

**HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST
MINUTES FOR MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Date of Meeting	Thursday 21 March 2024 at 6pm, Hydro Conference Room 1
Present	Veryan Johnston (VJ, Chair), Sarah Kemp (SK, Vice Chair), Graeme Atkins (GA, Executive Headteacher), Florrie Darling (FD) James Heath (JH), Kate MacLachlan (KM), Barbara Hignett (BH), Iain Veitch (IV)
Also in attendance	Neil Seaton (NS HoS QE), Liam Watters (LW, HoS HMS) Anna Vellinga (AV, clerk) – present for agenda item 3. Presentations: Paul Freeman-Myers (PFM), Andy Hedley (ANH)
Apologies	Patrick Ferguson (PF)

PART 1 (CLASSIFIED NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

	Trustees reflected on the recent passing of Alex L, a former student of HMS and QEHS. The trust board expressed condolences.	
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1.	<p>Apologies:</p> <p>Apologies were received from PF.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of pecuniary, business or personal interests</p> <p>No changes.</p>	
3.	<p>Presentations</p> <p>a. Personal development</p> <p>PFM and ANH presented to trustees on the approach to personal development within HMS and QEHS respectively. Focus of the presentation was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspects of personal development being developed this year • Progress and impact • Current picture: strengths and area for development • Further development next year <p>BH asked how schools address the need to connect students with careers. ANH reported positive results through the platform Unifrog, on which students can build a profile from when they join in year 9. VJ reported that they had spoken with students who had been very positive about the platform. Employers' events are also organised, which are helpful to identify needs and make connections.</p> <p>SK asked how awareness of the possibility of self-employment is raised with students? ANH reported that self-employed artists, hairdressers and virtual assistants also represented the employer's event. Unifrog will recommend a wide variety of courses, podcasts, jobs courses and careers once signed in.</p> <p>FD enquired if there had been any parental response to the RSE booklet that were handed out to pupils. PFM noted no responses and commented that school actively communicates with parents regarding the relationships curriculum.</p>	

	<p>b. Review of curriculum changes</p> <p>A review of curriculum changes is scheduled for the next Trust Board meeting on 23 May 2024.</p>	NES
<p>4.</p>	<p>Minutes of previous meeting Part 1: approval and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes of the following meeting were agreed as a true record.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 1 February 2024 – Part 1 <p>Matters arising</p> <p>All actions have been dealt with or are on the agenda. A record of future actions is held and these will come up when due.</p> <p>Minute 5: SK checked if minutes of the student council meeting had been forwarded to trustees. These had been sent to trustees on 4 March.</p> <p>VJ noted that the IDSR reports had been sent to trustees prior to the strategy meeting held in February.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>School updates</p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they had read the previously circulated QEHS and HMS school updates and were given the opportunity to ask questions.</p> <p><u>QEHS</u></p> <p>BH asked about intended follow up on the recommendations from the SEND review. NS advised that the main recommendations were to continue implementing the measures already embarked upon. NS would report further at the next QE Monitoring Committee meeting in May.</p> <p>IV enquired about the Y13 attendance number that seemed low in the report. NS explained this was partly to do with mock exams but that improving attendance was a focus for the sixth form team.</p> <p>Trustees asked NS and GA to pass on their thanks to Libby who has worked for QEHS for 21 years in various roles and will retire at Easter.</p> <p>An overview of suspensions of this and last year was circulated prior to the meeting. NS noted that a conscious decision had been made to have a more consistent approach to behaviour incidents alongside and a greater focus on relational practices. The sense is that the right balance is being struck, but this will be kept under review, with ongoing reporting of data to the monitoring committee.</p> <p>IV enquired about Y10 attendance which seems lower than expected. NS explained that this mainly is due to particular behavioural circumstances of a small group of students, however school is continually looking for new approaches to address attendance in general. A recent</p>	

	<p>meeting with Ashington Academy, who are doing well on attendance, was organised from which some peer review activity will follow.</p> <p>BH enquired if the school's approach on behaviour is addressing SEND students adequately. GA explained that the approach taken does include reasonable adjustment where appropriate, with the involvement of the SENDCo.</p> <p>SK asked how school deals with the small number of Y9 students who are waiting for a place in the internal Alternative Provision (AP). NS advised they are typically on a hybrid timetable and spend some time at external AP and some time in school, e.g. on a reduced timetable or in Restore.</p> <p><u>HMS</u></p> <p>LWA referred trustees to the previously circulated overview.</p> <p>SK asked about the reference to zones of regulation. LW explained it is a way in which children and adults can identify emotions, knowledge of which can then influence actions that follow or strategies that are put in place. SK asked if this approach carries over to students of QE. NS advised of developments in the relational approach noting that GA, Hattie Curry and Mark Stephenson were working on aligning approaches across the trust, mindful of age-related differences.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Trust updates</p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they had read the previously circulated Trust update and were given the opportunity to ask questions.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding the proposed art installation, GA advised that a team would be visiting the school that week to look at practicalities.</p> <p>VJ advised that she had attended a regional school round table recently and reported that the main areas of focus for the DfE were school absence and the growth of MATS whilst making sure no schools are isolated. VJ noted the follow-up meeting of the strategy working group.</p> <p>IV enquired if the QE sixth form is running at a deficit. GA explained that it was which was typical in schools with sixth forms.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Governance review</p> <p>The report, following an external governance review carried out in February, had been discussed by trustees previously and actions had been identified and circulated to trustees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>There were no questions from trustees and VJ established that all were comfortable with the review and the actions arising from this.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Trustee recruitment</p>	

	<p>VJ noted that, sadly, PF had to resign from the Trust Board due to unforeseen circumstances, with effect from this date. She thanked PF for his excellent contributions over the years and noted that he will be missed.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that there was a need to recruit additional trustees, and identified that someone with strong organisational financial management skills would be beneficial.</p> <p>VJ thanked KM who has kindly stepped into the role of SEND Trustee for an interim period and has obtained a Certificate in the Role of the SEND Link Governor. With an increasing need in this area, it would be good to also find someone with a professional SEND background to support KM.</p> <p>Trustees discussed and agreed the recruitment information which was to be sent with the parent newsletter of 22 March. The information would also be posted on the school websites and on social media. Equal opportunities and diversity will be factored into the process. VJ noted that shortlisting was scheduled for the end of April and interviews were to follow in May. Interview panels would comprise the Executive Head Teacher, the Chair of the Trust Board and one of the Members of Hadrian Learning Trust.</p> <p>Following advice of Brown Jacobson trustees agreed that it would be best practice to limit trustees' commitment to two terms of governance of four years. It was noted that SK's and BH's terms of office will end this summer, therefore further trustee recruitment will be required.</p>	VJ/AV
<p>9.</p>	<p>Trust strategy</p> <p>A subgroup of trustees (VJ, KM, IV, JH and GA) was formed to take strategy ideas forward. Meetings have been scheduled for April and May and progress reporting will follow in the next trust board meeting.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Committee reports</p> <p>a. F&A Committee – 16 February 2024</p> <p>VJ thanked JH for taking on the Chair of the F&A Committee meeting.</p> <p>IV asked for a clarification of an apparent overspend this year. JH clarified that this overspend was expected to happen and in hand. Funds come from an accrued reserve that is currently purposefully reduced and monitored with an eye on the next two to three years.</p> <p>The Next F&A committee meeting is 10 May. Trustees are invited to attend, if they have the opportunity to.</p> <p>b. HR&PM Committee – 8 March 2024</p> <p>There were no questions about the HR&PM committee meeting minutes from 8th March.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Policies</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees payment and allowance policy – for information / approval <p>Trustees approved the above policy.</p>	
12.	<p>Management accounts</p> <p>There were no comments or questions about the January management accounts. It was noted that the February accounts were to follow shortly.</p>	
13.	<p>Risk register</p> <p>VJ noted that risks 14 – Governance and Strategy - had been checked in February and risk 15 - strategic projects - had been checked in November.</p> <p>VJ invited trustees to look at risk 12 – operational continuity, cyber security – and asked for views on revising the risk given the expected implementation of a new MIS. Trustees agreed that the risk could remain the same for now, but advised it be reviewed at the next F&A Committee meeting.</p>	AV/GA
14.	<p>Trustee visits</p> <p>VJ thanked all trustees for their time for trustee visits and for completing the trustee monitoring visit forms. GA noted that it had been helpful for the comments to be collated as positives, areas for development and questions, which are shared with SLT by Heads of School.</p> <p>BH asked if comments were going to be passed on to departments. IV noted the reports have been written for senior leaders who would take forward actions with colleagues as appropriate.</p> <p>VJ noted that an HMS Trustee visit will be scheduled for June.</p> <p>Suggested areas of focus for this visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Impact of personal development – Intentions around careers and skills – Disadvantaged pupils and challenge, aspiration and confidence 	AV
15.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GA thanked VJ for representing the board at the NE Trust Leader round table session. – GA attended an event looking at sustainability and resilience for Hexham. In follow up, a Hexham Net Zero Fair was scheduled for Saturday 23 March. – GA reported engagement with Active Travel regarding the NCC report on pedestrian safety in the school area. – GA will be meeting the Hydro Neighbourhood Group in the week following this meeting. – Both schools had nominations put forward to initiatives of Tynedale Lions. NS will attend the presentations. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Two sixth form students have been organising a hustings event. All parties are invited and trustees are welcome to attend. AV will circulate the date. – The QE Spring Concert will be held on 17th of April in the Winter Gardens. – GA noted that the schools’ parent/carer newsletter contain a lot of information that may be of interest to trustees. 	AV
16.	<p>Urgent business with agreement of Chair</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	