

Minutes

UTC READING TRUST

Company number: 07652565

Meeting:	UTC Reading Trust Board	Location:	Meeting Conference Room, UTC Reading Crescent Road East Reading RG1 5RQ
Date:	8 March 2016	Time:	5:30pm-7:30pm
Chair:	Lee Nicholls (LN)		

MINUTES of a meeting of the UTC Reading Trust Board held at UTC Reading on 8 March 2016, commencing at 5.30 pm.

Present:

- Lee Nicholls, Chair
- Joanne Harper, Principal
- Caroline McNamara, Governor
- David Kilshaw, Governor
- Jennie Hooper, Governor
- Paul Newman, Governor
- Sarah Fleming, Governor
- Tony Macfayden, Governor
- Anjanie Mackenzie, Governor
- Sarah Clarke, Governor

In attendance:

- Katy Whife, Clerk

1.	Apologies for absence Martin Dix, Governor
2.	Declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality None
3.	Minutes The minutes were checked and agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting
4.	Matters arising Admissions arrangements: The Board was advised that further to discussions at the last board meeting on the admissions policy and the proposal to withdraw from local authority coordinated admissions for entry in 2017 and beyond, that the consultation was extended and it has been agreed that the UTC will withdraw from local authority admissions. A letter has been sent from the Principal to the Local Authority to advise them of this change. The next stage is for the admissions annex to be amended in writing by agreement between the secretary of state and the trust.

	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>To agree to progress arrangement to amend the funding agreement by updating the admissions annex to reflect the new admissions arrangements.</p>
5.	<p>Any other business that has arisen since the circulation of the agenda</p> <p>Laptop tender:</p> <p>The Principal outlined the laptop tender results. Due to the value of the contract, Board approval is required in line with the Financial Regulations. The recommendation was made to use CAE because they scored the highest in customer care, value add and the ability to meet the requirements of the trust.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>To approve the recommendation that the contract is awarded to CAE</p>
6.	<p>Governance update</p> <p>(a) To establish a working group to consider the arrangement between UTC Reading and the Multi Academy Trust</p> <p>The Board received a copy of the letter Nick Boles MP, which outlined a number of government reforms relating to the UTC programme. It was noted that some of the current developments with UTC Reading and through Activate Learning align closely to these reforms, including the current proposals to review the governance arrangements between the UTC and the Activate Learning Education Trust MAT and the current bids to the government for the UTC to become a National Support School and a Teaching School. At this stage the bids have been turned down and no clear evidence has been provided as to why. Governors noted their surprise that the bid has been turned down and it was recommended that a letter is written from the Trust in response.</p> <p>Lee Nicholls introduced a paper, governance review across Activate schools and UTC's. This paper sets out a proposal to review the governance structures of the Activate Learning Education Trust and the UTC Trusts. The paper outlines some options and proposes the formation of a working group with governor involvement from UTC Reading and UTC Oxfordshire Boards. The Board were asked if they see any issues or implications with the options set out in the paper. A number of comments were made. The Board discussed the proposal in the context of the wider UTC movement, considering the benefits of capacity building through working within a wider MAT structure. It was asked whether the UTC will have the same issues as the other schools within the MAT and some concern was expressed about the depth of understanding that a MAT will have on issues relating specifically to the UTC. In response it was noted that there are a number of ways of setting up the Trust and that maintaining the integrity of the individual schools with the common thread of an employer focused business model will be central the Trust. The Board emphasised the importance of maintaining local autonomy, culture and ethos. A number of suggestions were put forward, including a UTC only MAT and a MAT with lead roles and responsibilities for UTC Reading. In conclusion the Board agreed that collaboration is important and with the right structure, the UTC may benefit. A number of Governor volunteers were asked to join the working group, which will be reviewing the options.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To write letter in response to the National Support School and Training School bid.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A joint working group is formed with up to 2 governors from each UTC board, each Principal from the 2 UTCs and the Chair of the 2 board plus one other from the sponsor, Activate Learning. That Sarah Fleming volunteered to be involved with the working group • We keep the trustees of the Activate Learning Education Trust (the MAT responsible for the Bicester School and the Bicester Technology Studio) informed of this piece of work as it may affect them in the future (depending on what we choose to do). • We engage with legal advice, from the leaders in the UTC market place – Stone King (costs covered by the capacity fund) • We engage with project management & admin support to document the options and put into practice whatever legal changes are required (again, costs covered by the capacity fund) • We report back at the board meeting in July on the recommendations of this joint working group as to which option is preferred.
7.	<p>Principal's report, including presentation on student progress data</p> <p>The Principal gave an overview of her report, which summarises the progress of the UTC from one term to the next to ensure the Board of Governors have a clear view of the UTC. The Board received the positive news that the school is currently oversubscribed. In relation to leadership, it was highlighted that current staff are working above expectation and there is a plan to reward teachers for their efforts by giving them an extra day off work in lieu. Stakeholder surveys have provided positive feedback, this is supported by developments in marketing.</p> <p>The Principal set out a proposal to consult on reducing the length of the school day, a school week currently being 41.5 hours. The Board recommended that a robust consultation should take place included students, staff and parents to establish the implications of making changes. The Board were advised that lessons would not be affected by this change and governors were generally satisfied with the potential benefits but wanted to be assured that there would be no negative impact on lessons and independent study time. Evidence was outlined by one Governors, whereby it has been shown that teenagers can be more productive with later start times.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>To agree to consult on change the school day To approve the extra teacher training days To agree to roll out online training to all staff for Child Protection and Child Sexual Exploitation Training and Prevent</p>
8.	<p>Equality and Diversity report</p> <p>The Board received the annual equality and diversity report which included an update on compliance with general and specific legal duties and on how the UTC's equality objectives have been fulfilled. The Board were informed that an Equality Council has been set up by students. The Board questioned the gender balance of students and were advised that there has been a positive movement in this area, with increasing numbers of female students.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>To receive the Equality and Diversity report</p>
9.	<p>Special educational needs (SEND)</p>

	<p>The Board received the updated SEND report, which will be published online. The Board received assurance that all requirements in this area have been achieved.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>To receive and approve the annual report to governors regarding the SEND provision at the UTC</p>
10.	<p>Quality Assurance</p> <p>The Board received the termly update report on the development plan.</p> <p>Governors updated the Board on the work completed in their respective development plan link areas.</p> <p>(a) Personal Development, Behaviour and Safety: A meeting has taken place to review the area with the SLT lead. It was noted that a comprehensive plan is in place. In particular the link governors have looked in the support for those student with mental health needs and the effect of a student's diet on their concentration. The principal advised the Board that she will brief parents on the consumption of sugary drinks through her parent update newsletter.</p> <p>(b) Outcomes for Pupils: Following a meeting and a review, Governors were satisfied with the level of assurance received.</p> <p>(c) Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Formative feedback has been received. The Governors have probed into the nuances of individual student attainment and looked at the 'flight paths' for students</p> <p>(d) Effective Leadership and Management: The Chairman and the Principal informed the Board that they hold two weekly discussions and their work crosses over all the development plan themes. It was suggested that there may be value in looking into more detail at one of their next one-to-one meetings at what distinguishes UTC Reading from a regular school.</p>
11.	<p>Policies review</p> <p>The Principal advised the Board that a number of policies have been through a routine review. With the exception of the safeguarding and child protection policy, there have only been minor or no amendments required. The safeguarding and child protection policy has been re-written following a local authority template and reflects current legislation and guidance. The Governors were satisfied with these updates and there were no additional questions.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>To approve the following policies</p> <p>(a) School behaviour, including written statement of behaviour principles</p> <p>(b) Teacher appraisal</p> <p>(c) Staff discipline, conduct and grievance</p> <p>(d) Health and safety</p> <p>(e) Freedom of information</p> <p>(f) Child protection policies and procedures</p> <p>(g) Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff</p>
12.	<p>Report from Finance committee meeting</p> <p>The Board received the recommendations from the Finance and Resources Committee and noted the resolutions in relation to the:</p> <p>(a) Management accounts and financial forecast</p>

	(b) Review of Group Services Contract with Activate Learning
13.	<p>Principal's annual review The Chair reported the outcomes of the review panel to the Board. The Board were satisfied that all objectives have been met and agreed that the full 10% bonus should be released.</p> <p>RESOLVED To release the full 10% bonus to the Principal of UTC Reading</p>
14.	Next meeting: 28 June 2016

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17/7/16

