Minutes of the meeting of the **Governing Board** of **Wellacre Technology Academy**, held at the School on 27 March 2024 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr T Fredrickson
Mrs L Henry
Ms L Hepple-Stokes
Mr C Hinchcliffe
Mrs J O'Connor
Mrs J Sharrock (Principal)
Mr A Young (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss P Bailey (Business Director)
Mr H Hockin (Clerk, Trust GS)

1. APOLOGIES & ATTENDANCE

Apologies for absence were received for Cllr S Procter, Mrs M Radhakrishnan, Ms H Rayson, Mr S Russell and Mrs J Thirkill.

Resolved: ***That the apologies for absence for Cllr S Procter, Mrs M Radhakrishnan, Ms H Rayson, Mr S Russell and Mrs J Thirkill be accepted and Mr McGrattan's absence be noted.***

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

There were no declarations of conflict of interest, direct or indirect pecuniary interest by members of the Board in respect of any item on the agenda.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2023

Resolved: ***That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2023 be approved as a correct record.***

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

i) **Parent Lunch Accounts**

It was confirmed that Miss Bailey had addressed the Action, the matter had been resolved and a new procedure adopted.

5. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Resolved: That the Principal's Report be received and noted.

6. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

i) **School Improvement Overview**

It was noted the period covered by the School Improvement Plan will come to an end in the next few months. The Principal is aiming to incorporate aspects of the Ofsted Report recommendations into the new SIP.

ii) **Staffing**

An example of CPD was shared and a staffing update provided. An advert is due to be published for an IT vacancy.

iii) **Student Voice**

A Manchester-wide survey was presented, it was noted the feedback had been very positive. There was significant evidence that students scored well in multiple areas, and the Principal reported no concerns. A Workshop is planned for Year 10 to address some identified issues such as increasing daily physical exercise.

iv) **Staff Voice**

41 responses had been received. The Principal was encouraged by the feedback, with no significant concerns, but some areas for discussion. Pupil behaviour will be considered. It was noted the survey was not anonymous.

v) **Training on Behaviour**

The Principal explained recent staff training on ADHD and behaviours as well as adaptations made and recording of incidents. Staff had received clarification, and there had been no change in Policy.

vi) **Curriculum**

The Principal advised some departments are well developed in their curriculum journey, and were implementing changes. Those that were behind were due to increased workloads.

vii) **School Promotion & Achievements**

It was noted the School Newsletter is available and social media interactions are good. There was sense of community and sharing of achievements.

The Principal reported the School had won FFT Award for top 25% Attendance in Autumn term.

viii) **Safeguarding**

The Principal explained collaboration with Trafford Team Together, and excellent work done with families. It was noted that many of the support agencies young people are referred to have backlogs and waiting lists which means impact is limited.

Q: What type of Professionals are involved?
Examples were provided. The aim is to facilitate different ways of looking at issues by professionals and voluntary organisations. Demand for services has increased and exceeds resources and staff capacity.

The Principal advised 4 new cases were going to the assessment panel that month.

The committee felt the Safeguarding practices and arrangements at the School were good.

ix) **Numbers on roll**

It was suggested numbers are looking positive. The Budget forecast was based on the projection of 150 per year. A Migration Report was presented to illustrate where students were going. There had been thirty leavers and the reasons for leaving were explained.

x) **National Offer Day**

On 1 March, School had been allocated 166 students, including nine EHCP (only had three last year).

The Local Authority was keen that Parents named the Local School for EHCP children. Only four students had been allocated who had not named Wellacre as an option which was much lower than last year.

The Principal showed postcode analysis of pupils allocated places. It was noted a good proportion were from local M41 area. The transition programme is underway and transition tours had taken place, which had been well attended.

xi) **Staff Welfare**

The Principal provided an update. It was noted it had been a difficult term for absences.

7. **DRAFT BOARD DIVERSITY REPORT**

Trustees had discussed whether to publish the Report. It was noted some Governors had not completed the Personal details on GovernorHub so the Report did not provide an accurate representation of the Board.

Q: What was the benefit of publishing a report?
It is part of showing a commitment to diversity across the organisation. The Principal explained the importance of the Board considering diversity when succession planning and appointing new Governors.

Resolved: That the Board Diversity Report be noted but not published at the current time.

8. **BUSINESS DIRECTOR REPORT**

i) **Finance Report & Monthly Management Accounts**

It was noted that the Board/Chair receive monthly management accounts. MMAs are uploaded to GovernorHub, and relevant monthly reports are discussed at Resources Committee meetings.

ii) **Cyber Security**

It was noted a Report is produced annually. The School has good systems in place, DfE requirements are being met and there had been no incidents. Filtering and monitoring checks were carried out every month. Licences were in place, and there were plans to carry out work on emails. School had cybersecurity audit previous year.

iii) **SRMAC**

The Business Director advised the submission had been returned to ESFA in line with the deadline.

iv) **Risk Register**

It was noted the Risk register is regularly monitored, with new risk added linked to energy prices, but prices had been negotiated at lower than previous cost.

9. **LAND SALE**

The current situation was clarified. The Principal had been assured the Academy is closer to securing a formal offer. However, the proposal was far removed from the initial agreement and are keen to review once received. The initial plan was to sell land (next to the eco-centre, behind Delamere and next to astroturf).

The state of the astroturf was a factor in the case for sale, but bookings remained healthy. It had been refurbished last summer. Surveys and visits had been completed. There had been a suggestion to sell a bigger piece of land. The Principal clarified that Brookhouse Group, had first refusal on land.

Trustees discussed the matter and it was suggested that careful consideration be given to the needs of the School as part of a re-consideration.

The Chair advised it remains vital not to lose any provision and any agreement must be to the advantage of the School provision.

The School had provided feedback and remains open to further discussions.

Resolved: That the Land Sale update be received and noted.

9. **MULTI ACADEMY TRUSTS CONSIDERATIONS**

The Principal provided an update. Details were provided in pack and on screen. Consideration is being given to next steps.

The Principal advised of the Government policy for all Schools to be in MATs. Recent Guidance 'Commissioning High Quality Trusts, July 2023' was referred to. It had been suggested that DfE may be reluctant to approve new MATs in the area as there are already a high number locally.

Logistics and cost of due diligence were discussed. It was noted that the recent Ofsted judgement may result in additional pressure for the School to join a MAT to have access to additional support and capacity to improve.

The Principal clarified the Ofsted monitoring schedule. Trustees noted that two successive RI judgements could result in enforced conversion and the School would be directed to a MAT.

There was a discussion regarding the key considerations and the local education landscape.

It was suggested Trustees feedback opinions so appropriate conversations can take place to assess options and opportunities.

Trustees considered the capacity of the Leadership team and Trustees to review options, research and consider MATs and implement conversion.

It was suggested that the views of Parents and Staff be sought, however concern was expressed regarding perceptions of uncertainty. It was noted that stakeholder consultation would form part of any conversion process however Trustees must have a clear plan on which to consult.

Resolved: ***That the Multi Academy Trust update be received and noted, and next steps considered.***

10. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

i) **Curriculum & Standards Committee (10 January 2024)**

The Chair gave a summary of the key issues addressed at the last meeting.

Resolved: ***That the minutes of the Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting held on 10 January 2024 be received and noted.***

ii) **Behaviour, Attitudes & Personal Development Committee (24 January 2024)**

A Trustee provided an update on the last meeting. There had been discussion on Hive and lunchtime usage, and Governor visits were reviewed.

It had been a positive meeting and School was doing well on attendance (in top 20% nationally). Autism programme was discussed and Year 7 increase that could pose additional challenges. The Chair had visited the Hive and was very impressed.

Resolved: ***That the minutes of the Behaviour, Attitudes & Personal Development Committee meeting held on 24 January 2024 be received and noted.***

iii) **Resources Committee (23 March 2024)**

Mr Hinchcliffe provided an update. Pay progression was discussed, and situation with three long-term supply teachers. Energy contract negotiation and CCTV updates were provided, plus grounds maintenance, which had seen £10K saving on previous year. Trustees were made aware of a situation that led to cost saving. The Site Managers were thanked.

Miss Bailey explained the plan was for the Budget to balance by 2025/26. Trustees discussed factors which may impact the budget. It was noted the indicative figure from the LA included a £6K discrepancy in minimum funding guarantee.

Resolved: ***That the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 23 March 2024 be received and noted.***

iv) **Members AGM**

The Chair provided an update on membership and the meeting. Members had discussed the Ofsted Inspection and the Schools vulnerability to being forced to join a MAT. The Chair had updated Members on Governance structures and the Principal's appraisal had been signed off.

Resolved: ***That the Members AGM update be received and noted.***

11. **APPOINTMENT OF RECENTLY APPOINTED GOVERNORS TO COMMITTEES**

Resolved:

- ***i)*** ***That Mrs L Hepple-Stokes be appointed to the Resources Committee***
- ***ii)*** ***That Mr O McGrattan be appointed to the Behaviour & Personal Development Committee***
- ***iii)*** ***That Mrs J Thirkill be appointed to the Curriculum Committee.***

12. **POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

The Principal advised there had been no significant changes. Any amends made were highlighted.

Resolved:

- ***i)*** ***That the Procedure for Election of Parent Governors be noted and adopted***
- ***ii)*** ***That the Procedure for Election of Staff Governors be noted and adopted***
- ***iii)*** ***That the CEIAG Policy and Provider Statement be approved.***
- ***iv)*** ***That the Infection Control Policy be approved.***

13. **NOTICES FROM THE CLERK**

Resolved:

- ***i)*** ***That the Trust GS Spring 2024 Newsletter, The Clerks Post, including Governor Training details be received and noted.***
- ***ii)*** ***That the publication of updated guidance Working together to Safeguard Children (Dec 2023) be noted.***

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to discuss.

15. **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Resolved: ***That the following item be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting.***

- ***i)*** ***MAT Update***

16. **ACTION POINTS**

Resolved: ***That the following Action arising from the meeting be noted.***
i) Governors to feedback on MAT and next steps.

17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved: ***That the next meeting of the Governing Board be held at the School on 10 July 2024 at 5 p.m.***

The meeting closed at 6.55 p.m.

Chair of Governing Board ………………………………………

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