

Minutes

OAT Board of Trustees

Date: 12 March 2020

Time: 11.00 am

Location: Westley Hotel Euston, Euston Street, London

Present:

Paul Hann	PH	Chair
Nick Hudson	NH	CEO and Trustee
Frances Hall	FH	Trustee
Andrew Jones	AJ	Trustee
Janet Renou (dialled in)	JR	Trustee
Bal Samra	BS	Trustee
Mark Stanyer	MS	Executive Principal and Trustee
Peter Murray (dialled in)	PM	Trustee and Founding Chair

Apologies:

Ian Brookman	IB	Trustee
Kate Rutherford	KR	Executive Principal and Trustee
James Murray	JM	Ormiston Trust CEO

In attendance:

Sunita Yardley–Patel	SYP	Clerk
Nick Hudson	NH	Chef Executive Officer and Trustee
Carmel Brown	CB	National Director of HR and Operations
Rob Pritchard	RP	National Director of Education
Jo Dawson	JD	National Director of Finance
Tuesday Humby	TH	National Director of Teaching and Training

Minutes:

Part	Discussion	Action
1	Welcome, introductions and apologies	
	The Trustees were welcomed to the meeting. It was confirmed that BS has been appointed for another four-year term as a Trustee for OAT.	
2	Minutes from meeting 12 December 2019	

	<p>The minutes from the meeting dated 12 December 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>The School Improvement committee updated on the investigation of an alternative provision (AP) site outlining the current task of finding premises. The Trustees asked whether there was to be a business plan for AP and which committee would review this. It was confirmed that the business plan would be reviewed by SIS in the first instance. It was confirmed that the Integrated Performance Report was sent to sub-committees.</p> <p>The Governance Review is currently being completed and proposals will be forthcoming.</p> <p>JD confirmed that the loans do not need to be repaid early and the contingency budget should be achieved.</p>	
3	COVID 19	
	<p>The CEO outlined the cancellation of the Awards event that was planned for late March and the mitigations that have been put in place to host the Awards on a future date.</p> <p>TCB outlined the steps that have been taken to prepare for COVID 19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice was issued to academy Safety Officers prior to February half term. • Further advice was issued to academies that had held ski trips in affected areas. • Further steps have been taken to mitigate potential infection threats including deep cleans and self-isolation. • Communications to Principals have been ongoing. • There has been a section on OATnet developed for COVID 19 updates. • A reminder has been sent to academies to utilise crisis management plans. • Plans are being developed for remote working and delivering provision through relevant technology, if the decision is taken to close schools. • Government advice is being followed and circulated in <p>The Trustees asked about the capacity of head office staff to work from home.</p> <p>CB responded that everyone has capacity to work from home.</p> <p>The Trustees asked where the residual liability lies if schools close not in accordance with the government directive.</p> <p>NH responded that this would not happen without close dialogue with the DfE to properly understand the consequences.</p>	

	<p>The Trustees asked if schools will only close in line with government advice. NH confirmed that schools will only close with involvement of Government agency. RP added that schools will be as prepared as possible for this eventuality.</p> <p>The Trustees asked whether there would be a plan for home working for students. RP responded that each academy is addressing this in terms of their technology capabilities, homework setting and VLE provision.</p> <p>The Trustees reaffirmed that if the organisation follows the directions of the government, the risks should be reduced.</p> <p>The Trustees asked about liability and supplier relationships. RP responded that academies are assembling this information in order to clarify contractual liabilities.</p> <p>The Trustees asked whether there is a business continuity plan which addresses risk and the risk framework. RP responded that the current actions being taken will be different to the actions usually taken in the event of a school closure because it will be a longer closure.</p> <p>JD added that risk registers for individual schools and OAT's risk processes are currently being developed.</p>	
4	CEO Report / 5 Year Transformation Plan	
	<p>NH outlined that this will be a new report format for this meeting. NH outlined the content of his report including a high-level transformation plan.</p> <p>The Trustees confirmed their support for plans to increase Regional Lead Practitioners and the target for reserves. The Trustees requested the timeline for implementation.</p> <p>NH advised alignment of practices has been at the core of the decision-making. JD outlined how Curriculum Led Financial Planning would add to this transformation. The Trustees asked that the presentation of information includes a fully integrated narrative for the whole organisation. JD responded that this is currently being developed and will be presented at July Board to ensure clarity of the whole organisational picture. MS added that this picture has been well-communicated to principals and outlined some difficulties encountered in reaching an understanding of what 'alignment' looks like.</p> <p>The Trustees asked for further clarification on the advertising of job vacancies. CB responded that there is not currently central oversight of vacancies advertised in academies, but this is currently being addressed through finance systems which will also consider contracted workers. JD outlined that a process is currently being put in place to address this and there are currently steps being taken to ascertain how much is being spent across the organisation for all suppliers.</p> <p>Trustees asked whether the staff survey would be able to be categorised so that data can be viewed in terms of specific academies, principals and senior leadership teams. CB confirmed that this will be the case and added that it</p>	

	<p>would be launched in June with a view to report to Board in September with results and a follow up action plan .</p> <p>The Trustees asked how the training and development is benchmarked in the industry. NH responded that there are clear pathways. TH added that benchmarking is done with other MATs. Trustees asked that clear investment in training is demonstrated. NH outlined that there was high scrutiny of education at School Improvement Sub-committee.</p> <p>Trustees confirmed their approval of the level of detail in the report. It was suggested that in addition to the report, background information on key areas is provided in a consistent format for every meeting. This should also include the integrated performance report. NH responded that this will be developed in line with Trustee expectations.</p>	
6	Growth Strategy	
	<p>NH outlined the report that has been sent to and endorsed by Financial Oversight and Risk committee. The DfE has also had sight of this and are happy with the content.</p> <p>Trustees asked for the rationale behind the growth strategy. NH responded that the plan for the organisation is to prioritise the quality of provision in existing academies and ensure that an effective support structure is in place for the regions.</p> <p>The Trustees asked for consideration of the geography of the organisation to sustain effective support for all academies.</p> <p>There was a discussion about pupil numbers at academies and the impacts of this, including quality of provision, estate management, relationships with local authorities, finances and delegation of decision-making.</p> <p>Trustees requested that additional pupil number requests go to SIS and FOR committees.</p>	
7	Integrated Performance Report	
	<p>There was a discussion about the format of the report.</p> <p>Trustees asked that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the report contains information on risk and asked that Trustee sub-committee chairs outline the detail of risk in the specific areas • there be progress towards targets in strategic plan outlined in reports • the large amount of data consolidated into five or six organisational KPIs • the format be reorganised to ensure coherence. 	

8	Brownhills resolution	
	<p>The CEO presented the resolution to convert Brownhills to an OAT academy. Trustees asked whether there have been any changes to the situation at Brownhills. The CEO confirmed that there has not. Trustees agreed the resolution.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the conversion process. It was concluded that the due diligence should be discussed in detail at FOR.</p>	
9	For info	
	<p>The FOR and Audit minutes from 27.11.19 were approved.</p> <p>Trustees were given a verbal update on SIS Committee from the Chair of the Committee.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the minute writing processes and what should be reported from committees to the Trust Board.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the Remuneration Committee and the expansion of the meeting dates. The appointment of a Chair for this would take place at the next meeting.</p> <p>There was feedback on discussion points from FOR which led to a discussion about the communication with staff members about the financial position of the organisation and the purpose of CLFP.</p>	
10	AOB	
	There was no AOB.	
11	Dates of next meetings	
	<p>9 July 2020</p> <p>Proposed further dates:</p> <p>10 September 2020</p> <p>10 December 2020</p> <p>11 March 2021</p> <p>8 July 2021</p>	
12	Meeting close	