

Minutes

UTC Oxfordshire Trust



Meeting:	UTC Oxfordshire Trust Board
Location:	UTC Oxfordshire
Date and time:	Wednesday 19 th October 2016
Chair:	Lee Nicholls
Attendees:	Lee Nicholls (Chair); Philip Waddup (Vice Chair); Mark Bodeker; Owain Johns; Zoe Pooley; Grace Thompson; Steve Houseman;
In attendance:	Punam Kapoor (Group Finance Business Partner, Activate Learning) Sue Lea Vice Principal, UTC Oxfordshire Heledd Walker (Group Compliance Administrator, Activate Learning)

1. Apologies for absence

Alex Birkhead, Paul Hogg, David Martin.

2. Declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality

Lee Nicholls and Philip Waddup, work for Activate Learning, the lead sponsor and provider of group services. Billy McNeil works for RM, a provider of services to UTC Oxfordshire.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 6th July 2016

The minutes of the meeting were approved

4. Matters arising

None

5. Any other business that has arisen since the circulation of the agenda

Safeguarding Policy

The governors received the updated Safeguarding policy, which was updated following new guidelines received on 5th September following recent attacks in the local area. The updates included the addition of the "Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges" September 2016 and the addition for absence procedures for what happens if a student did not turn up for school and what happens if a student is in school but fails to turn up for a lesson.

RESOLVED

To approve and adopt the revised Safeguarding policy.

To comply with the responsibility to undertake to read the policy.

6. Governance update

- a) The governors were reminded of their responsibilities to complete the training contained in the link sent out over the summer. Any outstanding certificates of completion should be sent to either Katy Whife or Heledd Walker.
- b) The board received feedback from the Steering group in relation to UTC Oxfordshire joining the Activate Learning Education Trust Multi Academy Trust. The governors had attended an optional pre-board session for any governors with outstanding questions or new questions and to carefully consider any queries that may not have already been dealt with. It was resolved that subject to the outcomes of the consultation exercise undertaken throughout October and November 2016, the Board approves, in principle, to integrate with Activate Learning Education Trust (ALET)”

The motion was proposed by Grace Thompson and seconded by Mark Bodeker.

A final resolution and decision will be made at the December meeting.

- c) The board received the letter to the academy accounting officer from Peter Lauener, Chief Executive, Education Funding Agency to all academy accounting officers. The board discussed the contents of the letter around maintaining strong financial management and governance. It was confirmed that the Whistleblowing policy should be up to date and available for all to access. The board also discussed enduring the Edubase system used is up to date with governance details.

RESOLVED

To recirculate the training link to all governors.

Governors to complete any outstanding training and return the certificates to Katy Whife katy.whife@activatelearning.ac.uk or Heledd Walker heledd.walker@activatelearning.ac.uk.

To approve in principle to integrate with Activate Learning Education Trust (ALET) with a final decision and resolution at the December meeting.

To ensure Whistleblowing Policy is up to date and adequately promoted for ease of access.

To ensure the governance details on the Department's Edubase system are up to date.

7. Finance

The Group Finance business Partner provided the board with the draft unaudited management accounts for the 12 months period to August 2016. The audit commenced on 10th October with no material adjustments being anticipated. UTC Oxfordshire made a £1k surplus for the full year to August.

The board discussed the income being £87k better than budget which was partly due to funded income being £42k above budget which included £29k relating to EFA funding for specialist equipment that cannot be capitalised. There is a shortfall of £16k for rates which has not yet been valued therefore the invoice will go through in the following year's accounts.

The non-funded income was £45k higher than budget, this includes gym income of £22k, room rental of £8k, other £13k and student contributions of £20k for minibus trips etc, however there is a shortfall of £18k for Catering income.

Governors asked questions around the Energy budgeting, they were reassured that the readings are now accurate which is partly due to the installation of energy monitoring software.

The governors requested to receive a balance sheet and were informed that during December the statutory accounts will be made available to the board.

It was confirmed that the bank balance at the end of August was £1.008k, however the VAT creditor of £738k is included in the balance.

The board discussed whether depreciation is being calculated through the current manual asset register. It was confirmed that depreciation is being deducted and the asset register is being reviewed by the auditors and will be available by the December meeting.

RESOLVED

To receive the statutory accounts and asset register.

8. Principal's report.

The board received the Principal's half termly report which gives an overview of progress towards targets.

The board discussed the September 2016 recruitment of year 10 pupils which is now just under the target of 90 at 87. Retention has improved from year 1 with only 1 student leaving showing the success of the improved recruitment strategies in place over the summer which included taster days.

It is evident that local schools have performed better in year 11 and have managed to retain students in year 11 and 12 resulting in a disappointing drop of students accepting places. The follow up telephone calls to the students who declined a place confirmed that they had decided to remain at their current school.

The governors discussed the budget implication of the reduced number of students which equates to approximately £90k. They were reassured that actions are already in place to mitigate against the impact. These include contacting the DFE about funding allocation to increase the subject factor that would result in an approximate increase of £50k; Achieve savings on fixed and variable costs; generate further income from lettings and partnerships. Focus on the retention of current year 11 students.

At this point in the year it is likely that the reduced number of students along with the small surplus contingency available will not be enough to cover the reduction in budget. To maintain the quality of outcomes and current progress, it may be required to enter into a licensed deficit. The early warning and transparency given was noted and the actions already in place should mitigate.

Discussions moved to the main areas of the report. The UTC is now fully staffed to deliver the curriculum, with a number of strong appointments. Leadership is at capacity and there is demand in English, therefore additional capacity is being recruited in this area.

The board were informed that there are currently 8 young carers who have made their situation known to the Young Carer Lead, Debbi Reay who has does a fantastic job in supporting these carers and ensuring they have opportunities to share any issues they have and go home if required. A residential trip was organized last year and there is an upcoming charity bike ride in the pipeline.

9. Quality Assurance.

The board received the Development plan for 2016/17, year 2 priorities which is an evolving document. The focus of the leadership team will become more strategic and less operational.

The discussions focused around the Personal development, Behaviour and Welfare area. Feedback would be received at the next meeting from the link governors Zoe Pooley and Grace Thompson.

RESOLVED

To receive feedback at the next meeting from Zoe Pooley and Grace Thompson, link governors for the Personal development, Behaviour and Welfare area of the development plan.

10. Pay Committee

Three volunteers were requested from the board to join the pay committee suggested to take place during the week commencing 31st October.

Questions were raised around the responsibilities of the governing body which was confirmed to support and approve the recommendations of the principle to pay staff through the appraisal process. The principal will propose the recommendations and the governors make sure this is a fair process. The governors questioned whether the award had been factored into the budget, it was confirmed that a lump sum for progression had been budgeted.

RESOLVED

Mark Bodeker and Zoe Pooley would attend a pay committee on Friday 4th November at the UTC Oxfordshire.

11. Next Meeting:

Wednesday 7th December 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zoe Pooley', written in a cursive style.