

## Board of The Mead Educational Trust

### DRAFT Minutes of the meeting held online on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 5.30pm

#### Present

Gemma Bhagalia (until item 470)  
Kate Foster (from item 467)  
Tony Glover (Chair)  
Kirsty Holt  
Tina Jivraj  
Kajal Joshi (from item 466)

Hiten Mehta  
Hetal Parmar (Vice-Chair)  
Jerry Robinson  
Carolyn Robson, CEO  
Kasar Singh  
Lynda Valentine

#### In attendance

\* (from item 470)  
Cathy Brown\*, Director of Governance  
Lisa Cochrane, Director of People & OD  
Charlotte Johnston, Executive Assistant

Sarah Ridley\*, Deputy CEO and Director  
of Education (Primary)  
Paul Ticher, Clerk  
Dave Wyatt\*, Chief Financial Officer

#### Apologies for absence

[None]

**Action  
by**

#### 464 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, explained the order of the agenda and set out the arrangements for those who would be joining at a later stage.

#### 465 Board membership

Personal details of Kajal Joshi having been circulated in advance, the Chair proposed that she be appointed as a trustee. This was **approved** unanimously. Ms Joshi was admitted to the meeting, welcomed to the Board and congratulated on her appointment.

#### 466 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of business or pecuniary interests in any of the agenda items.

#### 467 Succession planning

[See confidential minute]

#### 468 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th December 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 were **approved** as a correct record and the Chair was **authorised** to sign them.

#### 469 Matters arising from previous minutes

[None]

[Mrs Brown, Mrs Ridley and Mr Wyatt joined the meeting]

#### 470 **Proposal: The Mead Institute for Professional Learning**

Mrs Ridley presented a proposal to create The Mead Institute for Professional Learning, which had been previously circulated. She thanked those who had contributed to the paper, including Ms Johnston.

Mrs Ridley emphasised the need for effective continuous professional development of the educational workforce, and the Trust's commitment to staff development. She reported on three other examples of multi-academy trusts that had set up this type of training provision. She outlined the proposed training content and the basis for her financial projections.

Mrs Robson supported the proposal and indicated that the Regional Schools Commissioner is also in favour of such proposals. She suggested that the proposed Institute would be an attractive proposition for the incoming CEO, and that the risks of not going ahead were substantial. In particular she noted that the Trust would be potentially losing income once the SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) programme was terminated and argued that allocating funds from the Trust's reserves to staff training would have the greatest impact.

Trustees **expressed their general support** for the proposal, and identified many benefits. The proposal was praised for being evidence-based and for strengthening local partnerships within education. A caveat was raised over the lack of firm information on the availability of finance, the fact that it had not been possible to consult the Finance Committee and other possible calls on reserves. The Board **explored** the financing in detail and it was noted that the proposed budget did not depend on revenue for the first year, although some course delivery would start in September 2022.

Mrs Robson suggested that the budget in the proposal was based on the worst case, and that there were risks in not going ahead as well as in proceeding. She was confident that there would be demand for the proposed institute's services from outside the Trust.

**Decision:** After further discussion, the Board **fully supported** the proposal and looked forward to receiving a full business plan in the near future.

The Board thanked Mrs Ridley for a thorough and helpful presentation.

[Mrs Bhagalia left the meeting during the above item]

#### 471 **Trust policies**

**Decision:** The Board **approved** the following policies:

- Pay Policy v.6.0
- Whistleblowing Policy v4.0
- School Pupil Admissions Policies

#### 472 **Governance**

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr Mehta reported that the latest management accounts show a surplus above budget, but the phasing of expenditure means that in reality the surplus is slightly better. He added that some sites were showing a deficit to date, and that these were being followed up by the Committee.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance, apologised for the meeting over-running its scheduled time, and closed the meeting at 8.00pm.

Signed:

Date:

Next meeting: Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022