

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

Date of meeting	10 October 2024
Present	Kate MacLachlan (KM, Chair), Veryan Johnston (VJ, Vice Chair), Graeme Atkins (GA, Executive Headteacher), James Heath (JH, via Zoom), Florrie Darling (FD), Carey Stuart (CS), Victoria Pugh (VP)
Also in attendance	Neil Seaton (NS, HoS QE), Liam Watters (LW, HoS HMS), Anna Vellinga (AV, Clerk)
Apologies	Iain Veitch (IV)

PART 1 (CLASSIFIED NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

		Action
1.	Apologies Apologies were received from IV.	
2.	Declaration of pecuniary, business or personal interest Trustees' recently updated declarations were published in the HLT area of the schools' websites.	
3.	Election of Chair VJ stepped down as Chair. One nomination and two seconders were received for KM to take on the position of Chair. KM was duly elected and will take on the role of Chair of the Trust Board.	
4.	Election of Vice Chair One nomination and two seconders were received for VJ to take on the position of Vice Chair. VJ was duly elected and will take on the role of Vice Chair of the Trust Board.	
5.	Minutes of previous meeting Part I: approval and matters arising The minutes of the following meeting were agreed as a true record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadrian Learning Trust Board – 11 July 2024 – Part 1 Matters arising GA advised that the strategic objectives will be published on the schools' websites the following day.	GA
6.	Trust Board membership KM formally welcomed Victoria Pugh (VP) as a member of the Trust Board.	

	<p>VJ also noted that the extracurricular programme was particularly impressive and had a good range of options on offer.</p> <p>VJ asked LW to explain what the reported work with Haltwhistle and Throckley entailed. LW explained that HMS had worked on reading development strategies with the Head of Haltwhistle Primary, part of WISE Academies Trust. LW confirmed this work will also continue this academic year. LW confirmed he has also connected with the Head of Throckley Primary School to learn from their provision for disadvantaged pupils which has had some excellent outcomes.</p> <p>KM outlined the nature of discussions at the HMS monitoring committee, which included looking at SATs outcomes in some detail as well as the personal development offer.</p> <p>FD asked how HMS uses data on positive points (P-points) and how this then affects behaviour. LW answered that P-points are analysed in combination with findings from lesson drop-ins and day-to-day observations around school. GA shared an example whereby the head of KS3 had increased the issuing of P-points through teachers rewarding positive behaviour, which led to a corresponding decrease in (negative) S-Points. LW added that a like-for-like comparison of P-point totals with previous years is not necessarily informative due to changes in issuing criteria, but changes in the ratio of P-points to S-points can be.</p> <p><u>QEHS</u></p> <p>VJ noted that the QE monitoring committee had gone through the executive headteacher report at length. VJ highlighted the positive achievement outcomes, particularly those of disadvantaged students. She also highlighted the work going on into attendance. As with HMS, the extracurricular programme on offer is very good. The school's use of suspensions was also considered by the board, with the sense being that they are being issued appropriately and are supporting the maintenance of high standards of behaviour.</p> <p>KM asked for an update on the status of progress 8 (P8). NS confirmed that he expected P8 data to come through soon and certainly by the time the first iteration of the IDSR is published in November. This will be the last year of P8 reporting until 2027 due to the lack of KS2 baselines due to COVID for the next two cohorts of year 11. The new government has not yet confirmed if it wishes to continue using the measure after 2027.</p> <p>FD informed the board she had liaised with GA and VJ on reviewing the schools' approach to permanent exclusions, over and above the statutory individual reviews undertaken at the time of specific cases. GA noted the intention to visit this within the safeguarding group meeting in January.</p>	
10.	School development plan priorities	

	<p>Trustees confirmed that they had read the papers that were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p><u>HMS School Development Plan (SDP) priorities</u></p> <p>VJ noticed that the pupil achievement targets are ambitious and asked LW if they are achievable. LW confirmed that he thought that they were.</p> <p><u>QEHS SDP priorities</u></p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they were comfortable with the QEHS SDP priorities.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>School updates</p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they had read the school updates that were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p><u>HMS</u></p> <p>VJ noted that attendance is looking positive. LW agreed that HMS had a good start to the year with regards to this. The team continue to work with parents of a small number of pupils who are persistently absent.</p> <p>LW reported that the SEND team is fully resourced, and they are working closely with several pupils with a high level of need.</p> <p><u>QEHS</u></p> <p>VJ commended the new personal development programme in the sixth form which includes international politics, healthy minds, yoga, consent and financial education.</p> <p>VJ was pleased to note the continuation of Latin Club and asked about numbers and the potential to undertake the subject at GCSE. NS advised that numbers in the high teens are currently attending and explained that, although Latin is offered as a club in year 9 rather than as a curriculum subject, students have the option to study it at GCSE level.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Sixth Form offer</p> <p>KM asked if the sixth form offer is similar to last year, noting some confusion with dates. NS explained that it was although quite significant changes are expected with guidance from the new government awaited.</p> <p>CS asked why the government is pushing T-levels. NS explained that the investment in T-levels is significant and there is skepticism around the value of some BTEC qualifications. GA added that the new government seems to be in favour of maintaining the approach of the previous government to post-16 provision, i.e. of an academic pathway through sixth form in schools leading to university and a technical pathway through colleges leading to employment. VJ</p>	

	<p>asked if this could potentially negatively affect the intake in sixth form. NS commented that this was a concern.</p> <p>NS advised that some of the qualifications will move to AAQ next year, and BTEC business will be replaced by A-level business studies. IT and Health and Social BTEC will also be replaced with AAQ equivalents, but Media is one of the BTECs that will be funded in 2025. It remains uncertain if it will be replaced with a suitable AAQ. Further maths will be offered as an enhancement in Y12, and students can continue with the subject in Y13. NS further commented that he is keen to put on A level economics, but this depends on availability of teaching staff.</p> <p>JH enquired about the timeline of the sixth form offer. NS advised that it would have to be circulated to Y11 students shortly to guide their choices for September 2025. CS asked about the final deadline for letting students know what subjects will be available. NS explained that the offer would go out in the coming weeks with the caveat that the government may make changes to particular courses. Once clear, these changes will be communicated, with students making any revisions to choices in the spring. NS explained that such decisions will guide timetabling activity in the spring and early summer but ultimately students' choices are not definitively finalised until the summer once they have received their GCSE outcomes. Trustees agreed the offer as suggested, but noted the need to potentially re-visit this for future years considering budget pressures.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p>Trust Update</p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they had read the trust update that was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>GA asked for trustees' thoughts on the proposed consultation letter regarding smart phones, which is intended to be sent to all parents with children attending Hexham Partnership schools. Trustees were in favour of the letter being circulated to parents, which GA anticipated would happen early in the new year.</p> <p>GA advised trustees that the intended meeting with officers from NCC to consider proposals for alternative provision in the west had now been scheduled.</p> <p>GA reported that he is continuing to communicate with NCC Highways with regards to road safety on Whetstone Bridge Road, following the publication of their recent report.</p>	
<p>14.</p>	<p>Committee minutes</p> <p>Trustees confirmed they took note of the minutes of the following committees that were circulated with the meeting papers:</p> <p>a. Safeguarding group 9 September 2024:</p>	

	<p>FD advised that the Single Central Record check for this term had been undertaken with positive outcomes.</p> <p>b. HR&PM committee 20 September 2024:</p> <p>KM commented that a staffing report had been reflected upon and HR policies had been reviewed. Summer recruitment has gone well with several new staff joining the trust, although the trust continues to carry some vacancies in cleaning and catering. Staff wellbeing was also considered and a decision on reinstating staff absence insurance will need to be made soon.</p> <p>c. HMS Monitoring committee 30 September 2024:</p> <p>KM reported that the main areas of focus were the executive headteacher’s report including the 2024 SATs outcomes, the development plan for the year ahead, the pupil premium strategy and the SEND information report. Trustees’ visits are aligned with QEHS with the next visit scheduled for 6th November. Risk 3 was reviewed, and a decision was made to keep the risk rating at the current likelihood level.</p> <p>d. F&A committee – 4 October 2024</p> <p>The minutes of the F&A committee meeting were not yet available given that the meeting had only taken place recently. JH informed trustees that the previous financial year closed in August with no surprises. There had been an overspend in the budget, but this was due to an additional in-year expenditure on the alternative provision and had been anticipated. The internal audit issued a clean bill of health for the Trust. The external audit is scheduled. JH advised that the Trust is in a better position than before the summer break due to some favourable movement in costs and income, however cost reductions will still be required over the coming years to bring in-year expenditure into line with funding. Senior leaders will develop specific proposals for initial review at F&AC. Approval of the teachers’ pay award has been completed and a support staff pay award was budgeted for.</p> <p>e. QE Monitoring Committee 7 October 2024</p> <p>GA advised that this committee meeting follows a similar agenda to the HMS Monitoring committee. Trustees noted the attendance at the meeting of the curriculum leaders for maths and English who reported on the progress being made by those students getting additional support in these subjects instead of undertaking a language in key stage 4.</p>	
15.	<p>Management accounts</p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they had taken note of the June, July and August management accounts that were circulated prior to the meeting. JH confirmed that the accounts had been reviewed by the F&A Committee. There were no questions.</p>	

16.	<p>Letters from ESFA to accounting officers</p> <p>The most recent letters to GA as accounting officer were circulated to trustees prior to the meeting. GA highlighted that the current functions of the ESFA are being transferred into the Department for Education.</p>	
17.	<p>Scheme of delegation</p> <p>Proposed changes to the scheme of delegation were circulated to trustees prior to the meeting. GA explained that these related to the HR&PM committee and the safeguarding group’s terms of reference and had been agreed by these committees at their respective meetings. Trustees approved the changes to these terms of reference in the scheme of delegation.</p>	
18.	<p>Policies</p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024-25 • HLT Complaints Policy and Procedure • Whistleblowing Policy <p>GA advised of the process to keep on top of policy review, with a master spreadsheet determining which senior leaders and trust bodies (committees or the full board) had responsibility and when reviews were scheduled, with GA and designated admin staff monitoring overall compliance.</p>	
19.	<p>Website compliance</p> <p>GA informed Trustees of the process in place to ensure that the Trust is following guidance from the government on what needs to be published online. The websites are compliant with some minor updates pending.</p>	
20.	<p>Risk register</p> <p>GA confirmed that relevant risk register items were updated in recent committee meetings.</p> <p><u>Risk item 10. Breach of legislative requirements</u></p> <p>Trustees agreed to amend the likelihood to 1, given that senior HR and finance personnel are now fully established.</p> <p><u>Risk item 12. Operational continuity</u></p> <p>Trustees noted that GA and FD will input an updated safeguarding perspective separately.</p>	<p>GA/AV</p> <p>GA/FD</p>
21.	<p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VJ attended the INSET day lunch. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees who are parents have attended info/open evenings. • GA continues to meet with local neighbourhood groups. • A meeting with the new headteacher of Corbridge Middle School and the chair of governors is in the process of being scheduled. • Trustees have been invited to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards evening. • Trustees are invited to join an INSET day lunch on Friday 25th October. Such lunches provide a good opportunity to hear from staff. 	
22.	<p>Urgent business with agreement of Chair</p> <p>There was no urgent business.</p>	

Close and confirm date of next meeting: The meeting closed at 7.20pm. The date of the next meeting is 5th December 2024.

_____ **Chair**

_____ **Date**