

Hope Sentamu Learning Trust Board of Trustees

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th September 2021 at 6.00pm
Via Zoom

Present: Tony Myers (Chair of Trustees) Jane Lewis
Peter Duffield Andrew Simpkin
Philippa Gowland Alison Smith

In Attendance: Helen Winn (CEO, Hope Sentamu Learning Trust)
Wendy Munro (COO, Hope Sentamu Learning Trust)
Julie Caddell (Principal, Barlby High School) [to 7.40pm]
Amanda Devaney (Exec. Principal, Newland St John's and St James' Primary Academies) [to 7.40pm]
Chris Mulqueen (Exec. Principal, Aspire and Compass Academies) [to 7.40pm]
Jess Swarbrick (Governance Advisor & Clerk)

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome & Opening Prayer</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the first Hope Sentamu Learning Trust Board of Trustees meeting for the newly merged Trust, which opened with a prayer. Introductions were made.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees</u> Nominations were invited for role of Chair of the Board of Trustees. Tony Myers was nominated and left the meeting whilst a vote was taken.</p> <p><i>AGREED: Tony Myers was unanimously elected as Chair of the Board of Trustees (Proposed: Peter Duffield, Seconded: Philippa Gowland)</i></p> <p>Karen Osborne was nominated for the role of Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees. The Chair advised that he had spoken with Karen, who had given apologies for the meeting, and she had confirmed she would be happy to be nominated.</p> <p><i>AGREED: Karen Osborne was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees (Proposed: Tony Myers, Seconded: Peter Duffield)</i></p>	
3.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies were received, with consent, from Ian Thomson and Karen Osborne. Fred Owen was absent.</p> <p>In relation to discussions regarding City of York Council (CYC), Philippa Gowland declared an interest as a CYC employee. In relation to discussions regarding the Diocese of York, Alison Smith declared an interest as a Diocese employee.</p> <p>The Governance Advisor explained that annual register of business interest forms would be emailed out to all Trustees and Governors in the next week, along with updated ethos declarations for the newly merged Trust.</p>	

	<p><i>ACTION: Trustees were asked to print and sign the business interest and ethos declaration forms, and to return either a scanned or photographed copy to the Governance Advisor as soon as possible.</i></p>	<p>All Trustees</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><i>Minutes of the previous meetings, action plan and matters arising</i></p> <p>Previously distributed. With reference to the SALT Board of Trustees minutes, it was noted that item 27, resolution that the Expenses, Gifts and Hospitality Policies remain unchanged, should read “until 31 March 2022”, not “2021”.</p> <p>Subject to the above amendment, minutes from the Hope Learning Trust Board of Trustees meeting held on 21st July 2021 and the SALT Board of Trustees meeting held on 20th July 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>All actions had been completed. It was noted that matters arising relating to confidential minutes would be discussed under item 13.</p> <p><i>Trustees requested an update on CYC’s proposals around the development of the site adjacent to Vale of York Academy.</i></p> <p><i>[Philippa Gowland left the meeting during this discussion]</i></p> <p>The COO advised that the consultation to develop the site as a new Explore library and community space had been launched by CYC on 9th August. The CEO had attended this meeting, and questions and some subsequent correspondence from local residents had been directed at the Trust. The COO reported that she had raised this as a concern with CYC, as the site and development are their responsibility, not the Trust’s. She advised that CYC had apologised for this situation and had confirmed they would be responding to local residents, ensuring that they were clear that CYC took full responsibility for the project. The CEO noted that whilst the launch meeting had been uncomfortable due to local concerns around the footpath, residents who had attended had been complimentary about Vale of York and the Trust, which had been positive.</p> <p><i>[Philippa Gowland re-joined the meeting]</i></p> <p><i>With reference to the budget, the Chair advised that Ian Thomson, who was unable to attend the Board meeting, had asked for the scale of merging two trust budgets to be recognised in the minutes. He had also emphasised that any spending outside of the budget must be brought to Trustees for discussion and approval.</i></p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><i>Committee Updates</i></p> <p><i>5.1 Confirmation of Committee Membership and Election of Committee Chairs</i></p> <p>Proposed committee membership had been circulated on the day of the meeting. The Chair advised that allocation to committees had been made following consideration of skills, experience and individual preference and were noted as follows:</p> <p><i>Resources Committee:</i> Andrew Simpkin (Chair), Ian Thomson, Tony Myers <i>Standards Committee:</i> Karen Osborne (Chair), Alison Smith, Jane Lewis <i>Distinctiveness Committee:</i> Philippa Gowland (Chair), Ian Thomson, Alison Smith, Fred Owen <i>Audit Committee:</i> Peter Duffield (Chair), Fred Owen.</p> <p>The Chair advised that plans were being taken forward to recruit a qualified accountant Trustee, who would also join the Audit Committee.</p>	

	<p>APPROVED: Trustees agreed the committee membership and appointment of committee chairs.</p> <p>5.2 Confirmation of Link Trustee roles The following proposals for link roles were noted:</p> <p>Safeguarding: Fred Owen Pupil Premium: Philippa Gowland</p> <p>Philippa advised that she would be happy to take on the role of Pupil Premium link Trustee, subject to a discussion with the CEO about the role.</p> <p>APPROVED: Subject to the above note regarding the Pupil Premium link, Trustees agreed the proposed link roles.</p> <p>It was noted that LGCs had been asked to identify an SEND and Whistleblowing link governor in addition to Safeguarding and Pupil Premium, and Trustees agreed it may be helpful to have an equivalent link on the Board for these areas.</p> <p>ACTION: The CEO and Chair agreed to discuss how best to arrange link roles for SEND and Whistleblowing, and Trustees were asked to consider taking these on.</p> <p>5.3 Committee Terms of Reference Previously distributed. The CEO advised that the Standards and Distinctiveness terms of reference had been reviewed and re-drafted following discussions with Trustees, to ensure there was a clear distinction between the two committees. She advised that scrutiny of behaviour and attendance had been moved to the Distinctiveness Committee, but data for this would still be presented at Standards Committee and Full Board meetings, so that all Trustees had oversight of this. It was noted that these changes were reflected in the terms of reference. Trustees also noted that the Resources and Audit terms of reference had been updated.</p> <p>APPROVED: Trustees approved the terms of reference for the Standards, Distinctiveness, Resources and Audit Committees.</p>	All Trustees
6.	<p><u>Schedule of Business</u> Previously distributed. The CEO advised that the schedule of business reflected the terms of reference, and would support effective management of work over the year between different levels of governance. She noted that the schedule provided a framework for meetings but this did not preclude the Board or LGCs from adding in additional items as required. The CEO advised that the schedule of business also reflected requirements for church schools as agreed with the Diocese of York.</p> <p>APPROVED: Trustees approved the schedule of business.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Local Governing Committee Updates</u> 7.1 Church school constitution updates Updates to church school constitutions had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that these updates had been proposed by the Diocese in order to accommodate the relevant wording in Article 101B of the new Articles of Association. The changes built in the requirement for the Trust to approve foundation appointments and for the Diocesan Board of Education to approve all appointments other than staff and parent elections.</p>	

	<p>APPROVED: Trustees approved the proposed changes unanimously.</p> <p>In relation to this, it was noted that the Chair had provided retrospective approval of all current foundation appointments. From this point onwards, new foundation appointments would be ratified by the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>7.2 Proposal to reduce the size of church school LGCs Previously distributed. Trustees considered the recommendation of the Diocese to reduce the number of posts in church school LGCs to address the high number of vacancies in some schools. The Governance Advisor advised that there were currently less vacancies at Newland St John’s, and therefore proposed that a reduction in size be applied only to Manor CE Academy and Archbishop Sentamu Academy (ASA) at this point. The Governance Advisor confirmed that the proposed reductions would still retain the requirement for foundation governors to outnumber all other governors by at least two.</p> <p>APPROVED: Trustees agreed to reduce the size of Manor and ASA LGCs to 10 governors. It was also agreed that there would be no reduction to the LGCs of Newland St John’s and St James’ at this point.</p> <p>ACTION: The Governance Advisor agreed to confirm these changes with the Diocese. The CEO agreed to speak to the Principal and LGC Chair at Manor and ASA to advise them of the changes to the size of the LGC.</p> <p>7.3 New Governor Appointment APPROVED: Trustees unanimously approved the appointment of Heidi Fewigs to the Aspire Academy LGC.</p>	JS / HW
8.	<p>CEO Report The CEO’s Report had been previously distributed, along with summary outcome data for the Trust’s schools, a report from the School Improvement Team and an overview of the new Central Team structure for information. The CEO expressed her thanks to the COO for her work in ensuring that the merger went ahead as planned on 1st September 2021, noting that this was a great achievement. She advised that there was a sense of being settled across the Trust now that the merger had been completed, and staff and pupils had been really positive in their return to school at the start of September.</p> <p>The CEO advised that plans to deal with a COVID outbreak were outlined in her report. She noted that most schools had some pupils in school who had tested positive, though there were significantly higher numbers in others. The CEO advised that the situation was being monitored, and Public Health England were being kept informed of all positive cases. It was expected that they would advise the Trust if additional measures were needed.</p> <p>Guidance had been released on the afternoon of the meeting regarding vaccines for children aged 12-15. The CEO advised that the biggest issue that schools were likely to face would be around consent, as a child was able to give consent to be vaccinated, even if this was against their parents’ wishes. The COO advised that the guidance stated that the COVID vaccination programme would be dealt with in the same way as a standard programmes within schools, with the appointed Immunisation Team managing correspondence with parents and recording consent. Schools would provide the space for the vaccinations to take place in, but the process would not be managed by them, though it was recognised that some parents and organisations would still assume that school had responsibility. The CEO advised that the Trust’s solicitors would be providing a standard letter setting out the Trust’s position, for schools to adapt and send out in response to any anti-vaccination campaigns which were directed to them.</p>	

It was noted that exam results for GCSE and A-levels and equivalent had been circulated to Trustees in August. The CEO advised that very few appeals had been received. She reported that one school had had an administrative error which had been identified and immediately corrected. Following this, the school had checked all results again to ensure that there were no further errors, and none had been found. The CEO noted that the clarity of the moderation process had meant that everything had run smoothly. The CEO advised that Ofqual had not yet made an announcement on what arrangements would be in place for the current Year 11 cohort next summer. She advised that schools and the Trust needed to work to ensure the very best for students and to prepare them for all eventualities.

The CEO reported that the first school improvement strategy meeting had taken place with the LGC Chair and Interim Principal at ASA, and had been really useful. She advised that having the LGC Chair in attendance provided them with a clear oversight of school improvement strategies and issues, and should support more effective discussion and scrutiny at governors' meetings. The CEO noted that meetings had been booked in for all schools and would be completed in the next four weeks.

The COO provided an update on operations. She noted that the transition to the new Central Team structure had been smoother since the point of merger, and colleagues were building new and effective working relationships. It was noted that there were currently two Finance Officer vacancies, with a rapid recruitment process underway to fill these posts.

Trustees expressed their appreciation for all the work which had been done to complete the merger, whilst still maintaining progress in teaching and learning. Trustees were also encouraged to hear the update on the school improvement strategy meetings, and how this would enable as much time as possible to make key changes and progress across the year.

The CEO noted that she had been very encouraged by the way all schools had embraced Walkthrus, adapting the scheme to fit their own context and consider what would make the most difference in the classroom. She advised that the fantastic practice and impact of implementation was a real area to celebrate.

Trustees agreed it would be helpful to have a summary staffing structure for the School Improvement Team, as well as an updated pen portrait for all schools in the newly merged Trust.

ACTION: The CEO agreed to circulate a School Improvement Team structure for information.

ACTION: The COO and Governance Advisor agreed to review the Governance Handbook and update this to include new structures and all HSLT schools.

In response to a question regarding a timeline for the closure of SALT, the COO advised that this was dependent on completion of external audit, which it was anticipated would be concluded no later than the end of December 2021.

A question was raised regarding leadership capacity for Helen Dowds, who was currently working as Interim Principal at ASA in addition to her role as Executive Principal for the Trust. The CEO advised that Helen was still Executive Principal for Graham and George Pindar Schools in Scarborough, but this role was not required to be as hands-on following rapid improvement and development in those schools. She noted that following the appointment of Gill Williams as Director of Primary, Helen no longer had oversight of the two primary schools in Hull as previously. Therefore her main focus was ASA and this would continue at least for the next academic year, to allow time for systems and structures to embed before looking to appoint a

HW

WM / JS

	<p>substantive principal. The CEO advised that leadership capacity within the school was under continued review, and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had really stepped up in terms of skills and capabilities. She noted that if additional capacity was needed, it would be brought in.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Strategic Plan – Key Priorities</u></p> <p>A high-level overview of the 2021-22 Strategic Plan had been circulated with the agenda. The CEO advised that she had wanted to get agreement from Trustees that the priorities were the right ones, before adding in detail of actions against each strand. She advised that the first two strands – <i>Curriculum</i> and <i>Inclusion and Wellbeing</i> – would be key priorities this year.</p> <p><i>Trustees were positive about the strategy and the thinking behind it. A question was raised as to whether the behaviour and interventions review needed to specifically reference inclusion and exclusion policies.</i> The CEO agreed that this could be added in. She noted that the Trust Inclusion Lead was currently working on a Behaviour Policy to be used consistently by all schools across the Trust, which would sit alongside local procedures which took into account the context of each setting. She advised that the standardisation of this and other policies would feed into the actions for the Strategic Plan.</p> <p><i>Trustees asked for more information about the development of a Virtual School.</i> Chris Mulqueen explained that in almost all schools there were a small number of students who needed a greater depth of intervention than could be provided within mainstream. He advised that the development of a Virtual School would look at multi-agency support and support from within the Trust to provide this additional intervention with a view to keeping children in school and engaged. The CEO added that the aim would be to bring in early intervention and support to avoid getting to the point of exclusion and to keep children in mainstream school.</p> <p><i>Trustees agreed this would be a great development, and in keeping with the ethos that the Trust had set out to achieve. A question was raised as to whether there was a resource implication to this project, and how this would be addressed.</i> Chris advised that the starting point would be an audit across schools to map local resources, and where this could be re-aligned. The CEO added that there was a wealth of expertise within Aspire and Compass Academies which could be drawn on as part of this development. Chris advised that any external resources needed would be bought in, and this would be done in discussion with the LA. <i>Trustees asked to be kept updated on developments around the idea of a Virtual School.</i></p> <p>With reference to success criteria, the CEO proposed using the MAT assurance framework to support self-evaluation as a Trust. This would involve having a “heatmap” of schools and different areas across the Trust at each meeting, which could be reviewed to look at progress against actions. In addition, the CEO proposed bringing in people from outside the Trust, for example another CEO, to moderate this self-evaluation, and validate Trustees’ judgements. <i>Trustees supported this proposal, and agreed that a structured approach to assessing progress and triangulating this with external validation would be helpful.</i></p> <p><i>Trustees asked whether explicit reference to SEND was needed in the overview and section on inclusion.</i> The CEO agreed to add this in to the plan.</p> <p><i>Trustees asked whether part of the strategy around the Virtual School would be integrating online learning into practice, for example if pupils were not able to access the classroom.</i> Chris advised that the idea of the Virtual School had a dual purpose, to prevent exclusions and also to re-engage those who were not attending school. He noted that schools across the Trust now had a large range of virtual resources available as a result of the online learning which had been necessary during lockdown periods. However, he noted that the key was to ensure that what was being taught was of the highest quality. The CEO added that the infrastructure for</p>	

	<p>online learning was now in place but that the focus needed to be on keeping children in the classroom as far as possible, as this was where the biggest impact could be had on progress and learning.</p> <p>With reference to training for governors and Trustees, the CEO advised that she had met with the Governance Advisor, Chair and COO that week to discuss a training package which would be circulated shortly. She noted that bespoke training could also be offered if LGCs wanted to focus on a specific area.</p> <p>AGREED: Trustees agreed they were happy with the proposed Strategic Plan, subject to the comments for inclusion noted above.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>Safeguarding Report</u></p> <p>An update from the Inclusion Lead had been circulated with the agenda, along with the behaviour and attendance update from the summer term 2021. A copy of the Ofsted report from Graham School had also been circulated for information.</p> <p>The CEO reported that the Ofsted team who led the inspection at Graham School were fair and helpful, and recognised a lot of the good work which the school had put in place. She advised that priorities for further improvement within the report were aspects which the Inclusion Lead was looking at across all schools in the Trust, including a review of the number of children on reduced timetables. It was noted that this would fall into the work around the development of a Virtual School.</p> <p>The CEO advised that external checks were in place, and audits had been carried out in all schools in the summer term. Feedback from these audits had been really positive. The CEO reminded Trustees that all audit reports were available to review in the Google Drive. Any exceptions had been followed up, with clear tracking in place to ensure that any outstanding issues were followed up. Single Central Record (SCR) checks were now being undertaken regularly to ensure full compliance.</p> <p><i>Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One</i></p> <p>All Trustees were asked to read the KCSIE guidance, which had been updated by the DfE. A link to the guidance was included on the agenda.</p> <p><i>ACTION: Trustees were asked to read the updated KCSIE guidance and complete the Google form to confirm they had read and understood this. The Governance Advisor agreed to circulate the link to the Google form.</i></p> <p>Trustees were also reminded of the upcoming safeguarding training which was being run by the Trust, and which covered the updates to the KCSIE guidance. It was noted that if Trustees had completed training in an equivalent governance role, this could be used as evidence, and should be sent to the Governance Advisor and Trust Compliance Officer for reference.</p>	<p>All Trustees</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>Policies for Approval</u></p> <p><i>11.1 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</i></p> <p>It was noted that the Inclusion Lead had updated the policy to align with the updated KCSIE guidance.</p> <p>A question of clarification was raised, regarding reporting of concerns about the headteacher. The policy stated that in such a case, this should be raised with the LGC Chair, whilst staff training had stated that this should be raised with the CEO or COO.</p>	

	<p>ACTION: The COO agreed to review and ensure consistency with the Allegations of abuse against staff policy and update as needed.</p> <p>APPROVED: Subject to the above amendment, the policy was approved unanimously.</p>	WM
12.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u> There was no other business to report.</p> <p><i>[Amanda Devaney, Julie Caddell and Chris Mulqueen left the meeting at 7.40pm]</i></p>	
13.	<p><u>Confidential Items</u> 13.1 Confidential Minutes from SALT and HLTy Boards of Trustees, July 2021 Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record.</p> <p><i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate, confidential minute.</i></p> <p>13.2 Primary Update <i>The following discussion has been recorded as a separate, confidential minute.</i></p>	
14.	<p><u>Items / Issues to Report to LGCs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Election of Tony Myers as Chair of the Board of Trustees and Karen Osborne as Vice-Chair * Approval of committee membership, committee chairs and terms of reference * Approval of the Trust Schedule of Business for Trustees' and Governors' meetings * Approval of Diocesan recommendation to align church school LGC compositions to reflect the Articles of Association in relation to foundation appointments. * Agreement to reduce the size of Manor and Archbishop Sentamu Academy LGCs to 10 governors (from 14 and 12 respectively). It was noted that this change had been recommended by the Diocese to address the high level of vacancies on both LGCs. * Update from the CEO on the return to school. This included an update on COVID-19 cases and recently released guidance on the vaccination of children over 12. * The CEO also provided an update on the strategic planning meetings which were taking place with all headteachers and LGC Chairs to map out the school improvement strategy for the year. * Trustees discussed the key priorities on the strategic plan for the year, and received an update from Chris Mulqueen on plans to develop a Virtual School across the Trust. * Trustees were asked to read the updated DfE guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education (part one) 	
15.	<p><u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>Wednesday 3rd November 2021, 6pm Wednesday 15th December 2021, 6pm (Approval of Final Accounts and Annual Report) Wednesday 19th January 2022 (Following AGM) Wednesday 16th March 2022, 6pm Wednesday 25th May 2022, 6pm Wednesday 20th July 2022, 6pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

These minutes were approved by the HSLT Board of Trustees at their meeting held on 3rd November 2021

Action Points from the Hope Sentamu Learning Trust Board meeting held on 15th September 2021

	<i>ACTION</i>	<i>AGENDA ITEM</i>	<i>WHO</i>	<i>WHEN</i>
1.	<i>Trustees were asked to print and sign the business interest and ethos declaration forms, and to return either a scanned or photographed copy to the Governance Advisor as soon as possible.</i>	3	<i>All Trustees</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
2.	<i>The CEO and Chair agreed to discuss how best to arrange link roles for SEND and Whistleblowing, and Trustees were asked to consider taking these on.</i>	5.2	<i>All Trustees</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
3.	<i>The Governance Advisor agreed to confirm these changes with the Diocese. The CEO agreed to speak to the Principal and LGC Chair at Manor and ASA to advise them of the changes to the size of the LGC.</i>	7.3	<i>Jess Swarbrick, Helen Winn</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
4.	<i>The CEO agreed to circulate a School Improvement Team structure for information.</i>	8	<i>Helen Winn</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
5.	<i>The COO and Governance Advisor agreed to review the Governance Handbook and update this to include new structures and all HSLT schools.</i>	8	<i>Jess Swarbrick, Wendy Munro</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
6.	<i>Trustees were asked to read the updated KCSIE guidance and complete the Google form to confirm they had read and understood this. The Governance Advisor agreed to circulate the link to the Google form.</i>	10	<i>All Trustees, Jess Swarbrick</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>
7.	<i>The COO agreed to review and ensure consistency with the Allegations of abuse against staff policy and update as needed.</i>	11	<i>Wendy Munro</i>	<i>30/09/2021</i>