

**Minutes of a Meeting of London South East Academies Trust Board  
held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 from 11.30-1.30pm online via zoom**

**Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest**

**Chair-MB**

Chair-MB welcomed Trustees and advised the following

- Apologies received from Trustee-DB
- Trustee-LW and Trustee-TP would be stepping down from the Board.
- Trustee-CB had reached the end of her first 4-year term and would not be continuing.
- Trustee-LR was welcomed to her first meeting of the Board.
- Trust Board recommended the appointment of Nick Linford as a Trustee to the Members,
- Trust Board approved the appointment of Errol Ince as a Co-opted Trustee
- Chair MB thanked all departing Trustees for their contribution and support.

**Pre-Meeting Trustees Only**

Chair-MB opened the pre-meeting with Trustees only.

Key themes from the papers to focus on:

- Funding
- Trust Performance
- Academic update including the Lessons Learned from New Horizons.
- One Trust update to consider update on actions. .
- Impact of Covid on examinations, catch up and hybrid learning to be reviewed.
- Safeguarding report to be brought forward to next meeting and consider mental health and wider support.

**1. Minutes of previous meeting and Action Log**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May were approved.

**2. Chairs Summaries**

- 2.1. LSEAT Education Performance & Standards
- 2.2. Group Audit & Risk
- 2.3. Group Finance
- 2.4. Group Search & Governance

Committee Chair-CP  
Committee Rep-MBx  
Committee Reps-CY/TP  
Committee Rep-MB

Chairs summaries presented and duly **NOTED**.

**Key:**

**A=Appendix** (attached to Executive Summary & Report)  
**RR= Reading Room Items** (provided for context and reading)

Approval and decision items	
<b>A1</b>	<b>2021/22 Budget 2021/22</b>
	<p>GCFO-JH presented the 2021/22 and supporting appendices, for consideration and comment and requested the Trust Board to <b>APPROVE</b> the 2021/22 Budget and the Central Resource Fee arrangements for 2021/22.</p> <p>It was reported that the Financial Regulations and Education Skills Funding Agency require that the annual budget be approved by the Trust Board prior to 31 August each year for the following financial year.</p> <p>GCFO-JH presented the budget for 2021/22 together with the Period 7 forecast outturn for 2020/21.</p> <p>The Board were advised that separate budgets had been prepared for each of the Academies within the Trust and the total budgeted operating position for 2021/22 is a surplus of £328k (2020/21: £125k) from incoming resources for the year. This value excludes reserves brought forwards.</p> <p>It was reported that for 2021/22, the Trust will move away from its historic operating model of grouping Schools into historic conversion based and geographical hubs, and instead will move to group Schools by provision type. The Board were advised that the paper still refers to our traditional hub-based model for continuity and comparison purposes.</p> <p>The Board were reminded that although each hub of Academies had been set a target surplus of 2%, due to reduction in commissioned places and levels of funding, this has not been achieved by Bromley Trust Academy and Belmont Academy, with those academies budgeting for a £126k deficit and £15k surplus respectively. The Board were advised that work continues with the respective local authorities and the academies to resolve these financial issues.</p> <p>It was reported that the budgeted surplus for 2021/22 represents a reduction of £120k from the latest 2020/21 forecast outturn. This is due to the better than budgeted performance of the hubs in the current year. The budgets for 2021/22 represent the pay and non-pay resources required to deliver the educational support and outcomes for the year with the principles of Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP) being applied to all Academy budgets.</p> <p>The Board were advised that they were required to determine the central resource fee (top slice) arrangements, and it was recommended that this should once again be set at 5%, with the Belmont Woodside fees as previously agreed by the Board on an annual escalator with 4.5% for Belmont and 6.5% for Woodside based upon their core ESFA funding only.</p> <p>Using the hub-based modelling as reported above, the Board were advised that the total budgeted income for <b>Bromley Beacon Academy (BBA), Bromley Trust Academy (BTA)</b></p>

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and **Bramley Oak Academy (BOA)** of £12.13m is expected to be circa £0.57m higher than the current year (2020/21: £11.56m). This was mainly attributable to an increase in the number of commissioned places at both BBA campuses and BOA.

The Board were advised that the PAN at BBA will increase from 148 to 168 places and from 55 to 61 at BOA as a result of the rise in demand for specialist provision and increased capacity following the building expansions. In contrast, there will be a reduction in commissioned places at BTA from 153 to 129 in accordance with the agreement with the local authority.

The Board were advised that the total budgeted income for the **New Horizons Federation (NHF)** of £7.65m represented an increase of £0.37m from the 2020/21 forecast of £7.29m. This increase was mainly attributable to an increase in the number of pupils sold services across the Federation.

The Board were advised that total budgeted income for the **Belmont Woodside Federation (BWF)** of £7.60m represented an increase of £1.05m from the 2020/21 forecast of £6.55m. The increase is attributable to inclusion of the Bexley Music Education Hub, which joined the Trust on 1 April 2021.

The Board were advised that to ensure the Trust holds sufficient reserves, the reserves policy recommended a minimum reserve level of 11% of the total income for each Academy. It was reported that this had been achieved by BTA, BBA and Horizons, but all other Academies were below this level, with Belmont having a previously reported historic issue, inherited upon conversion.

The Board were advised that it was expected that both Endeavour and Woodside would achieve a better than forecast out-turn in the current year and this should ensure both academies will meet the reserves policy by the end of the current year.

The 2021/22 Budget presented to the Board had been recommended by the Group Finance Committee for approval.

The Board were advised of the following key issues to be noted.

- Key risks of Bromley Trust Academy maintaining the resources to provide the required outcomes with the significant income and expenditure challenges.
- Key risks of achieving the Trust budgeted operating position will include achieving the anticipated sold pupil places for 2021/22 and remaining within expenditure budgets.
- Achieving budgeted surplus at Belmont and Bexley Music will continue to be a challenge.

The Board were advised of the following key actions to be noted.

- To work closely with the Bromley LA to review funding, reshaping the provision and close monitoring of the staffing structure at BTA.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To balance the number of pupils on roll and actively source pupil sold places to achieve full capacity.</li> <li>To closely manage the budget set and continually review the inherited staffing structure and contracts.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Board Comments &amp; Challenge</b></p>
	<p>Chair-MB thanked GCFO-JH for his report. Advised Trustees that the Board needed to consider the funding challenges. What are the key areas on the Board radar?</p> <p>Trustee-CY questioned the relationships with LAs and impact on Alternative Provision.</p> <p>GCEO-SP responded that LA policy on Alternative Provision was the result of deliberate actions to reduce school exclusions particularly in primary settings. Nationally there is a growing reduction in PAN for APs. There is a clear and growing demand for SEMH provision and places our SEMH schools are expanding with little scope for physical expansion at Aspire and Endeavour in Bexley and BBA in Bromley.</p> <p>Bromley LA have commissioned a five year contract for AP and Outreach which was reported to be a good and positive deal in the national climate with decreased AP places but increase and growth in outreach services. Bexley LA have approached the Trust with an MOU. It was reported that relationships with the LA had improved, and dialogue was open that could result in a different strategic conversation in relation to a more efficient use of the accommodation in the historic New Horizons Federation estate.</p> <p>Chair-MB was pleased to note the improving relationship and dialogue being open with the Bexley LA. Chair-MB also reported that the Trust should continue to be outward facing and look to working with other MATs. The financial plan should allow and accommodate new roles to support capacity for growth and provide a better balance of schools with two or three mainstream schools in the trust and stabilise income.</p> <p>Trustee-DJM commented that impact on mental health post pandemic had not yet been seen and 2021/22 will possibly see a different outlook for Alternative Provision.</p> <p>Trustee-CY thanked GCFO-JH for a thorough report.</p> <p>The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the 2021/22 Budget as presented. The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the Central Resource Fee as presented.</p>
	<p><b>2021/22: Three Year Plan Appendices</b></p>
<p><b>A2</b></p>	<p>GCFO-JH presented the Three-Year Financial Plan and appendices to the Board for consideration and comment and to <b>APPROVE</b>.</p>
	<p>It was reported that the strong governance and financial management requires the Trust to prepare a Three-Year Financial Plan together with its budget each year.</p>

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	<p>GCFO -JH presented the medium-term financial plan for the Trust Board based on the current membership of eight operating Academies.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the detail in the three-year financial plan for 2021/22 reflected the previous reported item; 2021/22 Budget.</p> <p>It was reported that for 2022/23, assumptions had been made around some growth within the existing Academies together with provisions for cost of living pay increases and other increased costs. Non-pay expenditure were representative of the best estimates based upon the 2021/22 budget and future plans.</p> <p>As previously reported, despite some funding problems affecting the school sector, with the exception of Bromley Trust Academy and Belmont Academy, It was reported that collectively the Trust was in a relatively strong position when compared to many mainstream Schools.</p> <p>The Board were reminded of the financial challenges of Bromley Trust Academy and Belmont Academy which had been discussed at length by the Group Finance Committee and the Board and work to try to improve the financial position of the Schools continued. It was reported that £300k of efficiency savings will be required by BTA to meet its 2% target in 22/23. These savings were reflected within the Three-year Plan figures.</p> <p>GCFO-JH advised that the financial plan has been considered by the Group Finance Committee and was recommended for APPROVAL.</p> <p>The Board were advised of the following key issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was an operating surplus of £448k in the current year, declining to £328k in year two of the plan due to the impact of funding reforms at BTA as reported previously. The surplus is expected to rise to £556k in year three as a result of efficiency savings and growth across the Trust.</li> <li>• There were no new major capital projects anticipated that would be funded from Trust reserves; however, total capital expenditure funded from reserves were forecast to be circa £530k in year one of the plan, reducing to £488k in year two and £421k in year three.</li> <li>• It was reported that overall cash balances would be expected to remain fairly close to current levels over the three-year period of the plan after investment in fixed assets.</li> <li>• The Board were advised that some pay, and non-pay efficiency savings would be required by 2022/23 in order to deliver the planned surplus for the year for all Schools.</li> </ul>	
	Board Comments & Challenge	
	<p>Chair-MB thanked GCFO-JH for comprehensive report.</p> <p>The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the Three-Year Financial Plan as presented.</p>	

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2021/22 Financial Regulations Policy	
<b>A3</b>	<p>GCFO-JH presented the Trust Financial Regulations for 2021/22 for <b>APPROVAL</b>.</p>
	<p>The Board were advised that the Financial Regulations had been reviewed for 2021/22 and a number of changes made.</p> <p>It was reported that the majority of changes related to post titles and other minor grammatical and administrative alterations with material amendments in relation to severance payments.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the most significant change related to clarification of the wording regarding severance payments and making this clear when Trust authority is required. It was reported that this authority had been amended to refer specifically to non-contractual and non-statutory payments only, since the Trust is legally obliged to meet its contractual obligations.</p> <p>It was reported that given that the Trust was expected to be a £28m organisation in 2021/22, the financial authority limits have been reviewed for staff in central roles. This had resulted in a new threshold of £100k being recommended for the Deputy CEO - Academies, Group Finance Director.</p> <p>With the move to centralise both IT and Estates for next year as Group functions, the Board were also advised that authority limits of £50k and £30k for the Group Director of Estates and IT respectively had been added.</p> <p>The Board were advised that LSEAT Financial Regulations had also taken account of changes to the Academy Trust Handbook 2021 (formerly the Academies Financial Handbook) which was published on 16 June 2021.</p> <p>Reference to EU Procurement Regulations had been removed and replaced with reference to post Brexit Procurement Notes (PPN).</p> <p>GCFO-JH advised that the Trust Financial Regulations had been considered by the Group Finance Committee and were recommended to the Trust Board for APPROVAL.</p>
Board Comments & Challenge	
	<p>The Board <b>NOTED</b> the changes to the Financial Regulations for 2021/22, to align to the new Academies Handbook and the increased authority limits for certain individual roles.</p> <p>The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the Financial Regulations for 2021/22.</p>

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A4	<b>2021/22 Internal Audit Plan</b>
	The Board were asked to <b>CONSIDER</b> and <b>APPROVE</b> the draft Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22.
	<p>GCFOJH presented the draft Internal Audit Strategy and Plan which had been developed in consultation with the Chair of the Audit Committee, the Head of Internal Audit, Group CEO and GFO. The Board were advised that this was the first plan developed with Scrutton Bland.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the plan was structured to provide each legal entity with an overall annual opinion on the key areas of risk and assurance. The plan has been considered by the Group Audit Committee and was <b>RECOMMENDED</b> to the Board for <b>APPROVAL</b></p> <p>It was reported that the draft plan covered the main areas of risk to be considered on an annual basis including Key Financial Controls, Student Funding and Learner Numbers, Governance, and Risk Management. It also included a number of other audit areas for review in 2021/22, i.e. Payroll and Pensions, Management of Capital Projects, Board Assurance and Safeguarding. The Board were advised that the plan also included an annual review of cyber security across the Group.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the internal audit plan contained provision for 100 internal audit days across the Group which compares to circa 85 days planned for the current year.</p>
	<b>Board Comments &amp; Challenge</b>
	<p>Chair-MB commented that the legal assurance provided by the plan was extensive and hugely beneficial to the Trust. This demonstrated how well the Trust is supported by the College as its Sponsor.</p> <p>Chair-MB noted that the recent DfE SMRA review had picked up on the generosity of LSEC as the Trust Sponsor with a glowing report.</p> <p>The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the Internal Audit Plan.</p>
A5	<b>External Auditors Tender Outcomes</b>
	The Board were asked to <b>CONSIDER</b> and <b>COMMENT</b> on the report and <b>RECOMMEND</b> the appointment of Buzzacott as the External Audit Auditors to the Members of the Trust.
	GCFO-JH presented that paper and reported that it had been a number of years since the External Audit services for the College or Trust had been tendered. It was reported that the Group Audit Committee had directed that a tender be carried out for the following services with effect from the 2020/21 external audit.

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- Financial Statements Audit (including London Skills for Growth)
- Regularity Audit (use of funds)
- Teachers' Pension Audit
- Academies Accounts Return Audit.

It was reported that using some available benchmarking data, seven audit firms had been shortlisted who had both a good local College client base, and who also had some experience of Multi Academy Trust Audits.

The Board were advised that the tender exercise had been conducted in three phases with phase 1 an Expression of Interest (EOI) stage to pre-screen firms.

It was reported that at this stage BDO, and KPMG had said that they would not be responding to the tender. This left five firms who were interested in being invited to the formal tender stage.

Grant Thornton  
RSM Tenon  
Buzzacott  
Mazars  
MacIntyre Hudson

The Board were advised that these firms were offered the opportunity of a meeting with the CFO to discuss the tender requirements and the Group in more detail, the offer had not been taken up by Grant Thornton and MacIntyre Hudson with the former dropping out of the tender stating capacity reasons. It was reported that meetings took place with all of the other firms as part of the fact-finding exercise about the Group, together with exploring the requirements in more detail. It was reported that RSM Tenon declined to tender once they had considered these requirements in the context of our current audit fees and the changes to the Audit Code of Practice, due to the fact that they did not believe they could put a competitive tender together. It was reported that a further meeting was held with RSM Tenon and although they did consider the matter further, they were unable to tender.

The Board were advised that the remaining three firms all responded to the tender and after some pre-scoring by the Chair of the Audit Committee and the Group CFO. It was agreed that all firms reached the interview stage which consisted of a panel of Audit Committee members comprising Trustees, together with a LSEAT Member and a College Corporation Governor.

The Board were advised of the total prices for the Group audit services provided by the three firms.

The Board were advised that interviews had taken place virtually comprising standard questions together with some specific questions related to their tender return and

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presentation. Each interview was collectively scored by the panel based upon the written document and the information presented and gathered during the interview.

The Board received a summary of the scores as detailed below and full details of the scoring criteria was provided in the Board papers.

	Score	Weighted Score
MacIntyre Hudson (MHA)	8.5	9.9
Mazars	12.0	13.9
Buzzacott	16.5	19.4

The Board were provided with a verbal overview of each firm's strengths and weaknesses.

The Board were advised that the results and outcome of the interview was considered by the Group Audit Committee at its meeting in June 2021 where the Committee **RECOMMENDED** the appointment of Buzzacott as External Auditors to the Trust.

Such appointment to be a contract of 3 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years. The offer was subject to satisfactory references which were being taken up at the time of reporting. Two references had been received and were very positive.

The Board were requested, subject to verbal confirmation that the references are satisfactory, to **RECOMMEND** the appointment of Buzzacott as External Auditor to Members of the Trust.

#### Board Comments & Challenge

The Board expressed thanks to the GCFO for managing the process and confirmed they **RECOMMENDED** the appointment of Buzzacott to the Members of the Trust, subject to receipt of the last reference.

#### A6 Group Risk Management

The Board were asked to **APPROVE** the Risk Management Policy Framework.

GCFO-JH presented the Group Risk Management Policy Framework, which set out the Group's approach to risk management, appetite for risk, responsibilities for risk and how risks would be scored.

The Board were advised that the policy is reviewed and revised very two years. There were a number of amendments that had been applied to the current policy to take account of the board assurance, improvements suggested by senior management, the external regulatory framework and comments made by the internal auditors. Updates to the policy included providing more clarity on the underlying approach to risk management and clarifying that

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	<p>although the Group has a low tolerance of risk, for some areas of business or specific activities / projects, each legal entity may take a different view of risk in the furtherance of its business and strategic aims.</p> <p>It was reported that following the recent internal audit of risk management, the policy has been updated to include more detail on the risk scoring system and matters to take into account when considering each element of the risk score.</p> <p>It was reported that the policy had been considered by the Group Audit Committee and was <b>RECOMMENDED</b> to the Board for <b>APPROVAL</b>.</p>
	Board Comments & Challenge
	<p>In response to questions raised by Trustee-MBx, it was confirmed that the policy aligned to the Risk Register.</p> <p>The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the Group Risk Management Framework.</p>
A7	<b>Trust and Group Policies:</b> Group Data Sharing Policy & Whistleblowing Policy
	<p>The Board were asked to <b>APPROVE</b> the Group Data &amp; Information Sharing Policy and the LSEAT Whistleblowing Policy.</p>
	<p>GEX Director Governance reminded the Trust Board that they have legal and regulatory duties with regard to data protection and whistleblowing. Policy development in these areas had recently taken place that required Board <b>APPROVAL</b> as follows.</p> <p>With regard to the Data Sharing Policy, it was reported that under both the DPA Act 2018 and UK GDPR, the Board have legal duties and responsibilities to ensure the fair and proper use of information about people, as part of the fundamental right of an individual's privacy. The law removes unnecessary barriers around data and information sharing by upholding common standards that enable the free flow of data. Good practice in data protection is vital to ensure public trust and confidence and to engage and support the innovative uses of data in both the public and private sectors.</p> <p>The Board were advised that with the continued embedding and increase in the Group central and core business services and with staff working across the two organisations, for example in areas like HR, Payroll and Finance, Health &amp; Safety and Safeguarding, it was important to ensure that the Group Organisations are operating within this legal framework, as legal entities in their own right.</p> <p>It was reported that this related particularly to employee data but increasing there is a requirement to share pupil information and data between pupil/student facing departments in</p>

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both organisations, to aid and support pupil transition and progression from our Trust Schools to the College.

It was reported that to facilitate this a **Group Data and Information Sharing Policy** had been developed, to underpin the safe practice and processing of data and information across and between each other. The policy will be strengthened by a Data and Information Processing Agreement between the College and the Trust.

The Board are advised that the current Group GDPR Policy and associated privacy statements would be adjusted to reference these documents and be republished with updated terminology and reference to the latest legislation and regulation e.g. UK GDPR and DPA 2018. All relevant policy documents will be published on the intranet and where applicable the Trust website.

The Board were requested to **APPROVE** the Group Data & Information Sharing Policy.

As regards Whistleblowing, the Board were reminded that as a public benefits and charitable institution, the College was required to publish a Whistleblowing Policy and to signpost staff to the Policy and provide ease of access and support as appropriate and as required.

The Board were advised that in February 2021, following the outcome of an LSEC Employment Tribunal Case in December 2020, a legal review of both LSEC and LSEAT Whistleblowing Policies had been commissioned in conjunction with the LSEC and LSEAT Staff Grievance Policies.

The purpose of the review was to provide assurance that the Whistleblowing and Staff Grievance policies would stand up to challenge and scrutiny and to ensure there was appropriate synergy and coherence between them, within an area where staff grievances can often be confused with whistleblowing and vice versa. This legal and technical point had been raised during the recent Employment Tribunal the College had been involved in 2020.

The Board were advised that two law firms were commissioned to complete the legal review, one with a leaning towards staff and employment law and one with a leaning and specialism in whistleblowing matters. Seeking two legal opinions has provided absolute assurance on our approach and practice.

The Board were advised that the LSEC Whistleblowing policy required minor adjustments, but the Trust Policy required a rewrite. To align both policies, it was agreed to produce a new Whistleblowing policy document, with terminology adapted and modelled for each organisation. The Staff Grievance policies for both organisations required minor technical changes which have been completed.

The new LSEAT Whistleblowing Policy was presented and reviewed by the Group Audit Committee and was **RECOMMENDED** to the Trust Board for **APPROVAL**.

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	The Board were advised that in addition to the review of policies, a detailed training session to understand the legal technicalities of whistleblowing and staff grievances, specifically for the HR Team, was to be scheduled. The HR team plan to deliver briefings to managers across both organisations to raise awareness and highlight the key differences between whistleblowing and grievance.
	Board Comments & Challenge
	The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the Group Data and Information Sharing Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.
	<b>2021/22 Governance Arrangements</b>
<b>A8</b>	<p>The Board were requested to RECEIVE and APPROVE the following</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One Trust Action Plan Update</li> <li>2. New Local Governance Structure</li> <li>3. Terms of Reference for Local Governance</li> <li>4. Local Governor Appointments and Vacancies</li> <li>5. Terms of Reference &amp; Operating Procedures Group Committees &amp; EPS Committee</li> <li>6. Board Register including Committee Members and Leads</li> <li>7. LSEAT Role Descriptions</li> <li>8. Meeting Dates for 2021/22.</li> </ol>
	Board Comments & Challenge
	<p>The Board reviewed all the items presented to by the GEX Director Governance in relation to the new Trust Governance Structure for 2021/22, the role descriptions, Terms of Reference, Committee Members and the appointment of the Local Community Governors.</p> <p>All Governance items presented were <b>APPROVED</b> by the Board.</p>

<b>B</b>	<b>Discussion items</b>
<b>B1</b>	<b>Group Principal &amp; CEO Update</b>
	The Board were asked to NOTE the contents of the report presented by the Group Principal & CEO.
	<p>This report presented provided an update and information for London and South East Education Group Board members on key issues including the Group, College and Trust, these included updates on</p> <p>External policy landscape. Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Grant Programme. Strategic Developments across the Group.</p>

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	Operational updates including One Trust Actions. Staffing update including support for mental health and wellbeing. Covid opening and testing. Estates update.
	<b>Board Comments &amp; Challenge</b>
	Chair-MB discussed the pending Schools White Paper and reminded the Board that the approved Growth Strategy, would place the Trust in a positive position.  The Board NOTED the comprehensive update from the Group Principal & CEO.
	<b>One Trust Progress Update</b>
<b>B2</b>	Trustee-LW and DCEO-NM reported on the recent One Trust Consultation. discuss the One Trust mission, vision and values.
	<p>The Board were advised that the One Trust Roadshow had run from 26th April to 12th May 2021 with over 500 Trust staff attending.</p> <p>It was reported that the proposed Mission, Vision and Values were well-received by staff across the Trust, with the majority of staff broadly agreeing with them. Following the Roadshow, a Consultation Report was created outlining feedback received from the Roadshow and subsequent survey. A revised mission, vision and values were created following this feedback.</p> <p>While the Mission and Vision have remained the same, the values have been adapted to align with the Group Values using the STARS acronym, however it is recognised that the Trust Values should acknowledge the key differences between the Group and the Trust and therefore should be thought of as parallel.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the updated Vision and Mission is</p> <p>Vision: <b>every child, in every school, can flourish every day.</b></p> <p><b>Mission:</b> Passionate about potential, our aim is to realise the unique talents and abilities of children and young people in all our schools.</p> <p>Ambitious for every child, we promise to work tirelessly to support them throughout their educational journey.</p> <p>We will equip them with the confidence and skills they need to progress and succeed at every level. We recognise and respect the rich diversity, individuality and strengths that our different schools bring to our wider community.</p> <p>Our ambition is to continue strengthening our network of schools by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating our diversity</li> </ul>

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- Promoting excellence
- Enabling personal development, achievement and progression
- Safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and staff.

We know that to achieve our vision we need a talented, resilient and energised workforce. Our people are central to turning our vision into a reality.

We need a workforce with common values that unite us, both within our Multi Academy Trust and across London & South East Education Group.

We are defined by the values we share, and our values guide everything, we do. They motivate our attitudes, actions, decisions and relationships with our learners, partners and each other.

It was reported that the Trust values will help us develop a workforce and culture that stands out from the crowd. The aspiration is to develop exceptional leaders and staff, 'star' performers who lead by example and deliver a high-quality service every day in everything that we do.

In line with Group Strategy the Board were advised that values centered around the acronym STARS. This determines that the Trust has its own unique character but is aligned with the College and together they represent the shared Group identity.

The Board were advised that it would be recognised that the aligned values should still acknowledge the key differences between the College and Trust, and therefore the Trust values should be thought of as parallel.

The Trust values were reported as follows

**SUCCESS:** Success is for all: we create a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging all learners and staff to strive to be better, and succeed.

**TEAMWORK:** We work together to maximise the talent and abilities of all, with our learners central to every choice we make.

**ACHIEVEMENT:** We have ambition for our learners and staff so that they can achieve and exceed with courage, resilience and determination, realising their own unique potential.

**RESPECT:** We empower our learners and our staff to be respectful to value diversity and to maximise this as a talent and strength.

**SERVICE:** Our purpose is to serve our learners and our communities. Leaders at every level serve with integrity, ensuring our learners achieve and progress in society.

The Board were advised that all Trust staff had been invited to One Trust Staff Meeting where the mission vision and values were formally announced.

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Board Comments & Challenge	
	<p>The Board extended their appreciation and thanks to GCTO-LW and DCEO-NM on facilitating and presenting the Consultation Roadshows. Recognising that this was the beginning of the culture shift and positive recognition from staff of the Trust and a move away from the Federated legacy hubs.</p> <p>The Board endorsed and <b>APPROVED</b> the new Mission, Vision and Values.</p> <p>GCEO-SP advised the Board there was a lot of evidence that staff and managers were ready to come on the journey and have been positively engaging in the change process. Momentum will need to be maintained and new management and governance structures for implemented 2021/22 will support this.</p>

C. Monitoring items	
<b>C1</b>	<b>2020/21 Financial Performance; Management Accounts Period 8</b>
	<p>The Board were asked to <b>CONSIDER</b> the report and period 8 management accounts.</p>
	<p>GCFO-JH presented the Management Accounts for period to 31 April 2021 (Period 8) which included an updated forecast outturn for the year for the Trust and all Academies. The forecast adjusted operating position for the year prior to FRS102 pension adjustments was reported to be circa £124k better than expected at period 7, and £448k higher than budgeted at £571k.</p> <p>The Board were advised that this improvement was mainly attributable to Endeavour, Horizons, and Belmont Schools with the latter now expected to make its first surplus in many years. This was due the inclusion of Rental income from the Bexley Music Hub and the contribution to School overheads following conversion of the Music Hub on 1 April 2021.</p> <p>The Board were advised at as a condition of the £3.2m grant to substantially improve the condition of the Bramley Oak estate, the Trust was due have a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) visit. The overall objective of SRMA visits was to support Trusts to make best use of available resource to provide an outstanding education to pupils. A copy of the report following the visit will be presented to the Board.</p> <p>The visit appeared to go very well with lots of positive feedback from the SRMA across our business and with the draft report is awaited which will be shared with the Board.</p>
	<p>The Board NOTED the contents of the GCFO-JH update.</p>

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C2	<b>Risk Register Update</b>	J H
	The Board were asked to <b>CONSIDER</b> and <b>COMMENT</b> on the content of the report and appendices.	
	<p>GCFO-JH presented the risk register and reported that since last reporting the register had been subject to a review by risk owners and the Group Executive.</p> <p>It was advised that the risk register for each Hub of Schools are considered by the relevant Local Governing Body, with these aggregating up into the risk register presented to the Audit Committee and Trust Board.</p> <p>It was reported that the main changes to the risk scores and the reasons behind those changes are summarised to the Board. Some of these changes related to the longer-term impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on attendance and achievement in the Schools.</p>	
	<b>Board Comments &amp; Challenge</b>	
	The Board <b>NOTED</b> the Risk Register and acknowledged that new risk relating to Cyber Security had been added.	
C3	<b>DCEO Performance Update</b>	N M
	The Board was asked to <b>NOTE</b> the Performance Update from the DCEO.	
	DCEO-NM presented the report and advised the Board on the updated position in relation to Covid. In addition the report provided a focus on some key operational issues that included Teacher Assessed Grades and final outcomes, progress against target, catchup funding and the national tutoring programme, school improvement, One Trust, restructures, safeguarding, attendance and summer schools.	
	The Board <b>NOTED</b> the comprehensive update from DCEO-NM.	
C4	<b>NH Bexley Schools Lessons Learned.</b>	N M
	The Board was asked to <b>NOTE</b> and <b>COMMENT</b> on the report which covered the lessons learned following the key issues identified at New Horizons Schools.	
	<p>The Lessons Learned Report has been written following a verbal report to the EPS Committee and the Chair requesting a detailed paper be presented to the Trust Board regarding the key issues of these schools and how the Trust are dealing with it.</p> <p>i) 20 key Issues identified across the three schools as significant areas of concern</p>	

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- ii) A list of 26 actions have been provided in the main document as to what the Trust have done to ensure appropriate support is provided at this time
- iii) 12 recommendations provided in main document as to what the Trust should do moving forward to stop this situation arising again.

As a substantial item and at the Chair's request, the Board received a report on Lessons Learned following the change and departure of the legacy Senior Leadership Team of New Horizons Federation, and the subsequent information that the quality of education and teaching and learning, in particular at Horizons Academy, had been overstated.

The DCEO and new Director School Improvement, following significant review of the schools throughout May and June, had also raised concerns around Heads of School management capacity, the scrutiny of performance and data by the LGB and Independent Education Adviser and failure of the New Horizons Senior Leadership Team to triangulate performance issues.

This report was discussed and debated at length by the Trustees and Executives.

The issues identified included an overstatement by the New Horizons Senior Leadership Team on the school improvement journey and Ofsted readiness of Horizons, Endeavour and Aspire Academies.

It was noted that the former Executive Head Teacher was a National Leader of Education, the Education Adviser a leader in LA Governance and SEND and the former Chair of the Local Governing Body, the Chair of Bexley Local Governors Group. These highly skilled individuals separately should have triangulated and scrutinised the information presented, to be able to provide satisfactory assurance on each of the schools' performance and the quality of education.

During the pandemic, there had been an absence of virtual visits and a lack of transparency in the data and information presented for the three schools.

The Board received adequate information and assurance to unanimously vote those lessons had been learnt and the mitigations proposed would provide greater triangulation of information.

The Board received details on the ongoing **actions** to resolve and remedy the situation as detailed below, some of which had already been outlined in the DCEO report presented to the Board and formed part of the One Trust Action Plan.

1. One Trust implementation – culture, ethos and management restructures underway to be complete for September term start.
2. One Trust Governance – restructure of existing LGBs into Provision Boards and introduction of Academy Councils to be running from September 2021.
3. New DCEO with accountability for all schools and management of Head Teachers.
4. New School Improvement Policy with rotation of Educational Advisers every three years, to maintain impartiality.
5. Specialist review of Horizons Curriculum by John Dabo.
6. Trust Central Services Review commissioned, with planned central functions in IT and MIS.

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	<p>7. Organisational learning from other Trusts. 8. Centralised complaints process through the Clerk.</p> <p>The Board identified additional operational <b>controls</b> as detailed below. to be put in place to mitigate risks going forward to include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Desk top data reviews by DCEO and Director School Improvement every term. Holding individual Heads to account.</li> <li>2. Existing School Development Plans and School Evaluation Forms for each school to be scrutinised by the Provision Boards annually commencing September 2021 and moving standardised template for September 2022.</li> <li>3. Moderation of Head Teacher Reports with onsite visits and checks by DCEO, Director School Improvement and School Improvement Partner or Education Adviser.</li> <li>4. Centralised MIS Dashboard to ensure transparency of data.</li> <li>5. All HR functions to be moved into central team to provide assurance on recruitment, Single Central Record, staff induction and training.</li> <li>6. All Head Teacher appointments to include CEO or DCEO on the panel.</li> <li>7. Provision Board Chairs to be impartial.</li> <li>8. Mid-year and annual complaints report to be prepared for the Board.</li> <li>9. Any future federated schools wishing to join the Trust to be disaggregated.</li> <li>10. Due diligence pre conversion to consider application of these controls and any barriers to compliance.</li> <li>11. Scheme of Delegation to be aligned to these controls.</li> <li>12. Policy matrix to be aligned to these controls.</li> </ol> <p>The Board <b>APPROVED</b> the above controls to be implemented and extended thanks to the Executive who had been involved in resolving the situation.</p>	
	<p><b>Group Strategy Progress Update &amp; 2021/22</b></p>	<p>L W</p>
<p><b>C5</b></p>	<p>The Board were requested to NOTE the progress made during the latter half of 2020/21 on the implementation of the Group Strategy and the proposed priorities and actions for implementation in 2021/22.</p>	
	<p>GCTO-LW presented the paper and advised the Board that following the previous update in December, the Transformation and Growth Team had continued to work with external organisations to finalise both the 2019/20 Social Value Report for the Group and the Community Wealth Building Report from the Centre of Local Economic Strategies (CLES).</p> <p>It was reported that the two documents presented form the full findings from external research partners conducted earlier in the year to quantify the social value generated through current operational activity (as measured using the National TOMS Framework), and opportunities for further improvement in the embedding of the strategy across the organisation. The Board were advised to note that since the pilot study in 2018/19, the level of social value generated by the Group has significantly increased, and a further increase is expected in 2020/21.</p>	

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	<p>It was also reported that in addition, robust progress had been made in the external positioning of the Group as a social enterprise. The Group had been invited to attend a number of high-profile events to share our work e.g. the CBI, Cabinet Office, AoC Conference, Social Value UK Exchange and the London Recovery Board Anchor Charter, and this was now setting us apart in the sector nationally.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the paper provided more detail on the progress made since December 2020 and builds upon some of the earlier recommendations although it was recognised that further progress needs to be made to increase the impact that the Strategy has on the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a Group wide social value procurement strategy</li> <li>• Individual ownership of the strategy at operational level (staff &amp; students) i The emerging role of the Multi Academy Trust as a Civic Trust.</li> </ul>	
Board Comments & Challenge		
	<p>The Board NOTED the report.</p>	
<b>Safeguarding Update &amp; Review</b>		
<b>C6</b>	<p>The Board were asked to <b>RECEIVE</b> and <b>CONSIDER</b> the information submitted by the Group Head Safeguarding-BM with regard to safeguarding practices at each Trust school, areas for development and common themes across the Trust.</p>	<b>B M</b>
	<p>It was reported that Trust schools have responded extremely well to a difficult year. Most schools have an embedded safeguarding culture and deliver an exemplary safeguarding and pastoral service to keep children and young people safe and protect them from, or receiving further, harm.</p> <p>The Board were advised that there are areas for development across a few of the schools in relation to record keeping and monitoring their single central record.</p> <p>It was reported that three schools require considerable development to bring the standard of safeguarding, risk management and health and safety procedures, approach, and culture to the same level as the other Trust schools. These were identified as Horizons, Endeavour and Aspire.</p> <p>It was reported that other issues presented included some safeguarding teams needed to improve the level of detail recorded in safeguarding files and that there was insufficient oversight and reviewing of SCR.</p> <p>The Group Head Safeguarding-BM reported that the following actions would be put in place.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan to support the three schools identified including implementing the CPOMS system.</li> <li>• SLT training and refiguring roles and responsibilities to be implemented.</li> <li>• Termly reviews to take place and all schools will be on CPOMS to provide standardisation.</li> <li>• Termly reviews to take place and feedback provided to Head and DSL.</li> <li>• DLS network to be reinstated and implemented.</li> </ul>	
Board Comments & Challenge		
	<p>Chair-MB extended thanks to Group Head Safeguarding-BM and requested that a more significant item on Safeguarding be added to the next Board Meeting to ensure that all Trustees received assurance on the actions to be implemented in the new term.</p> <p>The Board <b>NOTED</b> the report.</p>	

D Information items		
D1	<b>Bexley Music Service Update</b>	LW
	<p>The Board were asked to NOTE the report on the Bexley Music Service.</p> <p>GCTO-LW presented an update on the Bexley Music Service which transferred into the Trust in April 2021.</p> <p>It was reported that that that Bexley Music is in a strong position in terms of income generation.</p> <p>The Board were advised that Bexley Music is now operating from Belmont Woodside Federation and is delivering face to face tuition in whole classes in schools, in small groups, and individual tuition.</p> <p>Ensembles/orchestras sessions resumed from the start of the summer term. Although there has been some reduction in numbers due to the pandemic the take up has been reassuring.</p> <p>School coverage was reported as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 primary schools</li> <li>• 4 secondary schools</li> <li>• 2 special schools</li> </ul> <p>It was reported that Governance structures had now been implemented</p> <p>The Board were advised that the musical instruments and the music library were being temporarily accommodated at the London South East Colleges Orpington Campus.</p>	

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	<p>Bexley Music staff have moved their base into the old School keeper’s house on the Belmont site where improvements to the interior of the ‘house’ are nearing completion.</p> <p>It was reported that the entrance to the school for customers of Bexley Music is also nearly finished. There is a dedicated foyer and reception desk on entry. This will provide a better-quality experience for visitors coming on site after school hours. An additional part-time member of staff is being recruited to cover the reception desk and to manage the premises after hours (evenings and weekends).</p> <p>It was reported that all staff have successfully transferred under TUPE across to LSEAT with HR support and oversight.</p> <p>In addition, IT systems have migrated across and the new database for the organisation will be ready for use after the half term break.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the Bexley Music brand has continued to be developed by the Group Marketing and Communications team with a focus on wider branding and design, website design, social media account creation and PR coverage.</p>	
Board Comments & Challenge		
	<p>The Board <b>NOTED</b> the report and were pleased to see the progress and integration of the Music Service fully into the Trust.</p>	

**3. AOB:**

The Chair extended thanks and appreciation to the both the Trustees and the Executives in what had been a very challenging year.

**4. Next meeting date : 20 October 2021**

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## Attendees

### Board Members

Mark Burnett (MB)	Chair
Dr Sam Parrett, OBE (SP)	CEO/Trustee
Max Bero (MBx)	Trustee (Vice Chair)
Dr Tom Pey (TP)	Trustee: APOLGOES
David Bailey (DB)	Trustee: JOINING BY PHONE
Charles Yates (CY)	Trustee
Christopher Philpott (CP)	Trustee
Janet Saunders (JS)	Co-opted Trustee – LGB Chair BW
Denise James Mason (DJM)	Co-opted Trustee – LGB Chair BE
Emma Brand (EB)	Trustee
Sebastien Chapleau (SC)	Trustee
Lynne Revell	Trustee: NEW
Louise Wolsey (LW)	Co-opted Trustee (LSEC)

### Clerk to the Board

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
Beth Moore (BM)	Group Head Safeguarding (Item C6)

Approved by Chair:



20th October 2021

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