



## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### PUBLIC MINUTES

<b>Date</b>	:	Thursday, 17 September 2020	
<b>Time</b>	:	16:00	
<b>Venue</b>	:	Virtual via Zoom	
<b>Present</b>	:	Asha Choolhun	Trustee
		Carly Clarke	Trustee
		Clive-Anthony Douglas	Trustees / Chair
		Mohammed Mamun	Trustee
		Phillip Minns	Trustee / Vice-Chair
		Nina Panayis	Trustee
		Patricia Regis	Trustee
		John Rolfe	Trustee
		Rosemary Tehrani	Trustee
<b>In attendance</b>	:	Tom Canning OBE	Chief Executive Officer
		Sarah Lack	Deputy CEO
		Steven Lock	Chief Finance and Operating Officer
		Rose Nelson	Finance Specialist
		Marc Green	Clerk

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The Code of Conduct for Trustees requires Trustees to be honest and open with regard to conflicts of interest (either real or perceived). Trustees must not use their position for personal gain in business, political or social relationships. Therefore, a Trustee who has, or may be perceived to have, such a personal interest in a particular matter under consideration should declare that interest, withdraw from all discussions relating to it and take no part in any vote on such matter.

Items marked \* are those in which a majority of Trustees may have an interest because of some shared attribute. When considering these items, Trustees should aim to achieve a balanced view, paying particular attention to the sources of information and advice, and remind themselves of their duties as Trustees and to act in the public interest.

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#### 1. MEETING OPENING

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 No apologies were received.
- 1.3 The Clerk noted that the meeting was quorate.

#### 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS, PECUNIARY OR OTHERWISE IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest on any item on the agenda.

#### 3. CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP LIST

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- 3.1 Trustees were asked to consider the re-appointment of Clive-Anthony Douglas [CAD] as Trustee for a further four-year term with an appointment date of 21 November 2020 – and as Chair of the Board of Trustees for the next 12 months.

**AC seconded and approved unanimously**

- 3.2 Trustees were asked to consider the re-appointment of Phillip Minns [PM] as Trustee for a further four-year term with an appointment date of 21 November 2020 – and as Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees for the next 12 months.

**AC seconded and approved unanimously**

**4. PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING AND ACTIONS ARISING**

- 4.1 The minutes of the Board Meeting held on Tuesday, 14 July 2020 were **AGREED** and **RATIFIED** as a correct record.
- 4.2 There were no actions arising from the previous minutes.

**5. MAIN BUSINESS**

- 5.1 To receive and ratify 2020/2021 Budget:

RN presented the spreadsheet to the Board noting that this was the second iteration as a further funding announcement from Government had been made which had changed the budget and forecast – hence the presentation in depth.

**IN BRIEF:**

Expenditure is up overall whilst roll is down slightly.

Total expenditure has risen year on year, but total reserve has increased with a surplus expected again this year of approx. 5% across the Trust.

**BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS:**

Teachers Pay Award will not be confirmed until October so staffing costs are based on last year's figures – current and expected.

Uplift has been revised from 3% to 2.7% which has been agreed by 2 of the 3 unions but the third is expected to ratify this before the next meeting.

A traffic light system was presented to show which schools were struggling to meet the 5% budget surplus expected. All schools are expected to be able to adhere to the Trust's funding / expenditure blueprint

CAD asked RN to add the percentages of each school – either over or under the 5% threshold – to make it easier to see where they currently are.

TC clarified that staffing levels were being discussed as potential areas of levelling for thresholds but that there is natural "wastage" and that the colours should not be viewed in terms of failure more as work in progress; both RN and TC the Trust is still



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one of the best performers across the UK and this is an exercise in being better and that the reserve pot will continue to grow leaving the trust financially robust.

AC asked about local authority special needs funding – TC answered that it was a work in progress.

**NB** Rosetta is not in red as they are currently investing heavily in curriculum and capital items and this would not be replicated in forthcoming years

**RN will update the trustees on this status month-by-month**

All the schools are being supported to find solutions to any budget issues rather than being put under pressure

**PM thanked TC and RN and her team for all their hard work and for presenting a complicated budget so succinctly**

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON THE BUDGET AS PRESENTED:**

- Q: AC asked for confirmation of why there was a rise in the costs  
A: TC noted that pensions and teacher pay rises over the slight fall in the roll was the main contributor
- Q: AC asked if Covid 19 affected the roll  
A: TC stated “yes” due in part to non-returning children from overseas, isolating children / families, and parental fear
- Q: NP asked about additional provisions for working parents  
A: TC said that the Trust has created and promoted many new add-ons to help encourage parents and therefore increase the roll especially in after-school care provision
- Q: RT asked about staffing value for money with SLTs, senior staff and executive teams  
A: TC noted that they were using job descriptions to identify duplication and Head Teachers were being encouraged to streamline their staffing costs where possible
- Q: MM asked what was being done to streamline staffing profiles across the Trust  
A: TC replied that whatever changes are made need to be sustainable both upwards and downwards
- Q: AC asked if this had an effect on staff retention  
A: TC did not believe that it did rather that it was mainly not duplicating services and getting the best and most out of existing staff in the most positive ways possible – and that staff morale was very good
- Q: CC asked about healthcare and SEN plans re contact ratios  
A: TC noted that class contact was encouraged at a maximum level



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**Budget was ratified unanimously with a further vote of thanks to RN and her team and to SGL and his team**

CAD highlighted that the Government has awarded £80 to every pupil for Covid 19 support and recovery. All the head teachers are aware of this and plans are being drawn up for the use of this extra funding

5.2 Trustees are asked to update their declarations of interest on Governor Hub.

**Trustees should sign into GovernorHub, and update their declarations as soon as possible**

5.3 Trustees are asked to read and sign Code of Conduct [A2]

**SGL to send via "eversign"**

5.4 Trustees are asked complete level one safeguarding training.

**SGL will send link to safeguard training**

5.5 Trustees are asked to read and pay due regard to any updates to *'Keeping Children Safe in Education – 2020'* and confirm this on Governor Hub. [A3]

**SGL has set this up on Governor Hub**

5.6 Trustees to identify at least 2 Trustees to undertake Safer Recruitment Training.

**AC reported that she has completed the training on Educare and will send a copy of her certificate. CC was also asked to be the second trustee to take the course.**

5.7 CEO Update

In week one of the return roll was at 80% of the level prior to lockdown (96%)

This week (2) it was 90% and whilst some of the students are still not able to return, the roll is looking very healthy.

Curriculums have been revised to plug the gaps in reading, writing and mathematics with additional mental health and well-being support being put in place.

In summary – the children are very happy to be back in school.

There are still very big communication issues with Central Government and a wide variance in interpretations of the Covid related advice by both parents, children, and local authority. However, the Trust has ensured regulations and advice are accounted for Trust-wide and additional parental support is being given through the Family Centres. Each week is getting better, but it is "sad" to not have any singing, concerts, or music.



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MM noted that infection rates in Newham were rising and that a second wave is expected. MM also noted that many of the NHS staff in Newham send their children to the Trust's schools and that they were confident about the handling of the Covid provisioning and were also very thankful.

TC noted that all the schools are prepared for a second lockdown and if that were to happen, they are able to provide all the students with robust remote learning opportunities.

RT asked if there had been any positive Covid 19 tests.

TC replied that there were none directly in any of the schools from returned students but that all the staff were briefed and ready when and if it did.

#### 5.8 Chair Update

CAD wanted to inform the Board that the Trust had won a Silver Award for Impact Through Partnership at the 2020 Pearson National Teaching Awards.

CAD informed the Board that he had met with the Head Teachers and that he would be visiting all the schools individually to see how the Board can help.

JR mentioned that the Board should offer virtual tours of the Trust facilities to the staff of the Trust working overseas

#### 5.9 Trustees to read and pay due regard to any updates to the Academies Financial Handbook – 2020. [A5]

**SGL – signing sheet circulated on “eversign”**

#### 5.10 Trustees to note any visits or training undertaken since the last meeting.

**None were noted**

#### 5.11 Trustees are asked to approve the following policies:

- 5.9.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Statement. [A6]
- 5.9.2 Business Charge Card Policy. [A7]
- 5.9.3 Central Funding and Appeals Policy. [A8]
- 5.9.4 FOI Policy. [A9]
- 5.9.5 Gifts and Hospitality Policy. [A10]
- 5.9.6 Local Governor Visits Policy. [A11]
- 5.9.7 Trustee and Local Governor Expenses Policy. [A12]
- 5.9.8 Travel to Work Policy. [A13]
- 5.9.9 Staff Expenses Policy. [A14]
- 5.9.10 Whistleblowing Policy. [A15]
- 5.9.11 Admissions Policy. [A16]
- 5.9.12 Attendance Policy. [A17]
- 5.9.13 Behaviour and Disciplinary Statement. [A18]
- 5.9.14 Complaints Policy. [A19]



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## NOTES

Re: Local Governor Visitor Policy – AC asked for clarification on how often governors should visit their assigned schools as it is not specifically in the policy. SL said that this can be added into the Policy that it is up to the discretion of the individual but should be more than once – and that it can be done virtually rather than in-person.

**CAD – policies as listed above will be approved and signed off by the Chair**

5.12 The Board agreed to remove Nur Uddin from the Rosetta Local Governing Board for non-attendance.

5.13 PR asked about the status of the panel re Black Lives Matter discussed at the last meeting

TC stated that it was in the Standards Committee and would be presented on at the next Board Meeting and that the schools would also be invited to present their work on this issue.

## 6. STANDING ITEMS

6.1 No Item to report.

## 7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

7.1 No urgent business was tabled or discussed.

## 8. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 The date of the next Board Meeting will be communicated to Trustees.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 17:35.



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