



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

21 March 2023, 1.00 p.m. at Roskear School

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Trustees present: Tom Briant-Evans (TBE) Karen Brokenshire (KB) Robin Cowen (RC) Karen Harris (KH) Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Peter Sheppard (PS) Keith Tipler (KT) John Whetter (JW)</p> <p>Also present: Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Mike England (ME) – Finance Director Simon Hague (SE) – CEO Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education Sean Pinhay (SP) – Chief Finance and Operations Officer John Roseveare (JR) – National Leader of Governance Vanessa Schreiber (VS) – Executive PA</p>	
1	Welcome and Apologies	
2.1	MH welcomed JR to the meeting and explained he would be observing as part of the Trust's External Review of Governance.	
2.2	Apologies: none.	
2	Minutes of the meeting of 31 January 2023 were accepted as an accurate record.	
3	Matters arising / Action Tracker	
3.1	Tracker. Item 04: Online meeting calendar solution in progress – new solution being assessed.	
3.2	Items 06/07 – CEO Performance Management. MH confirmed pay recommendations have been implemented. Series of dates arranged with SH to review objectives. MH to report back to Board in due course.	MH
3.3	Confidential item.	
4	Strategic update	
4.1	Trustees received an update from SH covering the following:	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress with strategic plan objectives • Wider political context • New schools • RDD support • Operations and staffing • Premises 	
4.2	<p>Strategic Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school improvement hub model is continuing to change • Trust SEND lead appointed – will start in September • Very successful inhouse training day with year group teachers meeting together • Weekly Headteacher meetings providing very good induction for new colleagues • Reviewing a range of our software systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new finance system being procured – ready for September 2023. - looking at IMS next <p>JW commented it was good to see a lot of teachers together at the training day and they received a good opening address from SH.</p>	
4.3	<p>Wider picture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Paper dropped and no new legislation • 4 days of strikes resulted in lots of public sympathy and very little negativity from parents • Can expect a change to the Ofsted framework with change of leadership • MAT Inspection Framework developments are ongoing <p>Trustees noted that individual heads already receive plenty of support within our MAT framework and we have lots of evidence to support any inspection.</p>	
4.4	<p>New schools.</p> <p>No surprises with the new schools and plenty of positives – ‘positivity of staff and their leaders’ is continuing.</p> <p>MH reported the same approach of regular communications is taking place at the local governance level eg SH has attended several LGC meetings to deliver induction into the trust.</p>	
4.5	<p>RDD support.</p> <p>TL reported on the recent review of our School Improvement systems – provided for free under the RDD’s Trust School Improvement programme.</p> <p>This was carried out by a very experienced MAT CEO (Steve Savory) and his School Improvement lead – using the MAT Assurance Framework.</p> <p>Initial feedback was ‘hugely positive’ and they said they would reflect on their own work having observed Crofty’s approach. In particular they were very impressed with how quickly we had built our culture into the new schools and how positive they were.</p> <p>Two areas were identified for improvement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paperwork we use to make our case for growth to the RDD – needs to explain better how accountability works within the trust 2. Be clearer where we do / don’t align things across the trust and explain why eg curriculum. 	

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	<p>SH confirmed the trust gets 10 days of support in total so he and TL will do a reciprocal visit to review a more mature MAT as part of this process. Steve Savory has offered to help us review our paperwork.</p> <p>Trustees heard that they were very impressed with all the staff they met during the two day visit, and commented that the readiness of the new schools to adopt our culture reflected the hard work carried out in the autumn term.</p>	
4.6	<p>Operations and Staffing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment plans were reported including the rationale for Godolphin Head moving to Illogan • Admin training day went well - new staff dealing very well with the amount of change • Parc Eglos trialling a catering experiment – greater use of local produce • Heads commenced planning next year’s staffing structure as start of budget setting • Revised schedule of work for estates including roof work and solar installations • IT investment using reserves from Southerly Point 	
4.7	Confidential item	
5	Director of Education’s report	
5.1	<p>MH provided some context for future reporting to the board given the imminent introduction of the two formal committees.</p> <p>The committee chair will lead on reporting to the board – supported by the minutes and papers from their respective committee meetings. Officers will still be present to answer questions and /or present additional papers.</p> <p>MH reiterated that regardless of committee membership he wants ‘everyone owning everything’ at the board level.</p>	
5.2	<p>School Improvement plan progress review.</p> <p>Trustees received a RAG-rated version of the plan showing progress over the first two terms.</p> <p>TL reported that Cathryn Andrew will take the lead on Priority 3: Leadership for the rest of the academic year.</p> <p>Impact of Core Provision summary.</p> <p>Trustees commented this was a very interesting read and demonstrated how much has been done.</p>	
5.3	<p>School Summary report.</p> <p>TL confirmed the format of this report had been adapted in response to trustee feedback including adding cohort data and key KPIs.</p> <p>TL gave a verbal update following a visit to Garras the previous day - very impressed with what we saw despite being a small school at full capacity as consistently oversubscribed.</p>	
5.4	Confidential item.	
5.5	<p>Trustees commented that the report format was excellent.</p> <p><i>Q: For the small schools is it possible to see trend data?</i></p> <p>Currently included on the SoaP report (School on a Page) for each school – these are shared with governance at the start of the year.</p> <p><i>Q: Does the team need more capacity?</i></p>	

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	<p>Cathryn just starting in new role so will need to review later. TL will review whole school improvement strategy based on external review and our practical experience with it.</p> <p><i>Q: Will budget pressures have any impact on turning these schools around?</i></p> <p>Different approach needed at each school – eg for Halwin and Porthleven first identify the barriers then remove them – do not expect this will all require extra resources.</p> <p><i>Q: Is lack of EWO support from the LA still an issue for attendance levels?</i></p> <p>Yes Cornwall Council is more and more stretched and cannot provide the support we need. Expect our new Trust Lead appointment will make a difference – the starting point is to ensure our existing policies are being implemented fully everywhere.</p> <p>Trustees noted that despite a significant increase in primary age exclusions across the county this was not reflected within the trust and suggested the internal training programme had contributed to this.</p>	
6	Finance	
6.1	<p>Budget monitoring.</p> <p>SP provided a detailed report on the latest budget position together with summary of KPIs and items discussed at the recent Finance group meeting.</p> <p>Following were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall position improved slightly from previous month • Reinvesting in x2 PV arrays – start of rolling programme • Porthleven staffing overspend was expected – adjustments will be made in next budget cycle to reflect lower pupil numbers • Final decision on procuring new finance package system was influenced by best solution for our admin staff and receiving payments from parents • Investment planning being reviewed regularly due to rising interest rates – now obtaining at least 4% on latest investments 	
6.2	<p>Shared Services pay proposal.</p> <p>SH reminded trustees that initially this team was just three 3 posts – and salaries were benchmarked against similar local authority (LA). The continued growth of the team in numbers and range of roles, together with need to reflect the LA does not link their pay scales to the national pay (NJC) pay ranges – means it is time for a review.</p> <p>For lowest paid staff the ambition has been to move towards offering the living wage – but this has become much harder during last 12 months.</p> <p>Core recommendation is the Trust’s own range of pay scales align directly with those negotiated nationally (NJC). Advantages of this approach include remaining competitive with similar providers and simplifying budget setting / planning.</p> <p><i>Q: Upper Grades for Shared Services – how do these compare to teaching salary bands and should they reflect market prices for similar roles outside of education?</i></p> <p>SH suggested the closest match was with a Deputy Head role. Process does need more detailed work to be completed but allows some progression to mirror that for teachers. He pointed out that school based support staff currently have no opportunity to progress.</p> <p>Trustees noted this was a topic for an update at a future meeting.</p>	JA/SH

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6.3	<p>Pay Policies 2023.24 – Teaching and Support Staff.</p> <p>SH confirmed that only minor amendments had been made to these from previous year.</p> <p><i>Q: How are Headteacher pay rates decided?</i></p> <p>Reviewed annually and trust has some flexibility over taking other factors into account eg levels of deprivation.</p>	
6.4	Trustees confirmed their approval of these 3 proposals.	
7	Board restructure	
7.1	<p>Trustees had received in advance an updated paper with the details of the proposed restructure and introduction of two new committees. MH reiterated the desire for everyone to own everything.</p> <p>He confirmed that detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) for each committee would be drafted and presented at the first committee meetings for discussion and version agreed for recommendation to the board for final approval.</p> <p>He reminded trustees that in line with other recent documentation reviews and updates they should be kept as simple as possible.</p>	
7.2	<p>Discussion of the briefing paper raised several areas to be addressed either through the final ToR or retained by full board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk management – eg ownership responsibility (board vs officer) and divide between committee and full board. 2. HR – acknowledged this is a wide-ranging ‘descriptor’ covering leadership performance and impact on pupil outcomes, through compliance requirements and on to pay awards and policies. 3. New FAR committee meetings will be different in nature from existing finance group – they need to be trustee rather than officer-driven. 4. Lead Trustee roles to be reviewed and proposals made – retain, subsume into committee ToR, create new etc 	
7.3	Decision – Trustees agreed with the proposal to introduce the two new committees.	
7.4	<p>Follow-up actions for JA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft ToR and present to initial committee meetings. 2. Produce briefing note on HR responsibility options. 3. Produce briefing note on Lead Trustee roles. 4. Arrange meeting dates for summer term for both committees. 	JA
8	Governance	
8.1	<p>External review of governance.</p> <p>Date and time for feedback session for Trustees agreed as 2pm Wednesday 19 March via MS Teams.</p> <p>JR will share his key findings.</p>	JA
8.2	<p>Members 3 March.</p> <p><i>(Draft minutes have now been confirmed by meeting chair).</i></p> <p>Trustees noted the need to recruit at least two new Members was discussed.</p>	

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8.3	Update from Governance Planning meeting 17 March: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 stakeholder surveys are in the pipeline – results to be shared in due course • Training for summer term discussed • Half day Governor Conference proposal agreed for 2023.24 • Trust investigating new software product (Governor Hub) as a more user-friendly alternative to Sharepoint / OneDrive etc 	
	Meeting finished at 15.10	
	Dates of next meetings: 16/5 Board 23/5 LGC Chairs 16/6 Members 27/6 Board 18/7 Board <i>TBA – New Committees</i>	