



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

7 October 2019, 1.00 p.m. at Roskear School

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Actions
	<p>Trustees present: Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Keith Tipler (KT) John Whetter (JW)</p> <p><i>Also present:</i> Jeremy Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Mike England (ME) – Finance Director Simon Hague (SE) – CEO Tamsin Lamb (TL) – School Improvement Officer <i>items 6.2-9 only</i></p>	
1	Apologies: Tom Briant-Evans (TBE) , Brett Elliott (BE)	
2	Conflicts of Interest	
2.1	Annual declaration forms have been issued. No additional conflicts were raised.	
3	Previous minutes of the 9 July 2019 were accepted subject to the following amendment to item 5.3 second bullet point: <i>"All schools to continue raising outcomes with phonics".</i>	
4	Action Tracker / Matters arising	
4.1	Tracker updates: 18.10 Vice Chair role profile. JA to finalise draft and pass to MH / NL to sign-off. Remove 18.11 and 18.41 – superceded. 18.47 – completed. 18.48 is in progress.	JA
4.2	Agenda item 15.3 SH gave Trustees a brief update on this issue.	
5	Confidential item	
6	Trust Development Plan	
6.1	SH confirmed that he had found last month's strategy day really useful as an opportunity to hear a range of views.	

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	<p>The key objectives remain the same but some amendments are being made including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TL rapidly revisiting what 'Good' should look like based on the Ofsted inspections, and will then revisit strategies to achieve this. • More focus on Reading and implementing the new curriculum • Tweaks to success criteria for central operations 	
6.2	<p>Trustees discussed the need to find additional income to fully fund the central team but recognised that this was not an immediate requirement. They noted this could be achieved by obtaining additional SLAs or by further expansion. Following areas were all suggested as needing more capacity – SI, finance, HR, premises.</p> <p>MH reminded Trustees it is for SH to design the officer structure and our role is to recognise the need to provide extra resource.</p> <p>MH queried if there are urgent actions needed to better position the Trust for the future and any expansion – noting that waiting till the December board meeting might be too long?</p> <p>CEO and strategic leaders are reviewing current capacity and considering the risk / benefits of increasing capacity. They are also considering where that increase in capacity should be prioritised and this will be reported at the next board.</p>	SH
6.3	<p>ME pointed out that we should expect education / academies to be back on the political agenda post-Brexit – and recommended the Trust has a clear marketing strategy in place.</p> <p>MH reported that TBE had made a similar point – the Trust needs to be positioned to react as soon as the message changes.</p> <p>TL added that there are other schools keen to access our resources, and standalone schools / academies are seeing MATs more positively since the new Ofsted framework due to the extra support they could provide.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the need to learn from recent experiences and better manage how much is offered 'for free' in the future. They noted that there is usually an external factor 'forcing' a school to convert and want to join us – we need to identify what these are.</p> <p>Taking a flexible approach to the initial financial contribution to central services was also discussed as an effective way of investing in the long term future of the trust.</p> <p>SH confirmed grants for growth are available but we need to have schools who have shown a formal interest in joining us.</p>	
6.4	<p>The meeting also discussed the issue of financial inequalities across our schools, noting that a different way of using reserves had been raised by some Headteachers at the strategy day.</p> <p>SH commented he expected to see a different attitude over the next 12 months towards this subject, as well as the concept of pooling GAG. He reminded Trustees one school was already receiving financial support from a larger one.</p> <p>Trustees queried whether a decision by the government to improve funding for smaller schools would be an ideal opportunity to take a fresh approach here?</p>	

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	ME concurred that it made sense to look at where investing via reserves would make a long term difference to the Trust.	
7	Data analysis	
7.1	Confidential item	
7.2	<p>KS1.</p> <p>Across the board improvements reflect both the cohort and the extra focus the Trust put into this area.</p> <p>Maths saw a small improvement but expect to see more benefits from collaboration with the Maths Hub. Trust has a really strong Maths network and the recent Ofsted inspections have supported this approach.</p> <p>English are finding it harder to establish the same sort of network and this may be a factor in more variable outcomes across our schools.</p> <p>Reasons for a decline include quality of teaching (2 schools – being addressed) and cohort fluctuation at a third. TL confirmed the drop at Weeth was a surprise to both the Trust and the school.</p> <p><i>Trustees asked if the same moderation will take place this year?</i></p> <p>No. Was very time consuming and will now be done through the school triads.</p> <p><i>Is there a clear correlation between areas of focus for the Trust and improvements?</i></p> <p>Yes and it does seem to be sustainable the following year even if the focus has switched.</p> <p>Overall there is an upward trend which mirrors more schools adopting the Trust's preferred approach.</p>	
7.3	<p>KS2.</p> <p>Maths was a focus for the Trust. Our network was very strong with staff involved with the Maths Hub. Upskilling sessions and teacher CPD were factors in this too.</p> <p>Trustees noted there is still a gap for our PP children which matches the national picture.</p>	
8	Attendance and Exclusions	
8.1	Confidential item	
8.2	<p>Exclusions.</p> <p>Overall a low level with the exception of Pennoweth.</p> <p>TL explained to Trustees what reporting and monitoring arrangements are in place, when the PRU may be involved, and how some schools minimise exclusions by using inhouse alternatives such as the Forest Schools initiative.</p> <p>The number of Reception and Y1/2 children is an unwelcome trend. The Trust now has a SLA for a dedicated Behaviour Support adviser to give specialist training and online support.</p> <p><i>Trustees asked if there is a case for providing for an internal 'halfway house' resource?</i></p> <p>The need to move children from school to school creates fresh issues so it is not a practical solution for Crofty. Instead our focus is on internal approaches and early intervention.</p> <p>TL confirmed that the high % of excluded children who are also PP students is a concern and work will take place to see if PP funding needs to be re-directed to ensure children are in school first before addressing other needs.</p>	

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9	Safeguarding update	
9.1	Trustees noted the updated action plan. TL reported that Safeguarding had been assessed at a strength at all of the recent Ofsted inspections, and that the next round of external audits is underway. Training for Safeguarding governors has been delivered, and later in the year the Trust will check what information Headteachers are reporting to their LGBs. The need for the proposed MAT admin role to support safeguarding is to be reviewed.	
10	Brexit update	
10.1	Trustees noted the letter sent from the DfE. SH reported on the Trust's response on these issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food supply • GDPR • Medical supplies for children with SEND - <i>can contact the LA if any issues.</i> • EU settlement scheme. <i>Advice to the schools is to take no action on this.</i> <i>MH added that TBE had offered the same advice.</i> 	
11	Confidential item	
12	End of year accounts update	
12.1	ME provided an interim report on the end of year position which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall position £ 0.5 million better than budgeted for. • Difficulties with projecting some income streams – eg SEN / PP. • Improve control over sickness /absenteeism as payroll costs exceeded the budget • Ensure any premises underspends are not at the expense of compliance / H&S requirements. • Budget setting now linked more closely to curriculum needs • Surplus of £176K plus £59K from Pool SLA presents an opportunity to ringfence into a restricted reserve for specific project 	
12.2	Confidential item	
12.3	KPIs. <i>Trustees queried the very low teacher costs at Illogan compared to other schools?</i> SH confirmed there had been a significant staff turnover, and there had not been a deputy in post.	
12.4	Management of cash. ME confirmed an outstanding piece of work was to assess the impact of any delay in receiving income, and ensure Trustees received a monthly cash flow statement. MH requested this was available before the next board meeting.	SH
13	Resource Management return	
13.1	New requirement from the DfE – deadline for submission is 11 November. Agreed JA to draft a response to governance questions.	

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14	External Review of Governance	
14.1	Letter from MH issued prior to the meeting.	
15	Audit and Risk Committee proposals	
15.1	Trustees noted the plans for the new committee. Provisional date for first meeting is 11 November. SH requested the committee prioritise two items on their work schedule: 1. Requirement for Trustees to receive a monthly cashflow statement 2. Standard of H&S compliancy record keeping at schools	KT/JA
15.2	Trustees highlighted the need to improve centralised record keeping systems to monitor compliance and ensure data was available as soon as required.	
16	AOB	
16.1	Approving policies. SH raised the need to regularly review / approve policies and whether this could be met outside of board meetings? JA confirmed that approving via email was an option but it required 100% agreement by Trustees. He suggested Trustees consider an alternative of delegating responsibility to the appropriate Lead Trustee, and having a simple protocol for distribution, sign-off etc. Trustees agreed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement this proposal Delegate responsibility to approve updates to Pay and Sport Staff pay policies to NL 	SH/JA SH/NL
17	Items for next agenda	
17.1	SH / TL review of schools who might join the Trust. Teacher workload Reading / Read Write Inc	
18	Agree Confidential papers	
18.1	Attendance.	JA
	Dates of next meetings: 1 Nov Members tbc Audit & Risk 3 Dec LGB Chairs 10 Dec Board	
	Meeting finished at 3.43	

Signed	Date
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