



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

22 March 2022, 1.00 p.m.

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action	
	<p>Trustees present: (<i>V = virtual attendance</i>)</p> <p>Karen Brokenshire (KB) V Nik Butcher (NB) Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Keith Tipler (KT) John Whetter (JW) V</p> <p><i>Also present:</i></p> <p>Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary V Mike England (ME) – Finance Director Simon Hague (SE) – CEO Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education</p>	<p>1. Apologies:</p> <p>Tom Briant-Evans (TBE)</p>	
2	Conflicts of Interest		
2.1	Trustees noted the updated Register of Interests and indicated several minor updates were required.	JA	
2.2	JA reported he was providing governance advice to the Southerly Point Board as a consultant independent from Crofty.		
3	Previous minutes of the 8 February 2022 were accepted as an accurate record subject to following change to item 9.4: Remove line commencing " <i>TL confirmed...</i> "	JA	
4	Matters arising / Tracker		
4.1	Tracker Actions: 20.35 Action closed – agreed current format is sufficient. 20.44 Additional data will be available after next data drop. 20.63 Funding opportunities – further meeting later this week 20.76 Finance Team notes - next meeting scheduled next week.		
4.2	Matters arising: 14.2 TBE's new term of office confirmed by Members.		
5	Delegated Decisions: none		
6	Strategic update		
6.1	Trustees noted the update on progress and the impact made in priority areas. SH highlighted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Switch to community funding - establishing KPIs, first draft showed a deficit of £330K 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay rises for both teachers and support staff – former will see a narrowing of pay ranges • Supplementary grant announced to assist with energy costs and pay rises • CPPD becoming more embedded • Very positive feedback to our greater focus on training and support for admin staff – and no more staff have left • IT – 7/9 schools now transferred to the cloud • Continuing to make governance more effective - KBs role been very important, positive feedback on training 	
6.2	<p>Procurement savings appendix. Trustees welcomed the positive news on the savings achieved. ME confirmed the next cleaning contract offered further opportunity to continue this approach. <i>Q: Has energy consumption increased during Covid?</i> Not as high as expected. <i>Q: What impact will rising energy costs have on budget setting?</i> Approximately doubled.</p>	
6.3	<p>JA reported governors were beginning to hear about the introduction of community funding from individual heads. Agreed SH would provide a briefing at next LGC Chairs meeting.</p>	SH
7	CPR / SP update	
7.1	<p>SH explained he was becoming more systematic in his approach to raise the Trust's profile in response to a greater appreciation of how much the RSC relies on other players to assist them in delivering their plans – and he has been helped by the CEO at Dartmoor Trust. This is beginning to bear fruit – a request to the RSC to help us find an external reviewer has resulted in an offer of conducting a joint peer review with another MAT at zero cost.</p>	
7.2- 7.4	Confidential items	
8	Pupil Premium update	
8.1	<p>Director of Educations report. Audit completed of where funding is allocated – there is a statutory requirement to publish this on websites. Common areas include attendance, removing gaps, vocabulary, parental engagement. This poses the question as to whether we are focusing on the right things – and the clear evidence of so much overlap suggests we could be duplicating work. So the SIPS have started to consider if developing a whole Trust 'core offer' is a more efficient solution. This would ensure we take account of what the informed evidence / research says are the best things to do and offer them locally. Analysis of data from 2019 with 'post-Covid' data shows the gap is very similar – but the distribution has changed. Internally we are questioning assessment decisions across the Trust as we are not yet confident we are comparing like with like.</p>	

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	<p>The first step needs to be that we assess consistently within each school. Trustees commented that with c25% of all pupils within this cohort it was essential to give priority to addressing these concerns.</p> <p><i>Q: Is there a clear theory regarding this change in distribution?</i></p> <p>This is the cohort who missed a significant chunk of the whole KS1 experience – not just curriculum and learning but greater social interaction too – even when in school they were restricted to being in their bubble.</p> <p><i>Q: Do we know if this is national picture?</i></p> <p>No data available but local anecdotal evidence supports this.</p>	
8.2	<p>Y3 gap is significantly higher and Heads are supportive of proposal to get all Y3 teachers together and run a collaborative 'research project'. Focus will be on removing barriers to learning – whatever they might be.</p> <p>This should work well and bring other benefits (Y3 often has less experienced teachers). Summer term offers a good opportunity to commence this work.</p> <p>Conscious of not wanting to impose a single approach on schools – so project is looking at these underlying issues rather than existing practice. All schools have their own pre-determined systems so no benefit in undermining any of this.</p> <p><i>Q: Do we know what the gap in funding is for the Trust to address this – is it quantifiable?</i></p> <p>Interesting question - historically PP funding has been at times to balance budgets but certainly there will be a cost to releasing staff.</p> <p><i>Q: Is one solution changing how these children are taught?</i></p> <p>Yes – but it seems this is not working. For example a focus on reading does not address the issue of a readiness to learn.</p> <p><i>Q: Are you more confident about Y1/2?</i></p> <p>There are still some gaps but what we learn from the Y3 project should allow us to impact other year groups in the future.</p>	
8.3	<p>Trustees' Monitoring report.</p> <p>Focus of report was Pupil Premium / Disadvantaged pupils – the priorities for funding (8.1 above) and processes used to collect and analyse data.</p> <p><i>Q: Is it time to find an alternative to the Target Tracker system – or is the issue more to do with how it is used?</i></p> <p>TL confirmed this had been discussed by the working group looking at how we collect and use data – work delayed due to Covid. Her view was that the issue is more to do with how data is inputted and then the subsequent use we make of it. Our strategic IT plan includes looking for a new integrated MIS – similar functionality may be delivered by a solution to this. SH stressed the need for consistent whole Trust data.</p>	
9	Safeguarding	
9.1	<p>Single Central Record (SCR) external review.</p> <p>Completed externally in the autumn term. All issues have been addressed locally then subsequently peer reviewed.</p>	

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	Trustees noted the summary statement and that no serious concerns or significant risks had been identified.	
9.2	<p>Changes to s.157 submissions to the local authority.</p> <p>TL reported that Cornwall Council have changed their system. Once every 4 years they will carry out an external audit on every school, and require a peer review in alternate years.</p> <p>TL confirmed the latter can be completed by another school in the Trust and we already comply with this aspect – though we may look to have some of these carried out by an external reviewer.</p> <p>Trust has proposed Illogan and Lanner for first of 4 year external review cycle.</p> <p>SH reminded Trustees that the LA has the overarching responsibility for safeguarding every child in Cornwall and commented this seemed a positive step.</p>	
10	Finance	
110.1	<p>Budget monitoring.</p> <p>ME explained the report is to end of January and there has been no significant change from November.</p> <p>Current projections for year end:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £200K surplus – including Devolved Funding Capital. • £1.4m reserves. 	
10.2	<p>ME highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue increasing – partly due to supplementary grants • Reactive repairs and maintenance is a cost pressure — but should reduce over time as enhanced investment programme has an impact • Maximizing staff insurance claims. Currently 80-90% recovery – assisted by recent staff training • Catering – building up some surplus due to limited uptake of free school meals. Expect pressure from supplier for an in contract price hike. Anticipated savings earmarked for a new kitchen maintenance fund. <p>TL confirmed that catering / FSM take up has not been helped by Covid as the dining experience in some schools has deteriorated.</p>	
10.3	<p>ME explained decisions still to be made about ring-fencing / carry forward – eg fuel costs static until September.</p> <p>Auditors have confirmed having plans to spend catch-up funding / avoiding any significant carry-forward is acceptable.</p> <p>Teachers’ pay rise comes into effect from September.</p>	
11	Audit Committee 8 March	
11.1	<p>Trustees noted the minutes which KT confirmed were no longer a draft.</p> <p>KT drew their attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing discussions with internal audit • Proposed changes to governance responsibilities for Health & Safety • Forthcoming updated Health & Safety policy 	

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11.2	Trustees agreed amended Terms of Reference.	
12	Members AGM 11 March	
12.1	MH and JW reported the Members had discussed expansion opportunities and were broadly supportive – especially if this involves Southerly Point. Trustees noted they had raised a concern about the long term impact on children’s emotional development due to Covid. TL explained that each school will have a trained mental health lead thanks to DfE funding – but they will not be providing counselling.	
12.2	Member vacancy. This had been raised at the recent RSC meeting. MH asked all Trustees to identify any possible candidates – the commitment is one meeting per term.	ALL
13	Governance	
13.1	Summary of LGC reports to Trustees. JA explained this was first summary since new reporting form issued in the autumn and not all LGCs had yet submitted a report (reasons include meetings cancelled due to Covid). Following actions agreed: 1. Re-format into chronological order. 2. Indicate any ‘nil returns’. 3. Make standing item for future LGC Chairs agenda.	JA
14	Items for next agenda	
14.1	Growth. White paper. New data. Safeguarding – confirmed as first meeting of each term. Discussed option of a general invite to a future Finance meeting to hear more detail about budget changes.	SH/MH
	Dates of next meetings: 5 May LGC Chairs 24 May Board 8 June Audit Committee	
	Meeting finished at 3.38	