



Board Meeting
NOTES (Inquorate)
15:00 on Monday 23 May 2022
Location: by Video Conference

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS	
NAME	PRESENT
Tom Attwood (Chair)	
Stephen Gough	■
Frank Green	
Sara Attwood	
Chris Weavers (VC)	■
Helen Priday	
Rochelle Saunders	
Also in Attendance:	
Jesse White	Interim T4 CEO
Julie Pierzchniak	Safeguarding Lead & COO, T4
Aaron Mulhern	Executive Principal
Gosia Klosek	Head of College - ArtsX
Asad Muzammal	Governance Professional

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence:

- a. Apologies for absence were received from Tom Attwood, Frank Green, Sara Attwood, Helen Priday and Rochelle Saunders.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests:

- a. There were no declarations of pecuniary interest in any of the agenda items.

3. Finance Update:

- a. In response to questions on any concerns with the finances, JW said that there is concern with the loss of funding for SS students; a member of the finance team has submitted notice to leave in August and there are also some capacity issues in the team; and preparation of the balance sheet and cashflow are behind schedule and this is a focus of the ESFA and so is not helpful in the backdrop of the NTI. There are plans to advertise the vacancy in the

team and in the meantime to recruit an agency worker for a couple of months to help reduce slippage in the team's work programme.

Trustees suggested that this is also an opportunity to review the structure and function of the Finance team. Trustees discussed how a full central Finance team could only be justified by increasing the number of schools in the Trust.

- b. In discussing the ArtsX funding gap, trustees reviewing the annualised types of income projections and noted the projected loss in September of GAG funding for SS students and the loss of £200K ESFA grant funding. These losses are balanced out by a projected increase in LA SEN funding. However, for each additional student there is an approximate 50% increase in costs. Trustees discussed how ArtsX staff and supplies costs have been running significantly higher than income.

In response to questions, JW said that the ESFA documentation is unclear on whether the new building funding can be applied to other budget lines, such as energy costs.

In response to Trustees' comments on their assumption that disassociating the Trust from SS would have a net positive impact on finances, as SS had been a drain on the Trust's resources, JW said that GAG funding for SS students had no SS related costs this year and so had been propping up ArtsX funding. JP added that SS had been a drain on time resources, in that ArtsX (WAC) had provided Maths, English and EP time for annual reviews. There were no additional staff being employed by the college. Staff are now being used solely for ArtsX support.

In response to questions on the level of confidence in the forecast that LA SEN funding will cover the loss of GAG funding and the ESFA grant funding, JW said that the student numbers income is realistic and student recruitment is ahead of target. The current roll is 63, which is the highest number of students to date.

Trustees discussed how the priority is to focus on student recruitment, providing students with education and keeping them safe. The secondary focus is on ensuring that the college has the right operating model and that the costs do not outweigh income. Trustees acknowledged that the projections shows that income is increasing and that the funding gap is being closed through student recruitment. JW said that the projection is to breakeven by the end of year, but then funding dips in September with the loss of GAG funding and ESFA grant funding. Student growth is realistic to reach a breakeven point again after the first term of 2022-23. In response to questions on whether costs can be reigned in for a couple of months from September to limit the impact of the loss of funding, JW said that the income for every new student will require approximately 50% put towards costs of their safety and education support. GK added that the college needs to invest in staff CPD to build their confidence in being able to respond quickly and effectively to students' needs. JW said that a proper assessment can be made once the balance sheet has been updated.

- c. In response to questions on the projection of the ArtsX roll reaching 80 students by December and whether there is capacity in the college to teach 80 students, both in terms of staff and physical space that also includes recreational space, JW said that class sizes will be smaller, but the estimated capacity of the building is for 150 students. Trustees discussed the breakeven point being around 100 students on roll. In response to questions on whether the pinch points around the estate have been tested for students moving around the building, for example, if the college entrance has capacity for an increased roll and for all students arriving to college at the same time, or if the canteen can accommodate more students with the same lunch break time, JW said that there is confidence that the college could easily accommodate 100 students in the building at the same time and in the

canteen. GK advised that there is a three-day end of year celebration and showcase planned where parents, stakeholders and prospective students and their families will be invited and this could be used for a modelling exercise of moving people around the building.

Action 220523/01: A modelling exercise of moving students around the ArtsX building to be completed before the end of term. (CLT)

- d. Trustees discussed balancing whether the focus should be on increasing income or in managing costs more effectively. In response to Trustees' suggestions on delaying increases in the roll to be more effective in matching capacity and recruitment of teaching staff, JW said that much of the 50% cost for each student is for welfare staff. However, thought can be given to more effective use of agency staff. The college will not incur agency staff costs in August and it is possible that the volume of agency staff could be reduced in September and increased in October or November, when student numbers increase. JW said that staff are aware of the strain of finances, but the CLT are also conscious of maintaining a safe environment. Trustees noted that many of the students being referred at this time have EHCPs.
- e. JW said that Rock School has been running at a loss this year due to the small number of students. The Rock School tutors understand that they require 15 students for the provision to breakeven and they have been active in promoting the provision both on the website and externally and they are confident on achieving 15 students.

4. Governance Matters:

- a. Trustees noted that GP has been appointed as a member of the ArtsX LGB and will take over as Chair.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising:

- a. Deferred.

6. Safeguarding Update:

- a. JP advised that an anonymous complaint was investigated by Ofsted and they are satisfied with the ArtsX CLT's responses. Trustees discussed how it was fortunate that ArtsX had received a Quality Assurance audit by Islington and Camden in the weeks before the complaint had been investigated, which had determined that the QA were quite satisfied with safeguarding arrangements at the college. JP said that the QA report had been useful in providing Ofsted with triangulation through an independent confirmation of satisfactory safeguarding arrangements in place.
- b. JW advised that the QA visit had identified some update required to some policies. The updates are in hand, which will allow TA, as Chair of the Trust, to confirm to the ESFA that Trustees are satisfied with the implementation of safeguarding practices and policies.

7. Interim CEO's Report:

- a. Deferred.

8. Policies & Documents:

- a. Deferred.

9. Any other Business:

a. Trustees noted that the NTI will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

b. Forward Agenda

- Vision, Core Values and Mission Statement
- ArtsX Event Planning
- Audit Update
- Teacher Training
- Curriculum Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Trust-wide Marketing Plan
- Policy Review Schedule

10. Next Meeting Date:

Action 220523/02: A new Board meeting date to be arranged. (JW, Clerk)

- 6 June 2022 (For one hour - immediately before the Finance Committee meeting)

11. Any Confidential Items:

None.

12. Items for non-Staff only:

None

The meeting closed at 15:45

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Chair	Date

Decisions

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Actions

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Action 220523/02: A new Board meeting date to be arranged. (JW, Clerk)