

By Brook Valley Academy Trust
 (Company Registration Number 8020467)
Academy Board Meeting
Thursday 19th November 2020
Virtual Meeting in Accordance with
Covid 19 Guidance
and
Article 123 of the Articles of Association



Minutes

Present: Graham Pike (Head teacher) (“**GP**”), Keith Ernest (Chair and Member) (“**KE**”), Lisa Nicolson (“**LN**”), Carrie Davies (“**CB**”), Deborah Henshall (“**DH**”), David New (“**DN**”), Jaclyn Cross (“**JC**”), Lakmini Harkus (“**LH**”), Rosemary Jago (“**RJ**”) and Anjali Kanagaratnam (“**AK**”)

In Attendance: Emma Dadd (Finance Officer) (“**ED**”), Michelle Hocking (Clerk/Company Secretary) (“**MH**”) and (for agenda items 1 - 3 only) Liz Townend (“**LT**”) (Director & Representative of Diocese of Bristol Academies Company (“**DOBAC**”), Emma Langley (“**EL**”) (Director and Representative of DOBAC), James Skinner (Member) (“**JS**”), Elizabeth Gilbertson (Member) (“**EG**”) and Dan Slocombe (Auditors’ representative) (“**DS**”)

Apologies: Beth Borthwick (“**BeB**”) and Martin Lowe (“**ML**”)

Item	Minute	Action
	Opening Prayer AK led the opening prayer	
1	Welcome and Apologies KE took the chair and opened the meeting at 6.00pm. Apologies were noted and accepted from BeB and ML. KE declared that a quorum was present and formally welcomed everyone to the meeting, particular DS and DOBAC representatives – in attendance for the AGM.	
2	Pecuniary and Business Interests Register It was noted that all present had completed the annual Related Parties Declaration of Interests forms and, save as declared by staff in relation to any Pay Policy/salary discussions, no interests were declared in the business of this meeting.	
3	AGM Business Items: It was noted that the Accounts, including the auditors’ report, Trustees’ Report, the Audit Summary and Letter of Representation had been circulated (by email and uploaded to File Manager) prior to the meeting and it was presumed that all present had read them.	

Review of the Accounts

DS highlighted as follows:

- Statement of Financial Activities indicated income (funding for the academy's educational operations – comprising grants including Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Grant) had increased from £802K in the previous year to £855K
- The above was based on the pupil numbers from the previous census and so, despite Covid 19, the academy's main income stream remains fixed
- Donations & Capital Grants fell from £17K the previous year to £14K
- Income from Other Trade Activities (Trips & Residential, Uniform Sales and 'Other') had been impacted by Covid 19 and – particularly the fact that the academy had not been fully functioning for around half of the year due to lockdown so wraparound care income fell – reduced from £116K in the previous year to £80K
- Total income risen from £936K in the previous year to £951K
- Expenditure had increased from £785K to £1.1m, largely due to:
 - Movement on depreciation (previous over-depreciation on buildings led to a credit last year but ongoing charge this year)
 - Staff costs have increased by £70K (predominantly extra support staff costs and 2.5% teachers' salary income)
 - Total Funds Brought Forward = £127K – which is a reasonable position given the challenges this year
- Balance Sheet:
 - Tangible Fixed Assets (land, buildings (+ improvements to them) and equipment) – reduction in value this year as there have been few additions and there has been a depreciation charge
 - Current Assets: slight outflow – debtors are mostly prepaid expenses and accrued income (see note 14 of the Accounts)
 - Creditors: Level remains relatively stable (up from £74K in the previous year to £76K) – accruals and deferred income remaining static at £39K
- Pension Liability: The long-term liability, based on actuarial valuation, has risen from £267K to £338K
- Net Current Assets have reduced from £176K to £132K – again, not bad in a challenging year (when, despite some government support, e.g. furlough/grant, income generally down due to fall in wraparound care).

Audit Summary Document

DS highlighted:

- Significant Risk & Audit Approach:
 - Risk of Management Override: audit work in this area successfully completed – no evidence of management override and no significant matters to be reported
 - Revenue Recognition: audit work in this area successfully completed - revenue recognition is not materially misstated and no significant matters to be reported
 - Correct Accounting for Restricted Funds: audit work in this area successfully completed - restricted income has been correctly accounted for and no significant matters to be reported
 - Covid 19: audit work in this area remains open up to the point of signing the financial statements - at this stage no significant matters to be reported identified
- Going Concern:
 - Auditors are satisfied that it is appropriate for the financial statements to have been drawn up on the going concern basis - taking into account all relevant matters of which auditors aware and have considered a future period of at least one year from the date on which the financial statements were approved
 - Plans for future actions are feasible and it is believed their outcome will improve the situation
 - Auditors are satisfied that sufficient disclosure has been made to give a true and fair view
- Accounting systems and internal controls – minor items’ recommendations:
- Ensure capital items are identified as such and posted to the correct nominal codes
 - Create and maintain a fixed asset register
 - Prepare and maintain a prepayments and accruals schedule that tracks recurring entries as well as one-off amounts (reviewed as part of month end processes)
- Overall “clean bill of health” – particularly given that this is the first year of auditing by these auditors
- The note on Gong Concern is required by regulations in light of Covid 19 issues – but the board should be satisfied that the academy remains a going concern (i.e. able to meet its liabilities as they fall due) for 12 months from the date of signing the Accounts as the main stream of income is guaranteed and will still remain even in the event of further lockdown

Letter of Representation

DS explained that this letter is signed at the same time as the

	<p>Accounts to confirm that all relevant information has been made available.</p> <p>Subsequent Events None, so far as the auditors and directors were aware.</p> <p>Electronic Publication DS confirmed that the Accounts needed to be filed by the end of January but could and would be filed prior to that.</p> <p>Thanks, were extended to ED for all her hard work in concluding the successful audit.</p> <p><i>The meeting adjourned at 6.20pm to allow the AGM to take place.</i></p> <p><i>The meeting reconvened, DS, JS, EG, LT and EL left the meeting at 6.35pm.</i></p>	
4	<p>Note/ratification of email approvals:</p> <p>(a) EIA Committees' Lists</p> <p>(b) Policies:</p> <p>(i) Learning Outside the Classroom</p> <p>(ii) Pay</p> <p>(iii) Fire & Emergency Evacuation</p> <p>(iv) HR Policies (Appraisal & Capability, Disciplinary, Flexible Working, Grievance, Maternity, No Smoking, Paternity Leave, Social Media, SOSR)</p> <p>(v) Staff/Governor Expenses/Allowances</p> <p>(vi) EYFS</p> <p>(vii) SEND</p> <p>(viii) Pupil Premium</p> <p>(c) Other documents:</p> <p>(i) Scheme of Delegation/Terms of Reference</p> <p>(ii) Minutes of last meeting (+ matters arising not covered elsewhere)</p> <p>It was acknowledged that each of the documents listed in 4(b)(i)-(v), 4(b)(vii) and 4(c)(ii) above (inclusive) had been circulated prior to the meeting and all present had reviewed them. It was also noted that MH had asked all committees agree a list of policies delegated to them which should have Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). F&P Committee considered many of the policies for which it was responsible, being largely unaltered model HR policies are covered by a simple acknowledgement that the policies' providers have conducted appropriate</p>	<p>DN and JC to arrange for consideration of EIA at committees</p> <p>MH to add the following to the next FGB agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIA Committees' Lists • EYFS Policy • (subject to outcome of in-school discussions) Pupil Premium Policy

	<p>equality impact assessments. T&L and F&E to consider list of all policies they are responsible for which required an individual EIA.</p> <p>DN explained that the school's Pupil Premium dealings were compliant – including publishing both Pupil Premium Strategy and Spending Reports – and it was unclear whether a separate Pupil Premium Policy was necessary or desirable. GP confirmed that he was checking this with the Inclusion Manager in school.</p> <p>DN also reported that the EYFS Policy had been reviewed at Monday's T&L meeting, minor amendments to it were being made by the in-school team and it should be ready for approval at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that, subject to completion of EIA's (to the extent deemed necessary pursuant to the agreed EIA Lists to be produced by committees and ratified at the next meeting), approval of each of the documents listed in 4(b)(i)-(v), 4(b)(vii) and 4(c)(ii) be and is confirmed and ratified.</p> <p>It was noted that the above approval included agreement that the last minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting on 17th September 2020</p> <p>RJ asked committee chairs to send updated Terms of Reference to her for inclusion in an updated Scheme of Delegation.</p>	<p>KE to electronically sign the last minutes and return them to MH and MH to file the minutes as appropriate</p> <p>DN and JC to send ToRs to RJ, RJ to incorporate ToRs in updated Scheme of Delegation and MH to add Scheme of Delegation ratification to the next agenda</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Matters arising not covered elsewhere</p> <p>All matters complete, covered by this evening's agenda or superseded save that, for the record, GP confirmed all had completed Prevent training as required (to maintain work/life balance during these particularly challenging times, provision had been made for completion during staff meeting/school day).</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Headteacher Report (including School Improvement Action Plan (SIAP) Update)</p> <p>It was noted that GP's Headteacher's Report had been circulated (by way of upload to File Manager) prior to the meeting</p> <p>GP highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessments were being regularly reviewed 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly amended school start, and finish times were working well • Visitors and parents had responded well to additional measures – e.g. wearing of masks – during Lockdown 2 • Whilst extra curriculum clubs were fewer, opportunities for continuing essential curriculum visitors were still being taken e.g. Rev. Marc, AK, and socially distanced safeguarding meetings with parents • Children were used to being in their bubbles now and responding well • Staff are committed to giving children the best Christmas experience possible within the confines of national restrictions • The School Improvement Adviser (SIA) was impressed with work in Term 1, including observing that the School Improvement Plan indicated that the school was on the right track, the Senior Leadership Team shared a cohesive view and were in classrooms monitoring and progressing Teaching & Learning as much as possible • Community Links continue to be developed – with particular focus on supporting the school’s Christian ethos and worship • Staff are continuing to work hard on maximising enrichment opportunities • Attendance good: 97.51% <p>GP emphasised that staff are brilliant and working extremely hard – governors are encouraged to show appreciation where possible.</p> <p>Questions were invited. There were no questions, and it was agreed that GP’s report was clear and comprehensive.</p>	
6	<p>Safeguarding Governor/Single Central Record Update</p> <p><i>Safeguarding</i></p> <p>It was noted that LN’s Report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was presumed that all present had reviewed it.</p> <p>LN reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She met with GP in October – at which an impressive amount of training was reported • Just after Half Term LN and GP together completed the annual audit – in which all areas were judged to 	

	<p>be Effective of Highly Effective (4 Effective + 4 Highly Effective) – although this assessment was self-evaluation, it was based on a list of criteria and was the same as the last two years – clearly indicating that the school is operating over and above mandatory requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (all non-statutory) actions arising from the audit – which LN will follow up on during subsequent visits <p><i>Single Central Record (SCR)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check has not happened in person – although meeting scheduled with Office Manager for after the current lockdown • LN has no concerns – particularly as the Office Manager gave very rapid and thorough answers to queries raised by email – although will check in person when permissible <p>In response to questions raised by board members, LN confirmed that the 3 components of the audit action plan covered areas deemed Effective and were intended to help those areas move towards becoming Highly Effective. She and GP both also confirmed that the assessments were based on detailed and honest reflection – the school was very close to being Highly Effective in all areas and associated confidence that no child will slip through the net.</p>	
7	<p>Link Governors Update LN highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuring a highly effective link governor input remained an ongoing work in progress • During the current lockdown governor visits were not encouraged but governors should use the time wisely to reflect on how link governors can be more effective for the school and the governing body <p>The board considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inefficacy of historic linking to specific classes – as this tended to result in provision of very variable coverage • Suggestions to link to the school’s key focus areas: e.g. static core + changing additional subjects and key SIAP foci • Suggestions to more closely link with committees/sub-groups e.g. F&E focus on Ethos, RSE & F&P on staff wellbeing, good use of resources 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of governors making longer visits if feasible (i.e. a whole morning rather than just one lesson) – to observe a variety of activities both inside and outside the classroom including playtime, act of worship, etc • Revision of Visit Forms to ensure both useful feedback for everyone and a robust evidence trail for inspection purposes • Provision of clear examples of what is witnessed e.g. individualised learning, social awareness, etc via specifically focused learning walks and speaking with all staff (not just teachers) 	
<p>8</p>	<p>Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Committee Update DN highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two meetings this academic year • 12th October meeting: the focus was provision of oversight/critical friendship during the pandemic – altered approach required for lockdown 2 • 2nd meeting: in the absence of Subject Leader Reports or book reviews this was a very short visit • Online Prospectus was identified as requiring update (which RJ has now kindly done) <p>18th January is the next T&L meeting – to which all are warmly welcome.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Foundation & Ethos Committee Update JC highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two meetings this academic year – last one last week • Bristol Diocese Self-Assessment was reviewed • New Relationships, Sex, Health Education requirements reviewed • Following discussion, it was agreed that it would be useful to discuss with the wider FGB the purpose and content of parent questionnaires to ensure that they are gathering useful information <p>The board discussed questionnaires are noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year there were 60 questionnaires completed and returned • Useful for SIAMS due to summary of free comments which the inspector found useful • Inclusion of ethos questions desirable • Electronic version would be good (e.g. Microsoft Forms, ParentPay) • Detailed analysis and feedback on responses/key 	<p>JC/F&E to circulate preliminary revised questionnaire questions for</p>

	<p>developments arising required to ensure parents recognise the value of completing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted ParentView Questions -v- Questions to help address key SIP issues <p>It was agreed that F&E take the lead on full review of Questionnaires' content and delivery.</p> <p>There were no comments or queries on the F&E report.</p>	<p>comment</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Finance, Premises, Staffing & HR Committee Update RJ highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes circulated • Regarding the auditors' disclaimer re internal processes and controls – a meeting is scheduled with the Office Team to ensure processes are clearly defined, being consistently adhered to, and reflect the written policies, manuals, and best practice advice • Key discussions focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff and performance management updates ○ Analysis of auditors' report recommendations (ED gave the committee confidence that items raised are in hand) ○ Recommendation of policies ○ Buildings/maintenance (including IT tender, deferral of non-urgent expenditure e.g. upgrading lighting in newer part of the building and upgrades requiring further consideration e.g. playground markings, approval of car park markings work and significant ongoing trees maintenance) ○ Health & Safety handover – thanks to BeB, KE and Office Manager <p>It was noted that staff were working towards objectives set out in an Outdoor Learning Action Plan which is available on F&P sub-group pages of File Manager (including development of forest school capability within the school grounds)</p> <p>There were no comments or queries on the F&P report.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Governor Training and Participation JC: Attended Headteacher Performance Management Briefing, Bristol Schools New RSHE Curriculum session and Governors' Conference AK: Has started New Governors' Induction Training</p>	<p>JC and AK to cascade training materials via MH</p>

12	AOB KE thanked MH for her Clerk's Handbook Update note circulated via File Manager.	
13	How have we contributed to the vision of By Brook Valley C of E Primary School today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of relevant policies • Link Governor Update – included detailed group reflection on maximising the impact of link governor input • Consideration of appropriate updates to questionnaires to ensure capture of relevant information which helps inform further in-school developments • Review and acknowledgement of the school operating as a sustainable 'going concern' • Assessment and acknowledgement of the school's high safeguarding effectiveness 	N/A
14	Date of next meeting: Thursday 14th January 2021 - via virtual conference facilities unless guidance advises otherwise	Note

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.50pm

Signed.....

Date.....