

**Meeting of LSEAT Board held on
Tuesday 26 March 2024 from 5.30-7.30pm
in person at Orpington Campus Room C1/C2**

**Part 1 Above the Line 5-30-7.00pm
Part 2 Below the Line 7.00-7.30pm**

Trustees

Rama Venchard MBE
Dr Sam Parrett CBE (SP)
Denise James Mason (DJM)
David Bailey (DB)
Charles Yates (CY)
Christopher Philpott (CP)
Prof Lynne Revell (LR)
Marek Michalski (MM)
Sarah Servantes (SS)
Beverley Eaglesfield (BE)
Daniel Kwalombota (DK)
Milena Cooper (MC)

Chair
Trustee & Group CEO
Vice Chair
Trustee
Trustee
Trustee
Trustee
Trustee
Trustee
Trustee
Co-opted Trustee (LSEC)
Trustee

Governance Professional & Clerk to the Board

Jennifer Pharo (JP)

Group Chief Governance Officer

Executive Officers in attendance

John Hunt (JHu)
Neil Miller (NM)
Louise Wolsey (LW)
Martin Briggs
Beth Moore (BM)

Group Deputy CEO & Group CFO
Deputy CEO Academies
Group Chief Strategy Officer (Item A1.1)
Head of Trust Strategic Growth
Group Director Safeguarding (Item A3.2)

Board Papers Published on Board Intelligence on 20 March 2024

- Board Part 1 includes above the line items
- Board Part 2 includes below the line items

MINUTES PARTS 1 & 2

Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

Chair Welcomed Trustees to the Meeting.

Trustee-CY declared an interested in the company referred to within item A.4.2 and had introduced and connected the company with Trust Executive.

Apologies received from Trustee-DK

Minutes of previous meeting held on 23 January 2024

Minutes of the previous meeting were APPROVED.

Board Action Log

Action Log was reviewed – next update to be provided in July 2024.

Estates Strategy: due to be delivered in October using external consultancy to support.

Associate Membership model: work underway will provide some examples and bring for formal sign off.

PART 1: ABOVE THE LINE AGENDA ITEMS:

A1	Group CEO Update & Appendices
	<p>Group CEO presented the report which was taken as read.</p> <p>Board had provided pre-questions to the report which were discussed and responded to as follows</p>
	Questions and Comments
	<p>In response to questions on the closure of the National Tutoring Programme and impact on the Trust it was reported that not many of the Trust schools have used this in the last year or so due to funding contributions,.</p> <p>In response to questions on alternative initiatives in place to address the catch-up of disadvantaged students it was reported that most Trust schools have one to one intervention in place to support those requiring the most support.</p> <p>In response to question on Net Capacity Assessment Programme and link to developing Estates Strategy, it was reported that the two are not necessarily linked, as the Net Capacity Assessment Programme looks at a school capacity to inform space planning to obtain independent verification of capacity, to be used in capacity for admissions and appeals. The Board were advised that if Executives are made aware of any material variations from our current assessment of capacity, this would come back to the Board for information.</p> <p>In response to questions on DfE funded attendance hubs it was reported that we are not engaged in these, the Trust schools work collectively on sharing good and best practice. It was reported that attendance in vast majority of the schools is at least at national average or better and external scrutiny has demonstrated that the Trust's schools go above and beyond already.</p> <p>In response to questions on staff retention and the Trust's policy, it was reported that there is not a formal policy for staff retention, various incentives and practices are adopted by the Trust and Trust leaders to ensure staff satisfaction is high, providing CPD, progression opportunities and wellbeing initiatives. Trust Leaders work with every member of staff who has expressed an intention to leave.</p> <p>In response to questions on the Trust EDI policy and percentage and proportion of underperforming groups like Gypsy Roma, Black Caribbean and White/Black Caribbean, it was reported that overall these comprise a small group of learners between 1-2% of all pupils.</p> <p>In response to questions on the LSEAT's strategy to elevate inclusion to the same level as attainment, the Executive reported that the ethos and practice of the Trust is totally inclusive across all schools.</p>

	<p>In response to questions on Associate Membership, it was reported that a model would be discussed at the Board meeting in May.</p> <p>In response to further questions on Associate Membership and inclusion of time-limits and success criteria it was reported that this would be included as considerations in the documentation being drafted.</p> <p>ACTION: In response to questions on Project Galaxy it was reported that a report would be provided to the Board by the end of the academic year. (Group CEO)</p> <p>ACTION: In relation to an update on the Trust Research Group the Board requested for an update to be available for the new year. (Group CSO)</p> <p>ACTION: In response to questions on staff benefits and staff wellbeing, the Board asked if this could be published on the Trust website. (Group CPO)</p> <p>ACTION: In response to questions on EDI awareness training for the Board, it was reported that a session would be organised for Autumn 2024 term. (Group CGO)</p> <p>In response to discussions on the AI policy statement it was reported that the Oversight and Governance Committee will be an internal operational committee with Group Executive and other key managers a bi-annual or annual report will be provided to the Board.</p> <p>In response to questions on the AI Policy Statement on the important issue of managing risk, it was reported that AI can help reduce the workload for teachers and administrative staff, and we need to prepare learners for a world in which AI is an emerging and important factor.</p> <p>It was also reported that with a rapidly changing AI environment a strategy would likely be out of date very quickly. The purpose of the Policy Statement and the introduction of an Oversight and Governance Committee is to ensure the organisations both College and Trust remain agile when it comes to AI and implementing AI solutions.</p> <p>The Board commented that they were pleased to hear about the range of bid and grants submitted to date and requested ongoing updates and to hear more about future bids and grants but successful and unsuccessful.</p> <p>In response to questions on efficiencies to be released through digital and technology it was reported that efficiencies will be released through improved processes, that should result in more accurate data, better management information, leading to other service improvements.</p> <p>In response to questions on how AI is currently being used by schools, it was reported that two primary schools are piloting AI planning tools for teaching and learning.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update and ACTIONS..</p>
<p>A1.1</p>	<p>Group Strategy & KPIs and LASER Update</p>
	<p>The Board received an update on key issues in the development of a design and development approach to the Group Strategy KPI Scorecard.</p> <p>The Board were reminded that the Group Strategy Framework and the Trust Operating Plan had been approved following a review by the Board in January 2024. The Board were advised that the approach to the KPI scorecard has been developed to set out a way of working to enable the Board to have appropriate oversight of the progress and impact of the Group Strategy ambition within the Trust context.</p> <p>A simplified approach had been developed through better and richer data informing the narrative on the progress and impact in ‘transforming lives through the power of learning’ .</p> <p>The board were informed that the indicators will be supplemented by qualitative data gathered through the Group Research Framework, aligned to key areas of risk, opportunity and innovation as well as the findings of published research to understand ‘what works’ and to inform further practice.</p> <p>It was reported that to start to evaluate the intended impact of the 2024-30 strategy a series of KPIs has been provided with 22 high-level success measures. These are measures which will contribute to</p>

	<p>how the Trust achieves each of the 8 impacts set out in this strategy and the Group’s ambition is to ‘transform lives through the power of learning’:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustained and improved educational achievement and progression across our learner profiles 2. Increased staff satisfaction and well-being 3. Increased income and financial resilience 4. Increased opportunities and engagement through fundraising and sponsorship 5. Increased social value, fostering social and economic mobility through community wealth building. 6. Demonstrable contribution to London and Local London Skills Improvement Plans and priorities 7. Enhanced Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices and long-term sustainability. 8. Enhanced reputation, profile and opportunity to influence local, regional, and national policy. <p>The Board were advised that the proposed measures reflected the Strategic Themes and Goals – People First, Performance and Practice and Prosperity and Place.</p> <p>It was reported that KPIs focus on the priorities shared in common across the College, the Trust and the emerging new Foundation. The Board were advised that where possible the high-level outcomes will be similar for the College, the Trust and the Foundation, although the exact indicators to measure them will differ, as these will be drawn from different data sources.</p> <p>The Board were advised that beneath these high-level outcomes lie a series of more detailed supplementary objectives and targets, linked to the relevant approved operational plans.</p> <p>The Board were asked to APPROVE the KPI scorecard which will be collated and published at least twice a year through a series of dashboards bringing together the data into one place to support the effective monitoring of the strategy and our understanding of its impact and include trend data, data for sub-groups, narrative to explain the trends, and potentially a RAG status indicator.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>The Board discussed KPI 3 (Increased income and financial resilience), and an indicator ‘Reserves as a % of income’, as this is a measure of financial resilience used by the DfE and if it’s 5% or more, then the Trust is deemed resilient.</p> <p>In response the Board were advised that has not been put forward as a metric as it will continue to decline sharply as we take on Schools with no or very limited reserves. Therefore, during a period of high growth, it is not considered to be a good indicator of our resilience.</p> <p>In response to questions on negative operating position, it was reported that including indicator of any school(s) with a negative operating position could be added and would help to manage tight finances to highlight any schools experiencing difficulties, however this is reported through the management accounts.</p> <p>In response to considering measures on data it was reported that this would be considered looking another primary trust.</p> <p>In response to questions on Local Supply Chair Contracts it was reported that the measures to be reviewed would be consider.</p>

A2	CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – MINUTES REDACTED – SEE SEPARATE MINUTE
	Trust Growth and Development Update
	The Board received an update on the growth opportunities including the growth and opportunities matrix.
A3	DCEO Operational Update
	<p>The Board received an updated report from the DCEO which focused on operational issues across the schools since the previous report focusing on including key updates on</p> <p>All operational matters, Ofsted Readiness, Trust Improvement Strategy, External Advisors and Trust Professional Development, Safeguarding, Mid-Year Performance Management, Bexley Music Update, One Trust Update and Stakeholder Work with Local Authorities.</p> <p>In response to questions on home education and whether the Trust had lost any students to this, it was reported that this was not an issue for the Trust.</p> <p>In response to question on the updated policies, it was reported that the policy matrix was reviewed every year and school and trust policies updated accordingly.</p> <p>In response to questions on formal complaints received, it was reported that no formal complaints had been received in the current academic year.</p> <p>In response to further questions on capacity, it was reported that DCEO is working with school leaders where there are capacity issues and is pressing Bexley LA for funding changes. but this is first and foremost a Bexley funding issue which the Trust has supported very well.</p> <p>It was reported that the DCEO represents the Trust and challenges the senior officers at Bexley local authority on a regular basis. This however is a national issue and Bexley is not the only local authority that is in the safety valve and hence funding is being reduced or low already. Surrey and Bromley are funding significantly more but it is felt this will reduce significantly when the NFF for SEN is introduced.</p>
A3.1	Bexley Music Update
	<p>The Board received the update report from GCGO which was taken as read.</p> <p>The Board were asked to CONSIDER and NOTE the update on Bexley Music and the constitution of a company limited by guarantee South East London Music Education Limited in collaboration with our five principal partners “the consortium”.</p> <p>The Board are asked to NOTE that at the time of reporting the ACE grant application has been completed and submitted by South East London Music Education Limited (“SELME”) on behalf of the consortium, such funding to deliver music services in the six London Boroughs from September 2024.</p> <p>The Board are asked to APPROVE the selection process for appointing an LSEAT Trustee to be a non-executive director of the SELME in an ex officio capacity on behalf of the Trust.</p>
	Following discussion with the Board on the matter of a nomination from the LSEAT Board to take up an ex officio role on the South East London Music Education Board, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the appoint of Dr Chris Philpott as a Director of the SELME company on behalf of the Trust.
A3.2	Safeguarding Update (will be presented first)
	<p>GDir-BM presented the report which was taken as read.</p> <p>It was reported that safeguarding practice remains strong across the Trust with two priority areas for development: centralised SCR and online monitoring and filtering.</p> <p>It was reported that the majority of safeguarding reviews have been completed for this academic year with Horizons and Bramley Oak to be completed.</p>

	<p>Key issues identified were the implementation of the Trust wide SCR and the requirement for a new online monitoring and filtering systems across the Trust to ensure effective monitoring.</p> <p>It was reported that a working group is in place to implement a new SCR linking i-Trent and Arbor, with implementation to commence in April 2024</p> <p>It was reported that the move to a new Trust wide solution for SCR using Arbor was progressing, the data, process and procedure had been signed off. First tests being conducted by BOA and rolled out across schools over the remainder of the Summer Term.</p> <p>It was reported that IT are shortlisting providers with a plan to implement a new monitoring system in the summer term and be fully operational by September 2024.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>In response to questions on current process it was reported that schools use slightly different templates all collect standard and compliant information but on a different template. New solution will enable standard reporting across the trust.</p> <p>In response to questions on the delay in rolling out the new solution it was reported that data mapping had uncovered some anomalies in the data, inconsistent format of NI numbers, spaces or punctuation in some fields which required checking and revising. HR were involved in tidying up the data.</p> <p>In response to DBS checking and safer recruitment, it was reported that some schools are involved directly in the DBS process some not. HR are responsible for the SCR, schools have operational oversight. The Central system will enable improved monitoring and quality assurance of the Trust SCR.</p> <p>In response to questions on the central HR services and efficiency it was reported that HR would be to be responsible for safe recruitment and ensure the baseline requirements and compliance are being adhered to provide consistency and quality.</p> <p>In response to questions on the monitoring system, it was reconfirmed that the audit system for SCR was the strongest it had ever been with a huge amount of checking. A huge focus and time had been placed on ensuring the data was correct and being maintained. Regime of auditing would continue with new systems and process in place.</p> <p>In response to questions on Child Protection Issues, it was reported that this was localised to each school, reality is that safeguarding cases are becoming more complex with risk of violence increasing.</p> <p>In response to questions on non-attendance and safeguarding it was reported that schools monitor this closely. Transport issues at BOA with children travelling in taxis is a concern.</p> <p>In response to questions on dedicated drivers, it was reported that the service is variable and not guarantee that children will have regular or same driver.</p> <p>In response to questions on the WRPS SCR it was reported that following conversion audit completed and some gaps in SCR records and safer recruitment found. Easily fixed but somewhat surprising.</p> <p>In response to questions it was reported that WRPS would be moving to CPOMs in September 2024, the safeguarding system used by the Trust.</p> <p>In response to questions on whether this indicated any other gaps in process at WRPS it was reported that education is sound and safeguarding concerns are very different to those presenting in our other schools.</p>
<p>A4</p>	<p>GCFO Update & Presentation</p>
<p>A4.1</p>	<p>Group Risk Register and Appendices</p>

	<p>The Board received the risk register presented by the GCFO which was taken as read.</p> <p>The Board were advised that since last reporting the Risk Register has been updated by the Executive, resulting in some change which have been considered by the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting earlier in March.</p> <p>The Board were advised that of the 20 risks on the Trust risk register, 3 are High, 13 are Medium and 4 are considered to be Low.</p> <p>It was reported that there were no emerging risks, risks reported to the Board were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk T2 which covers Insufficient capacity and infrastructure to support growth as a High Risk. • Risk T6 relating to Breaches of data protection legislation has reduced following the appointment of Trust IT Manager in the summer of 2023, plus the introduction of a new data privacy platform, which will support the reduction in the risk and likelihood of data breaches, reporting as a high to medium risk. • Risk T8 relating to Breaches of health and safety legislation, or a major H&S incident has increased to high due to increased fire risks across Warren Road and Endeavour. External Cladding work at Heron to be completed by Lambeth LA with tenders due to be issued shortly. Internal fire safety issues have not progressed or commenced with Lambeth LA still reviewing the matter. • Risk T19 relating to IT Monitoring & Filtering systems not compliant with latest KCSIE 2023 requirements have been updated to reflect some of the work and controls which are ongoing in order to try to mitigate this risk.
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>In response to questions on the rise in teacher salaries and impact it was reported that the 3% would be modelled as part of 2024/25 budgeting and the increases are estimated at 3% which will need to be funded through efficiencies in each School since most may not receive any funding increases, and any that are received are unlikely to cover the cost of the pay award. It is possible that the Government may provide further funding for any award, and this will not be known until much later in the year.</p> <p>In response to questions on Heron Academy it was reported that there had been some positive communication from Lambeth LA.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
<p>A4.2</p>	<p>Leasing Solar and LED</p>
	<p>The Board received a report for consideration and approval on a proposal to improve energy efficiency through the use of leased solar and LED equipment, subject to DfE approval.</p> <p>A declaration of interest had been noted by Trustee-CY on this item.</p> <p>The Board were advised that following the publishing of the sustainability strategy for LSEAT in September 2023, a number of key workstreams have been undertaken as outlined in the “Trust Sustainability Roadmap” provided to the Board. In line with one Step 5 of the Roadmap to implement strategies to reduce energy usage the proposal takes this forward with solar panel and LED installations.</p> <p>In order to progress this objective Executives had met with several organisations to explore a range of potential options for achieving successful installation programmes for Solar and LED initiatives, through these engagements the Executive has identified SE24 as preferred option.</p> <p>The SE24 option has been tried and tested across the Education sector and appears to represent the best opportunity for achieving high social value outputs, requires no capital outlay from the Trust, representing significant savings from the outset and includes a maintenance plan to ensure efficiencies are maximised and sustainable.</p> <p>SE24 were introduced to the Executive by Trustee-CY who has extensive experience and knowledge of sustainability improvement, working within the sector.</p>

	<p>The Board were advised that SE24 is a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society who is a member of Community Energy London, with experience developing renewable and low-carbon energy projects in South London. At the time of reporting, SE24 was providing the most viable options for the provision of Solar and LED lighting upgrades. This model is utilised by a number of organisations and schools and would be our recommended model due to the partnership and support it allows through a flexible phased installation plan.</p> <p>It was reported that they are currently operating seven community rooftop solar projects and have developed three LED lighting projects for schools and are committed to community engagement around the path towards Net Zero. Any financial surplus made is devoted to supporting local fuel-poverty/vulnerable customers and to climate education, via their Community Energy Fund.</p> <p>The Board was asked to APPROVE the progression of this workstream with SE24, with approval also required from the DfE, and to further explore opportunities to install solar panels and LED lighting across our Schools, with no upfront cost to the Trust.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>The Board NOTED the declared interest and the selection process that had been undertaken to present the preferred provider which was also subject to DfE approval.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the proposal to proceed with SE24 and preferred supplier.</p>
A5	GCGO Update
A5.1	Board Improvement Framework
	<p>The Board received the Board Improvement Framework document presented by the Group CGO.</p> <p>The Board was asked to CONSIDER and COMMENT on the Board Improvement Framework to reflect the new DfE Trust Quality Standards and APPROVE for use by the Board to evaluate their performance in 2023/24.</p> <p>The Board were advised that in March 2023 the DfE published a set of Trust Quality Standards alongside information on their commission processes and definitions of what is a Strong Trust.</p> <p>To supplement this review and additional assurance on the quality and standards of Trust, The Confederation of Trusts (CST) our membership organisation, issued a new Governance Code in October 2023.</p> <p>The Board was reminded that LSEAT currently adopts the DfE Governance Code. The new CST Governance Code is based on Charitable Principles and aligned to the new DfE Trust Quality Standards and has been endorsed by the DfE as a suitable alternative Governance Code for Trusts to adopt. The Trust Board was asked to confirm the adoption of the CST Governance Code.</p> <p>The Board was advised that in order to pursue and be considered for future growth opportunities it will be necessary to evidence through Board self-evaluation and also external board reviews that Trust Governance is meeting the DfE Trust Quality Standards and providing strong assurance on its performance and reputation.</p> <p>It was reported that the prepared LSEAT Board Improvement Framework presented uses the seven domains of governance; leadership; high quality, inclusive education; school improvement; workforce; finance and operations; and public benefit that describe the collection of activities or functions of strong Board and governance performance.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the Framework identifies questions for the Board to consider and assess capacity and effectiveness across these elements and to rate each element against a four-point scale of Red, Red Amber, Amber Green and Green. Referenced within the document are the DfE Competency Framework for Governance criteria that were used in previous years, alongside the RAG ratings applied for 2022/23.</p> <p>The Board was asked to APPROVE the Board Improvement Framework for use by the Board to evaluate their performance in 2023/24.</p>

	Questions and Comments
	<p>The Board endorsed the new framework and extended thanks to the Group CGO for the work on preparing this for the Board.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the Board Improvement Framework for use by the Board to evaluate performance in current year 2023/24 which would commence in Summer Term and reconfirmed adoption of the CST Code of Governance.</p>

PART 2: BELOW THE LINE ITEMS

B1	DCEO Operational & Performance Update
B2	Group CFO Update
B2.1	2023/24 Financial & Property Update including Management Accounts (P5)
	<p>The Board received the financial and property update which included period 5 management accounts which had been reviewed by the Group Finance Committee and now included Warren Road Primary School.</p> <p>It was reported that for the period 5 to 31 January 2024, The forecast adjusted operating position for the year prior to FRS102 pension adjustments remains in line with the budgeted deficit of £103k. All Academies were currently expected to achieve their budgeted position.</p> <p>The Board were advised that following Board approval in the summer to commit an additional £1.16m of SCA and reserves to the Bramley Oak project, work has continued to drive the project forward.</p> <p>However it was now reported that the main contractor - Diamond Build, ceased work on the site immediately prior to Christmas and has now gone into voluntary liquidation. This project is now out to tender again.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
B2.2	SRMA Self-Assessment
	<p>The Board were advised that the SRMA Self- Assessment had been endorsed by the Chair and was presented to the meeting for information.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
B3	Information or Recommendations from Committees
B3.1	Value for Money Report
	<p>The Board were advised that the Value for Money Report had been presented and reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee and was provided for information.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
B3.2	Board Assurance Framework
	<p>The Board were advised that the Board Assurance Framework had been presented and reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee and was presented for information and monitoring.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
B3.3	Contract Extension: Internal & External Audit Service
	<p>The Board APPROVED the extension contract letters that has been prepared by the Group CGO for both external and internal auditors.</p>
B3.4	Group Policy Statement on AI

	<p>The Board were advised that that Group Policy Statement Presented had been reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee and was presented for information and comment.</p> <p>In response to questions on the requirement of an AI and the drive to introduce a policy statement, it was reported that there were already a number of IT and Digital policy references in other policies and with the increased use of technology and embracing technology across the whole business both college and trust and our group operations, it was important to have a consistent approach. Further the Audit & Risk Committee had commissioned the policy statement to ensure that we have sufficient coverage on risk across the business on emerging technologies but in particular AI.</p> <p>The Board were advised that this policy statement provides the ethical framework and oversight from which individual Digital or Emerging Technology policies can be considered and produced.</p> <p>In response to questions on the scope of AI, this was defined within the policy and would not be limited to RPA. The policy statement is broad to ensure that it is not limiting in any way and can adapt to the fast pace and moving landscape of emerging technologies.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the comments.</p>
B4	Governance / Statutory / Regulatory Updates
B4.1	Visit Report
	<p>The Board received a number of visit reports from the Trustees.</p> <p>ACTION: Visits for Trustees to be arranged in Summer Term. (Group CGO)</p>

AOB & Date of Next Meeting – 7 May 2024 at 5.30pm

Minutes APPROVED :



Rama Venchard, Chair
7th May 2024