

Minutes of the Board meeting 23.1 held on Tuesday 28 November 2023

Room A203, Long Road SFC, Cambridge

Present: Gerry Bolton (Corporation Chair), Gary Bourton, Yolanda Botham (Principal), Ishan Cader, Chris Cope, Alex Curnow, Abby Futter, Sophie Harrison, Rob Howes, Gemma Long, Hugo Macey, Lily-Kate McCormack, Melissa Mlauzi, Jenny O'Hare, Alex Pryce, Sebastian Rasinger, Gavin Sheffield and Alex Wong

In attendance: Steve Dann (Vice Principal), and Charlotte Hemmins (Finance Director)

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

Ref **Actions:**

23.X.1 Apologies for absence

None had been received by the Clerk. The Corporation Chair welcomed the newly elected student Governor, Melissa Mlauzi, whose elected appointment had been ratified at the 23.1 Board meeting in October. As another new appointment would be made under agenda item 3 the Corporation members introduced themselves.

23.X.2 Declarations of Interest

The senior post holders and Clerk to the Corporation declared an interest in the academisation matters on the agenda.

23.X.3 Board appointments

Teaching Staff Governor. The written paper outlined the recent election and results for the office of teaching staff Governor. The meeting noted that Paul Andrew had come to the end of his 4-year term of office in October, and wished to record a note of thanks for his service. The Board was asked to appoint the newly elected Governor.

The Board formally ratified the elected appointment of Gavin Sheffield as teaching Staff Governor for a term of 4 years to 15 November 2027.

23.X.4 Update on MAT progress since the October 2023 Board meeting

The Corporation Chair introduced this agenda item by explaining that although no decisions would be needed at this meeting, this was an opportunity to talk about the MAT application and its progress in great detail.

The Chair had taken time already to talk individually with Corporation members but he gave a brief overview of the discussions so far with the other SFC involved. He then handed over to the Principal.

The Principal explained that this meeting would provide opportunity for a shared understanding of the current situation and next steps, before the December Board would need to approve some processes, including the MAT application.

The Corporation Vice Chair and AWG Chair gave an overview of the various draft MAT documents that had been developed in draft with the MAT partner. These had been shared with the Corporation, along with information on other documents (soft due diligence). The all-Staff Governor explained that performance data had also been shared for both Colleges. The data, he explained, showed where performance differed and where each College was either stronger or weaker in some subject outcomes. The Finance Director spoke about the financial position of the MAT partner touching on financial surpluses, income, staff costs, contingency, cash balances, risk profile, the estate, governance standards and safeguarding.

A Governor asked a question about risks specific to one organisation within a MAT, and another question about managing finances within a MAT.

In response to a question about the partners' enthusiasm to co-create a MAT, the Principal explained that keenness from the partner was partly due to the positive relationship forged over the last two years as CENBASE Colleges.

23.X.5 Proposed MAT organisational structure

Turning to the progress to co create the MAT, the Principal explained that the new organisation still needed a chosen name. Whilst students will naturally choose the SFC they want to go to, the name was important, as regulators and other stakeholders would identify the MAT by its given name.

The slides that followed touched on 16-19 funding, draft organisational structure, key roles, and timeframe. Formal consultation and formal due diligence was also inbuilt into the MAT application/development process

The meeting touched on the MAT at member level, Trust Board level, and committees, and then local governing bodies (LGBs). The proposed structure of the MAT would need to be substantiated through the MAT application, and the Principal explained that now was the time to help shape the structure of the new organisation. The meeting discussed other similar models of 16-19 academies in other parts of the UK.

Alex Pryce joined the meeting at 5.59pm.

A Governor, referring to page 17 in the scheme of delegation, asked what was the key function of curriculum committees. The Principal explained that the MAT may choose to delegate as much as possible, within the framework of the articles of association, without losing oversight. Trust Boards consider constituent organisation (student) progress at every meeting. Curriculum could be determined at LGB level, with perhaps some common KPIs for both institutions. Shared vision for the MAT would be important. Another Governor commented that the LGB would need to be active and encompass student and parent voice.

The meeting considered in detail the scheme of delegation and the decision matrix, and one Governor suggested that the Trust Board could introduce change after creation. It was noted that the documents would be subject to annual review.

The meeting considered the feedback from DfE on the draft application. Advice had been received about creating a shadow Trust Board, which would have no formal powers until the MAT was created. The possible date for the shadow Board to be established was 1 March 2024.

Key positions such as CEO (separate role from College Principal), and CFO were discussed briefly, and then formal due diligence, and the timeline for these key appointments within Tupe regulations.

A Governor asked a question about the scope of formal due diligence and the Principal explained that all documents would be shared, including the due diligence and the DfE documents. She mentioned that a separate risk register for the MAT project would be created once the application has been approved. A project lead would be needed in the early new year.

23.X.6 Long Road LGB

This was discussed as part of agenda item 5.

23.X.7 Authorisations for the December 2023 Board

The Board was reminded about the minimum decisions it would need to make in December 2023 to do with the MAT application. These would not only be as part of the legal processes but also best practice.

- Progression with partner, and proposed key Governor names for Trust Board & Local Governing Body for MAT application

Ref**Actions:**

- Board authorisation to progress with MAT application, for submission in January 2024
- Engagement of formal due diligence against scope
- Legal guidance sought and formal discussions with senior staff impacted.

23.X.8 Date of next meeting

23.2 Tuesday 12 December 2023. The meeting closed at 6.48pm and the staff and students left.