

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING NESTON HIGH SCHOOL		
Date:	Thursday 17th June 2021, 18.00 – 20.00pm	
Venue:	Remote Meeting (Microsoft Teams)	
Present:	Kevin Mothersdale (KM) Keith Simpson (KS) Paul Airey (PA) Duncan Haworth (DH) K Elizabeth Jones (KEJ) Ian Mellor (IM) Colin Randerson (CR) Kathryn Clarke (KC) Kath Roberts (KR)	Community Trustee and Chair of Trustees Headteacher Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Community Trustee Parent Trustee Community Trustee and Vice Chair of Trustees
Apologies:	Paul Reilly (PR)	Staff Trustee
Absent:	None	
In attendance:	John Pilcher Kirsty Cunningham (KCH) Joe Vosseveld (JV) Karen McCarthy (KMC) Tina Phillips (TP)	Clerk Deputy Head Teacher (from Item 7) Deputy Head Teacher Deputy Head Teacher School Business Manager

AGENDA ITEM 1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Discussion:	The Chair welcomed Trustees to the meeting and noted the apologies of PR, which were subsequently accepted.
Decision:	Resolved. To note apologies from PR.

AGENDA ITEM 2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Discussion:	There were no new declarations of interest to note.

AGENDA ITEM 3	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Discussion:	Trustees agreed that the previous minutes were true and accurate.
Decision:	Resolved. Trustees agreed to approve the previous minutes from 13.5.21 as a true and accurate record.

AGENDA ITEM 4	MATTERS ARISING
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action Log <p>(5) KS to meet with Trustees to discuss 6th Form & Capital. Open (see Part 2).</p> <p>(10) TP to initiate Parent Trustee election process. Closed. TP advised an advert will go out next week.</p> <p>(13) Clerk to circulate Community Trustee statements. Closed/Item 7.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 5	EVERYONES INVITED
Discussion:	<p>SN presented the item and noted the Everyone's Invited website became prominent in March 2021. Students were able to record events of sexual harassment/sexually related bullying, and this is now a public website. The Government subsequently looked into the issue and a national review was completed on 10.6.21. This led to a report being published with a series of recommendations.</p> <p>SN advised that Neston have responded to the recommendations and have split the school's actions into several areas:</p> <p><u>Policy</u></p> <p>The school will maintain close contact with CWAC safeguarding teams and the school Safeguarding Policy adheres to the recommendations arising from Everyone's Invited.</p> <p><u>Training</u></p> <p>Trustees noted this is a huge area of focus, SN is liaising with the LA. It was suggested that staff understanding of this needs to be developed at a national level, particularly in terms of language and reporting.</p> <p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>SN confirmed that a s letter was sent out in April in relation to the website and corresponding report – reassuring parents and families that all aspects of this were being looked at across the school. A link was included to the NSPCC helpline that was set up specifically. The helpline also enables parents to access support.</p>

Student Resources

Trustees noted a meeting is taking place and resources will be reviewed, SN added that very good resources have already been identified for utilisation. Fortnightly meetings are also taking place with Safeguarding Link Trustees.

The Chair thanked SN, noting it was shocking to see the levels of sexual abuse and subsequent Ofsted findings.

Question: Trustee asked. Is the correlation between Neston and Ofsted figures clear?

Answer: SN noted that confidentiality has to be maintained but at the time of the report, cases did come to light, and they are complex and serious. Police have been involved but SN suggested there has often been a disappointing and somewhat 'relaxed' approach from the Police. The schools concern is that cases are taking place and they are not reported. The work of the pastoral team is focused on communicating to students that school is a safe place, and they should feel confident to share experiences and report incidents.

Discussion followed and Trustees reflected on the importance of ensuring students feel safe and able to share experiences. The school will aim for a 'zero tolerance' approach. Discussion also focussed upon the need for education, particularly in light of the potential for malicious allegations which subsequently leads to two sets of very distressed families.

Trustees agreed an authority wide approach is required, across multiple agencies but endorsed the school's approach. SN explained that Safeguarding is always included in year group discussions, but Everyone's Invited will become more high profile at parents' evenings and as part of student induction processes.

KS thanked SN for his presentation and also expressed thanks to the wider student services team. The issue the school has is very similar to other issues over the past few years – for example Mental Health was in many ways also a 'hidden issue', numbers increased because people became confident to talk about it. KS added that the lack of a joined-up response leaves schools in isolation to deal with complex issues. However, the school will continue to work with the community and the focus has to be upon prevention.

Trustees also reflected on the nature of the Everyone's Invited data; there is no timeline and incidents may have happened decades ago. The Board acknowledged the school also has to be cautious, but it appears to be leading best practice work across the county. KS suggested that a link Trustee may also be a beneficial role within the remit of the Board.

The Board thanked SN for his presentation and looks forward to a further update in the Autumn term.

AGENDA ITEM 6	HEAD TEACHERS VERBAL REPORT
<p>Discussion:</p>	<p>KS was invited to provide a verbal report and he continued to highlight the following.</p> <p>Key issues:</p> <p><u>Covid-19</u></p> <p>It has been another complex term in the context of Covid-19 (C-19). The school are acutely aware that the North West region is a 'hotspot' with case numbers rising. After half-term, there were two cases within the community, confirmed as the Delta variant. Neston children are asked to take PCR tests, Public Health England (PHE) then collect the results. 1700 test packs were issued with an 82% return rate, which is remarkable, and thanks were expressed to KC, TP, and the team for managing the situation so well. There was only one positive case related to a member of staff, who is now self-isolating, as a result, one other staff member is also isolating as an additional precaution.</p> <p>Neston is recognised by PHE as a test school, local schools have much higher numbers, and Neston is also now being affected by community cases. KS added that this does impact upon wellbeing.</p> <p>Trustees noted that Year 10 exams took place, Year 12 exams will take place on 21.6.21. Staff are understandably very tired from the events of the year; this is the case across all levels. However, staff continue to perform above and beyond, and staff absence levels are low. Some staff are still affected by long Covid and there is a long waiting list to access specialist care within the NHS.</p> <p>KN noted his concern that a significant number of staff will not get six weeks holiday, and many will have to work through the summer. In relation to the TAG process, JV was noted for significant hard work and the school has more than checked all processes, set assignments, marked assignments, and moderated marks. All data will be signed off and submitted by lunchtime tomorrow. Trustees noted this is a huge workload. However, staff are still looking forward to celebrating outcomes for students throughout the summer.</p> <p><u>Transition</u></p> <p>KS advised this is a complicated issue, the school had hoped for 'in person' transition events but ultimately, they had to accept this cannot be accommodated. The SLT are now re-building a remote package and will use some of last year's work in addition to new content. To date, the school has received good feedback from Year 6 parents. A one-day event for Year 7 and Year 12 was built in as a taster experience, this will still go ahead and remote 1:1 meetings will also take place.</p> <p>CR noted that he spent a morning with JV to review the TAG process. It is clear this involves incredible hard work. CR added that the decision not to keep students in the same classroom has also paid off.</p>

	<p>Question: Trustee asked. To what extent can new vulnerable children access the site in person?</p> <p>Answer: KS confirmed this will happen outside of normal school hours and the school still hopes to run a summer school, but this will be dependent upon national guidelines.</p> <p>The Chair thanked KS for his report and there were no further questions.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 7	BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Discussion:	<p>The Chair confirmed that a process was undertaken for existing trustees (IM and PA) to express interest in being re-appointed as Community Trustees. Both IM and PA have expressed interest and it was unanimously agreed by the Board that they should therefore be re-appointed for the term of four years.</p> <p>Discussion turned to training and link roles. KS noted that in an ever-changing world, perhaps pre-C-19 link roles are no longer fit for purpose. The school values colleagues coming in to meet up with staff, triangulation between the Board, SLT and the school is essential. The recommended roles of Safeguarding, SEND and Careers are in place, but the Board also need a Pupil Premium link. Trustees also need to be aware of pertinent issues and ready for an Ofsted conversation. C-19 curriculum recovery will also be a key area in this regard. The Board agreed that moving towards the Autumn/Spring terms, they will all be fully trained and aligned to key areas of the school's vision.</p>
Decision:	Resolved. To appoint IM and PA as Community Trustees.

AGENDA ITEM 8	FINANCE
Discussion:	<p>TP was invited to present the item and Trustees noted that the corresponding management report had been circulated.</p> <p>TP highlighted the reduced deficit of £101k as reported at the previous meeting. However, as part of the May forecast, this has reduced further to £74k, mainly as a result of an additional grant.</p> <p>A mass testing grant was expected at £22k, the school received circa £15k, but has now received an additional £25k from March-April 2021. This has reduced the in-year deficit accordingly. TP also hopes there might be additional savings across utilities costs and exam fees.</p> <p>The Chair thanked TP noting the reduction in the deficit is a great development and added that the Academy sector seems to be healthier in financial terms than would have been expected.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 9	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
Discussion:	Clerks note: Trustees are asked to review the Part 2 confidential minutes.

AGENDA ITEM 10	DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update: Due to the current demands upon the school, the July meeting has been postponed. The Vision Statement and Strategy discussions will be revisited in September. ▪ BoT and Committee dates for 2021/22 are to be confirmed.