RICHARD HUISH TRUST
BOARD MEETING

DATE 2024 at 5.00pm

Room M5 and via MS Teams, Richard Huish College

Directors Present: Jade Renville (Chair)
Catherine Christie (Vice Chair)
Tim Duffen
Clare Greenslade
Olivia Salaman
John Abbott (CEO)

In attendance: Steve Chattell (CPO)
Richard Anderson (Director of IT & Facilities)
Roz Abbott (MIS Manager)

Clerk: Helen Wells (Governance Specialist)

Directors met prior to the meeting and received a safeguarding update from Matt Nolan (Designated Safeguarding Lead), a recorded version will be made available to directors not in attendance.

MINUTES

		Action
RHT 24/01	**1. MEETING FORMALITIES** **1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence** The chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. There were apologies for absence from Dan Maycock, Dominic Lynch, Pat Flaherty, Victoria Harrison and Paul Lonsdale (CFO).	
RHT 24/02	**1.2 Minutes of the last meeting** The minutes of the last meeting held on 15th July 2024 were agreed as an accurate record, noting one amendment to ensure the appointments of committee chairs were all included. The Chair agreed to her electronic signature being used to sign them off once the amendment had been made.	
RHT 24/03	**1.3 Matters arising** Directors discussed the matters arising paper and agreed they were either all completed or were satisfied they were in progress and had been brought forward to this meeting or a relevant committee.	
RHT 24/04	**1.4 Declarations of interest** Directors confirmed that the summary declarations of interest for publication on the website were accurate, with Catherine Christie noting an amendment to be made, no declarations of interest were declared for this meeting.	

Signed:……*Jade Renville*…………………………………………….. Date:…5th December 2024………………………..

2. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

2.1 Strategic update

RHT 24/05 The chair introduced the item, summarising the wider overview of Huish and the specific view of directors regarding the position of Pyrland School, noting that the board had planned to have a strategic discussion about the future of Pyrland, in light of the summer 2024 results. She highlighted that the political position had changed due to the new government coming into power, shifting the focus about how the school is expected to improve. That change, coupled with the improved results now helps give more understanding to directors about the impact Huish is having and could have upon the school. She added that whilst there has been a significant focus on Pyrland, it is important for directors to maintain an overarching focus on all academies within Huish.

RHT 24/06 The CEO summarised key points from the paper circulated to directors prior to the meeting, providing additional contextual information including the position of Ofsted, the Regional Director (RD) and the performance of other parts of Huish notably the college where the results are exceptional this year. The results at Pyrland have improved, demonstrating that the predictions made by staff are much more accurate, this gives a high level of assurance about the capability of the leadership team. The results, whilst improved, still have room to improve further. The primary data remains strong and is likely to be within the top 25% of primary performance overall.

RHT 24/07 The CEO noted that there has been a recent development with some vocational sixth form level qualifications that were going to be unfunded in 2025-26 that was predicted to have a significant impact on a large number of students, but this has now been reneged upon.

RHT 24/08 Directors discussed the journey that Pyrland has been on with the CEO summarising the key points of the journey and the considerations directors have given about Pyrland's future over time. At present there is a positive trajectory, invoking a level of confidence, in the academic standards at the school. Directors noted there has been a strategic impact on Huish, restricting its ability to grow as a trust. Directors explored what the new approach from the RD may look like with the latest notification of 'improvement support' that Huish has been recently notified of.

RHT 24/09 **What can be demonstrated about the improvements coming through the school, aside from published outcomes? What metrics can be used to evidence improvements more widely?**
Pyrland operates the same quality management programme used across the trust. The key indicators are likely to be behaviour and attendance and are two of three priorities for Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) this year and will remain lines of investigation for Ofsted inspections. Both areas are a challenge for the school but there is scope, particularly with behaviour, to make positive changes.

RHT 24/10 **How are the leadership team being supported and how is this measured?**
There has been a lot of work to establish and maintain an effective leadership structure. Measuring the impact of this in metrics is difficult, but there are evaluations that are undertaken. Expectations of middle leaders responsible for the curriculum are now clearly defined and communicated following changes in leadership at the school.

RHT 24/11 **How much support does RHC currently give the school, could this help aid further improvements?**
The CEO described how the use of the Joint Practice Development (JPD) approach is being used as a vehicle to deliver powerful and impactful change at the college, demonstrated most recently by the outstanding set of results this summer. The effectiveness of working with a high performing school is complex and has repeatedly already failed to make inroads into

improving Pyrland. This is the fourth pairing with a high performing school for Pyrland with previous attempts over many years having little to no impact. It is anticipated, based on evidence, that the JPD approach underpins a long-term cultural change for which there are no short cuts but the impact is profound over time. However, it is difficult to reconcile when shorter term targets are needing to be met.

RHT 24/12 **Is there any information or support needed ahead of the RD meeting?**
It is hoped that alongside the approach to improvement they have to implement that they may view the opportunity to trial JPD at the school as a welcome suggestion to aid improvement.

RHT 24/13 Directors discussed their longer-term strategic view for Pyrland, directors agreed that unless there is clear evidence that the school would be better re-brokered to another provider then Huish will remain committed to working to support its success. It will be important to continue to monitor the data coming from the school to ensure that overall it continues to demonstrate a positive trajectory.

RHT 24/14 **Has there been any formal communication with the diocese?**
There has been some dialogue via the foundation director and some communication about data. Directors discussed the importance of having contextualised data in any wider strategic conversations.

RHT 24/15 **What is the situation with the articles of association?**
The articles are due to be reviewed but this was planned to happen to coincide with Huish growing last time, however the latest model articles at the time were not adopted as they give the diocese the power to veto the decision when the trust appoints a new CEO, directors at the time felt this was not appropriate.

RHT 24/16 Directors thanked the CEO for the report, noting the exceptional results achieved by the college and noted the other updates it contains.

The chair summarised the key areas directors had discussed:

RHT 24/17
1) Recognition of report and wider achievements by directors.
2) Continue to monitor progress through oversight reports with an annual review meeting in September where the recent outcomes could be considered.
3) The importance of tracking and monitoring quality and progress.
4) How to monitor improvement and progress at Pyrland to continue to provide assurance to the board, in addition to wider quality improvement across all the organisation. The CEO noted that Richard Gill will continue to provide support for quality improvement at Pyrland. Directors agreed the higher focus on Pyrland needs to be brought back into the round more to give a wider focus across all schools at the same level of detail.
5) Directors agreed they will respond to the RD's most recent communication.
6) To continue to develop relationships and connections with key stakeholders, including the RD, to understand what the new support framework looks like.

RESOLVED: Directors agreed that they remain committed to Pyrland School remaining part of Huish and to support continued improvements.

RHT 24/18 **2.2 Equality monitoring update**
The CPO summarised the background to the current equality objectives for Huish. The current objectives have been in place for a year. The CPO highlighted how the different approaches from the schools give an insight into the richness of diversity being embraced. Directors commented on the quality and usefulness of the briefing document. Schools are working hard to address equality, but not purely because of the document, but because it is the right thing

to do. Directors discussed that they are working well to achieve objectives but that there is opportunity for improvement in some areas.

RHT 24/19 **Do the headteachers consider this at their forums?**
Not formally but there is opportunity to share practice.

RHT 24/20 **It is notable there is no highlight around the practising of CofE approaches at Pyrland, compared to the other CofE school.**
Directors agreed it would be helpful to see further detail about how the school embraces its Church of England roots and connections. The CEO noted that there had been a recent visit from Bishop Michael to Pyrland which was extremely positive. Directors discussed whether the fact that it is a church school is understood or recognised within its local community.

ACTION: Make the CofE approach more explicit in the Pyrland section of the Equality & Diversity monitoring update. **CPO**

Directors agreed they feel assured by the update provided on equality monitoring.

3. FINANCIAL MATTERS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR INTERNAL CONTROL

RHT 24/21 **3.1 Oversight report including Management Accounts for July and August 2024**
The CEO summarised that schools are positioned where they were expected to be but there are emerging concerns about the financial position of one school. Directors noted points in the report previously circulated. The KPI data will be provided on around a half termly basis within the wider oversight report.

RHT 24/22 **Projects in some schools have come in over budget during the summer, is there money to pay for this?**
Yes, the budgets will balance in these areas.

RHT 24/23 **3.2 Strategic risk register - final review 2023/2024**
The chair highlighted that the register was scrutinised at the recent Audit & Risk (A&R) Committee meeting and that it will be reviewed again to update it to reflect the changes around Pyrland School. A new register be produced for the current year, based on the previous year and will be monitored with contributions and insight from academies about areas of risk affecting them.

RHT 24/24 **3.3 Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) including budget update**
The F&GP Chair noted that the F&GP committee will look at the final position for the year and will meet with the A&R committee and auditors in November.

4. GOVERNANCE AND PEOPLE

RHT 24/25 **4.1 Teachers' pay award proposal**
The CFO noted it has been well publicised teachers are highly likely to receive a 5.5% pay increase, subject to a number of actions that need to be met internally. The board need to approve pay awards for teachers at this point to ensure the pay increase is able to be reflected in their December payslips.

RESOLVED: Directors agreed a 5.5% pay increase for teachers within the school, subject to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions being published as expected in due course.

Signed:……*Jade Renville*……………………………………….. Date:…5th December 2024…………………………

ACTION: Confirm to the board if there are any unanticipated changes to the 5.5% pay increase for teachers position as quickly as possible. **CPO**

RHT 24/26 The CPO briefed directors on differences for college teaching staff and the complexities of this being agreed nationally; academised 6th forms will receive government funding for pay rises whereas those who have not academised will not. This needs to be resolved before any pay rises in the 6th form sector are permitted and currently involves legal action by the Sixth Form College Association (SFCA) against the government.

RHT 24/27 Support staff pay rise is subject to collective bargaining and proposed figures are still being negotiated.

4.2 LGB Chair and Governor appointments and updates

RHT 24/28 Directors noted the updates in the accompanying paper. Directors agreed it would be helpful to have an overview periodically of all governors, including an overview of changes and vacancies for each local board.

RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED and RATIFIED governor appointments as detailed in the supporting paper.

ACTION: Update directors periodically regarding the current status of governor appointments, resignations and changes at local boards. **Clerk**

RHT 24/29 **4.3 Attendance of directors at LGB meetings**

The Governance Specialist outlined the purpose of advising directors of their role and approach to attending future local governing board meetings, considering the context of additional oversight directors had undertaken the previous year for Pyrland. The advised approach for attending any future LGB was outlined in the accompanying paper, with directors attending on an adhoc basis as observers only, with the intention to only build relationships and find out more about the local governing body and school. Notification should be given to the Governance Specialist of their attendance so the LGB and clerk are aware in advance and they can be included when papers are sent out. Directors agreed it is a useful guidance note and that it should be shared with directors as a reminder.

ACTION: Share the guidance note about directors attending LGB meetings with all directors. **Clerk**

RHT 24/30 **4.4 Mandatory training overview for directors and governors**

Directors noted the training overview and need to complete the required training and declarations in a timely way on Smartlog.

5. MINUTES

RHT 24/31 **5.1 Minutes from recent Trust Board Committees**

Directors noted the recent minutes from the Trust Board Committees.

RHT 24/32 **5.2 Minutes from recent Local Governing Boards**

Directors noted the minutes from recent LGB meetings.

6. POLICIES AND OTHER MATTERS OF NOTE – all approved.

RHT 24/33 **6.1 Policy summary update**

Directors noted the update.

RHT 24/34 **6.2 Complaints Policy (and toolkit)**

RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Complaints Policy

Signed:……*Jade Renville*……………………………………….. Date:…5th December 2024…………………………

RHT 24/35 **6.3 Absence Policy and Procedure**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Absence Policy and Procedure

RHT 24/36 **6.4 Code of Conduct (Staff)**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Code of Conduct (Staff)

RHT 24/37 **6.5 Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

RHT 24/38 **6.6 Pay Policy**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Pay Policy

RHT 24/39 **6.7 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

RHT 24/40 **6.8 Low Level Concerns Policy**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Low-Level Concerns Policy

RHT 24/41 **6.9 Expenses Policy**
Directors noted that they were happy to approve the Expenses Policy subject to the section about claiming expenses for trains being re-written

ACTION: Re-write the section relating to claiming expenses for trains before publishing the revised Expenses Policy. **CPO**

RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Expenses Policy subject to the above amendment being made.

RHT 24/42 **6.10 Redundancy Policy and Procedure**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the Redundancy Policy and Procedure

RHT 24/43 **6.11 SEND Policy**
RESOLVED: Directors APPROVED the SEND Policy

RHT 24/44 **6.12 Dear Accounting Officer Letter 31.07.24**
Directors noted the DAO letter, which had been circulated to them at the time.

RHT 24/45 **6.13 Dear Accounting Officer Letter 11.09.24**
Directors noted the DAO letter, which had been circulated to them at the time.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RHT 24/46 **7.1 Any other business**
There was no other business

RHT 24/47 **7.2 Consideration of confidential content of the minutes**
There were no confidential items for the minutes.

RHT 24/48 **7.3 Agenda for next meeting**
Directors noted the agenda.

RHT 24/49 **7.4 Next meeting dates**
Directors noted the next meeting dates.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.55pm

Signed:……*Jade Renville*……………………………………….. Date:…5th December 2024…………………………