

Minutes

TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday 14th March 2019 at 4.15 at 2a Bradwall Court

No.	Item	Action points
1	<p><u>Present and Chair's Welcome</u></p> <p>Present as Trustees: S Burns, J Cowell, J Hill, S Isherwood</p> <p>In attendance: J Barber, D Osborne, L Robertson, Apologies, G Merry, J Savage</p> <p>The board were informed that Emily Richards had resigned the previous week as a member of the board due to work commitments. A letter had been sent to Emily thanking her for her time and input into the trust.</p>	<p>DO to: Update the records at the Charity Commission and Companies House.</p>
2	<p><u>Minutes of 13th September 2018</u></p> <p>Accepted as a true record.</p> <p>JC asked if there was any news in regards to government funding for the increased pension costs. DO/SB advised her that additional funding would be received for a period of 18 months after which time there was no certainty. JB explained that he was the only employee in the teachers' pension scheme at the and he was employed by Sandbach School and seconded to the trust.</p> <p>JC asked if the trust would be having an independent examination every year or would an audit be performed next time. LR replied that there is no legal requirement to have an audit (due to being under the income threshold) which is why the independent examination had taken place last year, this saved the trust £2,000 per year, it had been suggested that a systems audit take place every other year. If an audit took place next year the figures for the previous year</p>	

	<p>would also so require auditing to a certain extent, as the audit report on the statutory accounts would be in respect of the current and comparative year's figures.</p> <p>DO stated that there was no need to have an audit and this would cost the trust money unnecessarily, In the past the board had chosen to have an audit for peace of mind , since LR is now in post we have the comfort that controls are in place and the reporting is more accurate. We could have a systems audit in addition to the independent examination, this would check that systems are in place and they are being followed for example authorisation levels when purchasing high level items. At Sandbach this takes place three times per year.</p> <p>It was agreed that this should be considered once a year and quotes received for this work.</p>	<p>LR to get a quote</p>
<p>3</p>	<p><u>Arts Council update</u></p> <p>JB reminded the board that following the data return for 2017/18 the trust had received a feedback letter which had been circulated to trustees, this letter had highlighted a number of areas in which we weren't meeting the national average. A meeting had taken place with Jane Beardsworth & Carys Williams on 28th January at which JC and DO were present. The points raised by ACE in the letter were discussed, we soon realised that in relation to a lot of areas the trust was not recording the full extent of its engagement with schools which resulted in the figures reported being low compared to other hubs. We were asked to produce a milestone document detailing a timeline and actions to be taken to increase the level of engagement with Cheshire East Schools. This was done (a copy of which had gone to all trustees) and sent to ACE, who were happy with its contents but asked if we could present this in a slightly different format, this we did ACE were sent this the day before the meeting and we are awaiting their response. The milestone in its revised format had been circulated at the meeting and JB pointed out the main points including :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning a bespoke 'Out of the Ark' song book based upon the successful 	

Sheffield music hub model. 170 copies have been licensed to print, one for every CE Primary School and all LMT tutors who will be accessing the book in weekly lessons. All CE schools to be additionally provided with online access to resources and backing materials. Out of the Ark Song book materials are cross-curricular and 'Out of the Ark' will presenting a session at the LMT Primary Conference on how to make the most of the resources. Tied in with the book launch will be the singing challenge, an opportunity for schools to upload videos of their school groups performing songs from the book to our website. The books will be given to all the primary schools taking part in the events at the Crewe Lyceum next week. As a consequence we will have engaged with all primary schools in Cheshire East in respect of Singing (confirmed by ACE). JH asked how our results compared with Sheffield, JB said that he did not know but would try and find out, by adopting the Sheffield model, the costs were kept to a minimum as the licence required was not a brand new licence but a print licence

- Initiative to support CE Secondary Schools to run vocal transition projects with feeder primary schools in the summer Term. This activity already exists in some CE Secondary Schools however additional funding (sourced from unclaimed First Access grants for the 2018/19 academic year) would allow greater and more focused vocal engagement.

Appendix C: shows income other than the ACE grant generated by the trust, as requested by ACE this includes income raised by our partners. As these figures are not supplied to us by our partners until June we have based this on the previous year plus conversations with them.

JS spoke to Carys on 11th March, his feedback following this was that the LMT had possibly been

overly cautious on what we had been reporting in the data return.

JC thanked JB and his team for all their hard work.

The board asked if they were happy to approve the document. JC suggested that the board approve the document in the knowledge that there may be minor adjustments, if there were any major changes the revised document should be circulated amongst trustees. This was agreed unanimously.

JB then went onto the business plan review document which had been circulated to trustees on 4th March. As explained previously ACE do not require a revised business plan for 2019-20 however they wanted the board to review the original plan and consider any differences between it and what has taken place. JB said that since the document had been produced 4 special schools had taken up the STEAM initiative.

Also Cheshire East Theatre Youth, based at the Crewe Lyceum is ceasing. This had been funded by Cheshire East Council who have now opened a new online grant portal 'The Chest', £20,000 per year for 3 years is available and they had contacted JB to suggest that he and Paul Hine make a bid for the funding, based upon the successful Life on Stream project. The Mac Music Festival that we ran for the first time this year was successful and a new music festival will be taking place in Congleton next year.

SB asked if the special schools had taken part in the music festival JB said that they hadn't this year but he and Sally Dinnis had visited Fermain Academy and they hope to be taking part next year.

The board were happy with the review and the activities of the trust.

JC pointed out that the NA may increase so the trust needs to continue to encourage engagement with our services.

The third requirement by ACE was a revised budget for the year ended 31st March 2020. Three versions had been circulated prior to the meeting (best case, breakeven and worst case). Following a short discussion it was agreed that the breakeven model be approved taking into account this has a built in contingency in that the continuation grant figure

	<p>assumes that there is 100% take up, in reality this has never been the case and that the total continuation grants paid are normally £8,000 below this figure. It was also agreed that any surplus made in a financial year be treated as a restricted fund for future remissions in order to make the tuition more widely available to those who would otherwise not afford the tuition.</p>	
4	<p><u>Management Accounts</u></p> <p>LR had circulated these prior to the meeting.</p> <p>She explained that at this point in time the projected surplus was £10,000 below budget. One of the reasons for this was The Snowman event, which had not raised as much as expected. JB explained that the format of this production had been adapted following the previous showing, reducing the number of performances on the day to cut costs but unfortunately this did not have the desired effect and it will not take place next year. LR said that new ideas of raising additional funds need to be tried although not all will work. JB reminded the board that the Wallace & Gromit performance would be taking place on 20th May, it was agreed that this was a good time to hold it, the week after the SATs although ticket sales are still lower than hoped. SI explained she was going to the East Cheshire Heads meeting the following day and would take flyers with her re the event. DO also asked for a flyer he would then contact Wistaton school and promote the event.</p> <p>JB asked if there were any questions in relation to the accounts, there were none.</p>	
5	<p><u>Cash flow and investment policy</u></p> <p>The cash flow for the period ended 31st August 2019 had been circulated prior to the meeting. This showed a balance in excess of £200,000 throughout the year with the lowest point being £207662 in March 2019.</p> <p>LR had opened the new Nationwide account with the agreed investment of £100,000.</p>	

	<p>JC asked if we should be opening a third account to take further advantage of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.</p> <p>LR explained that although the Lloyds bank account had in excess of £200,000 once the capital project goes ahead and we relocate this figure will reduce.</p> <p>DO told the board that the school held funds in only one account, opening a third account would just cause increased administration and the risk of funds held at Lloyds being at risk was very low.</p> <p>There were no further questions.</p>	
6	<p><u>Statutory filing</u></p> <p>All statutory filing was up to date, other than Emily Richard's resignation which had only taken place a few days earlier.</p> <p>DO had been reading the articles of association and he felt that they needed to be reviewed and updated, to include trustee appointments/resignations and quorums at meetings. The trust currently has 6 trustees the articles allow for 9, we need to look at filling these spaces and considering areas where we are weak on expertise.</p> <p>LR said that she would send the summarised skilled matrix to DO/JC/JB to consider.</p> <p>Suggestions made by the board included a parent, a person connected to the RNCM, a Private school, a special school or with experience in public fundraising.</p> <p>DO also offered to review the trusts policies JB explained that most of the policies had been reviewed/updated during the last 6 months , however the risk management policy was yet to be reviewed. LR asked DO to look at the Health & Safety policy too.</p> <p>SI pointed out that a risk register should be kept by the trust. LR pointed out that there was a risk register as part of the business plan but that she would review this with JB.</p> <p>JC suggested that it should include the top five risks and offered that this once JB & LR had done this she would review the format.</p> <p>JB announced that Gemma Farrell had handed her notice in and would be leaving in six weeks. The board</p>	<p>DO to file EM resignation with charity commission and companies house.</p> <p>LR forward skills matrix</p> <p>DO Review risk management and Health & Safety policies</p> <p>LR/JB review the risk register.</p> <p>JC review format of risk register</p>

	<p>were disappointed to hear the news as Gemma was an integral part of the team and would be greatly missed. This was an example of what should be on the risk register. SB suggested that in the future the notice period should be increased to 8 weeks, this would allow time for the new employee to give a months notice to the previous employer and also allow hand overtime. JB explained that she would be providing a procedures manual for her role. The job description is being reviewed and the position will be advertised next week. The position may suit an individual who has an events/graphic design degree, her role is very wide, she is the 1st point of contact for users, creates all promotional material, arranges events, delivers instruments to schools, attends ensembles as and when we required as a chaperone ...</p> <p>JB pointed out that the staff at the trust were a small team and it was important that we all worked together and got on well.</p> <p>LR informed the board that she had started the process of recruiting volunteers, an application form had been created and will be going out to those individuals that have shown an interest. All volunteers will have a DBS and if possible 1st aid training.</p>	
7	<p><u>Activity Report</u></p> <p>The activity report had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>JB explained that this report had been covered in section 3 of the meeting whilst discussing the milestone report</p>	
9	<p><u>Any other business</u></p> <p>There was no other business</p>	

The meeting came to an end at 6pm

The date of the next meeting 13th June 8.30am at Sandbach School