

Minutes

TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday 18th March 2021 via Zoom

	Item	Action points
1	<p><u>Present and Chair's Welcome</u></p> <p>Present as Trustees: J Savage, J Cowell, P Sharp, J Hill , S Burns, G Merry, R Dakin and S Isherwood</p> <p>In attendance: J Barber, L Robertson, D Osborne.</p>	
2	<p><u>Minutes of 19th November 2020</u></p> <p>The minutes were reviewed and accepted as a true record.</p> <p>Action points: -</p> <p>JB had spoken with GM re care leavers 16+ pathway.</p> <p>LR had filed the statutory accounts with the Arts Council, however the policies will be carried forward to the next meeting due to the high number of items on today's agenda and LR awaiting information in respect to absence payments to staff.</p>	<p>LR to bring policies to the following trustees meeting.</p>

3

Management accounts and cash flow

LR had circulated the reports prior to the meeting.

She pointed out that the restricted part of the grant from the Arts Council will have been spent by 31st March 2021, however as of 31st August 2021 there would be approximately £14,981 restricted grant remaining although this wasn't a problem, she hoped that by 31st August 2022 this figure would be nil.

The management accounts were based upon revised budgets approved in January, which showed a budgeted deficit £48,573. The projected deficit for the year is currently predicted to be £40,384. This is due to a number of reasons such as the Bennett workshop being carried forward to the next academic year (£4500) due to a limited time to accommodate all planned projects caused by Covid restrictions. The purchase of Universal access to Out of the Ark being below budget by £2616.

This will result in an underspend of the restricted grant as of 31st August 2021.

This cash flow only covers a six-month period, once the budget has been agreed for the year to 31st August 22 and our funding has been finalised, this will be extended.

She explained that the Trust continued to be in a strong cash position although the balance in March is lower than it would normally be Cheshire East have installed a new accounting software which has caused a delay in receiving payment from schools.

JS asked if there were any questions.

PS asked firstly what the two different columns showed in the cash flow graph she explained that these showed the Lloyds bank balance and the joint bank balances which included both the Lloyds and Nationwide bank balances. He then went on to ask what the consultancy fee was in respect to **JB** explained that this was for **DO** services as company secretary.

JC then asked that in future reports the reason that the board approved a deficit budget be explained. Although the board were aware that this was due to an underspend of restricted Arts Council funding caused by cancellations of events and projects in the summer term due to Covid restrictions, not everyone reading the reports would be aware of the background. As of 31st August 2020, unspent restricted Arts Council grant amounted to £55,576 the result was that the Trust generated a surplus for that financial year, however any funds remaining as of 31st March 2021 were at risk of being clawed back by the Arts

	<p>Council. The Trust therefore investigated ways of spending these funds that would most benefit our children, this resulted in a deficit budget for the year ended 31st August 2021.</p>	<p>LR to include an explanation of deficit budget in future reports.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><u>Budgets year ended 31st March 2022 and year ended 31st August 2022.</u></p> <p>LR had circulated the budgets prior to the meeting, she explained that the budget for the year ended 31st March 2022 would require filing with the Arts Council in early April.</p> <p>The budget for the year ended 31st August 2022 (the Trust’s financial year) would be reviewed as last year at the June meeting and updated if required.</p> <p>The budgets showed three versions, worst case, mid case and best case, the difference being the value of grants paid out to schools.</p> <p>The best case being based on the usual uptake of grants by schools. The worst case being based on all schools taking up the grants and the mid case being based on a figure midway between the two.</p> <p>Previously the board have approved the mid case budgets, both budgets show a small deficit this is the affect the new projects such as the back to life composition overlapping two accounting</p>	

	<p>periods, also the Bennett Workshop being delayed and taking place in the following academic year.</p> <p>JC asked if the figures for business income had been prudent.</p> <p>JB explained that they had been reasonably prudent, he had been speaking to schools over the last couple of days and it appeared there would be little change compared to the school's previous requirements.</p> <p>JC felt that Sir Kevan Collin's comments about the value of drama and music and the mental health benefit to children should give some protection to funding in the future.</p> <p>JS proposed that the mid case budget be approved for both years, GM seconded, and the board approved unanimously.</p>	
5	<p><u>Business Stabilisation Plan</u></p> <p>JB explained that up until the previous year the Arts Council had required a business plan to be filed to secure funding, however since last year this had been replaced with a Business Stabilisation Plan.</p> <p>This plan had to be approved by the Trustees and filed in early April.</p> <p>The Arts Council's feedback letter praised the hub for adapting well to the effects of Covid, increasing digital learning and</p>	

	<p>enabling tuition to continue through school closures.</p> <p>He had circulated the document prior to the meeting and gave an update of the main activities.</p> <p>As of December 2020, within Cheshire East the LMT currently (academic year 2020/21) is engaging with.</p> <p>124 of the 124 Primary Schools (100%)</p> <p>21 of 21 Secondary Schools (100%)</p> <p>7 of 91 Special Schools (77.8%)</p> <p>1 of 2 FE colleges (50%)</p> <p>In total the LMT is currently engaging with 153 of 156 (98.1%) education settings across the four 'core roles'.</p> <p>Although there has been a drop in the number of schools engaging in First Access, the Trust is still above the National Average of 46.9%, engaging with 56.5% of settings in Cheshire East.</p> <p>Ensembles have continued to meet although this has been online.</p> <p>Singing has seen new initiatives. The Trust has invested £12,384 for licenses for all Cheshire East Primary and Special schools to access the 'Out of the Ark' Universal Access platform, a superb resource with well over 900 songs and singing activities.</p>	
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For September 2021, there are plans to extend the offer and support to young people with additional needs through the creation of a new Noteworthy choir to run alongside the LMT Noteworthy Orchestra.

The song book will be produced in house again this year with JB , Sally Dinnis and Victoria Palethorpe writing the songs. The focus will be around mental health issues caused by Covid restrictions and looking forward .

Continuation numbers are down slightly effected by First Access classes not taking place as usual.

CPD has extended to include online CPD sessions led by the team which are popular. The annual conference which takes place in May will also be online, two of the sessions being taken by Simon Greasby (Music Tech and Skoog).

JS asked if the steering meetings were still going ahead.

JB replied that they were and that the second one of the year had taken place a few weeks ago. There had been three new members, Lauren Scott, Paul Hine, and Lyndsey Purcell. As per the terms of reference, Jackie Davies had stepped down as Chair after two years and applications are now being taken for her replacement.

one student is looking at career in the police force and one to study Palaeontology. One student may not accept her offer having decided alternatively to teach.

JC Asked if there could be financial reasons behind not taking up the offers.

JB Replied that this would not be the case, once accepted they would have access to an array of grants. Applying to the RNCM and other conservatoires can be costly for students however this year all applications were online which reduced the fees. If we had been aware of any students struggling the Trust would have assisted them.

JS Suggested that the Trust provide a sign posting service for students to grant making institutions.

JB Went on to say that there had been nine applications for September 2021, three internal and six external including two students from Brine Leas Academy, in part due to the academy not providing A-level music and drama for the September 2021 academic year. The auditions will take place on Friday 23rd April, the panel will include Rob Buckland from the RNCM. He said that it had been a challenging year for the students and thanked **SB** and **DO** for all their efforts in accommodating the students' needs.

JS Suggested that the model should be used elsewhere in the country following its success.

JC Congratulated **JB** and the school on the success they should be proud that five students had been offered places. She suggested that this should be publicised, in the local press, radio and perhaps BBC North West.

JB & JS to publicise the success of the specialist sixth form course and its students.

	<p>JS Agreed and offered to work with JB on this.</p>	
7	<p>Coronavirus update JB Summarised the main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust had received good news that funding would continue for 2021-22 • Schools were open to all children. • Ensembles should begin to meet on a face-to-face basis from 19th April. • Events can go ahead in the summer. Gawsorth Hall has been booked on 4th July for the Trust’s summer celebration, this is an outside theatre, and the performance will include all the ensembles and a number of partners. • There will be another Conductive Music online course taking place over Easter. 	
8	<p>Statutory filing DO advised the board that the revised Articles had been filed with Companies House and a copy of the resolution passing the Articles had been filed with the Charity Commission. The Annual return had also been filed with the Charity Commission which meant that all statutory filing was up to date.</p>	
9	<p>Any other business JB Raised the Uber ruling in which the drivers were classed as ‘workers’. There is a possibility that this may have an impact on the tutors, he would be attending a Music Mark meeting that day where Bates & Well the legal representatives of Uber</p>	

drivers will be presenting the facts and the possible affects. The Trust was able to react to Covid restraints more easily due to Tutors being self-employed. However, the Trust will follow government advice and guidelines.

JC Asked how this would affect the Trust financially.

JB Replied that the result would be that tutors would be paid less per hour however this would be compensated by benefits such as holidays, sick pay and pensions.

The reduction in pay would hopefully cover the additional costs such as employer's national insurance and pension contributions.

JS Asked that he could attend the meeting and **JB** said he would arrange that.

LR Then asked that given there had been confirmation in writing that funding would continue for the following year 2021/22 that the support staff annual employment contracts be extended from 31st August 2021 to 31st August 2022.

This was agreed unanimously.

JB Informed the board that the Cheshire East Young Musician performances would be shown on YouTube this Saturday night and he would send a link to everyone, the total performance was 5 ½ hours long.

JC Congratulated the team on the fact that this had gone ahead.

JB Explained it had all taken place online and the judges would be announcing the winners on Saturday as part of the performance.

	SI then asked if JB was aware of the Cheshire East Holiday Activity Fund, he said he wasn't but would be keen to look at it. SI agreed to forward the details to JB	SI to forward details of fund application to JB
10	Future meeting dates The dates had been circulated and agreed	

The meeting came to an end at 9.50 am.

The dates of the next meeting

Full trustees – 24th June 2021 8.45 am.

Business & Resources – 22nd April 2021 8.45 am.