

**Minutes of a Meeting of LSEAT Board to be held on  
Tuesday 18 October 2022 from 5.30-7.30pm  
Via zoom**

**Trustees**

Christine Whatford, CBE (CW)	Chair
Dr Sam Parrett, CBE (SP)	CEO/Trustee
Denise James Mason (DJM)	Vice Chair
David Bailey (DB)	Trustee
Charles Yates (CY)	Trustee
Christopher Philpott (CP)	Trustee
Sebastien Chapleau (SC)	Trustee
Prof Lynne Revell (LR)	Trustee
Nick Linford (NL)	Trustee; <a href="#">Apologies Received</a>
Errol Ince (EI)	Co-opted Trustee (LSEC)
Marek Michalski (MM)	Trustee
Sunil Chotai (SC)	Trustee : <a href="#">Apologies Received</a>
Daniel Kwalombota (DK)	Co-opted Trustee (appointed at the meeting)

**Governance Professional & Clerk**

Jennifer Pharo	Group Executive Director Governance
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**Executive Officers in attendance**

John Hunt (JH)	Group CFO
Neil Miller (NM)	Deputy CEO Academies
Kate Shiner (KS)	Trust Chief Strategy & Operations Officer

**Officers in attendance for specific items**

Beth Moore (BM)	Group Head Safeguarding (Item 4.1)
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## AGENDA

### 1. **Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest**

Apologies received from Trustees, Nick Linford and Sunil Chotai

#### 1.1 **Trustee & Local Governors Appointments**

Appointment of Co-opted Trustee Danny Kwalomobota was **APPROVED**.

### 2. **Minutes**

Minutes of previous meeting were **APPROVED**.

In response to actions from the minutes it was report that DCEO-NM had met with Bromley local authority to discuss BTA Blenheim and new facilities and location. Proposal is to relocate to Dukes Youth Centre in St Mary's Cray, in September 2024. Commissioned places will be included in the MoU, which was reported still remains unsigned and stalled by their legal team.

In response to actions from minutes regarding harmonisation of Bexley and Surrey contracts, it was reported that a vast amount of staff were already on LSEAT contracts. It was reported that those staff on Surrey T&Cs had primarily remained due to recent 7% pay increase by Surrey CC Surry have not taken up pay and conditions due to fact that they were given 7% by SCC. All new staff are automatically on LEAT Contracts.

In relation to the outstanding action of the Trust Estates Operational Strategy, it was confirmed that the strategy was being prepared and will come to the Board in Spring 2024.

In response to Trust EDI matters, it was confirmed that a new would be determined following departure of CoHead BBAO.

## **Section 3 : Strategic Direction, Leadership and Partnership Engagement**

### 3. **Group Principal & CEO Report**

Group Principal & CEO presented the report and highlighted a couple of key points

It ware reported that the Group intended to establish a **charity foundation** a detailed report was provided to the Board.

Director School Improvement had been appointed with the new postholder due to commence in January 2023. New postholder is a serving HMI leading on Primary, early reading schemes and phonics although inspects and works on all provision. She has also recently delivered inspection training to Primary Heads in Bexley. Extremely good and valuable appointment. Important to have someone to support and work alongside the DCEO and take on the line management of some heads. Director School Improvement to be invited to the Trust Board in January 2023.

**School Leadership changes** were reported. The Board were advised that CoHead BBAO had left the Trust. Co-Head BBAB was recommended to be appointed as sole HT across primary and secondary provision. It was reported that CoHead BTAB would be retiring at Christmas, and it was recommended that Co-Head BTAO be appointed HT be appointed as sole HT across primary and secondary provision. The Board were advised that both changes were natural evolution and progression from when Co-Heads had been appointed in following review of Trust Management Structures in 2020/21. Deputy HTs were in place to support at both schools.

Board were advised of the recent appointment of Baroness Barran with a mandate for School and College Systems.

The HR Dashboard was presented as an appendix to the Group CEO report.

**ACTION:** The Chair requested that this be a separate standing item going forward with analysis and trend information provided.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

### 3.1 Trust Growth & Opportunities

The Board were asked to **CONSIDER and NOTE** the updated report on the progress and development of opportunities presented in the report, in relation to the TMTS, Free School Applications and changes to Woodside Academy Deed of Variation.

The Board were advised that in relation to TMTS, the CTA had still to be finalised due to issues arising on the due diligence report on the estate and in relation to health & fire safety. Capital applications and requirements to remedy and provide for these liabilities are in progress with both the LA and DfE.

In response to questions from the Board it was reported that new HT had made a positive and good start in September and a good Deputy HT had been appointed to start in January 2023. An experienced Educational Adviser had been appointed by the Trust, to support rapid school improvement.

In response to questions from the Board in relation to the school improvement, the Board were assured that there was confidence that once infrastructure and capital issues had been resolved, right resources were being put in place to turnaround.

In response to questions from the Board on capacity it was reported that DCEO was focussed on continued operational and support improvement support of Bramley Oak and Director SI was focussed on operational support and school improvement at TMTS.

The Board were advised that the conversion of TMTS was planned for January 2023. Approval of the CTA would be required through special board meeting to be scheduled end November or early December, depending on the outcome of capital applications.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that Surrey LA had announced plans to build two new free schools in the North and South East of the county for pupils aged 11-19 with social, emotional and mental health needs who require a special school placement. The analysis presented reported that approximately 300 children in Surrey with this need are currently educated in the independent sector and around 55% are educated out of the county meaning they are travelling long distances each day. The DfE had launched the next wave of Free School applications and Surrey LA had proposed to submit two applications, which if successful will be approved by end 2022, at this time details for provided to apply will be published. Three potential sites have been identified. If Surrey's application to open these schools is successful, the new schools will open in September 2026. The Board were advised it was intended to consider an application.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that in September 2022, the Department for Education (DfE) approved a retrospective Significant Change request from the Trust CEO for Woodside Academy to change its lower age limit from 5 to 4 years of age with effect from September 2019. This was a request from London Borough of Bexley that Woodside Academy open to EYFS reception-aged children to accommodate an increasing demand for special school places for children diagnosed with autism. These changes have been enacted through a Deed of Variation and the Supplemental Funding Agreements have been updated to reflect this age range.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

### **3.2 Laser Education Foundation**

The Board were asked to **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** the report and proposal for the creation of a charity foundation, known as LASER Education Foundation, as recommended by the Group Board for **APPROVAL** by the Corporation and the Trust Board.

The Board were advised that the proposal was to create a Group Charity Foundation to reform and replace the Group Board from January 2023. The Board were advised of the best fit governance structure for the Foundation, how the charity will be run, its membership, Trustees and any legal requirements or limitations in how it is associated or connected to the College and Trust.

The Board were also advised on the purpose and objectives of the Foundation and how the recent work of the branding agency had been embedded and included within this proposal, connecting the sum of all parts of the Group to ensure the co-incidence of interest and combined and collective voice and strength of our organisations still resonates with our core values and purpose.

It was reported that the Foundation will supplement and enhance the charitable objectives of the College and Trust, through fundraising, research, philanthropy, partnerships, sponsorships and collaborations.

It is proposed that the Foundation be called London & South East Region Education Foundation. (“LASER Education Foundation”) and that the collective descriptor for our Group Organisations (the College, the Trust and the Foundation) be referred to as LASER Education Group.

The Board were asked to **APPROVE** the Trust as a Corporate Member of the Charity. Formally the trust is being asked to agree to become a member of the Charity.

In response to questions from the Board in relation to similar structures in the sector, it was reported that research had been undertaken by the Executive. Ormiston Trust have a similar model, likewise Harris and Haberdasher Federations have charitable foundations supporting them.

It was reported that the LASER Foundation would enable us to focus on areas such as educational disadvantage and close these gaps for our families and communities.

Following brief discussion it was reported that the Board were very positive and excited about the proposal and were assured that the Foundation would meet the Trust moral purpose and support greater collaboration and connectivity between the Trust and Colleges. In relation to staffing and resourcing the Foundation, it was reported that a DCEO would be appointed to support the development and operations of the Foundation.

The Board **APPROVED** the establishment of the Foundation.

#### **Section 4: School Operations & Performance**

##### **4. Deputy CEO Academies Report**

The Board are asked to **CONSIDER** and **COMMENT** on the report presented by the DCEO which covered the following areas

- Student Outcomes for 2021/22
- Ofsted Readiness
- School Improvement Progress
- Local Authority Engagement
- Leadership and Management
- School Development Plans

The Board were presented with the **student outcomes for 20201/22** which had been scrutinised by the Provision Boards and reflected in School Development Plans.

It was reported that all schools have produced detailed data reports for the DCEO and their provision boards following the publication of results in July (EYFS/Phonics/KS1 & KS2) and in August (GCSE and Entry Level Qualifications).

School SLTs have met with DCEO and where the outcomes have been forensically examined. In addition, it was reported that there has been a separate review of maths – a priority area across most Trust schools.

The Board were advised that the maths adviser for the Trust has produced a comprehensive report with clear recommendations for each setting. These actions will be monitored as part of the ongoing arrangements for providing appropriate challenge and support to each school.

The Board were advised that in the main results are positive across all schools and where there is underachievement then this had been challenged and detailed action plans put in place.

The Board were advised that HTs and SLT were regularly challenged by External Advisors and the Trust improvement team.

Targeted areas for improvement e.g., science at BBA and reading at Belmont have been identified and action plans have been put in place.

Schools have produced subject action plans for all subject areas, and these will be continually scrutinised by Trust Leaders and External Advisors to ensure progress is made.

**ACTION:** The Board requested future outcome papers to highlight and focus on the key headlines on whether schools were below national averages and comparison data for special and AP schools. KS4 data should have comparisons with benchmarks and previous years.

The Board was advised that dashboards including outcome data would be provided through the new student system Arbor, going forward.

The Board were advised that several schools are in line for an **Ofsted inspection** this year: Bramley Oak, Woodside, Belmont, Bromley Trust Academy. Three of the schools are expected to receive positive judgements.

The Board were advised that Bramley Oak remains highly vulnerable. The combination of ongoing staffing issues and significant issues with building works have exacerbated an already challenging situation.

It was reported that the DCEO is at the school for a minimum of two days a week now supporting the Head of School. An external consultant is providing two days a week support with teaching and learning, two behaviour leads from another Trust provision is providing full time support and other school-based Trust staff are also traveling down or liaising remotely to provide specific areas of support.

The recruitment of a substantive DH is in hand and the search for an interim senior leader continues.

In response to questions from the Board, it was reported that building work would not be complete until February 2024. Behaviour management has been challenging with four classes inside the accommodation and four classes in cabins on the field.

In response to questions from the Board on staff absences and recruitment, it was reported that Deputy Head had not returned due to personal circumstances, staff morale is holding but working environment challenging. Improvements made in 2021/22 have slipped and school is self-assessed as RI. A huge amount of improvement work has been completed, the building work has paused this a little although strengths and improvements in teaching and learning and safeguarding and pupil progress can be evidenced.

**ACTION:** Board requested a position statement for Trustees be prepared for Ofsted.

Trustees who had visited the school echoed the concern around the impact of the building work. **ACTION:** Further visit to be arranged for Trustees.

The Board received an update on local authority engagement and were advised that Trust and school leaders continue to work with their respective Local Authorities on a variety of issues.

The Board **NOTED** the report and update.

#### 4.1 Safeguarding Update

The Board received Safeguarding update and were advised that progress had been made on the standardisation of policy and training across the Trust.

The Board were advised that Safeguarding policies had been standardised and implemented across the Trust, these included, Safeguarding, E-Safety, Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation and Sexual Violence and Harassment. It was reported that new policies for Social Media and Positive Handling had been introduced and implemented.

The Board were advised that staff have completed the annual safeguarding refresher training. It was reported that Academy Council reporting template had been reviewed to centralise reporting data.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** the addendums to the Safeguarding policy specific to Bramley Oak to cover the ongoing building work taking place at the school.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

#### 4.2 Bexley Music Update

The Board were asked to **CONSIDER** the update report on Bexley Music which provided summary information on pupil numbers and coverage, status on the good financial position of the service and an update on quality assurance and curriculum development.

The Board were also advised and updated on the National Plan for Music Education and the role the Bexley Music Hub might play in the future composition of Hubs across the country.

The Board **Noted** the report.

### **Section 5: Financial and Risk Management, Compliance and Controls**

#### 5. Group Chief Finance Officer Report

##### 5.1 Financial & Property Update

The Board received the year end management accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 which reported that the Trust had made an in-year surplus from in-year incoming resources of £1,155k for the year, prior to FRS102 pension charges, which was £398k better than forecast for the year.

The Board were advised that the closing level of reserves of £5.7m represented 19.9% of annual revenue, which is within the new <20% ESFA guideline.

The Board were advised that the Standard Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) consultation closed on 23 September 2023. The consultation covered a September 2022 pay award of a 5% increase on all pay and allowance ranges and advisory points, with higher increase for some parts of the Main Pay Range (of between 5.5% and 8.9%) as a step towards achieving a minimum starting salary of £30,000 by September 2023. Finalised details are expected around 4 November.

It was reported that works have now commenced at Bramley Oak and will run for around 12 months. The Board were advised that the project had been subject to delays which have had a significant impact on school operations affecting pupils and staff. Due to these delays the School will remain in previously agreed temporary accommodation, for a term longer than anticipated.

In response to questions from the Board, it was confirmed that schools had been provided with access to the reserves and the Trust recovery funds set up in 2021/22 continuing for this year had been beneficial and well regarded by schools.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

##### 5.2 Audit: 2021/22 Regularity Questionnaire

The Board were asked to **CONSIDER** the content of the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire, and to **APPROVE** the content of the Questionnaire for signing by the Chair and Accounting Officer.

The Board were reminded that the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire must be completed on an annual basis for the external auditors as part of their audit programme. The representations are used by the auditors to inform their audit programme. Trust responses



are self-explanatory, and it was reported that there was nothing specific to draw to the attention of the Board.

The Board were advised that Buzzacott had already reviewed the content of the draft forms and had not highlighted any issues or concerns.

The Board **APPROVED** the endorsement of the Questionnaire.

### 5.3 Health & Safety Annual Report

The Board were asked to **CONSIDER** and **COMMENT** on the Health & Safety Annual Report for 2021/22.

It was reported that the Annual Health and Safety Report outlines performance for the 2021/22 and provided a summary of the work during the year, together with the further improvements planned and accident statistics for the year.

The report has been considered by the Group Health and Safety Committee and reported that the Trust had a difficult but positive year, partly due to a return to normal operations, post-covid.

It was reported that in general there had been high standards of practice. There had been a decrease in the number of serious assaults and the reporting of minor accidents has greatly improved across the Trust. The Board were advised that some reporting to HSE had been late but had not led to any investigations or sanctions.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

### 5.4 Sustainability Strategy Report

The Board received the Group Sustainability Strategy and were asked to APPROVE. It was reported that following the APPROVAL of the Group Sustainability Policy and Statement of Intent in 2021, work had been completed on the Sustainability Strategy for the Group.

It was reported that the Group Sustainability Strategy covered both the Trust and the College and has been prepared following a detailed consultation process with students, staff, managers and Governors/Trustee.

It was reported that the strategy sets out the Group vision to be Net Zero by 2050 or before, if that is possible, with the foundations of our vision being to inspire learners, run our operations sustainably, and empower everyone to have a collective responsibility to make a contribution.

The Board were advised that the Group Sustainability Strategy has been approved by the Group Sustainability Committee and is recommended to both legal boards for approval.

In response to questions it was reported that an annual report would be provided to the Trust Board to provide progress against target.

The Board **APPROVED** the Group Sustainability Strategy.

## **Section 6 Governance & Accountability**

### **6. Governance Matters**

The Board were presented with details of new Local Community Governors and **APPROVED** the appointments.

The Board received a verbal update on recent **visits** to the schools by Group CEO, Chair and Deputy Chair.

The Board were reminded of the **Board Self-Assessment**. The Board agreed that the evaluation would be circulated for comments by individual members and would be represented for review in early 2023.

The Board were advised that the first **Provision Boards** had taken place in September with a key focus on School Development Plans and outcomes which had been reported to the Board by DCEO.

### **7. AOB: none reported.**

### **8. Next meeting dates**

- Group Finance Committee: 3 November
- Academy Councils: w/c 14 November
- Provision Boards: w/c 22 November
- Group Audit Committee: 24 November
- Trust Board: 13 December

Minutes APPROVED :



Christine Whatford, Chair  
13 December 2022