

DRAFT MINUTES  
GREAT HEIGHTS ACADEMY TRUST  
**MAT BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (7.00 p.m) by Zoom

<b>Present:</b>	C Midgley (Chair)	A Bennett OBE (CEO)
	J Fryer	Dr A Birt
	J Nellis	K Inwood
	J Midgley	J Power
	I Jaffar	E Brooke
	<b>In attendance:</b>	Clerk, COO, CFO, PA

1. Apologies – None
2. Declaration of Interests – C Midgley, J Midgley and A Midgley (Raynville) are related.
3. Opening remarks and governance update  
C Midgley congratulated A Bennett on her OBE (New Year Honours list 2021) “For services to Education in West Yorkshire” and E Brooke on her recent marriage.  
  
Local Governing Bodies are in the process of being strengthened, with transitional cover until stabilised provided by Trust appointments as follows: K Inwood (BG), I Jaffar and J Power (WV). Parental involvement at West Vale is to follow as confidence rebuilds.
4. Minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> December & Matters Arising  
Minutes approved for publication – to be signed by the Clerk on behalf of the Chair.  
  
**Communication strategy verbal update (COO):** all Trust websites are now aligned. ICT contracts due for renewal will be independently reviewed over Half Term by another Trust, with a specification drawn up for migrating to a Trust-wide way of working (future-proofed). J Power offered to assist.
5. Correspondence, including ESFA  
**West Yorkshire Pension Fund email:** Bowling Green Academy is now part of the Pension Scheme for the Trust, with the deficit transferred in.
6. MAT reporting  
The CEO’s Report summarised key facts, figures and compliance for Trustees, from the MAT’s contrasting schools and wide variety of offers. The report had been shared in advance and discussed in detail at Standards Committee (with input from Dani Worthington, Carlinghow/Executive Trust Director, School Improvement Team and Andrew Midgley, Raynville/Executive Trust Director, Leadership Team) including the remote learning offers for those inside and outside of school. Carlinghow case study has been shared regionally and nationally. J Nellis confirmed that, on questioning, uptake and monitoring was seen to be robust - in particular for EHCP and vulnerable groups.  
  
Uptake and delivery of remote learning is monitored by Principals and the MAT core team through Seesaw, with coaching provided as necessary. Interest waning at home but maintained by promotions such as mountain challenge and screen-free days (‘Wellbeing Wednesday’) which are enabling remote learning to stay on track.

Due to COVID restrictions, meetings were held remotely during 2020-21. The Chair (C Midgley) has sent a confirmation email to the clerk dated 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021, to record that these minutes were reviewed and approved at the next Board meeting (29<sup>th</sup> March).

The CEO confirmed that catch up plans, School Improvement activities and data positioning are ongoing, despite challenging circumstances. SIP visits all completed. The Trust is expecting to appoint a Principal at Bowling Green Academy soon.

Current Trust Priorities are:

- Developing clarity and communication within the new 'Trust Leadership Structure'
- Securing leadership for the future at Bowling Green & associated School Improvement
- Monitoring of SIP visit recommendations
- Monitoring, reviewing and updating remote learning offers and/or re-opening offers
- Data capture for end of year positioning across the trust – new process

Feedback from LGBs - as requested at Standards Committee 5<sup>th</sup> October - is that TGA have accessed clerking training (new clerk), CH highlighted their case study (see above) and RV requested more clarity on the new Reserves Policy (MAT Board, 5<sup>th</sup> October). Trustees agreed that J Midgley should follow up on the Reserves Policy with Raynville.

In questions to the CEO, J Nellis referred to the exclusions at Carlinghow (2 children). J Power commented that the CEO Report reflected well on all the MAT schools.

### **Financial reporting**

The CFO referred to the Management Accounts as at 31.12.20, which confirm that the current EOY forecast (consolidated Trust position) vs budget is still £1.6M, with a small in year deficit of £199k. Income and expenditure increases were noted, but (i) work is ongoing to establish budget / finance positions at Bowling Green Academy which is not yet included within the accounts (converted 1.12.20) and (ii) team meetings to clarify 2002-21 Research School / TSA / SCITT activity are ongoing (a complex set of entities).

The Chair of Trustees added that Senior Leadership at Bowling Green will be supported during the school's improvement journey, as a benefit of joining the Trust. K Inwood added that he will be working alongside the CFO to better understand the current position, as part of his transitional role.

In response to the Chair of Trustees, it was confirmed that the SCITT Premises were completed by the end of December, but are not fully in use due to the current national guidance for home learning / working since 5<sup>th</sup> January.

In terms of assurance, the CFO confirmed that Principals are working uniformly to return each school's position (remote vs in-school working, suppliers, contracts, furlough etc) for collation across the Trust, with guidance and training from the CFO/COO - following lessons learnt and guidance received during the first closure (differences are the higher take-up of provision and reduced furlough - mainly some catering staff). The CEO added that this had been a positive process using a set template, with version control, to capture the relevant information (a bespoke system, as discussed at Standards Committee 30<sup>th</sup> November re. school improvement reporting).

Trustees approved the credit card limit increase and catering supply (CH/Kirklees Council catering SLA extended to 31.8.21) as set out in Document 7.2b. The CFO added that late guidance had been received from DfE re supplier relief, following on from PPNs issued in 2020. Trustees confirmed that catering reliefs (Leeds/Kirklees) reflecting income received, should continue with an expected exit date of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

### **Standards report**

Trustees heard a verbal update from the COO on management of risks and safeguarding measures, alongside the COO Report circulated in advance.

The Chair of Standards confirmed that Standards Committee had met to discuss the CEO Report in detail, with input from Andrew Midgley, Leadership Team (Seesaw live demonstration) and D Worthington, School Improvement (remote learning self review).

### **Policies approval**

No updates to report.

7. Standing Item - specific MAT Board decisions

Minutes of last meeting 14.12.20 - **approved**

Trust Management Accounts - **approved**

Financial approvals, as above - **approved**

Reserves Policy - **J Midgley to follow-up and report by 29.3.20**

8. AOB

None.

9. Future Meetings

**Confirmed: 29th March 2021 (F&P at 6pm / MAT Board 7pm, by Zoom).**

Detailed arrangements tbc:

24th May 2021 (Stds/MAT), 19th July 2021 (F&P/MAT)