



# Minutes

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING OF PEGASUS ACADEMY TRUST

Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> of December

2020 at 13.30pm

Virtual meeting (Google Meet)

<b>Directors</b>		
Richard Hill	Director	Present
Ian Patterson	Director	Present
Gary Griffin	Director	Present
Nina Pogossova	Director	Present
Fiona Fearon	Director	Present
Shelley Davies	Director	Apologies
Emma Whapham	Director	Present
Patricia Salami	Member	Present
Jolyon Roberts	Executive Principal	Present
Lynne Sampson	Executive Principal	Present
<b>Trust Staff</b>		
Jo Ridge	Chief Financial Officer	Present

<b>Clerked by:</b>	Katie Bird
<b>Supporting documents:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAT BoD Agenda 11.12.20</li> <li>• PAT BoD Minutes 09.10.20</li> <li>• BoD Action Log</li> <li>• Executive Principals' report to directors Autumn 2020</li> <li>• Pay scales for Academy Trust</li> <li>• Pegasus Pay and Appraisal Policy</li> <li>• Risk Register</li> <li>• Succession Planning</li> <li>• The right people around the table</li> <li>• BINF Minutes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CYP Minutes</li> <li>• ECCS Minutes</li> <li>• WHIJUN Minutes</li> <li>• WHINF Minutes</li> <li>• Message to staff</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting closed at:</b>	15.30pm

### 1. Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorum

Apologies for absence were received from Shelley Davies.

### 2. Annual confirmation of conflict of interest and changes to register of interests

The clerk confirmed that directors had completed their annual confirmation of conflict of interest.

### 3. Executive Principals' Report

The Executive Principal's report contained within the papers was taken as read.

#### Covid Update

Directors heard that the curriculum catch up programme was being used in innovative ways across the schools.

There are currently a few year groups at home due to confirmed cases of Covid. Children at home are meeting virtually each morning, and it was reported that there have been high levels of engagement from pupils at both Ecclesbourne and Cypress.

Directors were pleased to hear that the pupil premium children in Year 3 at Ecclesbourne who were sent home due a confirmed case in their year, have been allocated a Chromebook and will be able to access the home learning. These children will be allowed to keep the devices until Year 6.

[A director questioned the safety of these devices and whether pupils would be able to access the internet.](#) JR confirmed that all appropriate safety precautions had been taken before providing the children with the Chromebooks.

LS updated governors on the extra-curricular offering taking place at the school including Quidditch club which was a firm favourite amongst the children.

Directors were encouraged to hear that the preliminary results from the Key Stage 1 phonics screening show a positive picture. However, this should be treated with caution as the final results have not yet been analysed.

#### Governance

The Executive Principal's thanked the Chair of Directors for his continued work with Academy Ambassadors to recruit new Directors.

It was raised that the Trust requires at least two new members Academy Ambassadors were also providing assistance with this.

Directors heard that the recent Academy Council meetings had been very successful with high attendance due to virtual meetings.

Unfortunately, the new Governance Manager for the Trust has tendered her resignation. The clerk offered to provide support where possible.

### People and Leadership

Directors heard that the Trust is fully staffed with no vacancies. There are currently a number of staff on maternity leave, if all of these people return to their roles the Trust may be over staffed. Unfortunately, the Trust is losing a good supply teacher as the original teacher is returning to post.

There is an advert out for the role of Deputy Head at Cypress Upper and there have been enquiries from some Trust employees about the position.

### Financial sustainability

Directors heard that the recent audit carried out by Buzzacotts showed no significant concerns.

Jo Ridge was thanked by Directors for her hard work over the year.

### Capacity for Growth

Directors were encouraged to hear that there had been an expression of interest from a school in Sutton, which includes three buildings on two sites, including one that is a specialist base for autistic children. Meetings have taken place both virtually and in person. The schools have a deficit and the Executive Principals will need to look into whether there is funding available to support the Trust in the event that they joined. Directors heard that when the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher visited, they had commented on how tidy the schools were, and how calm and engaged the children were.

[A director asked when a decision would be made](#), and it was explained that this was hopefully going to be before Christmas with a view to them officially joining the Trust from September 2021.

Directors discussed the different challenges that would come with taking on a school with an autistic base including the high level of staff absence. The Executive Principals explained that the empty classrooms at Ecclesbourne could be used to further develop the provision and that Croydon would benefit from this and the expertise that the staff could bring.

Patricia Salami joined the meeting at 14.15.

#### 4. Finance Update and approval of Pay Policy

##### Finance Update

The Finance Committee Chair updated directors on the key areas of discussion from the recent finance meeting including the financial results for the last academic year. Directors heard that the management accounts can sometimes paint a more favourable picture than is true, due to income being received in tranches. To mitigate this JRi is going to look into spreading the income through the year. The Trust has committed approximately £100k of fixed assets for the new offices at Cypress. JRi and JRo are monitoring income and spend for Covid.

The key area of concern is the pupil numbers, which are reducing trust wide and will have a negative impact on income. This is a particular challenge at Cypress where there are 85 vacancies, predominantly in the upper years. Consideration is being given to reducing the number of forms across year groups.

Directors were relieved to hear that the recent announcement regarding the bankruptcy of Croydon Local Authority would not affect the Trust due to the money owed being ringfenced.

Due to the Trust's surplus, it is not entitled to apply for an exceptional Covid costs grant.

##### Approval of Pay Policy

JRo updated directors on the minor changes to the Pay Policy highlighted within the meeting papers.

**RESOLUTION: Directors approved the Pay Policy.**

#### 5. Risk Register Review

Directors noted the Risk Register and discussed the key risk of pupil numbers at Cypress. Despite the school's great reputation there is high mobility. The Executive Principals believe that this is due to families in the upper school moving house to access better secondary schools. Subsequently the families that move into their houses have younger children. Directors were reassured to hear that the recent open mornings were successful with approximately 100 people attending and all were keen to get their children into the school.

[A director asked where the families were moving to.](#) LS replied that some had moved to South Croydon to access the state grammar schools and others had moved to Kent and Bedfordshire.

[Directors discussed the other risks and agreed that the trust should have a business continuity plan in place.](#) It was agreed that this was a priority, and the SLA with Croydon allowed the formulation of a plan with expert advice.

**ACTION: Look into drafting a Business Continuity Plan and speak to Croydon regarding free expert advice. (Item 104)**

It was raised that there are two sets of servers that duplicate one another at two different school sites.

## **6. Staffing Update**

This Item was covered under Item 3.

## **7. Governance Update**

Directors discussed the need for additional directors and hoped that the current advert on Academy Ambassadors encouraged applications from potential candidates.

It was raised that this is the last year that Richard Hill will stand as Chair and therefore consideration needs to be given to succession planning. It was suggested that a formalised process be implemented to identify current and required skill sets and any training requirements.

It was raised that Members could become more involved and it was agreed that this is something that would be looked into.

A director suggested one to one sessions with the Chair to discuss the role, potential candidates and gauge current directors interest in the role.

## **8. Facilities Update**

JRo updated directors on the progress on the office build at Cypress and noted that there had been delays due to building materials shortage. The first stage of access is just being completed.

At Whitehorse a new path has been built and fences have been replaced on the fields.

## **9. Academies Council Minutes**

Directors noted the Academy Council minutes contained within the papers.

## **10. Board Membership Changes**

Nina Pogossova and Ian Patterson have renewed their terms for an additional four years.

## **11. Directors Message to PAT staff**

Directors agreed to send a thank you and Happy Christmas message to all staff.

The Executive Principals thanked Directors for their recent personal messages.

## 12. Minutes of the previous meeting (9<sup>th</sup> October 2020)

Amendment: Page 3 of 6 should read 'Thornton Heath Nursery' rather than Beulah Nursery.

**ACTION: EPs to provide KBi with access to websites to upload BoD minutes. (Item 105)**

**RESOLUTION: With the above amendment made, it was agreed that the minutes as presented represented a true and accurate picture of the meeting.**

**ACTION: Copies of minutes to be printed and signed by the Chair when possible. (Item 106)**

## 13. Matters arising not discussed elsewhere and Action Log

### Action Log

**Item 097:** Complete

**Item 098:** Complete

**Item 099:** Complete

**Item 100:** Complete

**Item 101:** Complete

**Item 102:** Complete

**Item 103:** Complete

## 14. Correspondence to the Chair

There was no correspondence to the Chair received.

## 15. Confidential Items

Please refer to Confidential Minutes.

## 16. Any Other Business

LS reported that Ciara Carroll, Governance Manager, has left the Trust. A gift and card have been sent to thank Ciara for her work.

Directors thanked the Executive Principals for their hard work throughout the year.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting

Chair's signature	
Chair's name	
Date	