

Minutes of a Meeting of LSEAT Board held on
Tuesday 15 October 2024 from 5.30-7.30pm
in person at Orpington Campus Room C1/C2 and online

Part 1 Above the Line 5-30-7.00pm

Part 2 Below the Line 7.00-7.30pm

Trustees

Rama Venchard MBE (RV)

Dr Sam Parrett CBE (SP)

Beverley Eaglesfield (BE)

Denise James Mason (DJM)

Charles Yates (CY)

Dr Christopher Philpott (CP)

Prof Lynne Revell (LR)

Marek Michalski (MM)

Sarah Servantes (SS)

Milena Cooper (MC)

Shirley Puxty (SPx)

George Ryan (GR)

Daniel Kwalombota (DK)

Suba Dickerson (SD)

Chair

Trustee & Group CEO

Vice Chair

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Co-opted Trustee (LSEC)

Co-opted Trustee (LSEC)

Governance Professional & Clerk to the Board

Jennifer Pharo (JP)

Group Chief of Staff & Governance Director

Executive Officers in attendance

John Hunt (JHu)

Neil Miller (NM)

Group Deputy CEO & Group CFO

Deputy CEO Academies

THE NOLAN COMMITTEE

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

MINUTES PARTS 1 & 2

Welcome new Trustees apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies from; Trustee-BE, Trustee-SD, Trustee-SP

Welcome to Trustee-GR (Online)

Trustees/Executive joining online: Trustee-MC (from 6pm), Trustee-DJM and Executive-JH

Minutes of previous meeting held on 9 July 2024

The Minutes of the previous meeting were **APPROVED**.

Board Action Log

In response to questions on the Growth Plan it was reported that a Financial and Costed plan would be available for next meeting.

PART 1: ABOVE THE LINE AGENDA ITEMS:

A1	Group CEO Update and Appendices
	<p>Group CEO report was taken as read.</p> <p>In absence of Group CEO it was reported that a new GLT had been convened to include the new Directors now in post.</p> <p>Directors have been allocated schools, with Director SI allocated those schools in the Ofsted window and the remaining schools still managed directly by DCEO. The Directors meet with DCEO fortnightly.</p> <p>It was reported that there had been a significant reduction in funding for BTA of £300k proposed for next academic year. Heads at Bromley Schools Forum were being lobbied. Reductions in 14-16 Alternative Curriculum College has also been reduced in current year. It was estimated that these combined reductions would be put c200 pupils at risk of permanent exclusion and NEET.</p> <p>It was reported that significant change for BOA to move towards admitting girls would be implemented when there was a guaranteed pipeline of girls (10% minimum). It was reported that the increase of the school pan would be over three years.</p> <p>The Board discussed the reports presented and requested Executives to enhance the standard and quality of the Executive Summaries. Board requested items for information to be sent out in advance and not collected and waited for the Board. The Board requested improved narrative on what has changed from previous reporting, good and bad.</p>
	Questions and Comments
	<p>In response to questions it was reported that this was a short term cost saving exercise, possible that alternative online resources would be sourced by the LA to ensure they meet the minimum statutory requirements.</p>

	<p>In response to questions it was reported that that this was systematic of LA deficit SEND budgets nationally.</p> <p>In response to questions on fund raising and campaigning through LASER it was reported that the political context of this is very challenging with no quick fix solution and the lobbying of Bromley Heads who did not support the cuts was probably the best route at the moment. Next step could be lobbying through MPs.</p> <p>In response to questions on the parents raising concerns, it was reported that parents of children attending AP were not always the best at remonstrating and lobbying.</p> <p>In response to questions on the Heron Fire Risk, it was discussed that that next step was to consider legal action against Lambeth. It was reported that there had been some movement on cladding and boiler issues. It was reported that relationships with DoE were important and the strategic relationship needed to be managed carefully before any legal action was considered.</p> <p>In response to questions on the collaborating more with local authorities as a collectives, suggested approach could be a report to the DfE on the impact on children and young people of all these issues. The Board discussed the probability of how and when this could be done.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the update.</p>
A1.1	Group Strategy: LSEAT Operational Plan KPIs
	<p>The Board received the updated operational plan and KPIS as previously reported and reviewed which was APPROVED.</p>
A2	DCEO Operational Update
	<p>Board received updated operational report from the DCEO, it was reported that outcomes remain strong and positive at Belmont and WRPS.</p> <p>Board received an update on attendance and new attendance policy was confirmed as having been implemented in line with the new DfE requirements.</p> <p>Board received an update on the new operational leadership structure to include Directors.</p> <p>It was reported that Director SI would take over the leadership of two schools reporting with high risks in terms of quality of education.</p> <p>It was reported that the Directors were still hybrid and with HT responsibilities alongside new director accountabilities and line management. The operational model would continue to be reviewed, revised and remodelled.</p> <p>It was reported that schools likely to be inspected in current academic year were Barrington, Heron and BBA.</p> <p>It was reported that Safeguarding report had been deferred to next meet due to recent family bereavement of Trust Executive Lead on Governance. DCEO provided a brief update on the SCR, with the automated SCR system being rolled out across schools and roll out of Smooth Wall as filtering and monitoring system continued.</p> <p>It was reported that safeguarding audits had commenced at some schools with priority for those in the Ofsted window.</p>

	<p>It was reported that there had been lengthy discussions at Provision Boards on how to compare useful statistics when cohorts are unique and individual.</p> <p>It was reported that destinations are key performance metrics that should be considered and compared as these are more meaningful in terms of a measure of achievement.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>In response to questions on the new primary schools that had joined the Trust in September it was reported that they were doing well and were settled. Early improvement work was being planned for Bedonwell Infants and support for Barrington which was in the Ofsted window.</p> <p>In response to questions on BBA it was reported the representation would be made to defer the inspection at BBA due to changes in leadership teams.</p> <p>In response to question on the primary outcomes it was reported that these were commensurate with national averages. In response to questions on secondary outcomes it was reported that progress 8 and attainment 8 are not measures that are applied. English and Maths outcomes could be compared but not year on year trends or comparisons.</p>
A2.1	<p>Ofsted Update</p>
	<p>The Board received an updated report on immediate changes to Inspection Handbook and further changes to be implemented in September 2025. This included notification calls being made on Monday morning, to reduce stress levels for leaders with Inspections will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday only. It was reported that more than two members of the SLT can now join inspector team meetings to observe and support Head. There is a help line that headteachers can use at any point from the notification, to contact Ofsted and raise issues.</p> <p>It was reported that Safeguarding will continue to be an absolute priority in any inspection, and the approach to inspecting safeguarding will remain the same. It was reported that Inspectors may pause an inspection in 'exceptional circumstances' where they are concerned about leaders' welfare, or in the event of a serious significant incident.</p> <p>The Board were advised that with regard to graded inspections, there is no longer an overall effectiveness grade, all judgement areas remain the same and will be graded. It was reported that there would be more focus and emphasis on outcomes and impact. Early reading and maths continued to be a focus.</p> <p>The Board were advised that for ungraded inspections, these may be one or two days, depending on the size of the school. The methodology for these inspections has changed and there would no longer be deep dives, replaced by 3 or 4 focus areas, identified during the pre-inspection telephone call. Focus areas would consider where leaders had taken effective action to sustain and/or improve the school's performance and where they had made decisions in the best interest of pupils, with the aim that inspectors would have greater flexibility to respond to the context of the school.</p> <p>Attendance would always remain a key focus area.</p>

	It was reported that inclusion appeared to be the key word being used by the new HMI Sir Martyn Oliver. It was reported that inclusion would feature heavily in the new Ofsted Report Card to be implemented for September 2025 alongside vulnerable, SEND and disadvantaged children.
	Questions and Comments.
	The Board NOTED the report.
	CONFIDENTIAL ITEM
A3	Substantial Item : Trust Growth Update and Presentation on Strategic Growth Risks
	Information not published.
A4	GCFO Update
A4.1	2023/24 Financial, Risk & Property Update and Appendix 1: Estates Strategy
	<p>GCFO presented the P12 management accounts for year ended 31 August 2024 reporting that the Trust made an in-year surplus from in-year incoming resources of £264k for the year prior to FRS102 pension charges, which is £329k better than the forecast for the year. Reports from the Actuaries regarding FRS102 are awaited. It was reported that the closing level of reserves of £3.73m represents 9% of annual revenue, which is within the ESFA guideline to be below 20%.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the Trust continues to hold a strong level of reserves although a proportion of this is allocated to capital projects and supporting Trust operations.</p> <p>It was reported that Bramley Oak Academy had undergone major refurbishment and remodelling works to address suitability and condition needs. This project had required a large proportion of the existing buildings to be stripped out to facilitate works and has impacted items we had previously capitalised. As a consequence it was reported that assets were removed from our accounts with a net book value (NBV) of £197,563, and the Board were asked to approve these disposals.</p> <p>It was reported that the Standard Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) had determined a pay award of a 5.5% increase, and this was paid for eligible staff in September. The Board were advised that the pay award for non-teaching Trust employed on LSEAT contracts pay award is always matched with that paid by the College since many staff are employed in the same teams. In the absence of an agreement or any funding for an FE award, it was reported that no pay award is being recommended at this time, pending the resolution of an award for Further Education.</p> <p>The Board received the risk register which had been updated and presented.</p> <p>It was reported that risk T2 capacity and infrastructure to support growth had increased. In addition, a new risk at T21 to cover the risk posed by the change of Government and the potential for policy reforms.</p>
	Comments and Questions
	<p>The Board noted the P12 final accounts and APPROVED the disposal costs reported in relation to BOA which was below the ESFA threshold for approval.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the 5.5% pay award to teaching staff.</p>

	The Board NOTED the update risks.
	Property Update
	<p>The Board received an update on property which included the update on BOA Project and the SSICB funded project at Heron.</p> <p>It was reported that despite assurance from Lambeth LA the fire remedial work of install lifts had not progressed.</p> <p>The Board were advised that in accordance with DfE requirements, the first Estate Strategy for the Trust had been prepared. It was reported that the strategy had been developed in accordance with the Good Estate Management for Schools (GEMS) guidance to ensure that the physical environment aligns with and supports our educational vision, while also meeting current and future operational needs.</p> <p>The Board were asked to approve the strategy.</p> <p>It was reported that following Board approval in March to progress with leased Solar Panel and LED lighting Installations at Woodside and Endeavour, work had progressed these projects, and feasibility studies had now been completed for these Schools. It was reported that in addition, in partnership with SE24, there had been a successful application to the Community Energy Fund (CEF) for £45k to carry out further feasibility studies at the remainder of schools in the Trust.</p>
	Questions and Comments
	The Board APPROVED the Estates Strategy and requested that an update on its implementation and cost be presented to the March Board.
A4.2	Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire
	<p>The Board received the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire which must be completed on an annual basis for the external auditors as part of their audit programme.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the representations on this form are used by the auditors to inform their audit programme. It was reported that that questions on the form together with the Trust responses are self-explanatory and there is nothing specific to draw to the Board's attention.</p> <p>It was reported that Buzzacott had reviewed the content of the draft forms and had not highlighted any issues or concerns.</p> <p>The Board were advised to note that the fraud from the summer of 2022 was once again reported on the document. This is because the fraud spanned two separate financial years, and it is not a subsequent or repeat instance.</p>
	Questions and Comments
	There were not questions. The Board APPROVED the document for endorsement by the Chair and Accounting Officer.
A5	GCGO Update
	2024 Trust Scheme of Delegation & Local Governor Appointments

	<p>The Board was asked to APPROVE the Trust Scheme of Delegation which had been slightly adjusted to reflect changes presenting in the 2024/25 Trust Financial Regulations and alignment to the Academies Handbook.</p> <p>The Board are advised that a following a successful recruitment campaign supported by Governors for School, Group Chief of Staff & Governance Directors, sixteen new Local Community Governors were recommended for appointment.</p>
	Questions and Comments.
	<p>The Board APPROVED the appointment of the new local community governors presented.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the revised Trust Scheme of Delegation.</p>

PART 2: BELOW THE LINE

B1	DCEO Operational & Performance Update
B1.1	Bexley Music Update
	Board NOTED the update.
B2	Group CFO Update
B2.1	2023/24 Financial P12 Management Accounts
	The Board NOTED the P12 Management Accounts
B3	Information or Recommendations from Committees
B3.1	Health & Safety Annual Report
	Board NOTED the update.
B3.2	EDI Annual Report
	Board NOTED the update.
A3.3	Board Register
	Board NOTED the update.

AOB & Date of Next Meeting – 10 December at 5.30pm

Minutes APPROVED :



Rama Venchard, Chair

10th December 2024