

**Uttoxeter Learning Trust  
Trustees' Board**

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Trustees' Board held remotely (via Microsoft Teams) on Monday, 8 June 2020 at 5.30pm.

**Present:**

Mr S Slater (chair), Mrs V Bennett, Mr S Harper, Mrs P Livesey, Mr R Oldham, Rev M Sherwin, Mr T Sutcliffe.

**Also Present:**

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Dr S Clark  
Clerk to the Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT) – Mr R Sheldon

**Apology:**

An apology for absence was received from Mr L Trigg. Governors continued to wish him a full and speedy recovery.

**1. Declaration of Interests:**

There were no declarations of interest from trustees relevant to agenda items.

**2. Minutes:**

The minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the trust board held on 27 May 2020 had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the extraordinary meeting be received and approved.

**3. Chair Power to Act – Report on Actions Taken:**

The chair reported on the following actions taken between this and the last meeting:

- A meeting of the Headteacher Professional Board (HPB) had been agreed for 5 June to discuss the readiness for a partial reopening of schools with effect from Monday, 15 June should approval be given for this to happen. All headteachers were in support of this and school risk assessments had been updated in line with any further guidance received. All updated risk assessments were required to have the approval of chairs of the local governing boards. The updated risk assessments had also been forwarded to the local authority, regional schools commission and the unions. The CEO confirmed that the local authority had provided feedback to some of the risk assessments and this had been noted by the schools concerned.
- Following the last extraordinary meeting of the trust board, telephone conversations had been held with some chairs of local governing boards, at their request, to explain the reasons for approval not being given for the partial reopening of schools on 1 June.
- A meeting of the School Representation Board (SRB) had been agreed for 9 June to share with headteachers and chairs of local governing boards the outcome of this meeting and to further explain as necessary the reasons behind whatever decisions were to be taken.

- As agreed at a previous meeting of the trust board, contact was being made with individual trustees to discuss their role and to identify appropriate training courses.

It was resolved –

That trustees fully support all actions taken by the chair, with thanks to him.

#### **4. Partial Re-Opening of ULT Schools on 15 June 2020:**

The chair thanked trustees for attending this further extraordinary meeting of the trust board and that, as agreed at the last extraordinary meeting, it had been arranged to consider the partial re-opening of all ULT schools with effect from Monday, 15 June 2020. Copies of all updated risk assessments (with the exception of Windsor Park Middle School, which was to follow) had been previously circulated together with other relevant Covid-19 documents. The chair confirmed that he read each of the risk assessments and that a number of views had been submitted to the CEO for consideration.

The CEO confirmed that, as previously reported, the risk assessments had been submitted to the local authority, regional schools commission and unions and that there had been no response other than some limited response from the local authority, which had been taken into account. The CEO also reported that she was to visit each of the school sites to discuss the effectiveness of the risk assessments and that five schools had already been visited with the other three to be visited by Thursday of this week.

The CEO was pleased to report that everything looked positive although the school cleaning arrangements remained a key issue. The cleaning contracts, and service level agreements, differed between schools and the CEO stressed the importance of ensuring that all cleaning programmes were specific to Covid-19 guidance. The cleaning programmes were currently being finalised and would be in place for any agreed partial re-opening of schools.

Alongside the planning for the partial re-opening of schools, the CEO further reported that consideration continued to be given to the further development of remote learning programmes. The detail of this was being discussed with Robin Oldham, trustee, and a meeting had been arranged for later in the week to look at possible options for developing remote learning.

Having listened to the full explanation from the CEO and chair of the trust board on how the schools had further prepared for any partial re-opening of their school, full discussion followed and trustees sought further information and clarification around a number of issues. Consideration was given in particular to:

- Parental views – all headteachers were positive for the partial re-opening of their schools, sooner rather than later, but recognised that the final decision on sending their child to school still rested with the parent. As discussed at the previous meeting, trustees remained of a view that any parent opting not to send their child to school should stick by this decision, subject to a regular review.
- School Transport – trustees questioned the arrangements in place for those pupils having to use public transport to get to school. The CEO reported that this remained the responsibility of the local authority and understood that procedures had been reviewed, with extra buses provided, to ensure that the number of pupils on each bus were limited to ensure social distancing requirements.

Trustees requested the CEO to seek confirmation from the local authority that this was the case.

Year Groups – the CEO reminded trustees that the Government had agreed that schools should only partially re-open for the following year groups – Reception; Y1; Y6, Y10; Y12. The attendance of children of critical workers would also still have precedence over other pupils being admitted. This had also been discussed at the previous meeting and trustees had recognised that the recommended pupil year groups to be re-admitted to schools were not appropriate for the three-tier system as they didn't take account of the age that pupils transferred to other schools. Representation had been made to the regional schools commission to allow the ULT to prioritise children moving to new schools in September but this had not been agreed.

The CEO reported that, with this in mind, headteachers of the first and middle schools had requested that approval be given for Y4 and Y8 pupils to attend school for a short period before the end of the school year. The request was for Y4 pupils to attend for five days and Y8 pupils to attend for one day. The CEO confirmed that should approval be given, the pupils in the other year groups would not be allowed to attend schools on those days due to concerns around social distancing. The CEO also reported that she was to seek the views of the local authority and regional schools commission regarding these requests. Trustees considered the implications for pupils in the other year groups currently attending school particularly given the amount of preparation time to make the necessary arrangements. Trustees also questioned whether the admittance of Y4 pupils for five days was too long given the impact on those pupils required to be in school.

- Collaborative working – should a decision be taken to partially re-open schools, trustees recognised the importance of all schools working together collaboratively to monitor and review teaching practices that had been put in place to identify those that were working well and those that may need some improvement.

## **5. Trustee Decisions:**

Having taken everything into account, including in particular the updated risk assessments demonstrating that schools were now even better prepared for partial re-opening; various updated Covid-19 related documents; the positive reports from other schools that had already partially re-opened; the national reduction in the number of infection rates; trustees subsequently resolved –

- i) That approval be given for the partial re-opening of all ULT schools with effect from Monday, 15 June although the decision would be kept under review and subject to change should there be evidence to suggest any local increase in Covid-19 infections.
- ii) That prior to the re-opening of schools, and as previously agreed, the headteachers should ask parents to indicate if they would be sending their child to school and to make it clear that they would be held to that decision. This would be subject to a fortnightly review with schools also reserving the right to admit pupils for exceptional family circumstances.

- iii) That approval be given for first and middle schools to admit Y4 and Y8 pupils respectively, for one day only before the end of the school year and subject to approval being given to this by the local authority and regional schools commission. Headteachers to also ask parents if they would send their child to school for that one day only and that it should not go ahead if numbers were not viable.
  
- iv) That trustees again place on record their thanks to the headteachers, staff and governors for all of the additional work that had been undertaken to enable the partial re-opening of schools.

Signed..... S. Slater

Date..... 8 July 2020