



MINUTES OF TRUST BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday 11th February 2026
 Time: 10.00am
 Venue: Woodford Primary School

Clerk: N Burgess
 Present: W Mason, L Magrath, M Vevers, T Little, D Woolley, L Woolley, D Brown, J Crawford, C Nevin, S McGill, N Thompson, S Mellor, D Kershaw and G Turnpenney (via Teams)

	Action	Initials
1	To inform the Clerk of any changes to the register of business interests	All
1	Update on funding opportunities	RK
1	To update Trust Directors to establish links with Trustees	DW
1	To complete outstanding training modules and submit certificates to the Clerk	All
2	To update on growth and school to school support opportunities	LM
3	To include Climate Action report on the agenda for the next meeting of the Finance and Resources committee	WM

Agenda – Part 1			
Category	Item	Notes	Action
1	Governance Arrangements Presentation – Changes to the Governance Handbook	<p>LW presented to Trustees an overview of the changes to the Governance Handbook which was revised in 2025.</p> <p>A summary of the changes and a link to the document were circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that in terms of the updated guidance there were no changes against what the Trust already had in place. Core responsibilities for Trustees are clear and have not changed.</p> <p>An external review of Governance was discussed and it was confirmed that LW is in talks with another Trust to undertake a reciprocal review in the coming months.</p> <p>Q – Is there any guidance from the DfE? A – The White Paper has not yet been published. SEND is a big issue and there is no solution at the</p>	

		<p>present time. SEND funding is a huge issue and the number of children with SEND is increasing, the current system is not sustainable.</p> <p>Q – Do you feel as a Trust we are on top of SEND as much as we can be?</p> <p>A – We have a Resource Base at PRS and HGHS and there are also plans to build one at LR. LCH is a priority for funding and at DHS we are addressing in a different way.</p> <p>In terms of primary there is a complexity of need in EYFS. Children come into school with no EHCP or support and there is no funding for additional support needed. We can create a Resource Base but it is difficult without approval from the LA. This is something which needs to be considered within the Trust as an innovate opportunity. LM is working closely with SMBC on the number of EHCP students in our Stockport schools.</p> <p>Q – Are you confident in the definition of need from a statutory point of view that we are where we need to be?</p> <p>A – There has got to be change in the future and it is becoming more difficult to obtain an EHCP. Pressure is on resources where there are students who are in the process for an EHCP, we meet their needs but there is no funding available.</p> <p>LW detailed the SEND inspection regime and ensuring needs are met. There should be additional space in different areas of the school building for children to work for some of the time. Part time timetables were discussed as being used as a way to keep the children in education, but this is not an option which is favoured by DfE.</p>	
	Apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from A Gilmour.	
	AOB items	WM wished to raise an additional agenda item at the end of the meeting.	
	Declarations of interest	There were no declarations of interest made in any of the agenda items.	

	Register of Business interests	Trustees were asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their record of business interests which was circulated during the meeting.	All
	Scheme of Delegation	The Scheme of Delegation was included in the meeting papers for reference and there were no material changes to note.	
	Minutes of the last Trust Board Meeting	<p>Minutes of the meeting held 10th December 2025 were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>Companies House ID verification was completed for all Trustees</p> <p>RK will provide an update on funding opportunities at the next meeting</p> <p>RK and DK term of office has been extended for a further 4-year period</p> <p>W Searle was appointed as a Member</p> <p>Link visits is an agenda item for this meeting</p> <p>Chair urged Trustees to finalise their training and send certificates to the Clerk as soon as possible</p>	RK
	Membership and succession planning	TL sought confirmation from Chairs of the sub committees that membership of their committee was up to date.	
	Admissions policies for 2027-2028	<p>Following the statutory 7-year consultation Trustees <u>approved</u> the following school Admissions policies:</p> <p>Laurus Cheadle Hulme Admissions policy- 2027-28</p> <p>Cheadle Hulme Primary School Admissions policy – 2027-28</p> <p>WM confirmed that both policies are unchanged and are compliant with the Admissions code.</p>	
	Policies for approval	There were no Trust policies for approval at this meeting.	
	Link Trustee roles and responsibilities	<p>The Link Trustee visits overview was circulated prior to the meeting. Trustees all confirmed they were happy with their allocated links.</p> <p>TL and GT already complete their 3 visits per year for Safeguarding and SEND.</p> <p>It was agreed that Trust Directors would establish contact with their Link Trustee to set up a visit. DW will update Trust Directors at their next meeting.</p> <p>Trustees gave verbal updates on their link areas since</p>	DW

			<p>the last meeting:</p> <p><u>Primary</u> SM had visited each school and was working to bring the information together to form a holistic view of the primaries in terms of alignment. SM felt it was a valuable piece of work which had been done in conjunction with LW and JM and that it had been good to visit the schools individually. There are some key deliverables which are not yet all in place, but work is being done towards this.</p> <p><u>Humanities</u> DK had met the CD a couple of weeks prior to this meeting with a focus on Geography. There was a conversation around A Level Geography and the work done over the last 2-3 years to bring the schools inline, which was working well.</p> <p>DK commented how enjoyable it was to work with the Trust Directors for History and Geography, and that they were both so engaged, were able to ask questions of Trustees, and were open and honest, which added value and was able to provide a connection.</p> <p>TDs had raised the issue that bigger teaching commitments meant there was less time for the bigger picture, and for QA and planning time. LM commented that TDs had been informed that they were not expected to do the same job they had a couple of years ago due to their bigger teaching commitment. TDs are the engine room of the schools and there is more work in some schools than there is in others. Leaders wished to retain the Trust Director model, but in order for this to be sustainable there had to be an increase in teaching time. Trustees were informed that for example the TD for History was currently running the History department at CHHS alongside the role of TD. TD of Geography has a current focus on HGHS and also teaches there. Teaching of A Level subjects was discussed, it was noted that this is a big commitment, and that some teachers new to the profession will choose not to whilst they settle into teaching. Workload is high and this is a big consideration, some staff have requested to reduce their teaching commitment to 0.9.</p> <p>Q – What is the policy on staff requesting to reduce to 0.9? A – It has to work for the school and the organisation,</p>	
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			<p>but we will always try to make it work where possible.</p> <p>The issue of timetabling split classes and part time timetables was discussed at length. LM concluded that Leaders will always try to accommodate requests, where possible, but that it can be very complex to timetable.</p>	
		Laurus Institute Governance area	<p>Trustees are requested to please complete their outstanding training modules and to send their certificates to the Clerk.</p> <p>Trustees are asked to contact the Clerk if there are any issues in accessing the training.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>

2	Being strategic	Exec Team updates	<p><u>Performance tables</u></p> <p>DW presented to Trustees the performance league table for Trusts. The data used is an aggregate of all the schools in each Trust. Trustees noted that PRS was not included in the data for Laurus as the school had not been part of the Trust for enough time.</p> <p>Trustees were delighted to see that Laurus Trust is ranked eleventh in the country, and top for the North West.</p> <p>Q – How many Trusts does this relate to? A – There are actually 100s. There are 245 on the list but some are too small to be included as they are SATs.</p> <p>In terms of Attainment 8 for disadvantaged pupils the Trust is number one for attainment in the North West which is very pleasing to note.</p> <p>Q – Which Trust is nearest to us in the North West? A – Bright Futures then possibly STAR.</p> <p>Q – What are some of the top Trusts doing? A – Some are selective.</p> <p><u>Growth</u></p> <p>LM updated Trustees on the expression of interest received from a secondary school in Bury. Members of the Exec Team have met SLT and Governors, and there has also been a visit to PRS. A final decision will be taken at their Governing Body meeting in March.</p> <p>The Trust have been appointed to do some intensive school to school support with a local secondary school. The support will be for 5 terms and will include Trust Director support, curriculum and pedagogy. There is an initial meeting taking place the day after this meeting. Trustees were informed that it would not be possible to engage with the school if the Head, CEO and SLT were not onboard with the process. An update on the progress will be given at the next meeting of the Trust Board.</p> <p>The Trust have been fortunate to be appointed to support other schools as part of the RISE project.</p> <p>Trustees received an update on the progress of a local primary school expressing an interest in joining the Trust. There is no further progress to report currently as the school are currently viewing five</p>	LM
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			<p>different Trusts. Trustees will be updated as to any progress at a future meeting.</p> <p>Q – What is the Ofsted rating of the school? A – Good.</p> <p>A second local primary school have also expressed an interest in joining the Trust and members of the Exec Team have recently met with Governors. Leaders were very impressed with the Head of School, but the school is a one form entry and pupil numbers are of a concern. A long discussion took place around the implications of the school joining the Trust, alongside the benefits of the opportunities and experience this would bring. Permission is sought from Trustees today to commence formal due diligence on the school to allow a decision to be made in the future on the school joining the Trust.</p> <p>Q – It is a challenge as the school is a single form entry, what will the benefits be? A – We would be able to strengthen SLT capacity within the primary sector of the Trust. It would also mean that if any other local schools joined there would be the opportunity to optimise economies of scale.</p> <p>Q – Is there capacity for this school to become two form entry in the future? A – No, the building is only sufficient to allow one form entry.</p> <p>Q- How well do we know the Head of School and Deputy if we have witnessed in their own school but not yet seen within the Trust? How are we assured? A – There has already been some professional learning done with CHPS, some peer to peer work and also some other collaborative projects. The due diligence process allows us to look at everything in more details, and this also includes the SLT.</p> <p>Trustees had a long in-depth discussion regarding all aspects of the information known about the school to date, and the benefits of what the school joining would bring to the Trust.</p> <p>WM commented that as part of the due diligence process there would need to be a full review of the Health and Safety of the school building.</p> <p>SMe commented he could see the benefits of the</p>
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			<p>school joining the Trust, but would also need to be reassured as to the cost impact and the financial implications this would mean and the associated risks. This information would allow to make a more informed choice.</p> <p>SMc agreed that it was a concern the school was one form entry and would like to know what the impact of this would be. Would it still be possible to do economies of scale if the other local school who had expressed an interest joined another Trust.</p> <p>DK commented that it was necessary to assess the school on a standalone basis, including the costs relating to the school joining and the fact it is already a feeder school for CHHS. The school joining would need to be quantified in financial costs.</p> <p>Catchment area for feeder schools to CHHS was discussed, and the fact that a number of children in the schools do not get a place. The catchment area for CHHS means the school does not necessarily serve its local community, and that some parents move to the independent sector.</p> <p>MV commented that as part of the due diligence process there needs to be reassurance for both the Exec Team and Trustees of how it will work financially. There are two routes of progression, to see the impact financially, and to get to know the school and staff more to understand how they will fit into the Trust and the benefits this will bring. Desktop due diligence done to date looks positive but there now needs to be more in-depth due diligence undertaken. CN, SME and SMC agreed to be a part of the sub group to complete the initial review on behalf of the Trust Board.</p> <p>Q – Does the Trust have an understanding of the talent in term of schools joining in the future? A – Not formally, there are a limited number of schools available who have not already joined a Trust.</p> <p>It was discussed that due diligence is a two-way process and that any school expressing an interest in joining the Trust should do their own due diligence.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> moving forward with due diligence on the local primary school.</p>
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		Trust Board Committee Chair updates	<p><u>AGM</u> CN gave Trustees a verbal overview of the meeting which had taken place on 15th December 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All appointed Members were present • It was noted that T Graham had tendered his resignation in October 2025 • Audit Accounts and Annual Report for the year ended 31st August 2025 were approved by the Members • It was noted that this was the third year of the five-year appointment of Cooper Parry as external auditors • Mrs Wendy Searle was appointed as a Member • TL gave an update on the work of the Trust Board • There were no other matters arising under AOB • The next AGM will be December 2026 and a date will be confirmed in due course. 	
		Safeguarding update	<p>A safeguarding update, either verbal or written, will be an agenda item for every meeting of the Trust Board moving forward.</p> <p>DB updated Trustees on Safeguarding across the Trust schools. Trustees were previously informed that the decision had been taken to align CPOMS reporting categories in all secondary schools, and this would allow for detailed cross trust analysis. This will also be something which will be done in trust primary schools moving forward.</p> <p>Trust Director of HR is currently working on staff training under the new legislation for prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace.</p> <p>Trustees had no further questions to raise.</p>	
		Confirm Spring term census completed in all schools	WM confirmed that the Spring term census had been completed and submitted in all schools.	

		Ensure compliance with regard to each school keeping admissions and attendance registers in accordance with regulations	DB confirmed compliance with regards to admissions and attendance registers.	
		Agree plan for TBM4 (self-evaluation and strategic planning meeting)	<p>The plan for TBM4 will be delegated to the Governance Oversight and Standards committee with input from all Trustees.</p> <p>It was agreed the first part of the meeting will be matters of compliance, in line with the schedule of business, and Trustees will then undertake a self-review and look at strategic planning.</p> <p>It is planned to undertake a peer-to-peer Trust Board review with another Trust later in the year.</p> <p>Q – What will be of the most benefit for the Executive Team for the future? A – MV responded that it would be beneficial to have the external review, and to also look at the TDP to move forward.</p> <p>Q – What is the timeline for the external review? A - It is hoped this will be completed before the end of this academic year.</p> <p>GT commented it would be useful to look at what information is presented to the Board, and the progress towards the TDP, to ensure that Trustees feel they have all the information they require.</p>	

3	Educational performance and staff performance management	<p>Trust Development Plan:</p> <p>Theme: Building Trust capacity</p> <p>Priority: Sound service and financial base allows the exploration of further opportunities</p> <p>Priority: Outstanding Governance and Leadership</p> <p>Priority: Clear and effective School Improvement Strategy</p>	<p>The Trust scorecard has been updated and there are no issues to note.</p> <p>MV commented it would be useful to review the use of the scorecard moving forward, as it is seasonal due to the timings of the school year and the data available. It was noted it is difficult to audit education in the same way as other areas, as not everything is quantifiable. It is good to have the information all in one place, but there is a need to review the impact of the scorecard and its usefulness.</p> <p><u>Climate Action plan</u> Trustees noted the Climate Action plan report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report was compiled by the Trust Director of Operations.</p> <p>It is a compulsory duty to have the plan and groups in place. The report reflects the work done to date, both at trust level and individual school level.</p> <p>Trustees were pleased to receive the report and SMC requested the report to be presented and reviewed in further detail at the next meeting of the Finance and Resources committee.</p> <p>Q – Where are we up to in comparison with other trusts? A – We are a large company with a large carbon footprint. Some trusts are bigger than others so it is difficult to compare.</p> <p>We are having a big push to ensure that our students are aware of the green careers that are available to them.</p> <p>Trustees noted that there were solar panels being installed at Laurus Ryecroft, and that they were also part of the new building at Laurus Grace.</p> <p>Q – Do we get any benefit in the recruitment of staff with the action plan, or any wider benefits? A – Not at present. There is currently more work being done with the students.</p> <p>Trustees offered thanks to the Trust Director of Operations for the comprehensive report.</p>	WM
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		<p>Performance Management arrangements</p>	<p>Trustees discussed the Performance Management arrangements for teachers, and the importance of the biggest focus being on them being able to improve. As well as being able to celebrate achievements, the reviews identify what is needed to be worked on to be able to get better, and what support is required to do so.</p> <p>The process has been developed over time and a decision was taken to be less fixed in intention and to move the focus on how to improve as a professional.</p> <p>Performance Management reviews are completed in October of each year, with an additional mid-year review completed in January. At this point pathways can be updated. The final review of the year takes place in the summer term.</p> <p>The review cycle will also be moved to an electronic system next year, which will allow for analysis across departments. Trustees were informed the review system works well, and that it was important to note that staff do get better.</p> <p>Trustees were informed that there is a similar process for support staff, but that this follows a different timescale.</p> <p>Q – Is it a hard balance to link performance to career development?</p> <p>A – The trade unions do challenge on PRP for SLT, but is it the one thing we insist on retaining. It is very important that as leaders we are held accountable. Underperformance is addressed in other areas, but it is definitely important to retain for SLT.</p>	
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4	AOB		<p>WM requested Trustee approval for works at HGHS on the fire alarm to be completed. Work has been completed in phases over time and this work is for the West building and the Sports Centre.</p> <p>Approval is sought for commitment of £178k following a process of obtaining 3 quotations for the work. Trustees were informed this was an 8-week project and required premium time working to allow the Sports Centre to remain open. The work is a health and safety priority.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the capital spend of £178k on the planned works at HGHS.</p>	
5	Meeting dates	Meeting dates	<p>Wednesday 6th May 2026 at 10.00am</p> <p>Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 10.00am</p>	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes	
Trustees were updated on the changes to the Governance Handbook	
Admission policies for 2027-2028 were approved for Laurus Cheadle Hulme and Cheadle Hulme Primary School	
Trustees gave verbal updates on their link visits	
DW presented trust performance tables	
LM updated on growth opportunities and school to school support	
CN gave a verbal update of the AGM meeting which had taken place in December 2025	
DB gave a safeguarding update	
Trustees approved due diligence to commence on a primary school who had expressed an interest in joining the Trust	
WM confirmed the Spring term census had been completed in all schools	
DB confirmed compliance with admissions and attendance registers	
Climate Action plan was reviewed by Trustees	
DB updated Trustees on the Performance Management arrangements	
Trustees gave approval for £178k essential works to the fire alarm at HGHS	

Meeting closed at 12.00



T Little
Chair of Trust Board
06.05.2026