

Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting held on Thursday 14 February 2019 at 6pm in the Board Room, Silverstone UTC

Present: Doug Newman (DN) Chair
Ray Brooks (RB)
Stuart Banks (SB)
Julie Dark (JD)
Julie Muscutt (JM)
Neil Patterson (NP) Principal
Crispin Robinson (CR)
John Sinclair (JS)

In attendance: Miriam Lakin (ML) Clerk
John McAfee (JM) Assistant Principal
Vanessa Stanley (VS) Deputy Principal

Apologies: Paul Atkinson Trustee
Mark Cusiter Trustee
Corrie Harris Trustee
Becky Midgley Trustee

1. Welcome and Apologies and Quorum

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present, noted apologies and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest in addition to those already submitted.

3. Safeguarding

3.1 JM delivered a report on safeguarding at the SUTC. A new system for tracking students with Special Educational Needs had been put in place and was in use for all staff. This brought together information about the student's needs, assessment arrangements, academic performance and wellbeing for easy reference by teachers. It was confirmed that the Achievement, Learning and Teaching Committee had received a demonstration and was content with this.

3.2 Trustees noted that they were aware of a challenging cohort in Year 10. JM reported that there was ongoing engagement over specific concerns for example through discussion with parents, documenting interventions and making onward referrals where necessary. However, some referrals were subject to the financial pressures experienced by Northamptonshire County Council.

- 3.3 It was reported that meetings with applicants to the UTC were ongoing and productive, allowing expectations on both sides to be managed.
- 3.4 JM noted that engagement with student voice and gathering student feedback was strong, and had led to some changes to enhance student satisfaction, for example enhanced privileges for sixth form students. There had also been some significant successes from the alternative provision provided for some students.
- 3.5 The trustees noted the number of current child protection cases in the SUTC. It was reported that this was a higher number compared to other schools. Trustees asked if the SUTC's team was adequately resourced to cope with any additional pressures this may create. JM reported that the SUTC was small and contained in one building, which facilitated communication between staff about students of concern, and that the SUTC was coping. The Chair asked if the SUTC was doing the best it could for students. JM stated that he believed that it was. Systems were robust and there was clear evidence of tracking and intervention.
- 3.6 Trustees asked what they could do to ensure that the SUTC remained in a strong position in the future. JM stated that resources were adequate and that a new Teaching Assistant would be appointed shortly. There were robust systems and processes in place.
- 3.7 Trustees asked if mental health awareness had been raised across the SUTC. It was confirmed that it had. It was suggested that the SUTC could consider having some trained mental health first aiders. JS agreed to raise this with the University to see if they could support some staff members to attend their training.
- Action: JS**
- 3.8 The Chair stated that the SUTC should be aware of how seriously the Board took wellbeing and safeguarding issues, and wished to assist wherever possible to ensure that the right systems were in place.
- 3.9 NP suggested a spend in the region of £5k on mental health support issues. This would be taken from reserves. The Chair stated that the Board would be minded to approve such a spend, and that the details should be discussed with the Finance Committee to ensure that the funding could be released.
- 4. Health and Safety**
- 4.1 NP reported that there was no new report since the previous meeting.

- 4.2 RB reported that he was due to visit the SUTC the next day to follow up on his previous report. That report had not identified any matters of serious concern.
- 4.3 The Board noted statistics on health and safety incidents, including one near miss. This had led to a ban on hot drinks being carried around the building. NP confirmed that this ban was permanent.
- 4.4 A marked increase in the number of accidents was noted by the Board. NP stated that he was not aware of any particular cause. The Chair requested that RB review the data to ascertain if there were any patterns and report back to the next meeting.

Action: RB

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 5.1 The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018 as a true record of that meeting, with one change to minute 7.3.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 School Development Plan (Minute 8.5 refers)

JS reported that some trustees had met Neil Bramwell who had commented that the summary of the strategic direction contained in the SDP was one of the best he had seen. The Board thanked VS for her hard work on the Plan. It was reported that the Achievement, Learning and Teaching Committee had considered faculty development plans and had provided feedback to VS.

7.2 External GDPR Audit (Minute 11.5 refers)

It was reported that the report had been reviewed by the Audit Committee.

7.3 Safety Around the Building (Minute 12.4 refers)

NP reported that he had raised this with SP.

8. Governance Matters

- 8.1 It was reported that Nik Ives had stood down as a trustee. The Board recorded their thanks and appreciation of his work over a number of years, from parent governor to independent governor.
- 8.2 As there was a vacancy, the Chair asked trustees to nominate any candidates they may be aware of. Candidates from industry would be desirable, as would candidates from potential partner institutions.
- 8.3 It was also noted that there was a new trustee nominated by Silverstone Circuits who would join the Board later in the year.

9. Principal's Report

9.1 Behaviour Management

NP showed the Board data on recorded behavioural incidents. It was noted that behavioural incidents were tracked and reported weekly. Students with more than two incidents rated at '3' received a sanction, which encouraged improvements in behaviour. The Board noted that behavioural incidents had diminished over time. It was reported that where they worsened, this was amongst a small cluster of students.

9.2 Compliments, Comments and Complaints

The Board received a report of the latest compliments, comments and complaints.

9.3 Whilst there had been no official complaint, NP reported on parental concerns about computing and maths in sixth form caused by staff absence. He reported on the measures that had been taken to address these concerns, for example as one computing teacher had left, the remaining computing teacher was undertaking extra lessons and rotating around the classes. Additional support had been provided by the Lawrence Sheriff School. In the current week a new teacher had been appointed on supply pending a salary negotiation for a full-time position.

9.4 Single Central Record

NP reported that the single central record had been reviewed recently and showed the Board anonymised examples of the type of data it contained. The Board was assured that the record was kept up to date diligently and that NP was confident that the data was robust, and where it was not on the record there was evidence that it had been sought. NP confirmed that only himself and his PA, who maintained the record, had access.

9.5 GDPR

It was reported that Audit Committee had reviewed an independent report on the SUTC's compliance. No major concerns had been raised. There were some minor issues and specific concerns, and the Committee had received assurance that they were being or could be addressed. NP noted that it had been decided to remove the ability for staff to access their SUTC email on personal phones. Students would still be able to receive SUTC email through their phones as no confidential or personal data was sent to them by email.

9.6 Ski Trip

The Board received details of a proposed ski trip. It was confirmed that the teacher running the trip had previous experience of leading such trips and that it had no cost implications for the SUTC. The Chair reported that he had given his pre-approval and that the ratification of the Board was sought.

9.7 Trustees were conscious that such trips could cause pressure or division between those who attended and those who did not. It was confirmed that where a trip was part of the curriculum, hardship funding was available. For the ski trip, the length of notice given and the payment plan meant that as many as possible were able to participate. It was confirmed that the tour company was ABTA-backed, and that the price included travel insurance and was fixed.

9.8 The Board approved and supported the ski trip.

9.9 **Inspection Data Summary Report**

The Board received the SUTC's inspection data summary report. NP reported that the report intended to provide a picture of the SUTC which Ofsted inspectors would use to formulate questions for the SUTC.

9.10 It was noted that the report contained useful commentary on why Progress 8 was not the most appropriate measure for UTCs. In respect of this, trustees noted that there had been negative press in the county about the SUTC's Progress 8 measure relative to other schools, and asked if a more appropriate comparison was available, for example with other UTCs. NP stated it would not be appropriate to compare with other UTCs, some of which had different curricula which were EBacc compliant. The SUTC had found that attainment rose when it ceased to be EBacc compliant.

9.11 It was noted that the inspection data summary report compared the SUTC to the national average across all years of study, however, some of the figures changed when a comparison was made with national rates at Year 10 and above, for example data on exclusions. It was also noted that some of the data did not accord with the SUTC's own data, for example data on student retention.

9.12 NP agreed to produce a commentary on the document and distribute this to the trustees.

Action: NP

9.13 **School Evaluation Form and Development Plan**

The trustees noted that they had received the SEF and Development Plan.

9.14 **Risk Register**

It was reported that Audit Committee had reviewed all items on the risk register rated '8' or above. No major concerns had resulted from this review. The Board agreed with Audit Committee's view.

9.15 As the next meeting of the Audit Committee was in June, it was agreed that the next Board meeting should consider the risk register in more detail.

9.16 **SRMA Report Review**

The Board received and noted a report from a School Resource Management Advisor, which was a condition of the transitional funding. The Board noted the recommendations made in the report and the cost savings indicated as a result. However, several flaws were noted in the report:

- Some recommendations failed to take into account the possible impact on student outcomes and/or staff recruitment, retention and motivation
- The SUTC's salary bill was currently in line with the county average and staff utilisation was at 99.3%, which left little room for cover in cases of sickness
- Some recommendations were not based on a wider understanding, for example a recommendation to increase the average staff teaching time was based on an assumption that teachers work only the hours they are in contact with students. A recommendation that parents were asked to contribute more to the cost of transport to the SUTC would have an impact on the SUTC's ability to recruit and retain students
- The Board was not in favour of actions which were likely to change the ethos of the SUTC, for example reducing the length of the teaching day.

9.17 It was reported that comments had been returned to the DfE, and no response had yet been received.

10. Link Governor Reports

a. Parent Forum Update

10.1 Some of the items raised had been covered elsewhere in the meeting. The forum was keen on organising some fundraising activity and ideas were being discussed.

10.2 The forum would meet again the following term. There were some core members, and a communication was being discussed to raise the profile of the forum. There was now a dedicated email address for the forum.

10.3 The Board thanked RB and JD for the work they had done to start making the forum a success.

b. Audit Committee Report

10.4 The Committee had covered GDPR and the risk register, as discussed elsewhere in the meeting. The Committee had discussed a suite of policies

which it recommended to the Board for adoption. Ongoing issues were insurance cover and seeking competitive quotes, and re-tendering for an external audit service. The Committee had noted a financial peer review by Leeds UTC and would review this in more detail at its next meeting.

c. Finance and Remuneration Committee

10.5 The Committee had discussed the current financial position. The SUTC was on budget and cash flow was sustainable. The hard work of the Business Manager in bringing this about was noted.

d. Achievement, Learning and Teaching Committee

10.6 The Committee had discussed forecast results for KS4 based on mock examinations. The majority of subjects were on course to perform in line with the previous year. There were some areas of concern and VS had been able to give the Committee the context for this. The Committee was assured that there was significant intervention in place.

10.7 Staffing shortages had been noted. NP reported that an offer had been made to an Engineering teacher that day.

10.8 The Committee had noted comparative data between the current and previous year. Students with the best KS2 outcomes were not making as much progress as might be expected, and this was discussed.

10.9 The Committee had discussed faculty development plans which had improved greatly compared to previous iterations.

10.10 The Committee had discussed curriculum planning with VS who had undertaken much work to ensure that the curriculum was planned in the most effective and efficient way, in addition to her heavy teaching load.

10.11 The Committee had received a teaching and learning update from James Moore and had challenged on the forecast improvement for lessons rated as 'Good', which James Moore had been able to explain.

10.12 The Committee had reviewed policies which were in its remit.

e. SENCO Update

10.13 JM shared with the Board data comparing the SUTC to other UTCs and to other secondary schools. There were a larger cohort of students with Special Educational Needs in Year 10 than previously. 12% of students had particular exam access arrangements, compared with 9% nationally.

11. Policy Approval

11.1 The Board approved the following updated policies:

- a. Employee Code of Conduct
- b. Examinations Appeal
- c. Finance
- d. Grievance Procedure
- e. Inclusion (D-SEN)
- f. Leave for Public Duties
- g. Pay
- h. Performance Management - Capability
- i. Professional Review (Appraisal)
- j. Recruitment
- k. Safeguarding and Child Protection
- l. Teacher Capability Policy

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Ofsted Inspection

NP reported that an Ofsted inspection was likely between now and Easter. Trustees were asked to ensure they were familiar with the School Evaluation Form and that they made any requests for further information or training to aid their understanding.

12.2 Vice Chair of the Board

The Board approved the appointment of John Sinclair as its Vice Chair. The Chair asked that he undertook training for Chairs of Governors.

12.2 Pupil Premium Review

A full review of pupil premium funding had been scheduled by the SUTC at the end of February. This would consider how PP funding was spent and the impact and outcomes achieved. There would be a number of meetings including with the Chair and other trustees.

12.3 Chief Inspector of Schools

Amanda Spielman, the Chief Inspector of Schools had requested a visit to the SUTC on 7th March 2019.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 26 March at 5.30pm in the Board Room.

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Chair
Signed

Date