

## **BEST Trustees' Meeting**

13<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 15:00-17:05

Room 914, Block 20, SWA

### **Attendees**

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

**Minute taker:** Yvonne Humphryes (YH)

**Approval of Trustees minutes:** 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019

**Notification of any perceived conflicts of interest:** None

### **Previous Minutes:**

**Trustee Training confirmed:** 10am on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 at BEST House.

### **Performance Committee Update**

CM advised that NM was a guest speaker at the Committee and discussed the strategies in place to improve progress & results at SWA; the LGB and SLT are supportive of the plans. Progress 8 aside the Committee is very pleased with the schools outcomes and ethos. The U15s and U18s Rugby teams have been successful in securing a place in the finals at Twickenham on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

AW joined BEST on 29<sup>th</sup> October as Director of Education – AW heads up the SI function within BEST. A new Director of Teaching School will be joining the Trust on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019. The teaching school has been re-designated. AW is working hard to improve the profile and course offerings, thus generating more income to help towards school improvement costs. The Teaching School has submitted an application to become an appropriate body so that they can approve applications to become an NQT and deliver NPQs.

The Performance Committee is responsible for compliance and as such, the external safeguarding reports are reviewed within this forum. The safeguarding audits were completed for the second consecutive year and were very strong for all the schools; the nurseries were included in the audit for the first time.

Trustees discussed tiered membership to the Trust and what this may look like; this could create problems around accountability in relation to School Improvement which is crucial to fulfilling the BEST Visions and Values.

### **Finance Committee Update**

The BEST CFO completed a benchmarking exercise in which BEST fared well in all areas.

The schools are in the process of putting together their 2019-20 budgets; the committee agreed 2.5% as the inflation factor.

Prior to joining BEST, SCA had a financial notice to improve and a 3 year recovery plan was put in place to recoup the £122,000 deficit. SCA were on target for year one but the projected figures for the end of year two would suggest that the plan will not be met; this is being monitored closely by the CFO. If no improvement is seen this could result in a financial 'cause for concern'. One possible solution would be for

SCA to become a single form entry and, if need be, offer places above PAN. However, the Principal is resistant to this. **Action:** AL to discuss at Principal mid-year review.

SWA have a small deficit too and a two year recovery plan has been approved for £40,000.

Following a staffing restructure at ETA a surplus has been achieved for 2018/19. In recognition of the task undertaken by the new ETA Principal (appointed Oct'18) to realise the funds, the Committee agreed that the surplus funds could be carried over to next year's budget. The Principal had formally written to the Trustees to make this request.

Concerns were raised around the financial sustainability of BEST House – income generation needs to be higher. The conference room is currently booked out Mon-Thurs from 3pm for NQT twilight sessions; discussions are taking place with SCITT to see how the issue is addressed.

### **Pix Brook Update**

The 2019 building works have started on the ETA site; the PBA Principal is involved in the process and ETA has been very accommodating. The programme is on schedule – completion date 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

**Action:** IB will write and thank ETA Principal and School Manager on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Tenders have been submitted by two contractors for the 2020 permanent build; a meeting will take place on Monday 18 March 2019 to select a contractor. Decision rests with CBC.

The DfE have confirmed that they are happy with the Educational, Governance and Financial Plans submitted by BEST; the DfE are now awaiting a detailed paper from CBC in relation to pupil numbers and their agreement to underwrite PBA beyond the first year. SH from CBC has confirmed that this paper will be with the DfE by 15<sup>th</sup> March. The funding agreement needs to be in place by 31<sup>st</sup> March to enable the CBC to contact PBA parents prior to the national offer day – 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Lawyers have been consulted in relation to FOI requests received following PBA Section 10 consultation; it has been confirmed that BEST have followed due process.

### **Comms**

CS has held meetings with potential PBA parents which have proved useful. A PBA open evening will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> April; Modplan and the successful bidder of the permanent build will be invited to attend and present. SA will discuss items such as before and after school club and uniform.

The PBA Principal will commence employment with BEST on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019. PBA staff recruitment will start shortly after this time.

### **Roundtable with Rt. Hon Damian Hinds and Lord Theodore Agnew**

CST invited six CEOs of MATs to a roundtable discussion. AL concluded that no new monies would be available for school and there is little clarity/consensus with regard to policy on MAT development. Any government needs to address fundamental questions such as whether all schools should belong to a MAT, what is the role of the LA and the issue of local democracy versus central direction.

### **COO update**

The Health and Safety Policy is due its annual review; CS is in the process of reviewing the policy with Cousins Safety. Cousins safety is being commissioned to conduct a half day H&S audit at each of the schools and nurseries next term. The reports and action plan will be completed by the end of term in readiness for the new academic year.

There is an established GDPR working group comprising of the DPO, CFO, Compliance Officer, ICT supplier and DPL from each school. There is a “no blame culture” to the meetings and all attendees maximise learning through openness and transparency. Reports were shared with the Trustees – there have been two reportable incidents which were closed by the ICO. Analysis of the near misses has highlighted emails as the main area of risk; email addresses will be amended to include the academy acronym to avoid future occurrence.

### **Policies for Approval**

#### Disciplinary Policy

IB would like it noted that whilst the policy states that a minimum of two Trustees will make up the Trustees appeal panel, it is best practice for three Trustees to be on the panel.

**Decision:** BEST will endeavour, where possible to use three Trustees to make up their appeal panel.

**Decision:** Trustees unanimously approved the Disciplinary policy for circulation.

#### Flexible Working Policy

PW questioned the introduction of the ‘informal request for flexible working’ and whether it’s required. The Trustees felt that the introduction of an ‘informal request’ would provide consistency in process to all employees within BEST.

**Decision:** Trustees unanimously approved the Flexible working policy for Union consultation.

### **Scheme of Delegation**

The BEST Scheme of Delegation is currently with LGBS and Principals for comment, as part of its annual review. Once these have been collated, as previously, AL will write responses for approval of the Board.

Discussion was had, with regard to the BEST value of outcomes being in the top 20%. Given the proposed removal of outcomes from the Ofsted framework – under consultation – our three tier structure and to facilitate planning, the outcomes value will be “All BEST schools are good or better”.

**Action:** AL to update the SoD.

### **Governor Mark**

The interim assessment for Governor Mark has taken place; the report has demonstrated the need for ensuring that a “golden thread” is seen through-out from Governor decision to impact on provision. CS confirmed that Governor Mark is now a standard agenda item for LGBs.

BEST are the first MAT to take part in the Governor Mark assessment; the assessment day is 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – schedule for the day is still be confirmed.

**Action:** Trustees to secure 18<sup>th</sup> June in their diaries – at least four trustees are required as part of the assessment.

A draft version of the document has been completed – LL and YH are collating the documents. AL will write a statement with regards to pupil outcomes, partnership and community engagement and how BEST have impacted on each of these areas.

**Action:** The Trust summary statement, draft and supporting documents to be shared with Trustees for comment by the end of April.

### **Lawnside**

LNA joined BEST January 2019 and have been positively engaging with BEST and working hard to improve student outcomes, process and structures. Trustees reviewed a letter submitted from the LNA Principal for financial support to a maximum value of £24,000, less any retained surplus to support with staffing structures. The restructure would improve the contact ratio from 70% to 78% as recommended against benchmarking.

AL advised that he would like to support LNA with the request and asked Trustees if they'd support his decision.

**Decision:** Trustees approved the LNA request for a repayment plan to support the staffing re-structure.

**Action:** YH to ask the CFO to share the LNA budget proposed for 2019/20 with the Trustees, following the re-structure.

LNA are in the process of establishing a new LGB; BEST are supporting LNA with this process. The next LNA LGB will be held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March for any Trustees interested in attending.

#### **Skills Audit**

Upon receipt of the final Trustee skills audit, YH will share the information with AW as Director of Education who will put together a suggested Trustees training schedule.

**Action:** YH to feedback the Skills Audit results and training recommendations to Trustees by the end of term.

#### **AOB**

AL praised SWA on the tremendous achievement of both the U15's and U18's rugby team getting to the national finals. Northampton Saints (NS) have watched the game and commended the year 10 captain, who at the end of the match went to shake the hand of every player on the opposing team before celebrating with his own team; NS have said that this action represented rugby values and will be used in their training.

The U18's rugby team found out earlier this week that they have also been successful with their academic achievements.

AL invited the Trustees to attend Twickenham to support the players on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019 should they wish to do so.

**Date of the next Trustees' meeting:** 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019 @ 3:00pm

Y. Bond 15/5/19

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