



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

18 July 2023, 1p.m. at Pennoweth School

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Trustees present: Karen Brokenshire (KB) Karen Harris (KH) <i>item 4 onwards</i> Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Peter Sheppard (PS) 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 <i>items 1-5 only</i> Sean Pinhay (SP) – Chief Finance and Operations Officer Deborah Richards (DR) – Prospective Trustee Vanessa Schreiber (VS) – Executive PA</p>	
1	Welcome and Apologies	
1.1	MH welcomed DR to the meeting and introductions were made.	
1.2	Apologies: Tom Briant-Evans (TBE)	
2	Minutes of the meeting of 27 June 2023 were accepted as an accurate record.	
3	Action Tracker / Matters arising	
3.1	30 – Shared Services pay – autumn term.	
3.2	53 – Governance Action Plan – in progress.	
4	Strategic update	
4.1	National. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.5% teacher pay rise offered – all unions recommended their members accept the offer • Workload and Ofsted also been discussed • Ofsted have a new lead – currently a MAT CEO – so could be a move in the right direction • Rumours of a further rise in teachers’ pension contributions – last one was funded but nothing else known at present 	
4.2	Regional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with RDDs office – kept them updated on the trust and recent Ofsted outcomes 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Trust Leaders Network – message from SW office was all about commissioning • Number of MATs in the region has decreased – so mergers / re-brokering a definite trend • 81% academisation in Cornwall means still higher than regional and national figure • Post-pandemic attendance issues recognised as system-wide now • Want coherence in the system – civic leadership / stewardship – trust leaders to look beyond their own trusts 	
4.3	<p>Recruitment.</p> <p>Porthleven Head – no appointment made so putting interim arrangements in place.</p>	
4.4	<p>Commissioning High Quality Trusts – new DfE guidance.</p> <p>Explains the process used by DfE / regional offices to decide on conversions, mergers and creation of new MATs. System has been ‘opaque’ upto now with no clear detail available. Builds on recently published Trust Quality Descriptions and is a mix of both quantitative and qualitative indicators.</p> <p>Should help us with planning future growth – we can identify areas to focus on and evidence to highlight in applications.</p>	
4.5	<p>Growth.</p> <p>SH will shortly start looking at potential partners list – who we might want to approach in the next academic year.</p> <p>MH working with other regional Chairs in a group identifying a list of key strategic questions for boards to ask.</p>	
5	School Improvement	
5.1	Confidential item	
5.2	<p>Data headlines.</p> <p>TL took trustees through the headline data from recently published results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GLD – Trust average was 70% - up from last year and last national figure was 63% • End of KS1 Phonics was 94% - also up from last year and above national target • KS1 results – final year of testing as will be internal in the future. Indicative national figure draws on a range of other sources at present. • Reading, Writing and Maths all improved from previous year • Y4 Maths check – only introduced last year and this is first year with benchmarks • KS2 results – really pleased with these • Reading, Writing and Maths and combined all improved from previous year and at or above national • Great achievement for the Trust – especially the combined score as RDD will use this as one of their new indicators for future growth decisions • National controversy about the reading test not reflected within our schools <p>Trustees welcomed these results as a ‘seismic step forward’ for the Trust – first time been at or above national across the board. They thanked all staff for their hard work in achieving this outcome.</p> <p>TL highlighted this has been achieved post-pandemic – many schools did not get upto speed as quickly as we did. We made reading central to everything – and sought evidence</p>	

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	<p>of the impact at all of our visits. Attendance also improved and our exclusions data is much lower than national and local figures.</p> <p><i>Q: Any guidance on the Y4 Maths check process?</i></p> <p>Online test but we can be smarter about this in the future – eg children practice during the year on the hardware they will use for final test - to help them perform under specific test conditions.</p> <p><i>Q: Do small school results skew our data?</i></p> <p>Three year average score is a much better indicator for small schools – cohorts vary between 4-16.</p> <p>Trustees noted the new hub groupings for next year.</p>	
5.3	SIG Committee 3 July	
5.3.1	<p>Terms of Reference.</p> <p>JW thanked RC and JA for their work on these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance needed between strategic overview and more detailed analysis • Focus on those schools causing concern • Transition included as wider than just Y6 moving to secondary school • Highlighted decision to discontinue most Lead Trustee roles – having the whole committee / committee chair responsible is a better solution • Aim to schedule attendance by specialist leads into the annual planner <p>TL has reported that in recent Ofsted inspections inspectors asked for minutes that evidence trust board was monitoring school improvement directly. Agreed a need to review committee and board minutes to ensure they provided necessary evidence for the future.</p>	JA/TL
5.3.2	<p>JW highlighted the following from the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crofty Community Awards - expect to launch these next term • Future Trustee visits – will mirror Ofsted walk through with the children • Changes to SI strategy – visits and accountability split • Priorities for future governor training discussed 	
5.4	<p>School Summary.</p> <p>Updated to reflect recent Ofsteds and latest data. TL collates this from work of the whole SI team who also use it to plan their work.</p> <p>Trustees commented again on how helpful this format was and there was 'lots of green'.</p> <p>Trustees noted that Halwin is the school causing greatest concern – followed by Parc Eglos. They also noted the expected dates for future Ofsted inspections.</p>	
6	Finance	
6.1	Approve 2023.24 Budget.	
6.1.1	<p>SP confirmed this draft budget had been reviewed at FAR committee. Trust is setting a balanced budget by making a substantial call on reserves – but this has been made possible by previous work in sustaining these and by the transfer of £1.3m from Southerly Point.</p> <p>Budget has been set against significant cost pressures over recent years – including energy and unfunded pay rises (notably support staff) – but also continuous investment into people and systems the outcomes of which are increasingly evident.</p>	

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	<p>SP highlighted the projected overspend but drew attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • range of new posts in place for the year ahead • budgeted teachers pay at 4%. • projected reserves in two years time <p>SP was confident that the current deficit could be managed out within two years and confirmed work has already commenced – in collaboration with the SI team – on where savings and efficiencies can be made with staffing (eg new five school hub).</p>	
6.1.2	<p>Trustees commented the budget setting process was very clear which is important.</p> <p><i>Q: How will you identify opportunities to halve the deficit within 12 months?</i></p> <p>Combination of work mentioned earlier plus being canny about the opportunities which arise from any vacancies.</p> <p><i>Q: Do we benefit financially due to improving academic outcomes?</i></p> <p>No.</p> <p><i>Q: What will be done about overspends – especially smaller schools?</i></p> <p>Latter are subject to significant variations year to year due to PAN volatility. More flexible staffing and class structures is one option we will investigate.</p> <p>Trustees noted the net contributors to overall budget and that Pennoweth appeared to offer lessons to be learnt elsewhere from their use of staffing and resources.</p>	
6.1.3	Trustees approved the budget for 2023.24.	
6.2	<p>Approve Budget Forecast Return.</p> <p>SP reported the figures had already been shared with ESFA as part of other conversations and we received positive feedback on our projections.</p> <p>SP highlighted the projected end of year reserves over next 3 years – and explained a minor difference from budget papers as an additional balance from Southerly Point accounts had been received.</p> <p>Trustees approved submission of this return.</p>	
6.3	FAR Committee 4 July. (<i>Note – minutes incorrectly marked as Draft</i>)	
6.3.1	<p>NL fed back from the meeting on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management approach - discussions now underway on preferred approach for the future. Committee ToR will be updated once decision made. • Additional funding of £425K built into next year’s budget • SP expects changes to system from next year will further improve reliability of budget monitoring and forecasting • Discussed future priorities for internal audit work <p>Differences between trust’s funding model and how budgets need to be presented were discussed and it was agreed to look at this in more detail at a future committee meeting.</p>	NL/JA
6.3.2	<p>Estates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major investment taking place over the summer – targeted at the new schools • Several externally funded PFI projects • SP explained the range of capital funding sources available to the trust 	

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6.4	ESFA letter 6 July 2023. SH reported this mainly highlights the minor changes to latest version of the Academy Trust Handbook – none of which have any direct impact on the trust.	
6.5	Garras update. Series of proposals prepared by the ESFA following a review of all the options. We anticipate they will negotiate direct with the landowner and expect an update later this week.	
7	Governance	
7.1	NL was re-appointed as Vice Chair for another term.	
7.2	Updated Governance Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference. Trustees agreed one amendment: 4.1 Curriculum plans and strategies to be approved by management not the board. Trustees noted the Terms of Reference for the two new committees and the allocation of responsibilities for HR responsibilities between full board and the committees. JA confirmed committees will have task of reviewing their ToR added to their planner for summer term 2024.	JA JA
7.3	Governance Meeting Schedule 2023.24 was shared. Board and both committees will meet every half term.	
7.4	Committee minutes. Trustees agreed not to publish these on website. However as still public documents JA to retrospectively check the minutes from this term to decide if any should be moved to Part B Confidential – and ensure this approach followed in the future.	JA
	Meeting finished at 3.15	
	Dates of next meetings: 6/9 Governance Planning 19/9 FAR Committee 25/9 SIG Committee 3/10 Board	