

**The Heath Family (NW) MAT**  
**PART I - Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on**  
**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 8.00 am**



<p><u>Trustees Present (in person)</u>: Helen Stevenson (Chair)  <u>Trustees Present (remotely)</u>: Karl Smith, Christopher Davis, Janine Inglis, Annette Williams</p> <p><u>In Attendance</u>: David Donnelly (CEO), Sharon Black (DOTL), Paula Jones (DOQS), Craig Parkinson (DOO), Natalie Gilmore (CFO)  <u>Audit Section Only</u>: Chris Manson (Internal Audit, Beever &amp; Struthers), Philip Griffiths (External Audit, Mitchell Charlesworth)</p>		<p><u>Apologies</u>: Tony Gundersen (Trustee), Cheri Kelly (Trustee), Paula Evans (DOHR)  <u>Non attenders</u>:</p>		
		Clerk (TGM): Trish Roberts		
Items	Discussion	Action	Who	When
<b>1. Welcome, introductions &amp; apologies</b>	Ms Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting.  At the meeting Trustees noted and accepted apologies from the following Trustee/s: Mr A Gundersen. Outside of the meeting Ms C Kelly advised that she had experienced personal issues which led to her being unable to attend the meeting, and as such her apologies have also been noted in the minutes.			
<b>2. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests</b>	Trustees received a copy of the Trust's <a href="#">Register of Business Interests 2023-24</a> prior to the meeting. There were no updates reported at the meeting; Trustees also reviewed the Register against the agenda prior to the meeting and no declarations were received in respect of the agenda for this meeting.			
<b>3. To receive/ ratify PT I and PT II Minutes from THFNW Board mtg held on 19.10.23</b>	Trustees received an electronic copy of PART I and PART II minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on 19.10.23. There were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified.  <b>RESOLVE: That PART I and PART II minutes of the MAT Board meeting held on 19.10.23 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</b>	Agreed MAT Board Minutes from 19.10.23 to be formally signed	Chair	ASAP
<b>4. To receive/ ratify PT I Minutes from THFNW BFA Committee mtg held on 12.10.23</b>	Trustees received an electronic copy of PART I minutes from the Trust Board's BFA Committee meeting held on 12.10.23. BFA committee members noted that there were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified.  <b>RESOLVE: That PART I minutes of the Trust Board's BFA Committee meeting held on 12.10.23 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Committee Chair.</b>	Agreed BFA Committee Minutes 12.10.23 to be formally signed	BFA Committee Chair	ASAP
<b>5. To review Matters Arising</b>	<b>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Action Log dated 07.12.23 prior to the meeting.</b> At the meeting Trustees raised questions and Exec Officers provided answers/updates on outstanding actions in terms of matters arising from the minutes and the action log:	Feb Trust Board Meeting & Trustee Strategy Session	TGM	ASAP

<b>not included on the Agenda (to include Action Tracker)</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding / PREVENT Training / KCSIE Declarations:</b> TGM provided an update in relation to where the Trust Board was up to in relation to completing these tasks. TGM reported that those Trustees who are yet to complete Governor Safeguarding training have indicated their intentions in terms of meeting the obligation. TGM confirmed that all Trustees have completed the online PREVENT training; and that she is awaiting confirmation from four Trustees with regards KCSIE 2023 declarations. Ms Stevenson asked that all Trustees complete/confirm their KCSIE 2023 declarations as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>Trustee Strategy Session:</b> Ms Stevenson noted that both she and Mr Donnelly feel it would be good to calendar the Trustee Strategy session to take place on the same date as a Trust Board meeting; as such Ms Stevenson proposed that the February Trust Board meeting (followed by the Trust Strategy Session) takes place w/c 19.02.24. Trustees in attendance confirmed their agreement to the proposal; TGM will therefore send out a meeting poll in order to identify which date within that week would be best.</p>	meeting poll to be circulated to Trustees		
<b>6. Policy Update</b>	<p>Trustees received a tracked-change version of the draft Trustees/Governors Allowances and Expenses Policy 2023-24 prior to the meeting. At the meeting Trustees confirmed receipt of the policy and were asked if they wished to raise anything in relation to it. No issues or queries were raised and as such Trustees,</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: to approve THFNW Governors Allowances &amp; Expenses Policy</b></p>	Governors Allowances & Expenses Policy to be circulated to schools and published on the Trust's website	TGM/DOO	ASAP
<b>7. Chair's Action Report (to receive)</b>	<p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Chair's Action &amp; Governor Membership Update 07.12.23 report prior to the meeting; and content was noted at the meeting.</p> <p>There being no questions raised Trustees noted that they were happy to accept the report.</p>			
<b>8. Governance Update</b>	<p>Trustees received a copy of the Governance Update report 07.12.23 prior to the meeting. At the meeting Mrs Roberts was asked to provide any updates;</p> <p><b>Trustee Membership/Vacancies:</b> TGM updated Trustees on progress with regards current Trustee recruitment processes.</p> <p><b>Trustee Safeguarding Lead:</b> TGM noted that she will signpost the newly appointed Trustee Safeguarding Lead to any training courses that are required for this role.</p> <p><b>Safer Recruitment Training:</b> Ms Stevenson confirmed that both she and the CoG (LHS) will be booking onto one of the Safer Recruitment training courses taking place in the new year.</p> <p>There being no questions raised Trustees noted that they were happy to accept the report.</p>			
<b>9. Performance Dashboard</b>	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the Performance Dashboard (dated 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023) prior to the meeting. Mr Donnelly provided a detailed overview of the data within the report;</p>			

*Basic Data*

- *Number on Roll:* Mr Donnelly noted that the NOR figure has increased by 24; and that when you drill down into the data further, the NOR at our secondary schools has increased whilst the NOR at our primary schools has decreased. Mr Donnelly went on to note that this is cause for concern.

***Q: Given the significant NOR movement at some of our primary schools; forward planning is key in terms of stemming the flow?***

***A: Yes, we are working on this with our schools, we are focusing on marketing. There is a significant lack of children under the age of 11 in Halton, and as such all schools are vying for them to transfer to them; these low cohorts significantly impact BWP and PFP. We are managing the decline in numbers at present but it continues to be a cause for concern. Mr Donnelly also spoke about traveller communities and how the transient nature of their lifestyle can impact schools, ie they can go travelling just before census, and return later in the year and as such the children are on roll but the school will not receive funding for the children as they were not on roll at the time of census.***

***Q: HPS' pupil numbers have dropped by 32, why and what are we doing to future proof the school?***

***A: HPS' PAN is 60 but they have never reached those numbers in all the time that I've been with the Trust (2017). Also, a new housing development is currently in the process of being built, and we are hoping that HPS' pupil numbers may pick up as families move in. We are also marketing the school via the Housing Officer linked to the development. HPS' Head of School is also opening up the school to pre-school groups in order to bring families in. Knowsley have indicated that they are considering keeping with the current number of schools in the area (2 x 2 form entry, 1 x 1 form entry), and instead of building a new school as part of the development, they may look to move the 1 form entry school to a 2 form entry if required.***

***Q: We are used to fluctuating pupil numbers and it is good to see a focus on marketing, but at what point does it become a concern? Is there a threshold that we need to be mindful of?***

***A: The Trust has a 3 year forecast which takes into account birth rates and fluctuating pupil numbers in the area; as such we can see that there is growth over time, particularly in the secondary sector. However, based on concerns/discussions we can look to produce another forecast so that Trustees are assured of the position going forwards. We can then keep this updated and bring to you on a rolling programme. NG also noted that the same forecast mechanism cannot be used for all schools, ie each school's circumstances/needs are different and as such forecasts are based around these nuances.***

Mr Donnelly also noted there are 2 issues to look at when forecasting; financial stability and educational delivery (ie school viability and teaching, learning & curriculum). Trustees agreed

*[Ms Williams joined the meeting remotely at this point]*

**Q: Some of our schools can be put under additional pressures, ie transient pupils are moved into schools because they have space. Have we got a plan/strategy for teaching, learning and progress of transient pupils?**

**A: We do have support in place for all pupils, but this distinct vulnerable group is something we can look into further; it would be good to look at tracking and monitoring for this vulnerable group of pupils. This group of children have their own set of challenges, and when you look at one of our primaries, 1 out of 3 children do not begin their education at that school. There are also a lot of in-year entrants at one of our secondary schools. When a child arrives the SEND department works fast to identify the child's needs, and the ADTL (SEND) also comes into school to carry out further screening. It is about building capacity/support, and having the screening tools in place and ready to use. A lot of work does take place to ensure all children can access the curriculum, resources etc.**

Exec Officers also noted that another of the Trust's primary schools has a lot of transient pupils, and there has been a real focus on improving Teaching & Learning across the board. The impact of this work is becoming evident, ie the school achieved fairly good outcomes in the summer which suggests that the children are doing well. Exec Officers also noted that some of our primary schools are very small, which also comes with its challenges, ie one child's attendance/performance can dramatically affect the overall figures.

- *Current Ofsted Grading*

**Q: In terms of TPS' Ofsted grading – can you provide Trustees with an update in relation to their pre-inspection preparation?**

**A: We are mindful of the Coasting Schools submission, and we are expecting a Section 5 inspection visit during Spring Term 2024. The Education Exec Team (DD/SB/PJ) are meeting with school leaders fortnightly to review progress. We do have a level of confidence in that we have given the school the best chance of achieving Good. There are still concerns with TPS, but attendance and behaviour at the school is improving. Mr Donnelly then spoke about possible outcomes should TPS not achieve Good. Mr Donnelly assured Trustees that the Education Exec Team are doing everything they can to support the school; Ms Jones then spoke about the work she has undertaken with the school around ensuring they are doing what needs to be done, and impact is measured and evidenced.**

Ms Jones noted that outcomes evidence that some improvement is being made; and then spoke about some key areas:

*Safeguarding:* this is one of the school's strengths. Ms Jones explained that she is impressed with Safeguarding at TPS, especially given the significant challenges it faces.

*Behaviour:* this is also improving. Ms Jones noted that there is good evidence of impact of strategies being used. TPS are also focussing on reducing repeat offenders.

*Attendance:* gap to national is closing, but is still there.

*Curriculum:* the school has strong leaders in place and work is taking place around getting teaching to 'consistently good'.

Mr Davis noted that this correlates with the details on ParentView; and also suggested that it may be useful to look at Havelock Schools.

**Q: How confident are you around the curriculum at TPS?**

**A: We are confident with the KS3 curriculum; and we are in the process of the quality assuring/ validating the KS4 curriculum. In terms of the KS3 curriculum we have also received external validation from a number of agencies, ie DfE, TCAT, and it was also recognised in the recent Ofsted monitoring report. The KS3 curriculum is much more rigorous/transparent; Teachers understand it; and there are no barriers in terms of delivery.**

**Q: In terms of KS2, we have talked about massive mobility at one of our Primaries and the impact of children joining us. What are we doing to address the gaps?**

**A: When the child arrives at school we carry out screening to identify their educational and pastoral needs; and we also have tightly balanced focus groups who closely monitor and track their progress. It's all about identifying the level of need and securing rapid progress.**

**Q: Are children at this primary school still being taught across year groups?**

**A: Children are taught in their own year groups; the only exception to this is when Yr 1 and Reception children come together for Phonics (using Read, Write Inc).**

#### *Evaluating Provision Framework & Performance Data*

Mr Donnelly explained that part of the DOQS' role is around validating judgements; and as such a key area of focus has been around consistency of judgements. Mr Donnelly and Ms Jones spoke about the work being undertaken, and noted that this will lead to judgements being more accurate/secure going forwards.

**Q: LMP are showing as Outstanding in all aspects?**

**A: No, the blue grading denotes that they are securely Good in all aspects; we are not looking at Outstanding in this iteration of the report. Our focus for LMP is moving towards 'what does Outstanding look like'.**

#### *Attendance*

Ms Jones advised that overall we are continuing to close the gap, with overall attendance YTD currently at 91.2% (Sec 90.2%; Pri 94.2%). There are signs of improvements in attendance within primaries (in particular LMP and HPS); as well as some secondaries (LHS, and THS are now above national). Ms Jones also noted that at this time of year attendance usually dips, and in order to try and u-turn this trend schools have been set a December attendance challenge. Schools have taken on the challenge and the competition is having impact on attendance figures. Exec Officers also noted that the DfE Attendance Adviser has also commented on how the Trust is having significant impact on attendance.

Trustees noted that this was good to hear; and the Chair of E&S also praised the format of the Performance Dashboard, noting that it was a powerful document which drives discussions between Trustees and Exec Officers.

**Q: We are all aware of how a Quality of Education Ofsted judgement can impact the overall Ofsted judgement; however persistent absence can also have significant and therefore isn't this also a concern when you look at TPS' p.a. figure?**

**A: You are entirely right and the school is on to this; the school has case studies on this cohort of children and staff are very mindful of p.a. The school is also receiving external support, and it is recognised that processes are having greater impact. Also nationally and in the Trust, we have seen a dip in p.a., however at TPS we haven't; we can see that things are starting to shift. A tremendous amount of work has taken place this term.**

**Q: The first day back after Christmas can also impact attendance greatly, do schools have a clear plan in place for this?**

**A: I don't know, but it is a good point, I will have to follow up.**

*Budget data:* Mr Donnelly noted that there had been some variances to budget and that Ms Gilmore had shared these details with Trustees last week.

*Survey Data:* Mr Donnelly noted that it has been agreed that the next round of surveys will go out after Christmas.

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Data 2022-23 (Term 3) Reports**

Exec Officers noted that these reports show the work that is going on; however they are looking at Safeguarding Data reports going forwards in relation to how they can present the data differently so that it is more meaningful for Trustees. Exec Officers then asked Trustees if they had any questions:

**Q: How many children are on part-time timetables, and is the number growing?**

**A: In terms of numbers and whether the numbers are increasing I don't have this information to hand; but potentially there could be an uptick in terms of children on part-time timetables. From an attendance perspective it could be seen as the right thing to do, (ie it is better to have the child attend school for a period of time rather than none); however you would expect this to be time limited (ie you would expect there to be a plan in place which encourages the child to attend more and more until they are back in school full time).**

**Q: Some of the data with these safeguarding reports seems to be out of kilter with the data within the performance dashboard?**

**A: It is dependent on the snapshot date and there could be some slight disparity because some reports may pull in 'ever on roll' data; however we do need to review so that we can allay any concerns with regards and discrepancy within the reports.**

	<p><b>Q: I am supportive of the performance dashboards, but leading on from this, I need to understand ‘so what next’; ie what are the tolerances and what do we need to focus on. Yes, we can have comparators, but we also need details on ‘so because of this, what are we doing’?</b></p> <p><b>A: This is just the raw data, what hasn’t been shared is the school level documents which show the level of work taking place. Ms Jones also noted that she will be asking the Trust Attendance Lead to complete a follow up meeting, in order to compile this information; so that when the new report format is produced it will provide Trustees with assurances/confidence. Mr Donnelly also noted that the new report format will need to look at trends.</b></p> <p>There being no further questions, Ms Stevenson thanked Exec Officers for their updates.</p>			
<p><b>10. Risk &amp; Reporting Update</b></p>	<p>Trustees received a copy of the Trust’s Autumn Term 2 Risk Assessment Overview document prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly provided a brief summary in terms of format of the Risk Assessment Overview document, noting that as of next term the areas of focus will be aligned with the Trusts’ departments/teams; ie Education, HR, Finance, Operations and Governance. Mr Donnelly also noted that the newly formatted document will be presented to Trustees at their next meeting (Feb 2024).</p> <p>Trustees thanked Exec Officers for their presentation/input noting that the proposed changes to the format made complete sense and as such they were happy to endorse.</p> <p><i>[Mr Smith left the meeting at this point]</i></p>			
<p><b>11. Appraisal &amp; Central Team Pay Progression</b></p>	<p>See PART II Minutes</p>			
<p><b>12. Internal Audit – Report of recent visit(s) undertaken</b></p>	<p><i>[Central Team Members re-joined and Chris Manson (Beever &amp; Struthers, Internal Audit) joined the meeting at this point]</i></p> <p>Trustees received an electronic copy of a document entitled ‘Risk Register Assurance Internal Audit Report (Dec 2023) prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Chris Manson (Internal Auditor – Beever &amp; Struthers) was introduced to the committee; and then invited to deliver his presentation in respect of the Risk Register Assurance IA Report – Dec 2023.</p> <p>Mr Manson noted that the focus for Internal Audit this year was around the Risk Register and the Trust’s new approach to risk; and as such the scope for Internal Audit visits was to review the compilation and the scrutiny of risk scoring at a sample of schools; assessing how the information is provided, aggregate and scrutinised by LGBs, Trust SLT, the BFA Committee and the Board. Mr Manson also explained that this time round the schools that were visited were DPS and PFP, and the review had looked at 4 areas (Safeguarding, Vision &amp; Values, Outcomes and Governance).</p> <p>Mr Manson then talked the Trustees through the key features of the report, including areas for improvement. Two recommendations were made in relation to the following areas: Risk Assessment</p>			

	<p>Quality Checks; Trend Analysis. Design of controls received an assurance level of reasonable and Operation of Controls received an assurance level of partial; both recommendations were identified as medium priority. Mr Manson also confirmed that the recommendations have been accepted by Executive Officers and a timeline has been agreed; Mr Manson also assured Trustees that all in all the report was positive.</p> <p>Ms Jones then went on to update Trustees on the work that has been undertaken in respect of Recommendation 2 (Trend Analysis).</p> <p>Mr Manson then asked Trustees if they had any questions they wished to raise:</p> <p><b>Q: Recommendation 1 references that a large percentage of children at one primary school do not feel safe, this is a huge risk?</b></p> <p><b>A: The survey data refers back to the previous survey and at that point the school was experiencing some problems with pupil behaviour; the school has since worked hard to bring behaviour back to where it needs to be and huge improvement has been made. We are confident that this figure will be significantly increased when the next pupil survey cycle takes place.</b></p> <p><b>Q: What have we done to promote/evidence pupil voice?</b></p> <p><b>A: When central team members visit schools we speak to pupils; informally (ie when visiting the school for meetings etc) and also formally when we have conducted bespoke pupil voice interviews. Ms Jones then went on to provide examples of this in practice.</b></p> <p><b>Q: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Risk Indicators (KRIs) – do you want KPIs or do you need to be looking at KRIs as well?</b></p> <p><b>A: Internal Audit focus on the Trust’s KPI thresholds.</b></p> <p>There being no further questions, Mr Manson noted that this report completed the 2022-23 Internal Audit plan; Mr Manson also assured Trustees that Internal Audit are currently working with the Central Executive Team in order to formalise a draft Internal Audit plan for 2023-24.</p> <p>Trustees thanked Mr Manson for his presentation and support throughout the year. Trustees then confirmed that they were happy to receive the Risk Register Assurance report and proposed timeframes.</p>			
<p><b>13. Year End Accounts</b></p>	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the following documents in advance of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31.08.23</li> <li>• Management Letter from the audit of THF for the Year Ended 31.08.23</li> </ul> <p>Mr Griffiths joined the meeting (External Audit - Mitchell Charlesworth) and reported:</p> <p><b>Annual Report and Accounts for Year Ended 31.08.23</b></p> <p>Mr Griffiths drew Trustees attention to page 25 (Statement of Financial Activities incl. income and expenditure account):</p>	<p>Annual Report and Accounts for Year End 31.08.23 to be signed off</p>	<p>Chair of BF&amp;A / Accounting Officer</p>	<p>Once received from Mitchell Charlesworth</p>



*Total income/endowments:* figures had come in higher than the previous year (2022 £27,432,134; 2023 £29,747,709); the reason for this is due to increases in GAG Funding, which is driven by pupil numbers, as well as increases in Recovery Premium and Supplementary Grant.

*Expenditure:* figures have come in higher than the previous year (2022 £27,544,635; 2023 £29,601,371); the reason for this is as a result of increases in staffing costs; as well as increases in operational costs such as energy, curriculum costs, exam fees etc.

*Net income/[expenditure]:* this has resulted in a surplus of £146K this year; against a deficit last year.

*Fixed Assets:* is showing as -£163K; this figures includes the Capital Grant received and the depreciation of fixed assets.

***Q: In relation to depreciation of assets, is there a forward planning/thinking around depreciation, ie are we planning for when assets need to be replaced?***

***A: The condition surveys provide us with a 15 year view on what needs to be replaced; then when we know how much Condition Funding and Development Capital we will be receiving, we review/prioritise any works that need to be undertaken during that year.***

Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes: this figure is £3M in credit, which is lower than last year. Mr Griffiths noted that this figure was in relation to the actuarial gains on the defined benefit pension schemes, and then went on to explain how the figure was calculated; and also how interest rates impact. Mr Griffiths also noted that this figure has to be shown in the accounts but that it does not affect the figures from an operational perspective.

*Total funds carried forwards:* £55,234,278

Mr Griffiths then explained the Balance Sheet on page 27, noting in particular that:

- Fixed Assets: decreased by £465K on last year; this figure includes the cost of assets that have been purchased and depreciation of assets
- Debtors: decreased by £948K on last year; this is due to VAT claims being more up-to-date at the time of audit, ie last year Jul/Aug claims were still due to come in. It was also noted the Pupil Premium government grant also needed to be accrued at the end of the year
- Cash in bank: has increased on last year;
- Current liabilities: have decreased;
- Net current assets: £1,853,636
- Pension Liabilities: have decreased from circa £3.7M to £827K; this is due to actuarial adjustments (pension schemes) being impacted by/based on interest rates. Mr Griffiths reiterated that Trustees should not get too weighed down by this figure and how it fluctuates. Mr Griffiths noted that the

pension liabilities figure is quite often one of the biggest figures within the accounts, but it does not have that much significance, apart from when the triennial valuation takes place.

**Q: In relation to pension liabilities; you say that we shouldn't get caught up on the figures, but how do we not land in 'hot water' going forward. When should we start to get worried about this?**

**A: There is not a lot Trustees can do; this is not in your control, but we have to include the figure on the balance sheet. These pension schemes include other public sector workers as well, ie NHS, local authorities etc, and as such it is a much wider issue.**

**Q: Can the pension liabilities be affected by changes in Government?**

**A: Yes, they can. The key thing is that if interest rates fall, the pension liabilities figures will begin to rise again. It will affect everybody, and if and when the subject comes to the fore, it is likely that the Government will need to provide support. Mr Parkinson noted that this had been proved to be the case with Teachers Pensions.**

Mr Griffiths then moved on to the Cash Flow Statement on page 28, noting in particular that:

- Cash and cash equivalents at end of year (2022 £2,762,025; 2023 £3,384,108); a significant portion of the increase is linked to unspent capital grant funding. Mr Griffiths noted that Capital Grant funding sits on the Balance Sheet as cash until the conditions of the grant are met. Mr Parkinson also explained that there are planned capital works still to take place, which this funding will be used for.

**Q: On the Statement of Financial Activities (pg 26) it provides figures re donations; what do we mean by donations? Is it related to fund raising?**

**A: Yes it is in relation to funds that have been raised; a large proportion is Capital Grants, and the balance is other donations received. We are also looking at other grants/funding opportunities that we may be able to bid for.**

Mr Griffiths then asked the Trustees if they had any questions. There were no further questions raised.

#### **Management Letter from the audit of THF for the Year Ended 31.08.23**

Mr Griffiths reported on the key areas/findings within the Management Letter:

##### **Section 1 – Executive Summary**

**1.2: Status of audit and audit opinion:** Mr Griffiths confirmed that once a final post balance sheet events review and signed letter of representation have been received, Mitchell Charlesworth are pleased to report that their intention will be to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and an unqualified assurance report on regularity.

**1.5: Audit adjustments and unadjusted misstatements:** Mr Griffiths drew Trustees attention to the schedule of adjustments that have been agreed with Ms Gilmore (see Section 4 – Management Letter)

**Section 2 – Summary of Audit Risks:** Mr Griffiths confirmed that all items within section 2 have been graded green as there are no findings to report.

	<p><b>Section 3 – Audit Conclusion in respect of Key Risks:</b> Mr Griffiths noted that this section provided a detailed commentary around key areas of the audit; adding that there were no matters to report in relation to items 1-3.</p> <p><b>Q: The audit concludes that for items 1-3 there were no findings, but is this a limited assurance, given that the summary of audit risks section indicate that for some items controls were not evaluated under audit plan? Do we need to do anything?</b></p> <p><b>A: From a Trustee perspective, you shouldn't just look at this report in isolation; you need to look at any Internal Audit reports, External Audit report and any other documentation that you have received/scrutinised throughout the year.</b></p> <p><b>Section 4 – Audit Adjustments:</b> Mr Griffiths noted the main item on this page was in relation to the adjustment of the defined benefit pension scheme liability.</p> <p><b>Section 5 – Other matters:</b> Mr Griffiths noted that this page included a couple of miscellaneous items; Letter of Representation; Independence.</p> <p>[Ms Williams left the meeting just before the end of the Management Letter presentation]</p> <p>Mr Griffiths then asked the Trustees if they had any questions in relation to the Management Letter.</p> <p>There being no further questions, Ms Stevenson thanked Mr Griffiths for his presentation and the finance team who had been involved in the audit for securing a set of unqualified accounts.</p> <p>Ms Stevenson then asked Trustees whether they were happy to approve the Annual Report and Accounts for Y/E 31.08.23. All agreed. Trustees,</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: that Annual Report and Accounts for Year End 31.08.23 be approved</b></p> <p>Trustees also thanked Mr Griffiths for his presentation and support throughout the year. Discussion then followed regarding sign off process.</p>			
<b>14. AOB</b>	No AoB items were received for this meeting.			
<b>15. Date of Next Meeting</b>	<p>Trustees agreed to move the February 2024 Trust Board meeting to w/c 19.02.24, so that it can incorporate the Trustee Strategy Session straight after. TGM will send out a meeting poll in order to identify a date within that week whereby the majority of Trustees can be in attendance.</p> <p>It was also agreed that this Trust Board meeting/Strategy Session will be held in person at Halsnead Training Rooms, C/O Halsnead Primary School.</p>	Meeting poll re new date for Feb Trust Board/Trustee Strategy Session to be sent to Trustees	TGM	ASAP

Meeting closed at 10.00 am

These minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting

Signed: .....

[H Stevenson – Chair]

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Chair's initials to record approval of minutes: .....

Date: 28.03.24