



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

14 July 2020, 1.30 a.m.

Virtual meeting held using Zoom

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Trustees present: Tom Briant-Evans (TBE) Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Keith Tipler (KT) John Whetter (JW) <i>item 6 onwards</i></p> <p><i>Also present:</i> Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Mike England (ME) – Finance Director Simon Hague (SE) – CEO Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education</p>	
1	Appoint Chair / Vice Chair	
1.1	MH was re-appointed as Chair for a further year following completion of appointment procedure.	
1.2	NL was re-appointed as Vice Chair for a further year following completion of appointment procedure.	
2	Apologies: none	
3	Conflicts of Interest: no additional interests were declared.	
4	Previous minutes of the 29 May 2020 were accepted as an accurate record.	
5	Matters arising / Tracker	
5.1	5.2 Investments. Interest rate has reduced from earlier in the year. Sharing documentation outstanding.	JA
5.2	6.6. Transition arrangements. TL reported that all the secondaries have been quite thorough in their approach, and we have worked hard to pass on the required information. Parental feedback very positive and our schools feel they have been involved as well.	
6	Delegated Decisions since last meeting	
6.1	Lanner roof. SH explained the need for an urgent decision as CIF bid had failed but County Council stepped in to agree to fully fund from their PFI budget.	

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	<p>Only have their agreement via email at present so agreed to fund initial payment from our reserves to ensure work could start immediately.</p> <p>2. Deployment of staff with asthma.</p> <p>Amended earlier decision regarding the restrictions we imposed. Risk assessment completed, individuals agreed their confirmation in writing, record of initial conversation kept.</p>	
6.2	<p>Notes from weekly Trust Leaders' meetings since May.</p> <p>Trustees had no further questions but commented how they reflected the speed of change and need for prompt decision making.</p> <p>MH confirmed versions were shared with both the Members and LGB Chairs.</p>	
7	CEO's update / Covid response	
7.1	<p>Covid response.</p> <p>SH referred Trustees to the weekly meeting notes for the details but highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications are working well across the Trust. Anticipate continuing to use Zoom for those meetings where it works effectively. • Cornwall Council have been far more 'connected' and open with MATs compared to the past due to their new leadership. 	
7.2	<p>September opening.</p> <p>SH referred Trustees to documentation shared in advance and gave a summary of work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June plans have been adapted and extended which has helped reduce workload • Updated procedures and risk assessment in light of updated government guidance – however the changes to shielding guidance make little practical difference to which staff can return to work • Re-visited our Equalities Impact assessment – notably around pregnancy where we are following national advice <p>SH stressed he was confident this is a collective approach as all the Heads worked in groups of 3 in preparing their plans, which were then reviewed centrally.</p> <p>He reminded Trustees that the employer responsibilities continue and the final decision rests with the Board which he has reiterated with staff.</p> <p>Challenges remain for Disadvantaged children but staff are not expecting many problems with the children when they return, and accept that without a vaccine solution we will need to work differently for some months ahead.</p> <p>Formal sign-off to be discussed when weekly meetings reconvene second half of August.</p>	MH
7.3	<p><i>Q: Are we expecting all pupils back fulltime?</i></p> <p>Government guidance is quite clear about fulltime attendance for all and our Heads are confident this can be done whilst still including PPA time.</p> <p><i>Q: Do we expect to have staff wearing masks?</i></p> <p>Currently guidance does not require this and the evidence to date from our extended opening following lockdown has reduced concerns.</p> <p><i>Q: Any concerns raised by the unions?</i></p> <p>Very positive response from Unison and GMB to our plans.</p>	

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7.4	Confidential item	
8	Director of Education report	
8.1	<p>Home learning engagement shows significant variation across schools but correlates with levels of deprivation.</p> <p>Parent survey replies provide a helpful addition to staff's views and will help us improve any future blended learning offer. We recognise we can do more to explain to parents how they can help their children with their learning.</p> <p>The relatively small increase in families registering for FSM suggests most who were eligible were already claiming.</p>	
8.2	<p><i>Q: Any reason why Pencoy's data is different?</i> TL thought this was due to local variation in classifying 'engagement'.</p> <p><i>Q: Why the drop-off over time – does this just reflect more parents returning to work?</i> Heads thought this was more to do with the approach of end of summer term.</p> <p><i>Q: Will SILC visits restart in the autumn?</i> Agreed classroom visits / extra visits into school not appropriate early on but will review after half term.</p> <p><i>Q: How difficult will it be for new staff to get inducted into the Trust?</i> TL agreed the Trust will need to be 'creative' here especially for NQTs as they will have missed some of their classroom training prior to joining us.</p>	
8.3	<p>Staffing / HR.</p> <p>Six teachers have re-deployed to a different school though this is not everyone who expressed an interest in a move.</p> <p>Collaborative approach to co-ordinated recruitment and appointments worked very well.</p> <p>Decision to change HR support provider partly financial but more to do with quality of service and poor VFM.</p>	
9	Strategic overview / horizon scanning discussion	
9.1	Due to lack of time it was agreed to defer this to the autumn.	MH/JA
10	Budget monitoring	
10.1	Trustees noted the monitoring report.	
11	Approve 2020.21 budget	
11.1	<p>ME presented the budget for next year and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income increasing overall but has reduced for some schools • Staffing expenditure overall remains similar to last year at 83% of revenue but varies between schools • Overheads does not include any of our planned projects • Overall a small surplus and no need to use contingency funds • Current projection is that only two schools may be eligible to claim for Covid extra funding • Reserves up to £1.9m and have allocated £300K for school-based capital works plus LED lighting • Excludes Lanner roof expenditure as we should be reimbursed during the year 	

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11.2	<p>Key KPIs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small decline in staffing % spend • Overheads compare well to available benchmarking data <p>Meeting discussed proposal that total PAN / GAG income be added to KPIs and ME offered the view that the KPIs should be ones Heads can influence.</p> <p>Trustees also noted the limitations of benchmarking comparisons due to either different approaches to inhouse services vs contracting out, what is provided centrally and how a 'top slice' is calculated.</p>	
11.3	<p>Trustees asked that the minutes reflect their congratulations to the finance team on getting the Trust to this positive position of being able to set a budget with a surplus despite all the changes taking place.</p> <p>They noted that the long term trend is the Trust is moving into a deficit budget position and in light of Covid the Trust should anticipate continued pressure on government expenditure and therefore income received.</p>	
11.4	Trustees agreed to approve budget for 2020.21.	
11.5	Confidential item.	
12	Finance update	
12.1	<p>Payroll system procurement.</p> <p>ME summarised the reasons for recommending preferred supplier.</p> <p>KT confirmed he had reviewed the procurement process and that this system could release upto 18% of current staff time in the first year.</p> <p>Trustees agreed to procurement proceeding subject to the following actions being completed satisfactorily:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New SLA with county arranged providing advice on LGPS and teachers' pension scheme. 2. Current SLA with county extended to ensure continuity of provision. 3. ME investigate supplier's balance sheet liability. 4. Obtain a 2nd reference from another customer. 	ME/SH
12.2	<p>New Academies Financial Handbook.</p> <p>Trustees noted the new requirements from September and that several of these are met already.</p> <p>ME confirmed a fixed asset register is already in place using the Parago software system.</p> <p>SH to identify best time of the year to report on pupil numbers.</p> <p>JA to prepare report for Audit Committee comparing requirements against current terms of reference.</p>	SH/JA JA
12.3	<p>Accounts direction 2019.20 - new requirements.</p> <p>Trustees acknowledged the briefing note summarising the changes.</p>	
13	Governance	
13.1	<p>Trustee re-appointment.</p> <p>Trustees confirmed the co-opting of NL to a second term of office.</p>	

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13.2	Meetings 20.21 - frequency / dates for autumn term. Proposal that the Board meets three times in the autumn term was agreed with the extra date to be first half of term.	JA
13.3	Trustees re-confirmed the Delegated Decision subgroup would continue until further notice. Final weekly meeting takes place this week and will reconvene before the start of term.	
13.4	Message of thanks to all staff. It was agreed to send a formal communication from the Board to all staff in the central team and the schools thanking them for their hard work over recent months and wishing them a restful break.	MH/SH
14	AOB	
14.1	Confidential item	
15	Items for next agenda	
15.1	Audit plan update.	
16	Agree Confidential items	
16.1	To be confirmed after draft minutes produced.	MH/SH
	Meeting finished at 15.40.	

Signed	Date
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