

**FUTURE GENERATION TRUST BOARD
MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY FULL TRUST BOARD MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 29th SEPTEMBER 2022 at 5.30pm
VENUE: FUTURE GENERATION TRUST CENTRAL OFFICE**

PRESENT: Fliss Dale (FD) - Chair
Stuart Ayres (SA) - CEO/Accounting Officer
Chris Steel (CS)
Natalie Boys (NB)
Lee Bowen (LB)
Paul Woodhead (PW) - Vice Chair
Charlotte Martin (CM)
Jan Macey (JM)
Hilary Southern (HS)

TOGETHER WITH: Tina Clark (TC) – Head of Operations and Facilities
Julie Burns (JB) – CFO, Head of Finance and HR
Emma Joyce (EJ) – Trust Clerk

APOLOGIES: Mark Whitehouse (MW) Peter Farrow (PF)

45.22 CHAIRS OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed all Trustees to the first meeting of the 22/23 academic year.

46.22 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from MW & PF.

47.22 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Lee Bowen to the Trust Board. LB's appointment had been accepted and ratified by all members.

The Chair informed Trustees that Peter Bishop had resigned as a member due to ill health. The Chair is actively researching a number of possible opportunities for the vacant position and will update Members and Trustees as soon as possible.

48.22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ CONFIDENTIALITY

The Chair reminded Trustees of the need to inform the Chair or Clerk if there were any items on the agenda which could be deemed as a conflict of interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chair reminded Trustees of the need to maintain confidentiality. All attendees were reminded that all discussions that take place during the meeting remain confidential to that meeting.

49.22 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Clerk informed Trustees that it was necessary to appoint a Chair of the Trust Board for the 22/23 academic year. The Clerk requested nominations for Chair and all Trustees agreed that they would like this to be the current chair FD, there were no further nominations.

All Trustees voted in favour of FD continuing as Chair for the 22/23 academic year.

The Clerk will ensure this re-appointment is updated on all relevant documents.

**CLERK
07.10**

The Chair did request for it to be noted, that whilst she is happy to continue in this role for the 22/23 academic year, Trustees should bear in mind that it is best practice to consider a new chair, if a Chair has been in the position for a reasonable amount of time, to further aid with the development and strength of the Trust Board.

50.22 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

PW had confirmed to the Clerk his desire to continue in the role of Vice Chair for the 22/23 academic year.

The Clerk requested any further nominations. There were no nominations and all Trustees voted in favour of PW continuing in this role for 22/23.

The Clerk will ensure this re-appointment is updated on all relevant documents.

**CLERK
07.10**

51.22 PREVIOUS MINUTES - FULL TRUST BOARD - THURSDAY 14th JULY 2022

The minutes of the previous Full Trust Board meeting, held on 14th July 2022, having been circulated, were taken as **read** and **approved**.

52.22 STRATEGY

Trustees were provided with the Strategy 2022/23 report along with the meeting documentation which had been written and developed by SA.

The report included an update on the 21/22 strategic plan and proposals for the 22/23 strategic actions.

SA took Trustees through the key points of his report and stated that whilst developing 22/23 strategic plan consideration had been given to ensure that the plan did not contain business as usual targets following feedback from Trustees in 21/22 Full Trust Board Strategy meeting.

SA stated that considerable successes had been achieved within Estates Management area. In Education progress has been made in several areas but the development of other aspects had been restricted by limited capacity. There was a number of business-as-usual targets in Finance for the 21/22 academic year however this was reflective of the level of scrutiny within this area. SA reported that there had been a number of achievements within People area which included the development of FGT policies and the completion of the first FGT Employee Engagement Survey. It was reported by SA that the area of Community had continued to be challenging for the Central Team to move forward.

The Chair stated that she believed that work was continuing within the academies for the Community area.

SA stated to Trustees he is committed to the Strategic Wheel which continues to be valuable, show accountability and steer the direction of travel for the Trust.

Trustees were invited to ask questions and comments on the proposals.

SA proposed to Trustees that People is moved to the top of the strategic plan to support the continued success of the Trust ensuring People are at the forefront of activities.

Trustees were informed that the Trust had been successful in obtaining the full TCaF (Trust Capacity Fund) grant of £134,000 to be used in the 22/23 academic year. This grant is to be used to further develop the Central Team and operations to support growth of the Trust.

CM said that the success of receiving the full grant allocation was fantastic, and asked if this grant was to be used within the academic year?

CS asked if the grant is a one-off payment?

SA confirmed it is a one-off grant and must be used within the academic year. SA proposes to request the money on 31st May 2023 which will give the Central Team more capacity to achieve the actions outlined within the application for the grant.

Trustees were provided with a streamlined reporting mechanism for the 22/23 strategic actions.

SA highlighted the main actions on the proposal for each area.

People

SA said that in his view the biggest challenges that the Trust will face in the academic year will be to ensure there is sufficient succession planning in place, along with the recruitment of suitable candidates for vacancies.

Education

SA is committed to improving the school improvement arm of the Trust and that in his view it is absolutely essential to move this action forward.

Finance

Trustees were informed by SA that the finance operations had successfully moved to the Central team, but focus must be maintained.

The Chair informed Trustees that the move to centralise Finance operations had not been imposed by the Trust but requested by Headteachers following the successful support offered to St. John's and Gentleshaw.

JM asked SA if he felt the current FGT office space was sufficient for the growth required?

SA stated that there are opportunities to increase the number of desks and alternative working arrangements are always possible. The view of alternative working arrangements was also shared as being useful and successful by the Chair.

Estates

SA stated that it is critical for the Trust to have a renewable energy plan and that work with the decarbonisation plan is underway.

Community

Increased marketing and support to further enhance Community actions and activity were proposed.

PW stated that he is pleased with the new format proposed.

The Chair stated that we will be scrutinised on the use of the TCaF grant and we need to ensure the actions are happening,

CM stated that she is happy with the new format but requested that the 2023 Employee Engagement Survey is included on the People strategic plan to ensure the work undertaken in 2022 is continued.

EJ
10.11

CM asked SA to consider if we can wait until the 23/24 academic year to increase the Central Team considering the actions required?

The Chair shared the views of MW which had been sent to her in his absence.

MW said "The Central Team Structure has to be able to support a growing Academy at the same time as integrating a new school in other words it's important to maintain

BAU at all times. As we know due diligence doesn't reveal everything about a school and dealing with the unknown issues can take time and resource

With this in mind, whilst succession planning is extremely important for key roles I think that the Team Structure is of equal importance and I wonder if a focus even beyond the 2023/24 academic year is also required. If we can understand what the ideal Central Team should like with the addition of say another couple of schools we can look to achieve that through careful budgeting”

MW had also stated the importance of succession planning for the CEO role and others within the Trust.

CM stated it is clear that we need to bolster the Central Team to be able to continue to further develop and support the academies.

SA reminded Trustees of his view that it is important to ensure the Trust has a strong school improvement arm and that we continue to grow our own talent. Trustees were provided with examples of the benefits of School Improvement from inside the academies by SA.

CM shared the views of SA by stating that we need to understand the talent and also where it is.

PW stated that we need to create capacity day to day and that there has to be a balance to further support using Trust employees for school improvement.

The Chair shared her views on the successes achieved to date by Lauren Morgan in the role as Maths Lead for the Trust.

CM said that there must be a process to ensure there is a clear and fair process for progression.

SA confirmed that the position of Maths Lead was advertised internally and managed by Marie Smith.

PW asked if we also need to consider that school improvement also extends beyond teaching, i.e. Before and After School Provision, Support staff as an example.

SA stated there is clear evidence that collaboration is working within the Trust as seen within Estates and Clerking.

PW asked SA to provide an update on the replacement classroom project at Etching Hill and should this project become a strategic action for the 22/23 academic year?

SA provided an update and all Trustees agreed that this should be added to the Estates strategic plan.

JM requested that further collaboration between LGB's will also be beneficial.

SA agreed and said that he aims for this to be achieved moving forwards.

CM suggested a further community audit should be added to Community strategic plan so that we can be clear where we are and what we need to achieve, and the Trust should also consider including an action to seek to obtain external recognition/awards in the proposed activities.

EJ
20.03

EJ will liaise with Headteacher Board to obtain this information in the Spring Term.

No further questions were asked by Trustees.

Trustees **agreed to accept** the Strategic Plan proposal for 22/23 and thanked SA.

53.22 LINK TRUSTEE ROLES

Trustees were provided with proposed link roles along with the meeting documentation which had been developed following the recommendation in the ERG audit/action plan to further develop link roles with the Trust and Academies.

Trustees were invited to comment on the proposed roles.

PW suggested that a Faith link role may currently be omitted.

SA stated that not all academies are Church schools however this could still be a consideration.

The Chair invited Trustees who were interested in a particular area to let the Clerk know via email, and then further discussions can take place on what the role will entail. The aim will be to move these roles forward in the 22/23 academic year.

ALL
01.11

No further questions were asked by Trustees.

Trustees **agreed to accept** the Link Trustee Roles update.

54.22 GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION

Business and Pecuniary Interests

The Clerk will email all Trustees and ask that confirmation is returned if there have been no changes to their Business and Pecuniary interests for the 22/23 academic year.

CLERK
05.10

Code of Conduct 22/23

The Clerk requested all Trustees in attendance sign a copy of the Trustee Code of Conduct at the end of the meeting, those absent will be emailed a copy for completion,

CLERK
05.10

Trustee Skills Audit

The Clerk proposed that a Skills Audit is undertaken by all Trustees.

This was agreed by all, and the Chair requested that all Trustees complete and return their completed audits to the Clerk by 21st October 2022. The Clerk will email the form for completion.

ALL
21.10

No further questions were asked by Trustees.

Trustees **agreed to accept** the Governance Administration update.

55.22 RESTRICTED ACCESS RESERVES

JB asked Trustees to consider approving the addition of adding further trust funds to a longer-term restricted access reserve account to obtain greater interest.

JB provided Trustees with examples of the return which could be received on a 2.3% interest rate for approximately 2 months deposit.

The Chair clarified that we could still obtain the funds if required, however the increased interest would be forfeited,

PW asked for consideration to be given to ethical and sustainable organisations for him to support such activity.
Trustees agreed for JB to investigate the options, add funds to a restricted access reserve account and consider ethical organisations for future reserves.

No further questions were asked by Trustees.

56.22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Flash Ley Community Primary School

SA asked Trustees to approve for MLG to undertake due diligence for Flash Ley Community Primary School.

This was **agreed** by all Trustees.

Support Staff pay award

JB informed Trustees that it has been proposed to offer all Support Staff pay grades a pay award of a flat rate of £1925 which would be backdated to April 2022 and if agreed would be paid in November's payroll.

JB stated that one union had accepted the proposal and asked that if this was agreed by all unions would Trustees support this award for all support staff?

Trustees were informed that this pay award is more than was budgeted for by all academies.

Trustees **agreed to accept** the proposed pay award in **principle**.

CM asked for Trustees and academies to consider how we can further support families who may be currently struggling due to the rise in energy costs and cost of living crisis.

57.22 NEXT MEETINGS

Curriculum Committee Academy Presentations - Thursday 6th October 2022 @ 10.30am FGT Central Office

Pay Committee - Thursday 10th November 2022 @ 5.30pm FGT Central Office

Finance & Resources Committee - Thursday 10th November @ 6.30pm FGT Central Office

Curriculum Committee - Thursday 17th November @ 5.30pm Etching Hill Primary Academy

Audit & Risk Committee - Thursday 1st December @ 5.30pm Venue TBC

AGM & Full Board - Thursday 8th December @ 5.30pm/6.30pm Venue TBC

The meeting ended at 18.59pm

Signed:

Date: