



Company no: 07729878

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SHARE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of SHARE Multi Academy Trust held remotely at 8am on Thursday 11 May 2023.

Present

Mr D Quinn (Chair), Mr J McNally, Mr R Amos, Mr A Kent, Mr N Javid

In Attendance

Mrs D Howard (Director of Operations)
 Mrs C Potterton (Director of Finance)
 Mrs J Carr (Executive Head Teacher)
 Mr D Wadsworth (Executive Head Teacher)
 Ms M Lee (Director of Primary Academies)
 Mrs A Eastham (PA to CEO)
 Mr J Piggott (Minute Clerk)

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions	Action – who/by
1.	<p>Apologies, Consent and Declarations of LAAPS and Interests</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Day, Prof J Keay and Mr M Dunkley (consent).</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2.	<p>Matters for any Other Urgent Business</p> <p>The following item of Other Urgent Business was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation for a parent governor to become a Trust governor 	
3.	<p>Representation</p> <p>There were no matters of representation for discussion.</p>	

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4.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 9 March 2023 and Any Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that any actions arising from the previous meeting were either in hand or for discussion on this agenda.</p>	
5.	<p>Updates and reports from NE Directors</p> <p>There were no reports for this meeting. It was noted that there will be Health and Safety report and Safeguarding report shared at the next meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>Primary Update</p> <p>Ms M Lee reported on KS2 outcomes and provided an update on the improvement plans in place at Heaton Avenue and Luck Lane.</p> <p>The Ofsted report at Heaton Avenue had been disappointing with an Action Plan having been put in place to seek to address issues raised. There was some frustration around Phonics as leaders had indicated that they were in a good place but this proved not to be the case. Phonics has since been reviewed across all primaries, and training needs and resources identified.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that new leadership is required to drive rapid improvement at Heaton Avenue. A leadership restructure has been proposed with an aim to be implemented by 1st September 2023. DELETED – minute 11 refers.</p> <p>Ms M Lee reported that there has been a general improvement at Heaton Avenue but that the correct leaders are now needed to take things forward.</p> <p>An action plan is also in place for Luck Lane, with a focus on behaviour and on supporting teachers to improve teaching.</p> <p>Q: Can you clarify the leadership structure at Heaton Avenue? A: The current structure is a Deputy Head and four leaders of learning. The Deputy and two leaders of learning have left. The restructure proposal is to put in place a Head of the school and three Assistant Heads.</p> <p>Q: Are you confident of finding leaders of the necessary calibre, given the general shortage of heads and senior leaders? A: The situation is certainly challenging nationally but we have gone to an 'open field' and are already aware of some interest.</p>	

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	<p>Q: So is it correct that the main issue is around leadership? A: Yes. There have been two Heads in the last two years and the Deputy has left.</p> <p>Q: What was the process at Heaton Avenue whereby Phonics could look ok the day before the inspection but was found not to be? A: Part of the problem was around matching books – the Inspector was working to a fluency rate of 80% (the teacher was working to 60%) and so found books to be too difficult for pupils. The Phonics group has therefore been working on matched books and been clear on progression.</p> <p>Q: Has the fluency discrepancy above been clarified going forward? A: The 80% requirement has been shared with other primaries and was used successfully for the inspection at Luck Lane.</p> <p>Ms M Lee was thanked for her report.</p>	
7.	<p>CEO Report for Directors</p> <p>The Chief Executive’s Report for May 2023 was circulated prior to the meeting. The CEO updated the meeting.</p> <p>(a) Ofsted Inspections</p> <p>While the report for Heaton Avenue was disappointing, impressive progress had been made at Royds Hall (and Luck Lane) and at Thornhill and colleagues involved should be congratulated.</p> <p>All schools within the Trust have now been judged at least ‘good’ by Ofsted.</p> <p>(b) Strike action</p> <p>More ballots have been circulated from teaching unions for strike action. It is likely that there will be further disruption due to strikes up to Christmas. It was noted that a notification was expected from NASUWT, NAHT and ASCL. If so, this would almost certainly result in significant disruption to schools and possible full closures.</p> <p>(c) Regulatory and Commissioning Review</p> <p>The DfE recently announced an ‘Academies Regulatory and Commissioning Review’. More information would be needed to better assess the full implications for the Trust but the Trust was believed to be in a good place, with stronger trusts more likely to be encouraged to grow.</p> <p>(d) MAT Assurance Framework</p>	

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	<p>The CEO reported that he believed the framework was a reasonable way of measuring progress for an evaluation and that this would feed into next year's strategy and improvement plans. The framework might need updating when the full regulatory and commissioning review is issued.</p> <p>Q: In assessing what makes a 'strong trust', should we align our current six priorities with the five priorities of the DfE?</p> <p>A: Yes, it would be sensible to move to those new five 'pillars' although it would be difficult to do so until the government has issued figures for benchmarking.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Board approve the evaluation.</p> <p>(e) Trust Strategy</p> <p>The CEO had updated the Trust Strategy Dashboard which highlights Progress against some of the main strategic goals for this academic year. The Board noted that the dashboard was a very helpful format.</p> <p>With regard to attendance, the Trust remains ahead of national figures although the latter are currently unofficial. However attendance generally has still not recovered to the figures pre-Covid.</p> <p>Q: If the aim of 'overcoming disadvantage' is always likely to have an amber RAG rating, should we consider an alternative objective that could turn green?</p> <p>A: The strategy dealt with some very knotty problems that were nationwide issues. It was noted that gaps regarding disadvantage had been closing pre-Covid but had since re-opened. However, if we were to set lower goals, we could be accused of lacking ambition.</p> <p>Q: While noting the above, we should retain the aspiration for all children from whatever background to perform as well as those from any other. On that basis, could we remove the reference to overcoming disadvantage being likely to remain amber, but just acknowledge that it is a very challenging issue and celebrate where we are making progress rather than be seen as admitting defeat?</p> <p>A: Agreed, we can remove the amber reference and alter the tone of the statement.</p> <p>ACTION: CEO to remove the amber reference.</p> <p>The CEO reported that he was working on next year's strategy and aimed to bring this to the next Board meeting. Two features at this</p>	<p>CEO</p>

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	<p>stage were teachers' ability to assess and preparation of a new Trust handbook.</p> <p>(f) Staff, pupil and parent surveys</p> <p>The CEO report contained a selection of the feedback received from the recent surveys. While overall there was a sense of satisfaction (notably at Thornhill), certain aspects stood out including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concerns over bullying and poor behaviour at Royds Hall, however, during the recent inspection, inspectors found that staff and leaders were doing the right things. There are a number of pupils with challenging behaviour at Royds Hall. • low levels of satisfaction at Whitcliffe Mount. This is unsurprising given where the school is on its improvement journey. • low levels of staff satisfaction at Luck Lane. A new head has taken over running the school and has found lots of problems that need fixing. <p>(g) Leadership and recruitment</p> <p>A number of staff changes were happening with recruitment processes underway as a result. In particular a number of interviews for Assistant Headteachers had taken place.</p> <p>Q: What posts are being recruited to at Whitcliffe Mount?</p> <p>A: - Assistant Head for Inclusion with a focus on SEND (new post) - Assistant Head for Personal Development (new post)</p> <p>(h) Languages Hub</p> <p>The Trust had submitted an expression of interest to establish a regional languages hub, to be led by UCL. The status could help the Trust attract talented languages trainees and teachers, as well as support improvements nationally.</p> <p>RESOLVED: For the reasons set out in the CEO report, the Board was fully supportive of the submission of a full application in due course.</p> <p>(i) Safeguarding</p> <p>A full safeguarding report was set as Appendix E to the CEO report. It was noted that the next session for safeguarding managers was due to take place after half term.</p> <p>(j) Finance</p>	

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	<p>Mrs C Potterton updated the meeting on financial issues by reference to the details set out in the CEO report.</p> <p><u>2022-23 Spending Review</u> – Management accounts had been issued covering up to period 6 and these were looking positive, with no concerns to be reported to the Board. The reports indicated that the actual performance of income over expenditure was £450k surplus, against the budgeted surplus of £177k, resulting in a surplus variance of £273k. Management accounts for period 8 were in progress. Work was continuing with Heads to look into any scope for reducing spending.</p> <p><u>2023-24 Budget</u> – This had not yet been finalised but budget planning meetings had been held with all schools and the budget would be presented at the next Board meeting. Mrs Potterton would be meeting again soon with three primary schools which had consistently run up a deficit to try to identify and address any financial issues leading to such deficits.</p> <p><u>2023-24 Funding Allocations</u> – the table shows an overall increase in funding of 3%. The situation would continue to be challenging in light of expected staff salary increases of c.5%.</p> <p><u>Capital plans</u> – Trust reserves forecast to the end of 2022-23 were c.£7.5m. There are some capital project commitments including a new 3G sports pitch at Shelley College at a cost of £775k. Other projects are in their early stages but if they proceed, this would still leave reserves of c.£5m, well above the sum expected of trusts.</p> <p>Q: I am concerned that the national funding formula is not correct in that many primary schools are disproportionately adversely affected and so are really struggling financially as compared with secondary schools. Do we therefore have a moral obligation to adapt the model to address anomalies from the national formula? For example should secondary schools pay a higher percentage to the central fund?</p> <p>A: At the end of 2021/22, we wrote off the deficits for some primary schools that were in difficulty but there are no plans to do so this year. For 2023/24, there are different models to review that could recognise the different sizes of schools and allocate fixed costs more fairly. There is certainly a balance to be struck.</p> <p>Mrs C Potterton was asked to keep a close eye on this aspect and to look carefully at whether the national formula was fit for purpose in this regard.</p> <p>ACTION: Mrs C Potterton to monitor the national funding formula and consider alternative models to support primary schools.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">DoF</p>

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	<p>Q: Have you done further modelling of the budget assuming inflation at >5%?</p> <p>A: Not yet but this would be easy to do.</p> <p>ACTION: Mrs C Potterton to update the budget to include a scenario where the inflation budget assumption is >5%.</p> <p><u>Audit tender</u> – Presentations had been made at the end of April by prospective auditors. It was reported that the panel unanimously recommended the appointment of Forrester Boyd as the new auditors, on the basis that they had more experience with MATs as well as being cheaper. Their main offices were in Grimsby, with other offices across East Yorkshire but would expect to travel to the Trust where necessary.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Board approve the appointment of Forrester Boyd, for ratification by Members at the AGM.</p> <p>(l) HR and Operations</p> <p>Mrs D Howard reported on energy audits that had been carried out at Shelley College and at Millbridge. The resultant audit reports have been used to help the Trust decide how best to spend the additional capital grant which has been given to spend on energy efficiency upgrades.</p> <p>The reports were very helpful and outlined a range of initiatives to be undertaken over a period of time. The first priority was to replace existing lighting with LED lighting, which was expected to make a significant saving over time. Work was underway on a 10 year sustainability plan which was yet to be fully costed.</p> <p>The fact that the Trust had an in-house electrician meant that funding could be spent solely on materials rather than labour.</p> <p>Q: Is the electrician up to date with training to be able to sign off work satisfactorily?</p> <p>A: Yes, he undertook the necessary training course last week and is just completing outstanding tasks to become fully authorised.</p> <p>Q: With regard to HR, has there been any interest in the role of Governance Professional?</p> <p>A: There have been two expressions of interest but no applications as yet.</p> <p>(m) Trust Board Diversity Monitoring</p>	<p>DOF</p>

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	<p>Mrs A Eastham reported that new DfE guidance encouraged trusts to collect and publish diversity data about the Board.</p> <p>It was noted that strong legal advice (Browne Jacobson) was not to publish such data online due to GDPR issues. Given the relatively low number of individuals whose data would be published, it may not be possible to ensure the necessary level of anonymity.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Board agreed to follow the legal advice and to collect diversity data but not to publish this at this present time until further guidance is received.</p>	
8.	<p>Approval of policies</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Policies below be approved and adopted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Management Policy & Procedure • Bullying and Harassment at Work Policy & Procedure • Capability Policy & Procedure • Complaints Policy & Procedure • Disciplinary at Work Policy & Procedure • Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure • Flexible Working Policy & Procedure • Grievance Policy & Procedure • ICT Policy & Procedure • Leave of Absence Policy & Procedure • Management of Stress Policy & Procedure • Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy & Procedure • Recruitment Policy & Procedure • Staff Code of Conduct • Travel and Subsistence Policy & Procedure • Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure 	
9.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>There was no further correspondence for discussion.</p>	
10.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>A letter had been received from the Chair of Governors at Millbridge and Heaton Avenue, seeking support for a recommendation that a parent governor (in the second year of a four year term) be designated instead as a Trust governor, given that their child would be leaving the school in the summer. The school would advertise for a further parent governor.</p>	

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	<p>It was considered that in principle, the governor could in fact retain the status of parent governor until the end of the four year term but that the proposal would a good way to grow the governing body.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Board support the recommendation as requested.</p>	
11.	<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>RESOLVED: That part of minute 6 be excluded from the copy to be made available at the Trust, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.30am.



_____ (Chair)

Wednesday 28th June 2023

_____ (Date)