



MINUTES OF THE FEDERATION TRUST MEETING

Thursday 2 July 2020, 2pm
via Microsoft Teams

Present

Iain Dodd, Emma Gautrey, Judith Gilboy, Rob Guthrie, Sam Hearth, Andrew Holt, Sally Kirkby, Martyn Rhowbotham, Stuart Williams (Executive Principal),

In Attendance

Laurence Howard (Member), Natalie Ray, Sheryl Wilson (Clerk)

1. Welcome introductions and apologies for absence

Andrew Holt welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Alex Mould and Rob Mulvey and were accepted by the committee.

2. Declarations of Personal Interest and Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18 March 2020 (Extraordinary meeting combined Trust and Resources committee).

These were signed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising from previous minutes

None.

5. Clerk's Business

Trustees and Members were asked to complete, sign and return the Register of Business Interests form.

6. ESFA Academies Financial Handbook 2020

Stuart Williams referred to page 60 of the financial handbook (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ef0a9a5d3bf7f6c03ed25b7/Academies_Financial_Handbook_2020.pdf) which details the 'musts' for chairs and other trustees. Each point was covered and discussed as to how the Federation is compliant.

Question: Are there any outstanding items that need covering following lockdown?

Stuart Williams advised that the ESFA had relaxed some of the deadlines for returns, however all is currently on track.

Trustees and members were also advised to read the hyperlinks within the financial handbook and refer to the RDSF funding agreement and articles of association, as follows:

<http://www.rutlandfederation.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Articles-of-Association-FINAL.pdf>

<http://www.rutlandfederation.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Master-Funding-Agreement-RDSF-2.pdf>

7. Governance/Trustee Structure

Stuart Williams referred to page 10 of the Academies Financial Handbook which outlines the roles and responsibilities of members. The original governance structure of the Rutland and District Schools' Federation was set up as a flat structure with trustees also being members. Over time the Department for Education prefers to have separation between members and trustees, and at each annual visit they refer to this aspect in their follow-up letter. However, the Articles of Association do not require this. Trustees and members unanimously agreed that it would be appropriate to approach three independent members and to review who is currently a member and a trustee. At the next Trust meeting separation between the two roles will be agreed.

With reference to 1.4 of the Academies Financial Handbook in which it states 'members must not be employees of the trust, nor occupy staff establishment roles on an unpaid voluntary basis', queries were raised as to whether members could volunteer as a mentor or, assist with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Advice will be sought from solicitors.

8. Surveys

Prior to the meeting, links to the results from the parent, student and staff surveys were shared. Trustees noted that generally the responses were very good.

Question: With regards to the parents' survey, one of the charts reflects bullying, what is being done about this? Stuart Williams stated that social media can be problematic and some of the issues are being brought into school. The numbers are however, very small and follow-up work is done with those concerned.

Question: The responses regarding careers advice appears to be lower than expected. Stuart Williams advised it had been a difficult year in terms of staff leading on careers, however this is now in a stable position.

9. A.O.B

Trustees and members expressed their thanks and gratitude to all staff for their hard work during this difficult time. Andrew Holt will arrange for a letter to be sent to all staff.

10. Dates for Diaries

The meeting dates for the new academic year are available on the VLE portal.

Date of Next Meeting

Trust meeting – Thursday 10 December 2020, 3.30pm, venue to be confirmed