



## MINUTES of the STRATEGY SESSION / BOARD MEETING

18 October 2022, 1.00 p.m. at Lanner School

Item	Subject	Action
	<p><b>Trustees present:</b> Tom Briant-Evans (TBE) V Robin Cowen (RC) <i>item 3 onwards</i> Karen Harris (KH) <i>item 3 onwards</i> Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Peter Sheppard (PS) Keith Tipler (KT) <i>items 1-3.4 only</i> John Whetter (JW)</p> <p><b>Also present:</b> Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Cathryn Andrew – Headteacher <i>items 1-3 only</i> Mike England (ME) – Finance Director Simon Hague (SE) – CEO Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education Linda May – Headteacher <i>items 1-3 only</i> Kieran Walsh - Headteacher <i>items 1-3 only</i></p>	<p><b>1. Apologies:</b> Karen Brokenshire (KB) Nik Butcher (NB)</p>
2	Appoint Trustees	
2.1	MH shared details of the background and experience of two potential new recruits to the board and recommended them for appointment. Both KH and RC had previous governance involvement with Southerly Point, and RC also met the criteria set by the RDD to recruit a trustee with MAT leadership experience.	
2.2	Trustees agreed to co-opt KH and RC onto the board.	JA
3	Strategic Planning	
3.1	<p>SH introduced the session which would cover the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Reflect on our journey so far</li><li>2. Summarise the current context</li><li>3. Propose a way forward for the next 5 years</li></ul> <p>1. Reflect on our journey so far.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School improvement has always been at the heart of our thinking – all the way back to 2012 and creation of the co-operative trust</li></ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong focus on the quality of teaching - never been afraid to challenge each other</li> <li>• Strong culture of 'no child left behind'</li> <li>• Constantly debating how we achieve our purpose – the Why How What</li> </ul>	
3.2	<p>2. Summarise the current context.</p> <p>SH summarised examples of where the trust has made a significant impact (disadvantaged 2018, greater depth 2019, early reading 2022) and how this was achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well thought through strategies for teaching</li> <li>• Understanding of the subject specific leadership requirements</li> <li>• Culturally high expectations of what is possible, particularly for disadvantaged</li> <li>• Ensuring resources (Time, CPD, equipment)</li> </ul> <p>We have identified 4 ingredients for organisational success – school improvement, culture, operations and governance. All have evolved and will need to do so again as we grow from 9 to 16 schools. For example the quality of teaching is increasingly viewed through the lens of the bottom 20% - getting it right for them. Local governance has changed significantly over the last two years.</p>	
3.3	<p>The last 12 months.</p> <p>This time last year we agreed we needed to grow beyond just a group of 9 schools – a lot has happened since:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White paper and DfE's aim to have fewer but larger MATs</li> <li>• Formalised and codified school improvement strategy</li> <li>• Trust wide school improvement systems have been externally validated</li> <li>• Two successful Ofsted outcomes</li> <li>• Appointment of Speech &amp; Language specialist to the SI Team</li> <li>• Implemented Community Funding</li> <li>• Changes within CPR – two secondary heads retiring</li> </ul> <p>SH suggested that the RDD's decision to allow the trust to take on 7 new schools appears to be an opportunity for Crofty to become one of the larger MATs in the county.</p>	
3.4	<p>3. Looking forward.</p> <p>SH explained he wanted the updated strategy to propose a way forward for the next 5 years.</p> <p>The Context and Risk Analysis paper – together with the PESTLE summary and budget projections – provide the context.</p> <p>The trust has adopted the strategic planning approach and methodology used by the Dixons Academies Trust. Key features of this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting out plans as simply as possible</li> <li>• Identifying the 'levers' to pull to improve outcomes</li> <li>• Recognising not taking a risk is the greatest risk</li> </ul> <p>An example of a lever for Crofty would be greater support for marketing – MH reminded trustees this was an issue when the trust presented to the RDD earlier in the year.</p>	

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	<p>Crofty Five Year Plan – the headlines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build talent, operational and financial capacity to ensure consistently high standards in our existing schools</li> <li>2. Establish expertise and talent to attract secondary schools</li> <li>3. Grow the trust to provide quality education for over 7,500 children and young people</li> </ol>	
3.5	<p>Discussion of the plan and questions from trustees included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to be outstanding at what we do will draw others to us</li> <li>• Potential future merger with secondary schools / trust</li> <li>• Expansion brings us more capacity – but also challenge of demonstrating consistency</li> <li>• Several of our current schools still need further support</li> <li>• Number on roll projections for the smaller SPt schools look less secure</li> <li>• The trust needs to be ready to talk about further growth in 2023.24 – not wait another year</li> </ul> <p>There was a consensus view that specifically mentioning secondary schools might not be helpful – and could potentially put off small primaries from joining. Combining numbers two and three was seen as a better option.</p>	
3.6	<p>Next steps.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SH update plan and present to December Board for sign-off.</li> <li>2. Review this plan on a termly basis.</li> </ol>	SH SH/JA
<b>4</b>	<b>Finance</b>	
4.1	<p>External audit update.</p> <p>ME is meeting with external audit later this week but not expecting any major issues. Currently expecting to show a surplus of c.£353K for the year. He itemised the funding streams which had contributed to this (1.5% contingency, £140K supplementary grant).</p> <p>He also confirmed he will be discussing the options for ring-fencing some reserves and how this would appear in the final accounts.</p>	
4.2	<p>Budget monitoring.</p> <p>Trustees noted the report to end of August.</p> <p>ME identified potential 'hotspot' areas for the year ahead including IT systems and staff sickness insurance (last year recovery rate was too low at c.70%).</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Expansion update</b>	
5.1	<p>Trustees received a brief update on Southerly Point Project Board (SPPB) meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial due diligence reports compiled – arranging separate meetings to review all 7 schools</li> <li>• Legal support addressing issues with draft Commercial Transfer Agreement</li> <li>• Commissioned detailed property searches for all 7 schools</li> <li>• TUPE meeting held and no issues raised</li> <li>• On track for January completion of transfer</li> </ul>	

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5.2	SH reported there has been no further announcement about the next round of TCAF funding.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Agenda items for next meeting</b>	
6.1	Business case / formal decision on expansion. Receive draft annual accounts. Approve strategic plan. Decision to be taken if an additional meeting will be needed.	MH
	<b>Dates of next meetings:</b> 20/10 Joint session with SPt colleagues @Pencoys 11/11 Members 14/11 SPPB 22/11 Audit <b>6/12 Board @Rosemellin</b> 12/12 SPPB 13/12 LGC Chairs	
	Meeting finished at 3.35	