



**MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING**

**19 October 2021, 1.00 p.m.**

**Part A Public**

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Subject</b>   | <b>Action</b> |
|-------------|--|---------------|
|             | <p><b>Trustees present:</b><br/>           Karen Brokenshire (KB)<br/>           Nik Butcher (NB)<br/>           Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair<br/>           Nick Lake (NL) <i>item 5 onwards</i><br/>           Keith Tipler (KT)<br/>           John Whetter (JW)</p> <p><i>Also present:</i><br/>           Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary<br/>           Mike England (ME) – Finance Director<br/>           Simon Hague (SE) – CEO<br/>           Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education</p> |               |
| <b>1</b>    | <b>Apologies:</b> Tom Briant-Evans (TBE)   |               |
| <b>2</b>    | <b>Conflicts of Interest</b>   |               |
| 2.1         | Trustees noted the updated Register of Interests.<br>MH confirmed his Related Party entry needing amending.  | JA            |
| <b>3</b>    | <b>Previous minutes</b> of the 14 September 2021 were accepted as an accurate record.  |               |
| <b>4</b>    | <b>Matters arising / Tracker</b>   |               |
| 4.1         | 7.3 Strategy Day<br>Rescheduled for Thursday 4 November – 9.30 start, Portreath Community Hall.  |               |
| <b>5</b>    | <b>Delegated Decisions</b>   |               |
| 5.1         | Updated Governor Code of Conduct approved.   |               |
| <b>6</b>    | <b>Strategic update</b>  |               |
| 6.1         | Covid update.<br>County wide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently <i>half</i> of the total number of Covid cases in Cornwall are being recorded in Schools</li> <li>• Public Health Cornwall issued new guidance for parents, carers, teachers and school staff</li> <li>• You book a PCR test if you are a household or close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case</li> </ul>  |               |

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|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are asking for household contacts of a case who attend an educational setting to take a daily rapid LFD test for 7 days</li> <li>• This additional testing recommendation applies to children in secondary schools and additionally primary schools if parents/carers feel comfortable in doing so</li> </ul> <p>In Crofty schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies on a day by day basis, staff and children absence creating daily management challenges</li> <li>• Currently 2 HTs absent / recovering from Covid, one since August</li> <li>• Pencoys HT- Deputy acting as HT, SIP support as exec HT</li> <li>• Typically varies between the odd staff member and 3-5 children up to 8 staff and 35 children</li> <li>• Impact on HTs is significant, creating tensions between keeping the school safe and open / ensuring delivery of the SI plan</li> <li>• Supply agencies unable to meet demand – HTs covering by other means</li> <li>• NAHT survey highlights HTs managing 'crying staff' – typical for Crofty HTs, examples of covid related stress and anxiety</li> <li>• Parent anxieties also a factor</li> </ul> |        |
| 6.2  | <p><i>Q: Is remote learning still being offered?</i></p> <p>Some work is set in specific circumstances linked to Covid. Where parents are choosing to keep their child at home we cannot authorise the absence so cannot set them work either.</p> <p><i>Q: What about staff morale?</i></p> <p>SH and TL felt there was a 'just get on with it' mood amongst schools and staff. JW fed back a very positive response from staff he had spoken with at Illogan. Trustees noted the leadership absences and how the trust had responded to provide cover and support.</p>  |        |
| 6.3  | <p>Recruitment.</p> <p>Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid is a significant factor, although it would be a mistake to write it off as purely that</li> <li>• Vacancies: 10 TA, 2 Teacher, 2 Administrators</li> <li>• 1 HT vacancy</li> </ul> <p>Response:</p> <p>HT -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decided not to recruit from HT applicants</li> <li>• Two term secondment of experienced Deputy HT into Illogan – Head of school type role – releases TL capacity</li> <li>• Full recruitment planned</li> </ul> <p>Teacher - Recruitment planned</p> <p>Admin -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admin situation has been a catalyst for a root and branch review of roles and relationships – create a coherent system of admin across the trust</li> <li>• Includes clarifying 'Managers' role descriptions and creating a system of Induction and CPPD to mirror the teachers' offer</li> <li>• Creation of a training and development role to initially provide quality induction and training and to standardise administrative systems across the trust</li> </ul>  |        |

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| 6.4      | <p>MH and KB confirmed they had been involved in discussions regarding the vacancy at Illogan.</p> <p><i>Q: Is pay actually a factor in admin staff leaving?</i></p> <p>SH reported some other schools / trusts may offer higher pay rate – but some staff may be leaving due to limited induction and performance management systems. Trustees noted that clerks would benefit from being part of the planned changes too.</p>  |        |
| 6.5      | <p>Estates update.</p> <p>Recently completed building works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Building projects 2021 (£1,095.127)</li> <li>• Rosemellin - drainage works</li> <li>• Portreath - new flat roof</li> <li>• New LED lighting</li> </ul> <p>Live building projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pennoweth - basic needs extension.</li> <li>• Rosemellin - drainage (phase 2).</li> </ul> <p>Areas of strategic development:</p> <p>- Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Health and Safety policy following Local Authority audit.</li> <li>• New compliance tracker which will produce trust wide reports and is scalable for growth</li> </ul> <p>- Energy - create a green energy policy and guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Eco champions</li> <li>• Salix public sector decarbonisation Bid</li> <li>• Solar panels</li> <li>• New energy provider (Sept 2022)</li> </ul> |        |
| 6.6      | <p><i>Q: Should we be approaching other procurement partners already - eg local secondaries?</i></p> <p>Potentially yes.</p> <p><i>Q: Any publicity to promote all this good news?</i></p> <p>Not yet – our 2 day a week marketing secondment is focusing on new websites and the associated data transfers, plus newsletter work.</p> <p>Trustees challenged this response. They accepted that any additional permanent appointments would be hard to justify but suggested that the level of reserves does allow the Trust to consider adding short term capacity and / or seeking external specialist support.</p> <p>They confirmed they would be open to proposals for making a short term investment.</p>  | SH     |
| 7        | CONFIDENTIAL item  |        |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Safeguarding</b>  |        |
| 8.1      | <p>TL summarised key changes within the most recent version of <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> (KCSIE) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abuse / bullying can be online or offline or both</li> <li>• Identifying children with health issues important as they may be more vulnerable – especially if out of school</li> <li>• Mental health - DfE released funds to train up mental health leads for schools</li> <li>• Be aware of links to parents in prison</li> </ul>  |        |

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|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent absence – investigate when only part of a day eg regularly late</li> <li>• Peer on peer abuse – should have a policy for this</li> <li>• Be more aware of risk factors which could indicate abuse</li> <li>• Community safety / child abduction</li> <li>• Cybersecurity</li> <li>• Modern slavery / human trafficking</li> <li>• Sexual violence / abuse – now very clear guidance about what is not acceptable</li> </ul>   |        |
| 8.2       | <p>All staff received training in this at start of term – we stressed importance of detecting this very early. KCSIE stresses need for staff to follow their school / trust policy. SH added there is more emphasis too on ‘low level concerns’ which may not trigger any thresholds - guidance now states some of these scenarios should be recorded.</p>  |        |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Finance</b>  |        |
| 9.1       | <p>Budget monitoring.<br/>ME reminded Trustees that the year end figures in his monitoring report were subject to change in the final audited accounts.<br/>He highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extra income</li> <li>• Staffing only slightly overspent – new payroll system really helpful here in managing costs</li> <li>• Revenue spend on premises main pressure – cleaning and repair costs</li> <li>• Repair costs reflect a historical underspend on capital works to regularly enhance / improve our schools – plans are in place to address this by earmarking a proportion of our reserves for specific school projects – health &amp; safety will be a priority</li> <li>• Catering savings due to reduced staffing costs and take-up of free school meals</li> <li>• Reserves will remain static – but we have still invested in one-off projects</li> </ul> |        |
| 9.2       | <p>Utility costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locked into a contract till end of this financial year - anticipate going to market next spring.</li> <li>• Existing investment eg LED lighting – should generate significant savings.</li> <li>• Accept we are at the mercy of suppliers –the future is uncertain.</li> <li>• Reducing consumption is another challenge.</li> </ul>   |        |
| 9.3       | <p>KT shared details of a proposal to explore new external funding sources for children / charities / green energy initiatives.<br/>Trustees supported exploring this further and noted it may bring the opportunity of some PR support as well.</p>  | KT     |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Draft Governance Statement for external audit</b>  |        |
| 10.1      | <p>Trustees noted the draft governance statement which had been developed by the Audit Committee, and was available for sharing earlier than previous years.<br/>SH added this had been one of the benefits of greater co-ordination of the work involved.</p>  |        |

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| <b>11</b> | <b>Audit Committee 24 September</b>   |        |
| 11.1      | Summary of key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with internal audit regarding changes to format of future reports and request to see a draft first</li> <li>• Credit card review and changes – made significant improvements to controls over how they are being used</li> <li>• Initial discussion on updating risk management arrangements</li> <li>• Reviewed plans for external audit</li> </ul>  |        |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Governance</b>   |        |
| 12.1      | Training update.<br>Induction training delivered earlier this week – further sessions on Safeguarding Governor role and Stakeholder views booked for later this term.<br>MH shared the view that it would be good to make sessions more interactive and generate questions – though yesterday’s attendees were perhaps atypical as most had some form of education background.<br><i>Q: Will these sessions be repeated?</i><br>Yes plan is to offer induction each term, with a specific topic each half term focusing on key monitoring priorities. |        |
| 12.2      | Governance Scheme of Delegation - updating LGB Terms of Reference.<br>Trustees noted the proposed changes and confirmed they supported the change to Heads not having a dual role.<br>JA accepted the desire to give the main focus to the 6 priority monitoring areas agreed last term, and explained the additional proposed responsibilities would be limited to areas the Board needed oversight of.  | JA     |
| 12.3      | LGC reporting to the Board.<br>Trustees noted the different options and approaches available to make this work effectively.<br>Agreed that solution needed to focus on flexible / ‘by exception’ reporting as this would address concerns raised by chairs.<br>Further proposal to be shared at next Chair’s meeting.   | JA/KB  |
| 12.4      | CST Executive Pay survey.<br>Noted. Agreed to return to this topic at a future meeting.   | JA     |
| <b>13</b> | <b>AOB</b>  |        |
| 13.1      | Trustees noted the recent papers from SW Leaders event – in particular the update on Ofsted and the deprivation analysis.<br>Trustees confirmed they would happily accept any offer of a whole MAT ‘visit’.   |        |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Items for next agenda</b>  |        |
| 14.1      | CPR update. Audited accounts. Investment. Pupil Outcomes.   |        |
|           | Meeting finished at 16.14.  |        |