approved a programme of work for completion at the schools over the summer; the money remaining to be used as contingency funds.

Wilmott Dixon believe phase one of the permanent PBA site will be complete and ready for handover on 1 September; CBC may need to support with catering and Generators. The whole site should be completed by October half term.

Action: CS to see if he can organise with the PBA Principal holding the September Trustee meeting at the new PBA site to enable trustees to visit and tour the new school.

Next Trustees' meeting: Tuesday 22 September @ 10:00am

J. Bond

Minutes approved and signed 13/07/2020

¹ ICO Document – 'What is Personal Data?'