



Promise Foundation

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Chair's Report 2021 (Mike Hulme - Chair of the Trustees Group)

2020/21 has been a year of great uncertainty and the continued challenges presented by the Covid pandemic has, yet again, affected the work that we were able to significantly undertake. Complications in funding applications as a result of many potential sponsors either changing criteria or ceasing to offer funds has only served to frustrate the charity's position and circumstances further.

Even so, I am delighted to report that Promise Foundation has been able to continue to deliver its public benefit remit remaining a service to targeted young people based around the 13-18 age range particularly those from backgrounds of high deprivation or significant need. Indeed, much of the charity's core focus on 'social mobility' and supporting the life chances and well-being of vulnerable young people has become even more relevant. The Trustees have recognised that the detrimental effect of the latest restrictions of C-19 virus has served to widen the gaps in attainment, aspiration and outcome for the most vulnerable young people in society.

Subsequently, the Trustees group have evaluated the charity's operational remit and decided to review the impact of the established existing operational model. There has been a need and opportunity to review and evaluate our effectiveness and it was thought timely to undertake this work during the process of emerging into the 'new normal' with our work. A Trustees' working group was formed (February 2021) to consider strategic direction; sustaining our community recruitment status; addressing concerns over maintaining funding and grant applications; and the continuation of the management methodology through our core values.

The working group concluded and recommended to the full Trustees board that significant remodelling of the charity's operational status was required and that the current model had become unfit for purpose. It was recognised that the remit and scope of Promise Foundation remained robust and very relevant, but that the existing management model no longer met the newly emerging direction and demand. Therefore, the post of Central co-ordinator was to be subject to a compulsory redundancy procedure. A new post of Programme Director was proposed with a much wider and multi-faceted remit. Based upon a 'consultancy model' therefore reducing 'on-costs' this would utilise funding grants to the maximum. The proposal was agreed by the Trustees group and the new structure was implemented.

Our advert met with a healthy response from our targeted professional group and the Trustees undertook a robust competitive recruitment procedure.

It was with regret that we had to lose the services of Khadija as our Central Co-ordinator and the Trustees thank her for her work in this position. We were delighted to welcome Simon Marks as our new part-time Programme Director who has been in position from May 2021.

Simon has ably started within his role and made a hugely impressive beginning to his duties in implementing the new strategic direction and operational model as laid out by the Trustees group. He brings huge expertise and experience to the new position and has already made a substantial difference with fund raising, networking, highlighting the work of our charity and managing our strategic direction.

Promise Foundation Link Centres

We continue to successfully manage our programmes in our three existing centres (Newman Catholic College; Capital City Academy and Queens Park Community School). Newman and Capital have managed to fully establish their mentoring/mentee cohort and are providing a strong programme of support for the targeted group of young people in their establishments. Queens Park have re-launched their programme with a new link co-ordinator operating within the centre and are now re-building mentoring relationships due to considerable slippage during the school lockdown period.

The Trustees' aspiration to continue with the expansion of our school centres has taken an exciting development at the time of writing this report with the potential to include Ark Elvin Academy within our Promise cohort. This has been instigated via a successful funding bid to the Raheem Sterling 1692 Foundation to work within this new centre and the appropriate 'franchise link school' model is to be implemented once more. However, there is also a huge opportunity to further expand our work within several other Brent schools through this new venture and we are soon to be subject to enhanced publicity highlighting our services in the broadcast media. The possibility of linking with the Raheem Sterling 1692 Foundation will give us the potential to realise Promise Foundation expansion to several more centres and to fully instigate our strategic planning over the next few years.

Fundraising:

Whilst the fundraising element of our charity remains a fundamental core purpose of our future success, I am please to report that we find ourselves in a strong financial position as we move towards the 'new normal' in our work. Having secured a three-year grant once more from BBC Children in Need, the charity can now experience some sense of financial security backed by the grant from the Raheem Sterling 1692 Foundation. Simon has worked incredibly hard in obtaining this potentially 'game changing' funding commitment and he has also doubled the funding pledges from individual donors realising a healthy and somewhat guaranteed monthly income which forms the basis of the core funding for our financial stability. The drive to further increase this element of our financial strength is recognised as a consistent form of income particularly in an emerging uncertain funding climate.

The Trustees are confident that our new managerial model will be supported by the new Programme Director position. The procurement of this position on a consultancy basis has served to eliminate salaried on-costs and payroll fees therefore enabling a greater proportion of our funding to be directed towards our core purpose. Our financial forecasting has shown greater possibility in realising stability via this remodelled and stronger management structure representing a confident and robust funding plan towards future growth.

Funds – reserves/debts/income/expenditure:

The Trustees continue to be fully informed at each meeting of the status of the foundation's financial standing via a detailed cash flow/account balance reconciliation provided to by our Trustee Will Leaning. His latest report is supplied as an appendix to this document. I would like to thank Will for his work with this element of our organisation.

I can report that our accounts have been dutifully and annually audited to September 2020 by *Rouse Partners LLP* and have been submitted to Companies House for the record in accordance with legislative requirement. Trustees have paid due regard and diligence to the audited accounts during their meetings as required. The annual accounts for 2021 are currently being processed by the same company as required and consolidated at the Promise Foundation AGM on 17th November 2021.

Operational organisation:

Strategic planning – The Trustees were able to agree a revised strategic plan drafted in May/June 2021 thus enabling a coherent overview of our objectives and desired outcomes over a five-year timeline towards an improved and enhanced service being offered by the charity. The strategic plan has enabled roles and responsibilities to be fully understood from the re-modelling process whilst providing important evaluative scoping for the work of the Programme Director. This will ensure strengthened guidance as the foundation emerges from the impact of the C-19 school closures.

The role of the Trustees – The Trustees group continues to provide impact upon the strategic dynamics of the foundation and our continued support for the core purpose has remained resolute during the remodelling period of the charity. I would like to thank the Trustee members for their fair and firm handling of the difficult decisions made during this period and their willingness to become involved in the consultation through their experienced and informed professional input.

We welcome Will Leaning to the Trustees group as the financial lead and it is testament to his willingness and supportive working that has resulted in the Trustees making this decision.

Meetings continue to be conducted remotely which is a methodology proving to be successful in overseeing business and we look forward to reinstating our, previously postponed and hugely popular, Christmas networking event once more this year.

Safeguarding: Trustees continue to be fully aware of their legal duty to dispense their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation. We continue to uphold matters across our school centres and fully operate and comply with the policy for each. Safeguarding training forms part of the induction process for all recruited mentors with each host centre conducting relevant DBS checks to place each individual on their centre Single Central Register. Existing mentors receive updates and refresher training on safeguarding on, at least, an annual basis.

Where this is still appropriate, applicable monitoring is in place during those mentoring sessions still being offered on-line. It is thought that this element of our work, which supported the continuation of our services during school closure during the C-19 lockdown, may well be phased out. We are able to offer this flexibility of approach to facilitate some mentoring sessions if needed.

The Promise Foundation Child Protection Flow Chart enables all involved with the charity to understand how the safeguarding procedures must operate and has been continually updated in-line with the current legislation outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2021).

Looking forward:

The Trustees can look forward with great confidence as our current remodelling process has served to provide improved management co-ordination with the appointment of an experienced Programme Director. Through the strategic planning process, greatly improved co-ordination and an overall enhanced business model, there is certainty in our future direction.

The development of the partnership working with the Raheem Sterling 1692 Foundation and their potential funding will serve to accelerate our long-term expansion plans with the possibility of being supported in rolling out our programme to several other school centres within the next few years. This will provide financial stability for Promise Foundation and much needed media publicity surrounding our important work in social mobility and equality of opportunity for the young people we serve.

As Chair of the Trustees group, I am certain that with all the Trustee's and the Programme Director's continued support and expertise, this new and exciting phase of the charity's development looks to be hugely positive.

Since the conception of the charity in 2013, the Trustees group have managed and developed a great and successful charitable concept proving to be highly successful in meeting the needs and addressing the inequalities experienced by certain young people in their lives. By remodelling the remit for our central management and by maintaining the core drive of our moral purpose, I believe that the Trustees group have successfully enhance the programme and secured a hugely positive future for Promise Foundation.

Recognising the need to review in the light of an emergence into the 'new normal' from the C-19, the Trustees group have not 'stood still' or consolidated services under such restrictions but have provided a decisive drive for 2021/22. This will extend our much-needed work to a greater number of centres, vulnerable young people and result in an improved service in addressing social mobility and inequality in society.

Mike Hulme

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Hulme', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Chair of the Trustees (Promise Foundation)