



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

5 December 2023, 1p.m. at Tehidy Golf Club

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Trustees present: V = virtual Tom Briant-Evans (TBE) Robin Cowen (RC) V Karen Harris (KH) Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Deborah Richards (DR) <i>item 5.2.2 onwards</i> Peter Sheppard (PS) John Whetter (JW)</p> <p><i>Also present:</i> Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Simon Hague (SE) – CEO <i>items 1-5.2.3 only</i> Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education Sean Pinhay (SP) – Chief Finance and Operations Officer Vanessa Schreiber (VS) – Executive PA</p>	
1	Apologies: Karen Brokenshire (KB)	
2	Conflicts of Interest	
2.1	Current Register of Interests was shared. Any amendments to be sent to JA.	
2.2	No additional interests were declared.	
3	Minutes of the meeting of 3 October 2023 were accepted as an accurate record.	
4	Action Tracker / Matters arising	
4.1	Action Tracker. 30 – Shared Services pay. Agenda item 7.3 will close this item.	
4.2	53 - Governance Action Plan. To be agreed at January Governance Planning meeting.	
4.3	72 – Governor Conference 2024 – date agreed as morning of Saturday 12 October.	
4.4	82 - CEO PM meeting – booked for later this month.	
5	STRATEGIC / OPERATIONS	
5.1	Trust Strategic Plan. Trustees received the latest version of the Strategic Plan. SH confirmed there were no significant changes.	
5.2	CEO's update	
5.2.1	Government's Minimum Service Level agreement proposal. SH briefly explained this development – likening it to what has been introduced for transport providers during periods of industrial action.	

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	<p>There has been 'universal consternation' across the sector with a wide range of concerns raised including the attack on Article 11 human rights.</p> <p>In the current proposal it is a power not a duty – but for primary schools it would effectively remove the right to strike.</p>	
5.2.2	<p>RDDs regional meeting feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDD leaving for a local government role - not yet known who will replace her • Primary standards do not match Ofsted outcomes (rise in number of 'Good's)– especially Maths • Outgoing Ofsted lead's final report highlights a breaking of the social contract between families and schools – the root of challenges within the system • Number of schools wishing to convert to academy at all time high – equates to 9% all LA schools in the region • Shared their observation that primary only trusts will struggle with growth and resources - more challenging to create a MAT dividend (<i>suggests our model is relatively strong compared to other similar trusts</i>). • Average of 10.6 schools per MAT in our region – double national average • Urgent need for SEND partnership working (<i>SH confirmed a network is already being created within the county which includes the council</i>) • They have challenges around area-based planning – want to see more coherence but limited opportunities to influence this themselves <p>Trustees noted we need a system where collaboration takes place – not competition – we want children to be the winners.</p> <p>CEOs leaving can be the catalyst for smaller trusts merging.</p>	
5.2.3	<p>SH posed the question whether the Trust should consider changing articles so they could take on faith schools? He noted the Diocese had previously 'checked us out' and felt the Trust was in a position to consider further expansion.</p> <p>Brief discussion covered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE recently introduced single set of model articles which are more upto date • Previous experience of other trusts has been Diocese's capacity can be limited leading to delays in decision making • Challenge is how you get to the conversation of how will we provide better services – this is the benefit of a merger 	
5.2.4	<p>MH shared examples of new publicity material – incorporating change of name discussed at strategy session in June 2023.</p> <p><i>Q: Trustees queried if a formal decision was required and who needed to be informed of the change?</i></p>	SH
5.3	Safeguarding update	
5.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Trust lead is Lucy Wandless (Head at Illogan) – who previously held same role at Southerly Point trust. • Decision has been taken to migrate to CPOMS system next term. Can track a wider range of issues than current MyConcern system – eg behavioural issues. • DSL network created categories for CPOMS – will allow future whole trust data sets to be reported to Trustees 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Central Records (SCRs) a focus this term – partly based on LA inspection but also some Ofsted questions. All now held in one place. • Improving various policies together with the procedures for reviewing / updating these • Discussing with the LA our preferred future audit / external scrutiny arrangements 	
5.3.2	<p>Governance. DR requested a meeting with TL and Trust Lead to find out more about her responsibilities and training needs, and ask some questions based on what she has researched so far.</p> <p>Training requirements – TL confirmed the Trust wants Trustees to complete level 2 and the Safeguarding Lead Trustee level 3 annually. Former can be completed either online or face to face. Trustees expressed a consensus preference for online – but it was noted for autumn 2024 there would be opportunities to attend face to face sessions too.</p>	<p>TL/DR</p> <p>DR/JA</p>
6	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	
6.1	Ofsted update / reports	
	<p>Trustees noted the final reports from 4 recent Ofsted inspections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes were expected • Representative of our schools and work as a trust • Recognise more collaborative approach of a MAT and the impact on outcomes 	
6.2	DoE's update	
6.2.1	School improvement strategy change introduced for this year - separating accountability from support – is having a positive impact and has allowed some 'harder' conversations too.	
6.2.2/3	Confidential items	
6.3	SIG Committees 8/27 November	
6.3.1	Minutes were received from two SIG Committees 8/27 November.	
6.3.2	<p>JW summarised areas committee members had discussed during their meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of the data presented gives us a very rounded picture of what is happening in our schools • Trust has responded to queries raised during Pencoys Ofsted around governance seeing limited data for attendance and behaviour. LGCs receiving termly reports and SIG reviews the Risk Assessment framework termly. • SEN concerns in some schools and new draft inclusion strategy a positive step. This area presents lots of opportunities to involve pupils and listen to what they have to say. • Former Southerly Point schools were well behind in some areas – but many have recognised what the Trust can offer and are gratefully accepting it. • We have some concerns about whole trust leadership capacity – with SI leaders having to devote considerable time to specific schools. <p>TL explained the cover brought in to assist at the small school hub - an experienced Head from outside of the trust seconded to us for 3 days per week.</p>	

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7	FINANCE	
7.1	Final accounts and Management Letter	
7.1.1	<p>Final Accounts 2022.23. SIG Committee recommended these accounts for approval by the Board. SP – Key headlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts are unqualified • Reserves increased to £2.6m from £1.9m – reflects balance transferred from former Southerly Point trust • Cash in bank currently £3.5m – most held within investment funds <p>Trustees agreed their approval of the accounts.</p>	
7.1.2	<p>Management Letter. Trustees welcomed the minor number of recommendations with only one graded important. They passed on their thanks to SP and his team for achieving this outcome – noting it had been a very atypical year too. They also welcomed the improvements made with actions outstanding from previous years - with only some minor issues regarding local governance records to be addressed this year.</p>	JA
7.1.3	<p>Letters of Representation. Trustees noted these letters concerning the audit process and checks and regulatory assurances.</p>	
7.2	Budget Monitoring	
7.2.1	<p>Trustees received the management accounts for the first two months of the year. SP highlighted the following from his supporting paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant variances with income • Minor variations to staffing expenditure - inevitable as budgets set earlier in the summer but not yet of any significance • Teaching overspend is due to price of living increase – will be offset by additional funding • 160K underspend on support staff is mainly due to difficulties with recruitment – which will have a knock on effect on teaching and learning in most schools 	
7.2.2	<p>ESFA have published guidance on academy reserves. This recommends a range of between 5-20% of income as 'acceptable'. Trust total is currently around 12% and SP offered the opinion this could comfortably reduce to around 8% in the future.</p>	
7.3	Pay Policies 2023.24	
7.3.1	<p>Shared Services team. SP reminded Trustees this proposal addressed an outstanding action on the tracker. He highlighted the following from the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduces minor variations for non-managerial roles • scale system for managerial roles to support retaining / recruiting to these key roles • cost implications c.£10K in total • retains link to national scales / scheme 	

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	<p>Future considerations include moving some roles to same pay range – potentially when postholders leave / retire.</p> <p>SP confirmed that line management of the roles listed is shared between SP and TL.</p> <p>Trustees agreed to the proposals but asked that the lack of pay differential between the CFOO post and others is reviewed by the CEO.</p>	SH
7.3.2	<p>Teacher / Support Staff pay policies.</p> <p>Major change is inclusion of the ex-Southerly Point schools – all changes are highlighted.</p> <p>Both policies out for consultation with unions.</p> <p>Trustees approved these policies.</p>	
7.4	Procurement – Print tender proposal	
7.4.1	<p>SP introduced this item by explaining current financial scheme of delegation limits means this contract (no. of schools, multi-year) is too big for FAR Committee to award – hence being presented to full Board.</p> <p>Three tenders have been received – all similar or below current contract price.</p> <p><i>Q: Do any schools restrict access to printers?</i></p> <p>We have monitoring software installed to identify who prints the most. TL reported she has had conversations with some school leaders over excessive use of worksheets.</p> <p>FAR committee had raised two other questions around how well copyright restrictions are understood and followed, and was there scope to add the other schools to this contract in the future.</p>	
7.4.2	<p>Trustees confirmed that they were happy for FAR to make final award of the contract – information to be shared via email to minimise any delay.</p> <p>Final decision to be shared and minuted at future FAR meeting.</p>	
7.5	Confidential item	
7.6	<p>FAR Committee 21 November</p> <p>NL confirmed the majority of the committee’s business was covered in earlier agenda items and reported that the Garras lease has been extended by 6 months whilst final details are worked out between owners and the DfE.</p> <p>He asked that the minutes reflect Trustees thanks to the Estates Manager for his presentation to the committee.</p>	
8	GOVERNANCE	
8.1	Recruitment / Roles	
8.1.1	<p>JW is standing down as a Trustee at the end of the month. RC has agreed to take the role of SIG Committee Chair for the next 12 months.</p>	
8.1.2	<p>MH reminded the board that this meant overall numbers had reduced again to 8 Trustees for the year ahead – compared to our target figure of 11. All were asked to use their own networks and connections to identify any potential new board members.</p>	
8.2	<p>Members meeting 17 November</p> <p>Minutes will be issued when available. Focus of the meeting was on school improvement, updates on new governance structure and how local governance performed during Ofsted visits.</p>	

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	New Member Jonathan Peck attended his first meeting. JW highlighted that the Trust will need to recruit at least one new Member in the new year.	
9	AOB	
9.1	MH reported that the scheduled LGC Chairs meeting for later today had been cancelled – so Governance Planning group would need to look at how to improve planning and scheduling for future meetings at their next meeting.	JA
9.2	Trustees and officers all gave their thanks to JW for all the time and effort he has given to education in the area – as deputy head, Headteacher, governor and trustee – and in particular taking the lead on monitoring the Trust’s school improvement work and outcomes. JW thanked them and admitted that although initially an ‘academy sceptic’ this was no longer the case - especially for Crofty. If he was still a Headteacher he would ‘join them in a shot’.	
	Meeting finished at 15.40	
	Dates of next meetings: 8/1 Governance Planning 8/1 SIG Committee 23/1 FAR Committee 6/2 Board 6/2 LGC Chairs 26/3 Board	