

Board of Trustees

Monday 4th July 2022

Minutes

Present:

Sugra Alibhai
Peter Green (Chair)
Lucy Harrison
Linda Horbye
Adrian Marrocco
Lola McDowell
Helen Pettifor
Zubair Shaikh
Andrew Tebbutt

In Attendance:

Ian Hooper
Lubna Hussain
David Lee
Marco Macchitella
Claire Mugridge
Beth Yap

David Adams (Chair of Archer Academy)

(*attended virtually)

1.	Governance
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting
3.	Matters Arising
4.	FLT Strategic Priorities
5.	Report from the CEO
6.	White Paper – Opportunity for all
7.	Confidential Item
8.	Budget and Three-Year Plan
9.	Reports from Committees
10.	Risk Register
11.	Any Other Business

Minute	Decision /Action	D/A
1.3	To agree that the Members should appoint Lola McDowell as a Trustee for a full term of four years.	D
1.4	To agree that the Members should re-appoint Peter Green as a Trustee for a full term of four years.	D
1.5	To agree that the Members should re-appoint Zubair Shaikh as a Trustee for a full term of four years.	D
1.6	To agree that the Members should re-appoint Adrian Marrocco as a Trustee for a full term of four years.	D
1.7	To agree that the Members should re-appoint Helen Pettifor as a Trustee for a term of 2 years.	D
1.8	To agree that the Members should appoint Lucy Needleman as a Trustee and member of the Audit & Compliance Committee for a full term of four years	D
1.9	To appoint Jeremy Ruff a Co-opted Governor at both the Audit & Compliance and Finance & Operations Committees for a full term of four years.	D

1.10	To appoint Meryem Recber as a Governor serving on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body for a full term of four years	D
1.11	To appoint Wasim Rehman as a Governor serving on the ICLMS Local Governing Body for a full term of four years	D
1.12	To re-appoint Marco Macchitella as a Governor serving on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body for a full term of four years.	D
1.13	To re-appoint Pamela Chowdhury as a Governor serving on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body for a full term of four years	D
1.14	All Trustees to complete the governance self-assessment.	A
1.15	To appoint Peter Green and Helen Pettifor as Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees respectively for the next academic year.	D
3.3.5	Helen Pettifor to discuss protected characteristics offline with Sugra Alibhai.	A
3.7.3	Financial KPIs to be included in the CEO report.	A
4.	College to speak to alumni to discuss whether there were any gaps in their skills once they progressed to university or work.	A
5.	Sugra Alibhai to ensure key contacts are included in the student bulletin throughout the year so students know who to reach out too should they require additional support.	A
6.	Trust to regularly reconsider the impact of the ‘Opportunity for All’ white paper.	A
6.	Sugra Alibhai to circulate presentation regarding the ‘Opportunity for All’ white paper to Trustees.	A
8.	To approve the 2022-23 budget and three-year plan.	D
9.2	Beth Yap to circulate confidential Local Governing Body minutes to the Board.	A
9.4	To approve the Trust’s Reserves Policy.	D

The Board welcomed Lola McDowell, David Adams and David Lee and introductions were made.

1. Governance

1.1. Apologies

Richard Craster, James Marshall and Ellie Smith.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

Lola McDowell declared an interest in item 1.3.

Peter Green declared an interest in items 1.4 and 1.15.

Zubair Shaikh declared an interest in item 1.5.

Adrian Marrocco declared an interest in item 1.6.

Helen Pettifor declared an interest in items 1.7 and 1.15.

Marco Macchitella declared an interest in item 1.12.

1.3 Lola McDowell

Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed that the Members should appoint Lola McDowell as a Trustee for a full term of four years. It was noted that Lola will become the Safeguarding Trustee.

Decision

1.4 Peter Green

Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed that the Members should re-appoint Peter Green as a Trustee for a full term of four years.

Decision

1.5 Zubair Shaikh

<p>Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed that the Members should re-appoint Zubair Shaikh as a Trustee for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.6 Adrian Marrocco Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed the Members should re-appoint Adrian Marrocco as a Trustee for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.7 Helen Pettifor Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed the Members should re-appoint Helen Pettifor as a Trustee for a term of two years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.8 Lucy Needleman Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee which took place via email, the Board agreed the Members should appoint Lucy Needleman as a Trustee and member of the Audit & Compliance Committee for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.9 Jeremy Ruff It was noted that Jeremy Ruff has stepped down as a Trustee. Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board appointed Jeremy as a Co-opted Governor to serve on both the Audit & Compliance and Finance & Operations Committees for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.10 Meryem Recber Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed to appoint Meryem Recber as a Governor serving on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.11 Wasim Rehman Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed to appoint Wasim Rehman as a Governor serving on the ICLMS Local Governing Body for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.12 Marco Macchitella Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed to re-appoint Marco Macchitella as a Governor serving on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.13 Pamela Chowdhury Following the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Board agreed to re-appoint Pamela Chowdhury as a Governor serving on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body for a full term of four years.</p>	Decision
<p>1.14 Governance Self-Assessment The Clerk explained that the governance self-assessment will be circulated over the summer holidays and reminded all Trustees of their obligation to complete this, as stated in the governance code of conduct.</p>	

1.15 Chair and Vice Chair

Peter Green and Helen Pettifor withdrew from the meeting at this point.
It was agreed to reappoint Peter Green and Helen Pettifor as Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees respectively for the next academic year.

Decision

The Chair informed the Board that the ICLMS Local Governing Body would convene during the next academic year and the membership of this, and that of the Woodhouse Local Governing Body, have been discussed by the Steering Group. It was noted that Angela Hille would remain on the Woodhouse Local Governing Body and there are also plans to appoint a governor from Imperial's Faculty of Medicine to the Woodhouse LGB.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of 28th March 2022 were reviewed and approved as a true and accurate record of the events that took place. It was agreed that part of items 4 and 8 would be removed prior to the minutes being uploaded to the Trust's website.

3. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

3.5 Helen Pettifor to discuss protected characteristics offline with Sugra Alibhai.

Action

6. Due to the delay of the ICLMS build, a second quote for the installation of the ICLMS broadband line has not been required.

7.3 Financial KPIs to be included in the CEO report.

Action

4. FLT Strategic Priorities

Sugra Alibhai reminded Trustees that the Board considered the draft strategic priorities at its last meeting and, since then, the working party has discussed this feedback and made a number of changes. Sugra then presented the updated vision, mission and priorities.

Vision Statement

Frontier Learning Trust staff inspire and empower ambitious young people from every background to advance and thrive in each step of their academic, professional and personal journey.

Mission Statement

Frontier Learning Trust offers transformational opportunities to students and educational professionals, drawing upon the reputation, skills, and experience of leading institutions.

Strategic Priorities

Students

- Attract diverse cohorts of high achieving, aspirational students who seek a transformative educational experience.
- Provide excellent teaching and relevant guidance in a supportive and safe environment, so that students have a fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

- Enable students to achieve the best possible grades and progress to the next step in their academic or professional journey.

Staff

- Attract, recruit and retain a high performing, diverse staff body who will collaborate to deliver the vision.
- Develop and support all staff to thrive in their careers.
- Build and sustain organisational culture based around trust, respect and openness.

Wider Work of FLT

- Lead national innovation through sharing our educational expertise and influencing stakeholders.
- Provide opportunities by working collaboratively with our diverse local communities.
- Achieve organisational excellence and financial sustainability through resource planning and efficient estate management.

Trustees discussed Ofsted's increased focus on skills within the new framework that is due to be launched soon **Trustees questioned** whether this should be included in the strategic priorities. Sugra reminded the Board that this framework has not yet been finalised and the College already conducts a large amount of work around skills, such as Woodhouse Plus and the various internal academies.

The Board was pleased to note that according to the recent HESA data, Woodhouse students typically progress to a higher tariff university course where 93% achieve a first class or upper second-class honours, compared to 92% of independent schools.

The Board then considered the 5-year priorities for Woodhouse College

- **To refine our approach to destinations so that greater numbers of students access Oxbridge, high tariff universities, US universities and degree apprenticeships.** It was noted that, whilst there is a good foundation, the College has more work to do around this and needs to take a more strategic approach.
- **To further develop the broadening and enriching experiences available to students by developing the 'Woodhouse Diploma/W Level'** There are plans to codify the experiences beyond the classroom, such as ensuring that all Woodhouse students attend a presentation, academic lecture or participate in voluntary work.
- **To develop our estate to ensure that we have additional accommodation to support students with study space during the college day and ensure that the estate is regularly refurbished.** This has been the largest piece of feedback received from students. The Board was reminded that students are not required to remain on site if they do not have lessons, but a significant number would rather study at the College than at home. This is something the College is looking to address as quickly as is practicably possible. Separately, an annual budget has been allocated to improve the general condition of the campus.
- **To develop and implement a successful strategy around fundraising.** This is something that has not progressed at the College. However, fundraising strategies for Woodhouse and ICLMS need to be devised.

- **To further develop and implement a successful strategy involving parental and alumni engagement to support our students and offer wider opportunities.** It was noted that this is something the College currently does well, but a more strategic approach is needed to ensure that this work makes the biggest impact possible.
- **To further develop our reputation as a leading organisation across the sector and local community.** There are plans to share the College's work across the borough, such as assisting with Oxbridge applications.
- **To embed the 'Woodhouse Way' as a common approach to ensure that our students benefit from excellent lessons, informed by the best pedagogical research.** The Woodhouse Way incorporates seven core principles of teaching and learning that should be used regularly in teaching practice, based on Rosenshine's key principles of learning but developed further by senior staff. These include scaffolding difficult tasks, reviewing previous learning and student engagement and participation. The Woodhouse Way was formally launched at the staff conference and was well received.

In response to a question from Trustees, Sugra explained that the College has a desire to encourage students to progress to destinations of choice, not necessarily US universities, but that the US is the most common destination outside of the UK chosen by Woodhouse students.

Trustees questioned what plans there were to further develop the estate to ensure that all students have access to study space. Sugra reminded the Board that BEAT will no longer provide the music provision from next year and, once the Finches lease has ended, the College will have an amount of flexibility around this particular accommodation. **In response to a follow up question from Trustees**, Sugra confirmed that there are no plans to increase student numbers for the foreseeable future and that they will be capped at 1500.

Sugra confirmed that she would present the Board of Trustees with an annual update on how the 5-year priorities are progressing and that the Local Governing Body would continue to oversee the annual College Improvement Plan.

Trustees questioned whether any additional budget was required to ensure that the work is completed. Sugra explained that much of this is already embedded in the current infrastructure but needs further development. The new Vice Principal will create additional resource at senior leader level but other resources and costs will be incremental.

Regarding the Woodhouse Diploma/W Level, the Board suggested that, as an ongoing action, the College speak to alumni to discuss whether there were any gaps in their skills once they progressed to university or work.

Action

In response to a final question from Trustees, Sugra outlined the work that takes place around transition, including the transition day in the summer term and work for students to complete over the summer. The first week at college is carefully arranged to ensure that students get to know their tutor and feel comfortable, before getting introduced to A Level lessons.

5. CEO Report

The CEO report had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting, but Sugra explained that since its writing, the College has received one staff resignation.

Trustees questioned how the College was supporting students with the cost-of-living increase and Sugra explained that the College has a visible pastoral team who are available throughout the year to assist with support such as free school meals. However, it was agreed that key contacts should be included in the student bulletin throughout the year so students know who to reach out too should they require additional financial support.

Action

Finally, it was noted that the draft inspection report has now been received from Ofsted and the final report is expected imminently.

6. **White Paper: Opportunity for All**

Sugra informed the Trust of the recent government white paper ‘Opportunity for All’, which outlines a number of proposed educational changes to be implemented by 2030.

The Board considered the first three chapters which set out some improved standards: an excellent teacher for every child; delivering high standards of curriculum; behaviour and attendance; and targeted support for every child who needs it. Sugra explained that these relate largely to primary and secondary schools.

However, chapter 4, “A fairer and stronger school system”, may impact Frontier Learning Trust. Sugra explained that it is felt that streamlining the school system will allow for greater clarity of responsibility, as some students are currently not served well by small Trusts, and students will benefit if their school is part of a larger, stronger MAT.

Sugra went on to explain what this could mean for the Trust, reminding the Board that Barnet is a high performing borough, and the wider political context is still unknown. However, the Trust’s priority at present is to successfully open ICLMS whilst maintaining an excellent experience at Woodhouse.

Andrew Tebbutt explained that this white paper also impacts the work of universities, many of whom have long-standing partnerships with schools but must now change the way they engage with them.

It was agreed that this is a conversation that the Trust should return to regularly. It was requested that Sugra circulate her presentation to Trustees.

Action

7. **Confidential Item**

Confidential minute.

8. **Budget and Three-Year Plan**

Claire Mugridge presented the 2022-23 budget along with the three-year plan, both of which had been considered by the Finance & Operations Committee and

recommended to the Board for approval. Claire explained that both of these documents need to be submitted to the ESFA by the end of July 2022.

Claire reminded the Board that the Trust is anticipating an operating surplus of £500k this year, compared to the original budgeted surplus of £265k.

The Trust's overall surplus for each year is £153k in 2022-23, £138k in 2023-24 and £284k in 2024-25.

Claire confirmed that this is a relatively cautious budget and explained that the Trust must balance using resources effectively with not being overly cautious.

Claire then outlined the sensitivity analysis that has been conducted as part of the budget. The budget allows for a pay rise of 5%, which is unlikely, but if an increase higher than this was to be agreed, support from the DfE would be expected, as has been the case in previous years.

The budget also includes the proposed KPI targets:

- Cash days in hand – 60 days
- Overall Trust staff costs as a percentage of overall total income - 80%
- Overall Trust surplus as a percentage of total income – 3%
- Premises cost per student - £372

The Board approved the 2022-23 budget and three-year plan.

Decision

9. Reports from Committees and Local Governing Body

9.1 Search & Governance Committee

The Board received the minutes of the Search & Governance Committee of 16th May 2022. It was noted that Ruth Henrywood is no longer a Trustee.

9.2 Local Governing Body

The Board received the minutes of the Local Governing Body of 6th June 2022 and noted that the latest College Improvement Plan was considered. Beth Yap to circulate confidential minutes to the Board.

Action

9.3 Audit & Compliance Committee

The Board received the minutes of the Audit & Compliance Committee of 13th June 2022 and noted that the Committee discussed cyber security, the performance of the internal auditor and risk management.

9.4 Finance & Operations Committee

The Board received the minutes of the Finance & Operations Committee of 20th June 2022. The Committee had discussed the reserves policy in detail and recommended this for approval. After considering this, the Board approved the Reserves Policy.

Decision

10. Risk Register

Sugra Alibhai presented the Trust's risk register, highlighting the changes including the increased risk around ICLMS build and the reduced risk around a reduction in woodhouse grading.

It was noted that, going forward, the risk register will be monitored each term by the Audit & Compliance Committee, but presented to the Board annually.

11. AOB
None.

The meeting concluded at 8:07pm