

## COMMUNITY FIRST ACADEMY TRUST (“The Company”)

### Minutes

Of a meeting of the Directors of the Company held at Platt Bridge Community School,  
Rivington Avenue, Wigan, Lancs, United Kingdom on  
**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 5.20pm**

**Present:** Mr J Pugh, Mrs S Darbyshire, Mr N Bailey, Mrs V Lewis, Mrs D Wood, Mr G Ashton,  
Mr N Bailey, Mr P Harmer

**Apologies:** Mr M Rowlands, Mr C Sweeney

**In attendance:** Mrs M Frost, Mr C Holden, Mrs M Foster (Clerk to the Trust)

#### 1. APOLOGIES

- a. To receive apologies for absence  
Apologies for absence were received from Mr Rowlands and Mr Sweeney.
- b. To accept apologies for absence  
The apologies were accepted.
- c. To note Directors not in attendance  
All Directors were either present or had tendered apologies for absence.

#### 2. URGENT ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Holden requested that the TOIL policy be included under the HR update.  
Mrs Darbyshire requested the schedule of dates for next year be considered

#### 3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL OR PECUNIARY INTEREST

Directors were invited to declare whether they had any direct or indirect personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any matter forming part of the agenda for this meeting or likely to be discussed at this meeting. The following interests were declared:

Mr Ashton Kingsbridge EIP SCITT Operating Officer/Consultant  
Northern Schools MAT  
Department for Education Consultant  
Baker Dearing Educational Trust Senior Education Consultant  
Wigan Youth Zone Board Member  
ASCL, Institute of Directors (MINSTD)  
FRSA  
Director and Trustee of GM UTC, Oldham

Mrs Darbyshire	Kingsbridge EIP SCITT Director Wigan Road Management Company Director FASNA
Mrs Wood	Kingsbridge EIP SCITT Director Ofsted Inspector
Mrs Lewis	Westbridge Teaching School Director Self-employed School Improvement Consultant
Mr Sweeney	Platt Bridge Community Centre Limited Director Abram Ward Community Co-operative Limited St Mary's CE Primary School LA Governor

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD ON TUESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016**

- a. The minutes of the meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016 were approved as a true and accurate record.
- b. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016 were as follows:
  - For clarification - PS Financials is the new accounting package that has been introduced – it is separate to the new IT system.
  - Item 12 – Kingsbridge: For clarification, the charity and the company have been wound down but the SCITT continues to operate.

#### **5. HEADTEACHER/HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORTS**

Reports from both schools had been circulated prior to the meeting and accepted to the LABs. Directors were happy to accept the reports.

Mr Ashton raised the point that the role of the Directors, and therefore the Board, is to hold the Headteachers of the two schools to account, so at some point the Board needs to discuss the reports. Mr Pugh suggested that they have already been looked at in detail by the LABs. It was suggested that both reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and Directors could ask any questions arising from the reports at the meeting. Mr Ashton requested sight of the reports further in advance of meetings. Mrs Lewis suggested that the Board should have sight of the LAB minutes to ensure that challenging questions are being asked. It was also suggested that the Board have access to the LAB documents at the same time as the LAB members. Mrs Darbyshire suggested that Year 6 and Year 11 data be presented to this meeting as part of the data update. (This had not been available at the most recent LABs as screening had only just been completed). After discussion it was agreed that Directors will access documents for LABs via the GVO and that data is to be shared with Directors at the same time as with LAB members.

#### **6. DATA UPDATES**

##### **a. Platt Bridge**

Mrs Darbyshire shared the current data profile for attainment for Y6. It was noted that 80% of pupils are at age related expectations for reading. Writing is at 68% and is expected to improve following moderation to above 70%. Pupils are being tested on areas of the maths curriculum that has not yet been taught, but by the time SATs are taken all areas will have been covered several times. A number of children are due to move from working towards to age related imminently. One class is working at 71% combined reading, writing and maths, and the other at 57% combined. The full cohort is currently at 62%, with a target of 68% for the year. The combined floor target last year was 65%. New tracking sheets have been brought in to identify gaps and it is looking more positive than last year.

Directors commented that writing and maths are very positive, it can be seen that the children are very enthusiastic about what they are learning. Mrs Darbyshire advised that Year 4 and Year 6 have already been identified as priority areas for the Summer term.

Directors asked the following questions:

Q: What happened prior to the streaming in Year 6?

A: There were two teachers; there are now four teachers enabling smaller groups and more individual time, which leads to accelerated progress.

Q: Are the Greater Depth pupils the same children?

A: They usually would be for reading and writing, but not necessarily for maths. Also, writing skills develop after reading, which is why data in Year 1 and Year 2 looks different.

Mrs Lewis advised that she had been in to school recently for a Pupil Premium review, and commented on the quality of writing in Year 6.

Mrs Darbyshire advised that in higher year groups, there are still mid-year admissions due to not being a full cohort, which affects the data. Two sets of data have been prepared to show the impact of this. Lower year groups are full and all have accessed the new curriculum, gaining the skills required, resulting in less gaps to plug later on.

## **b. Rose Bridge**

Mrs Wood advised that the floor measure for secondary schools is Progress 8 and schools have been advised not to attempt to calculate this. The other measure of significance is the basic measure – English and Maths. In terms of English Language and English Literature, the highest result counts for the basics measure.

Mrs Wood explained that the FFT50 measure is the average nationally, with the FFT20 being the top 20% nationally. Also, it is not known what the grading system will look like for Maths and English so predictions are unlikely to be very accurate. Directors noted that in English and Maths grades are changing from A\*-G to 9-1.

However, at the moment, English screening indicates school being above FFT20 with Maths close to FFT50. Recent information is that there will be national reporting on the number of students achieving a Grade 4+ and a Grade 5+ and that the entry requirement to sixth form is going to be Grade 4.

Numerous interventions are taking place; however, some students are struggling to interpret the questions with the new specification Maths exam. Students will either take a Foundation or Higher paper in Maths, but English is the same for all students.

Based on last year's screening, students are at a higher level than last year, but Directors noted that the paper are more difficult than last year. Moderation with other schools across the Borough have taken place and Rose Bridge is in line with some other schools.

It was noted that exams start on 13<sup>th</sup> May and students remain in school until their last exam with no study leave.

Attendance for Year 11 is currently at 97%.

Discussion took place about an initiative where students on a gap year after taking A levels come in and work with students in school.

### **c. Recommendations from LABs**

Documents were tabled and discussed as follows:

#### **Platt Bridge:**

Staffing – Mrs Darbyshire has reviewed performance management evidence and although attainment targets are not all on track, there is evidence to demonstrate pupil progress where this is the case.

Governance – Mrs Foster asked Directors to consider Mrs Davies' appointment to the LAB. It was agreed that as she has not attended meetings, her appointment would be rescinded. After discussion, Directors ratified the appointment of Mr Wood to the LAB. It was noted that a new parent governor has also been elected.

Mrs Darbyshire asked Directors to approve a change in the constitution of the LABs to allow three staff governors, the Headteacher, a member of teaching staff and a member of support staff. This was agreed.

Action: Platt Bridge to conduct an election process for a member of teaching staff.

#### **Rose Bridge:**

Positive thought - Mrs Wood advised that the girls' football team have reached the final.

Increase in PAN – this is on hold until confirmed by the LA. If it does go ahead, an application will be submitted for the growth fund.

Ofsted – The criteria for inspection of converter academies has changed from “within the seventh term” to “within three years of opening”.

Science – Mrs Wood advised Directors of the issues with Science and the plans in place to address these.

Directors noted that absences and exclusions are below national averages.

SIF bid – The outcome is still awaited. Mr Ashton suggested considering an EFA capital bid for a whole school build would be less disruption. This was discussed.

## **7. CEO REPORT**

A document had been circulated prior to meeting. Of particular note:

- National Funding Formula – Directors noted that income offset the impact of the NFF. Additionally, both schools have been briefed and are planning for cuts.

- RSC meeting – Mrs Darbyshire fed back from the meeting in January which mainly focussed on data. Recommendations have not yet been received in writing although the meeting was very positive. CFAT is now on the list for sponsorship and has received growth funding. Mr Ashton indicated that part of the growth fund is related to governance.
- Review and analysis project – Directors were informed that this is about looking at efficiencies, not reducing staff.
- Regional growth bid – Noted and discussed previously.

The remainder of this agenda item was moved to the end of the meeting.

## **8. HR and FINANCE UPDATE**

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Discussion took place about recent appointments and resignations.

DBS checks for existing staff - Mr Holden referred Directors to this item which was a matter arising from the last meeting. Mr Holden shared options, including costs, so that Directors could determine the frequency of DBS renewals for existing staff. Michael Prior (responsible officer) recommended best practice is that renewals take place between five and seven years. After discussion, it was agreed to renew DBS checks every seven years for existing staff. Governors and Trustees will renew every four years (although there is no cost for this as volunteers). Mrs Wood suggested adding a trigger on to the Single Central Record six months in advance of renewal.

Apprenticeship levy – Mr Holden provided information to Directors on the impact this will have on CFAT. At present, there are three apprenticeships across the organisation. The Board were asked to consider how the levy should be paid/charged across the organisation. After discussion, it was agreed to increase the current top slice by 0.5% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and centrally fund the levy. Mr Holden to liaise with Mr Ashton to investigate whether Kingsbridge can be recognised as a provider of apprenticeships which would provide additional income for the organisation. It was agreed to delegate a decision around this to Mr Pugh and Mrs Darbyshire.

Policies:

- a. DBS checks – addressed above.
- b. Probationary period policy – Discussion took place about the probationary period and appraisal period running in parallel. Mr Holden recommended a probation of three months in most circumstances, but this could be extended to six months if necessary. It was agreed to adopt the policy for all new staff with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017.
- c. Buying and selling annual leave – Mr Holden advised that this was applicable to those members of staff who have transferred from Wigan Council (Startwell), who are employed full year, and who have had this benefit prior to joining the organisation. The policy was accepted.
- d. Safer recruitment policy – This policy was accepted.
- e. Social media policy – This policy was accepted.
- f. TOIL policy – This was tabled at the meeting. Directors were advised that this would normally be for staff who work overseas over a weekend. The policy was approved.

IR35 – Mr Holden explained that this immediately affects one Kingsbridge consultant. A meeting has been arranged to discuss this with the individual concerned.

ISS Cleaning – Directors were informed that the current contract has been extended to 31.10.17. Directors were asked to consider proposals for after that date. After discussion, it was agreed that Directors would like further information around costs and benefits/pitfalls. In the meantime, the LA require an urgent decision of whether to include the organisation in their re-tendering exercise. It was agreed that further information would be provided to Mrs Darbyshire and Mr Pugh to make a decision.

Service level agreements 2017/18 – Mrs Frost advised that the only issue this year is around security contracts as the LA have changed provider. Directors were provided with options for consideration. After discussion, it was agreed not to enter into a SLA with Wigan but to go directly to UIS, and to use Central Watch for CCTV monitoring.

Spending to date – Mrs Frost reported that budget monitoring reports have gone to LABs. Key points were highlighted in the report.

Kingsbridge – a report was circulated to Directors. Directors noted that percentages were very similar to last year.

Balances – Mr Ashton asked what balances are being held for. Mrs Frost advised that the 3-5 year forecast, together with the introduction of the National Funding Formula, indicates that some reserves will be needed.

PS Financials – implementation of the new system is under way.

Budget 2017/18 – Information was shared with Directors. Budget forecast and 3-5 year budget will be brought to the next meeting for approval.

Procurement – Directors were informed that dates have been booked to look at closer working together on joint procurement.

Bank accounts – Directors agreed to add Mr Holden as an additional signatory to the Trust account for practical reasons.

IT – Mr Holden reported that the cloud based solution is being phased in across the Trust. This will be rolled out to all staff from 1<sup>st</sup> September.

Risk Registers – After discussion it was agreed to delegate this to Mrs Frost. Further information to be circulated.

## **9. GOVERNANCE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. Board Committees  
To be discussed at confidential items later.
- b. Matters arising from LAB minutes and reports  
The Board ratified the Admissions decision for Platt Bridge.
- c. NGA Membership

Directors were advised that all were now members of NGA. Directors to check if receiving e-mails and updates from the NGA and advise Mrs Frost if any issues.

d. Director training update

Directors were informed that Mrs Wood and Mrs Shelford are meeting to discuss training for LABs, particularly around the new RAISE online. It was suggested that all should undertake training on safeguarding, safer recruitment and Prevent. Trustees will be invited to attend. Dates will be circulated to Directors when available.

Mr Ashton fed back from the most recent Governors' Forum meeting and Directors Briefing.

Mrs Darbyshire advised that there will be some training included at the Conference in May.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence to report.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

2017/18 meetings - The meeting schedule for the next academic year was discussed. It was suggested that LAB meetings should feed in to Board meetings. Mrs Darbyshire to liaise with schools and share further when dates are available.

International work – It was agreed that authorisation forms should be completed and kept centrally for international work. Delegation for approval was delegated to Mr Pugh

## **12. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Directors were reminded that the usual confidentiality applies to the discussions during the meeting.

## **13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 5.30pm

Mrs Foster left the meeting at 8.10pm in order for confidential discussions to take place.