

## HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST

### Minutes for Meeting of Board of Trustees

6:00pm, Wednesday 11 October 2017

**In attendance:** Simon Kitchman (SKi), David Hartland (DH) Graeme Atkins (GA), Tony Brown (TB), Jonathan Holmes (JH), Barbara Hignett (BH), Sarah Kemp (SKe)

**Also attending:** Charlotte Gaines (CG, Clerk to Governors), James Andriot (JA, Acting Head of School)

#### Part 1 Classified Non-Confidential

##### 1) Apologies

No apologies for non-attendance were received.

##### 2) Declaration of Pecuniary, Business or Personal Interests

No declarations of pecuniary, business or personal interest were made in addition to those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

##### 3) Minutes of previous meeting Part 1

The Minutes of the following meeting, having been circulated to Trustees, were discussed:

- Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 7 September 2017 – Part 1

SKi requested that the names of potential Trustees be removed from the minutes. Trustees agreed the minutes should be adopted as a true record subject to the removal of names.

##### Matters arising

CG reported that guidance stipulates the register of pecuniary interest should be updated regularly, but advised that there is no guidance regarding frequency of updates. Trustees agreed to notify CG of any changes and add an update to the September Trust board Agenda.

##### 4) Chair's Actions

SKi advised trustees that he had been contacted by GA to discuss a one day closure of QEHS on Friday 13 October to allow staff to attend the funeral of Alan Currie, a long term member of staff. SKi noted that legal advice confirmed that as an academy HLT was able to close QEHS for the day and confirmed the decision was made quickly to enable parents to be advised. Trustees agreed with the decision.

Trustees noted their sadness at the passing of Alan and a debt of gratitude for his work as a teacher, in Youth Theatre and the pastoral care he showed to all students. SKi stated that Alan embodied the ethos of QEHS.

##### 5) Membership update

SKi confirmed that PF had resigned from the Trust Board with effect from 27 September 2017 due to personal reasons and noted the he had commended the Board and senior leaders for

their hard work. SKi advised that he had written to PF thanking him for his contribution to the Trust Board.

JH recalled that previous discussions suggested a need to appoint an educationalist to the Board. SKi agreed that these discussions had taken place but no conclusion had been reached on any particular skill set, although Trustees had agreed a specific need for HR experience. Subsequent to the resignation of PF, the Skills Audit had been amended and circulated. On the basis of this, Trustees agreed that it was important to recruit additional Trustees with HR and finance skills. This would not preclude appointing Trustees with other skills should strong candidates come forward.

Trustees discussed the use of Academy Ambassadors to recruit new Trustees. SKi noted that they are increasingly successful in finding Trustees in this region. SKi advised that although he was initially concerned that this might delay matters, Academy Ambassadors had confirmed that applications would be forwarded on a rolling basis. SKi added that if a Trustee were recruited through Academy Ambassadors they would benefit from additional training/networking opportunities.

Discussion followed about the need to be open and transparent in recruitment, with the opportunity to apply open to all from our stakeholder community. It was agreed that in parallel to the Academy Ambassadors search, expressions of interest would be sought via a notice in the Hexham Courant, ParentMail and both schools' websites. Interested parties would be encouraged to have an initial conversation with SKi before applying via Academy Ambassadors.

SKi

Trustees were concerned that use of Academy Ambassadors removes the local connection.

SKi suggested that due to the urgency resulting from PF's resignation, new Trustees should be co-opted rather than appointed by Members. Trustees agreed. GA added that new Trustees could become member-appointed at a later date.

#### **6) Executive Headteacher's report - Hexham Middle School**

SKi advised that the reports have been discussed in depth at the Monitoring group and suggested further discussion was delayed until minutes were available.

#### **7) Executive Headteacher's report - Queen Elizabeth High School**

SKi advised that the QEHS monitoring group met last week and minutes will be circulated. Trustees agreed to defer discussion until the next meeting.

SKi

SKe noted that there was no mention of the Gold Arts award, and suggested this was comparable to Duke of Edinburgh Award. Trustees agreed the Gold Arts Award should be added to the list of enrichment opportunities.

GA

#### **8) Committee Reports**

##### **Safeguarding**

JH advised that minutes of the last meeting will be circulated and noted there were no issues

CG

of concern.

### **Finance and Audit Committee**

Trustees were advised that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend:

- Increase of limits for delegated authority for non-payroll expenditure from £10k to £20k for Executive Headteacher and £50k to £100k for the Finance and Audit Committee.
- Utilities contracts of up to three years duration should be delegated to the Finance and Audit Committee.

Trustees agreed.

SKi advised Trustees that S2E had originally been appointed for one year and reminded Trustees that there is no upfront fee but a management fee if successful. SKi suggested that reappointment for 2017/18 would allow continuity following the successful bids. Trustees agreed to reappoint S2E for 2017/18.

Trustees discussed the circulated briefing paper regarding deficit recovery and agreed to embed the savings into the budgets.

### **9) Committee Terms of Reference & Scheme of Delegation**

Revised committee group terms having been circulated to Trustees following previous discussion.

GA advised that the Finance and Audit Committee terms do not reflect the revised limits agreed this evening. Trustees agreed the terms of reference subject to the updated limits.

SKe noted that the Monitoring Committee terms of reference refer to four non-staff trustees and commented that BH is an HLT member of staff working at QEHS but sits on the HMS Committee. Trustees agreed the terms should be amended to state three non-staff trustees.

GA

SKi noted that following PF's resignation there is a vacancy on the Finance and Audit Committee. Trustees were asked if they would be interested in joining the committee until a trustee with a finance background is appointed. GA advised that it is likely to be for one meeting. Trustees agreed that membership should remain as is, but appointment of a new trustee should be progressed quickly.

### **10) Stakeholder Engagement**

Trustees had attended the training day lunch with staff.

SKi and BH advised that they would be attending the funeral of Alan Currie.

Triangulation visits have taken place at the schools.

Trustees requested an update regarding forthcoming events at both schools.

### **11) Urgent business with agreement of Chair**

JH advised that an excellent mental health presentation had been produced by leaving students. JA was asked to circulate the video to trustees, subject to technical constraints, so

JA/SKi

that it could be discussed at a future meeting.

**12) Close and confirm date of next meeting**

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded.

The next meeting will take place on 15 November 2017

Trustees moved onto Part 2 of the agenda.

