

HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST

Minutes for Meeting of Board of Trustees

5:30pm, Thursday 27 January 2022

QEHS Conference Room 1

In attendance: David Hartland (DH, Chair), Sarah Kemp (SK, Vice Chair), Kate Chaplin (KC), Vyan Johnston (VJ), Barbara Hignett (BH), Tony Brown (TB), Patrick Ferguson (PF), Graeme Atkins (GA, Executive Headteacher)

Also attending: Neil Seaton (NS, HoS QE), Eleanor Simpson (ES, HLT Business Manager, 17:30-18:10 only), Jonathan Henry (Health & Safety Adviser, EPM, 17:30-18:10 only), Fiona Snook (Clerk)

Part 1 Classified Non-Confidential

1) Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Jonathan Holmes and Liam Watters.

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 meetings

The Minutes of the following meeting, having been circulated to trustees, were adopted as a true record with one amendment as detailed below.

a) Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 16 December 2021 – Part 1

Under agenda item 9, SK noted that she had also attended the lights switch on at Sele Park so this has been amended to: "DH advised that he, LW, GA and SK had attended the lights switch on at Sele Park, where HMS singers and musicians were performing."

Matters arising

- CG had contacted those trustees who have not completed the safeguarding training. FS to follow up.
- GA had an action relating to a possible guest of honour for a celebration event to coincide with the completion of all works and full site handover. He has signalled interest but has not yet heard back.
- Following the last meeting, GA sent the previously circulated letter to Highways at Northumberland County Council regarding traffic and pedestrian safety. He has received a response, which explained that there will be a comprehensive review of requirements once Phase 2 works are completed, with justification provided as to why no action had been taken so far. Highways have offered to observe the start and end of a day, to be followed by a meeting with NCC's Health & Safety lead.

FS

4) Admissions Consultation

GA advised that the consultation received two responses, both in favour. One response included a query and Charlotte Gaines, former Clerk to the Trust Board, clarified this with the respondent. There were no responses to suggest a change to the original proposal so this will now be taken forward as the determination for September 2023, with a deadline of the 15th March to upload the new arrangements to the website and to inform NCC.

5) Health & Safety

Note: The H&S update took place at the beginning of the meeting, between 17:30 and 18:10.

Jonathan Henry, Health & Safety Inspector for EPM, along with ES, Business Manager for the Trust, delivered a Health & Safety update to Trustees. There will be an annual Health & Safety update to Trustees.

The presentation slides and additional useful links will be circulated to Trustees following the meeting.

6) Head of School updates

a) HMS

GA reported on the term to date at HMS, which has been going well. Covid-related staff absence has been relatively low with pupil Covid-absence ranging from mid 20s to low 40s. Face coverings are no longer mandatory but are encouraged. SATs are expected to go ahead this year although it is unclear if the data will be published. A positive SATs evening for parents has taken place and pupils undertook 'mock' SATs this week, to build their experience and confidence in such assessments and to enable staff to identify gaps in knowledge. The HMS monitoring committee will reflect on the outcomes at the next meeting on 14 February. Year 8 parent evenings have also taken place.

A peer mentor initiative has launched whereby KS3 mentors are being trained to offer support for younger pupils at break and lunch times. A pupil support worker has been appointed to add capacity to the pastoral team to support those with social and emotional needs.

The PTA continues to offer great support to the school, for example through the purchase of 60 dyslexia-friendly books for the library and through a weekly Fitness in the Park initiative where monies raised will go to the PTA to then fund in-school initiatives. Extra-curricular provision remains strong as can be seen from the offer on the school's website. A number of sporting fixtures have taken place.

Professional development for staff takes place each Tuesday, some of which is school-specific, some cross-Trust: for example, this week's related to the next round of Quality of Education reviews being conducted by curriculum leaders. CLs have been given additional time to be in the middle school this term, with a specific focus on Key Stage 2.

Through Liam Watters, HMS is leading a Hexham Partnership initiative around reading, which will seek to establish a coherent cross-partnership approach to reading across Key Stages 1 and 2, following the reading framework published by the DfE.

FS

b) QEHS

NS provided an update on the QEHS term. Covid-related student absence is currently 30-40 each day. Students no longer have to wear masks although some are still wearing in social spaces.

Exams, assessments & reporting

Exams are currently anticipated to go ahead and timetables have been published. Exam boards will release exam content on 7 February.

- Y12 have just completed their assessment week, Y10 have had mock exams and Y11 are approaching their second round of mocks. Y13 mocks are in March. Mocks are currently running over the contingency framework so that there are no clashes, which means they are taking 8 days rather than 5. Because there may be a requirement to use internal assessment data for final grades, students can't sit unsecured papers so there is a series of 'mop-up' exams with different papers for Y11 if they are unable to attend the first exam. This has created a lot of additional work for Curriculum Leaders but will ensure robust, defensible grades from the mock exams.
- There are shadow papers and contingency plans for exams being cancelled.
- Y9 Parents' evenings are taking place this week and next to discuss options for Y10.

Curriculum & Progression

- The KS4 curriculum consultation is in motion. NS and LW are meeting Curriculum Leaders to discuss. These have been very helpful. NS should be able to report back at the next Trust Board meeting.
- Y11 options meetings are taking place at the moment so NST will have a sense of numbers for 2022/23 Sixth Form entry in the near future.
- Y9 will choose options for Y10 soon.
- 166 UCAS applications have been sent – this is the most ever.
- NS updated Trustees on staffing challenges in Economics and associated arrangements to support students.

Intervention

- There is increased maths provision with intervention now for 5 days – this means smaller classes have been created for tailored support.
- More Y11 students are now engaged in English intervention, which means withdrawal from some PSHE and PE classes.
- NTP to fund Easter holiday tutoring and tutoring in the EBacc subjects after Easter and before exams when it is feasible to withdraw students without missing content, because by this point the courses will have finished.
- Some Sixth Form students are going to work as subject champions to support the lower school.

Quality of Education (QoE)

- Quality of Education Reviews will be led by CLs this term.
- The School Improvement Partner (SIP), Mark Wilson, has been in to work with Anne Lloyd, Assistant Headteacher i/c Teaching and Learning, and to support particular CLs. Similar support intended for other CLs via external contacts.
- Pastoral walks/SEN walks have taken place in both schools to look at the provision.

Pastoral

- Recruitment of school nurse, attendance admin and two behaviour support workers is underway.

Wider life

There have been a range of extracurricular activities and successes:

- Collected for West End Refugee Centre and foodbanks.
- Write for Rights campaign
- LGBTQ History month
- Success for the debating society
- Sporting successes, including a student in Y10 who has been selected for the GB skiing squad, a number of students who have been selected to represent the County at cross-country, football and rugby, and a student representing England at U18 football.
- The spring concert will hopefully go ahead just before or after Easter. SK asked if the date could be confirmed and NS said he will share as soon as it is finalised.
- A Youth Theatre production intended for December 2022.

SK asked what the morale is like for Y11 and Y13 following the impact of Covid on education. NS explained that support is needed for these year groups regarding the rigours and anxieties of exams given limited experience over past two years. Assistant Headteacher, Amanda Fletcher-Woods, and NS are addressing.

7) New build update

GA provided an update. Progress is being made but there are ongoing frustrations, for example HMS has not yet had handover of the MUGA, nor QE the Sixth Form Café.

NS/FS

There has been significant flooding on site towards the far end of the cricket nets and hard standing tennis courts and on neighbouring gardens. The local flood authority within NCC is aware and investigating. The damaged path on site needs a sufficiently robust repair.

GA advised that there is a delay of three weeks to the demolition, which will impact on landscaping and the grass seeding but should not delay handover of the coach park, which remains scheduled for 29 April.

Landscaping works have commenced. SK asked if the landscapers are also working on the woodland garden. GA explained that GT and NCC remained in discussion as to where responsibility for this lay.

DH & VJ noted that there have been some very positive comments on social media relating to the new build.

GA advised Trustees that Pre-Construct Archaeology had been commissioned to carry out a programme of historic building recording at QEHS in association with the construction of the new school. In addition to two very detailed technical reports (on the walled garden and the Hydro building) which were required as part of the planning conditions they also produced a booklet on the history of the site and of QE. Copies were distributed to Trustees.

SK asked about the possibility of community open days when Covid restrictions have eased. GA advised that he would look to arrange in the summer term following completion of Phase 2 works.

8) Stakeholder engagement

GA advised that former headteacher, Tony Webster, and his wife Cathy, had visited earlier in the week and had been impressed with the new facilities.

A journalist from The Hexham Courant has visited with a view to including details of the new buildings in their January Learning Supplement. GA also advised that he had been invited to speak to the Rotarians on Monday 31st January about the new facilities, the co-located arrangements and education more generally.

GA

BH asked for an update about memorial trees. GA advised that these were in safe-keeping with re-planting arrangements in hand.

9) Urgent business with agreement of Chair

None.

Close and confirm date of next meeting: The date of the next Part 1 meeting is Thursday 3 March 2022.

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded. Trustees moved onto Part 2 of the agenda.