

**Uttoxeter Learning Trust  
Education Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held remotely (via Office 365 Teams), on Tuesday, 23 June 2020 at 5.30pm.

**Present:**

Rev M Sherwin (in the chair), Mrs P Livesey, Mr S Slater, Mr T Sutcliffe.

Dr S Clark – Chief Executive Officer

Mr R Sheldon – Clerk to the ULT

**Apology:**

An apology for absence was received and accepted from Mr R Oldham (chair).

**180. Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda items.

**181. ULT Teaching School:**

Mrs Lindsay and Mrs Goodwin, co-directors of the Teaching School, were present for this item to provide an update on the progress of the Teaching School against its key performance indicators. A copy of the updated report, together with the Teaching School Action Plan 20219/2020, had been previously circulated.

Mrs Lindsay and Mrs Goodwin reported on the progress being made against the three performance indicators:

- Initial Teacher Training – this KPI has been met with 16 teacher trainees currently going through the assessment board with a view to being placed in a school from September. This area remains positive with a similar number of teacher trainees anticipated for the next school year. At the request of trustees, a breakdown was given of the subject areas being covered and specific target numbers for Science and English teachers. Work also continues with other Secondary school partners and Mrs Goodwin confirmed that the addition of another secondary partner within the ULT would be of benefit.

Mr Slater made reference to some of the difficulties being experienced, due to the coronavirus, by major local companies such as Rolls Royce and JCB and a suggestion made for contact to be made with a view to offering teacher training in STEM subjects for those members of staff who may be facing redundancy from those companies. Mrs Goodwin agreed to explore this further.

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – this KPI has also been met including development of on-line training due to the closure of schools as a result of the coronavirus. The majority of training has taken place and the future training offer will be designed to meet emerging agendas and to accommodate the needs of local schools. An outline was given of the CPD planned for next year including qualifications for senior and middle leadership.

Discussion followed and trustees gave their congratulations for the very positive course evaluations that had been received. When looking at future CPD that could be made available trustees recognised that a key focus for the Teaching School

should aimed at supporting schools in reducing the attainment gap for disadvantaged students.

- School to School Support – trustees were informed that this key performance indicator had not been met as it had not proved possible to provide school to school support during the last few months as schools were closed due to the coronavirus. An outline was given of the measures to be taken to address this and to increase the amount of school to school support during the next school year.

Mrs Lindsay and Mrs Goodwin also referred to the Teaching School's Action Plan 2019/2020 and assured trustees that it remained ambitious in what it could provide in the future, with various funding streams being sourced to support these plans.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mrs Lindsay and Mrs Goodwin be thanked for attending the meeting and for their positive update on the work of the Teaching School.
- ii) That trustees place on record their thanks to all staff concerned with the Teaching School and in ensuring its continued successful development through being both proactive and reactive.

(Mrs Livesey, trustee, gave her apologies for having to leave the meeting at this point).

## **182. Minutes:**

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 28 April 2020 had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting be received and approved.

## **183. Matters Arising:**

- a) School Improvement Action Plan – Ryecroft Middle School (Minute 173(a) refers)  
The CEO reported that she continued to work with the headteacher to address the concerns that had been outlined in the pre-Ofsted review and the School Improvement Plan continued to be developed. It was hoped that the Plan would be completed by the end of the school year and the CEO undertook to keep trustees updated.

It was resolved –

That trustees be provided with a copy of the School Improvement Plan at the earliest opportunity so that they can monitor, and challenge as necessary, the impact of improvement strategies.

- b) Centre Assessed Grades – Thomas Alleyne's High School (Minute 174(b) refers)  
The CEO reported that centre assessed grades for the school had been submitted to the DfE as required. The CEO confirmed that the school had put a robust system in place to determine the grades and that she had discussed these with the headteacher. The grades for GCSE were showing a slight increase from the previous year and post-16 performance was also looking better. The headteacher was, however, to focus

further on accurate assessment of student attainment and progress for 2020/21. A full breakdown of the post-16 grades had been requested from the headteacher.

It was resolved –

That the update on the centre assessed grades for Thomas Alleyne's High School be noted and that the CEO be requested to circulate to committee members the breakdown of post-16 grades as soon as available.

c) New School (Minute 175 refers)

The CEO reported that, as agreed at the last meeting of the trust board, the local authority and DfE had been informed of the decision to defer the opening of the new school until September 2022. The project board would continue to meet and a timeline for agreed actions prior to the opening would shortly be determined. Trustees would be kept updated.

d) Trustee Training Programme (Minute 178(a) refers)

Mr Slater reported that he was contacting trustees, as previously agreed, to discuss and identify possible training needs for the trust board as a whole and individually. A number of possible training needs had already been identified including one around financial matters, and another on succession planning. Those trustees spoken to had also recognised the benefit of holding an away day, to also include chairs of local school governing boards. Mr Slater further reported that he would prepare a report to highlight identified training needs as soon as he had spoken with all trustees.

e) JCB Equipment (178(b) refers)

Mr Slater reported that he had discussed this matter with Mr Harper, trustee, who had confirmed that there would be some delay in receiving the computer equipment being offered by JCB. Mr Gliddon, headteacher at Oldfields Hall Middle School, who was supporting with this project had also been updated.

## 184. Covid-19 Issues:

a) Partial Re-opening of Schools

The CEO reported that schools had re-opened on 15 June, as previously agreed by the trust board, with positive feedback from staff and parents. The number of pupils attending also continued to increase. Headteachers had appreciated the extra two weeks given before re-opening their schools and headteachers of the first schools were also looking at the further guidance received for admitting other year groups before the end of the school year.

The chair of the trust board referred to a recent meeting of the School Representation Board where headteachers had made a request to be given permission to admit Y4 pupils, where possible, for more than the one day that had been agreed by trustees. Discussion followed and consideration given to the benefits of admitting Y4 pupils for more than one day, if done as a formal transition programme.

It was resolved –

- i) That trustees would consider supporting the admittance of Y4 pupils for one week before the end of the school year if a formal transition programme was in place.

- ii) That the CEO be requested to ask headteachers to provide details of their plans for Y4 pupils and that these be circulated to trustees for a decision to be taken through email rather than an additional meeting.

b) Latest DfE/LA Guidance and Future Planning

The CEO and chair of the trust board both reported on local and national guidance being received with regard to the opening of schools in September. Schools were currently making provisional plans and modelling how their schools could operate but much more guidance was awaited before anything could be finalised. Factors included the social distancing requirements and the advice given to vulnerable staff currently shielding from school. Not all schools would be able to accommodate all pupils if current guidance remained in place.

Discussion followed and trustees noted that additional funding was to be made available to schools to support summer school programmes and to help support reducing the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils. Further guidance on how this was to be allocated and specific spending requirements were awaited before plans could be finalised by schools.

It was resolved –

That the trust board would continue to monitor the situation and take account of further local and national guidance likely to be received before finalising plans for the opening of ULT schools in September.

c) Development of Remote Learning

The CEO confirmed that all ULT school headteachers continued to develop arrangements for remote learning and that funding was also available to support the development of virtual learning platforms. Schools were currently using a variety of packages for delivering this but all were being evaluated to determine what might be best in the future. Support with this was also being given by the IT team. A lot of good work was being undertaken across the schools but a number of issues would need to be taken into account, particularly around GDPR, before anything could be finalised.

The CEO also reported that she was discussing IT support for Ryecroft Middle School with the CEO of Staffordshire University Academy Trust given the shared facilities with Dove First School. Trustees would be kept updated regarding those discussions.

It was resolved –

That trustees continue to monitor the development of virtual learning platforms and evaluate all that is happening across the ULT schools before approving any formal plans.

**185. Safeguarding:**

The CEO reported that there had been a recent incident outside of school concerning a student from Thomas Alleyne's High School. Details weren't known but the headteacher had confirmed that the matter was being dealt with in accordance with the Safeguarding policy and any necessary action taken. The CEO also reported that there were no other specific safeguarding matters to bring to the attention of trustees.

It was resolved –

That the CEO be thanked for bringing the Thomas Alleyne's incident to the attention of trustees and an assurance that the matter was being dealt with appropriately.

#### **186. Policy Reviews:**

##### a) Staff Discipline Policy

The clerk reported that the Staff Discipline policy was still in the process of being revised. The updated policy would be made available for the next meeting of the Education committee for consideration and subsequent recommendation for approval by the trust board.

It was resolved –

That the report be noted and that this policy be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Education committee.

##### b) Internet safety and Online Learning Policy

A copy of the draft Internet safety and Online Learning policy had been previously circulated and the CEO reported that such a policy was necessary in view of the development of online learning in response to Covid-19 and the closure of schools. Such a protocol was necessary given that many members of ULT staff were using their own IT devices for internet and online learning activities. Support with the policy was being given by the ULT's IT manager but a number of concerns remained to be resolved, including the use of USBs. The CEO therefore recommended that the policy remains in draft form at present although still used as a working document until such time as the policy covered all related matters.

The chair of the trust board reported that he had identified a number of suggested amendments to the draft policy and had been forwarded to the CEO for consideration.

It was resolved –

That the draft Internet Safety and Online Learning policy be received and that it should continue to be used as a working document and the policy revised as necessary for subsequent approval at a future meeting.

#### **187. Risk Register:**

Trustees had been previously circulated with an updated risk register to reflect discussions from the last meeting of the Education committee and to take account of the impact of Covid-19 on schools. The CEO reported that the growth of the ULT also remains a key issue and outlined the marketing strategy being developed to support this. This had also been included in the risk register.

The CEO further reported that the current format, and wording for many of the issues, had been in place for a number of years. As such it was considered that the development of an updated register would be more effective to help monitor risks and progress being made against each of them. The CEO undertook to develop a new risk register in readiness for the start of the new school year.

It was resolved –

That the updated risk register be received and noted and that trustees look forward to receiving a new format for the register at future meetings.

**188. Other Business:**

a) Record of Thanks

Trustees placed on record their continued thanks for all of the work being undertaken by the CEO, headteachers and chairs of local governing boards for all ULT schools at such a difficult time.

b) Growth of ULT

Mr Slater reported that a group of schools, including a high school, were looking to join a multi-academy trust and had contacted him to discuss an option of joining the ULT. A reply had been sent and Mr Slater undertook to circulate a copy of this to other trustees.

c) Trust Capacity Fund

Mr Slater reported that that there was a further opportunity for the ULT to submit a bid for funding from the Trust Capacity Fund and that the detail of this would be discussed at the meeting of the Finance committee being held later in the week. Mr Slater was hopeful that, given the decision of Richard Clarke First School to join the ULT and other schools looking into the possibility of joining, the criteria for submitting bids would be met. He would keep trustees updated.

It was resolved –

That trustees fully support any bid made to the Trust capacity Fund.

**189. Date of Next Meeting:**

As previously agreed, the next meeting of the Education Committee was to be held on Tuesday, 22 September 2020 at 5.30pm. The venue for the meeting will be confirmed nearer the date, but if it was still necessary for the meeting to be held remotely then the committee will continue to meet through Microsoft teams.

Rev M Sherwin

**Signed**.....

22 September 2020

**Date**.....