

MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

20 May 2024, 1p.m. at Tehidy Golf Club

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Trustees present: V = virtual Tom Briant-Evans (TBE) V Karen Brokenshire (KB) Rob Gasson (RG) V Karen Harris (KH) V Mike Hosking (MH) – Chair Nick Lake (NL) Deborah Richards (DR) Peter Sheppard (PS)</p> <p><i>Also present:</i> Jem Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Matt Brierley (MB) – Prospective Trustee Simon Hague (SE) – CEO Tamsin Lamb (TL) – Director of Education V Sean Pinhay (SP) – Chief Finance and Operations Officer Vanessa Schreiber (VS) – Executive PA</p>	
1	Welcome and Apologies	
1.1	Welcomed MB to the meeting as a prospective new Trustee. Trustees introduced themselves.	
1.2	Apologies: Robin Cowen (RC)	
2	Conflicts of Interest: no additional interests were declared.	
3	Minutes of the meeting of 26 March 2024	
3.1	Minutes of the meeting were accepted as an accurate record subject to the following amendments: Part A/B/C – add PS to attendees. 5.3.1 - add reference to DR's written report	JA
4	Action Tracker / Matters arising	
4.1	Action Tracker. 97 Trustee Safeguarding training. JA to check on progress.	JA
4.2	109 Policy work. SH provided an update on progress in compiling a full list ready to decide level of governance involvement. This could include delegating some (eg Behaviour) to LGCs as well as either the Board or committees. JA added they can be delegated to a Lead Trustee too.	
4.3	133 Share analysis of our performance against Trust Quality Indicators. In progress but best reviewed again after Strategy Day in July.	

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4.4	136 Member recruitment. One enquiry made – awaiting a response. SP's offer to approach former Southerly Point Members was accepted.	MH SP
5	STRATEGIC / OPERATIONS	
5.1	Strategic update	
5.1.1	SW Regions meeting – RDD's update. SH provided the following summary of what had been covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the Trust Quality Indicators for decision making • Same priorities for the region – attendance, SEND, growth of primary MATs, decisions to make sense for the locality as well as school • National academisation rate now 50.1% - South West is highest at 64% • Converter pipeline – 89 schools in April • For Cornwall looking for incremental conversions and mergers – currently 53 maintained schools and 8 SATs left • No new MATs will be allowed – but out of country hubs still a possibility • New DfE Attendance Analysis tool – focus is on 5-15% absentees / PA groups • Ofsted presentation – looking to be listening and looking to change too • AI and education – very interesting presentation • Politician's view of potential Labour government's approach to education 	
5.1.2	Confidential item	
5.2	RDD meeting feedback	
	Met with several of their team who also visited Pennoweth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More of a 'strategic visit' than expected – but extremely positive • Started with the message they acknowledge we are a 'strong and stable trust' • Reinforces we are in a position to expand - discussion was about 'how' we could expand – not 'when/if' • Incremental or merger approaches – we stressed the latter would need to be with a trust with a similar culture to our own • They had read recent Ofsted reports and noted how frequently the impact of the Trust has been mentioned 	
5.3	Change of name update. Name change is now official. Letter going to parents via each school – stressed no significant costs being incurred and there will be a slow roll-out of changes to signage / documentation etc.	
5.4	Safeguarding. DR reported she had met with the Safeguarding team to hear more about the implementation of the new CPOMs system.	
6	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	
6.1	DoE's update	
6.1.1	Confidential item	
6.1.2	Curriculum Development – work is ongoing with this.	

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	School Improvement (SI) Strategy is being reviewed – want to ensure it has the maximum impact on outcomes but minimum impact on school staff. Engaging with staff about potential changes but so far very little negative feedback or suggestions of what to change.	
6.2	<p>SIG Committee 24 April. TL reported back on behalf of RC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing issues with data tracking system so have cancelled our contract and will get a replacement as part of new MIS system • Moderation of Maths data an issue • Community awards continuing to be successful and a positive process (all but one are staff so far) • GLA Peer Review partly prompted our own SI Strategy review. • EY Strategy published, Maths at the publishers <p>Governance: Training was discussed and we will put more focus on videos and online sessions as we seek to improve takeup and participation. Decision has been taken to mark all SILC reports as Confidential in future following an issue at one school where information about an individual was disclosed without Headteacher being aware.</p>	
7	FINANCE	
7.1	Budget Setting update	
7.1.1	<p>Two papers were issued to Trustees at the meeting which explained the staffing principles used in applying the Trust’s ‘community funding’ approach to budget setting, together with several draft budgets. SP summarised the process so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just the third year of community funding – so continuing to learn and refine our approach • TL and SIP team heavily involved due to clear link between staffing levels and educational outcomes • First budget meeting with Heads had no staffing principles applied and gave an overspend of £1.6m (Reserves reducing to £225K) which clearly was not a viable option • Tighter principles introduced – ‘rules to stick by’ – with aim of reducing staffing costs • Non-staffing principles were introduced last year and expect to retain some or all of these • Work still underway on non-staffing costs but do not expect much change here as most are fixed costs / contracts 	
7.1.2	<p>Staffing Principles explanation. These are detailed and cover a range of factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of pupils / classes / admin staff / TAs / teachers • Deprivation bandings • Learning Mentors / Pastoral Support • Nursery staff where part of school (4 schools) • Service children (Parc Eglos) 	

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	<p>SP stressed that the process does allow for flexibility – eg each school can decide over non-teaching hours and SENDCo hours. Small schools are given extra consideration too – eg recognise the importance of fulltime admin support.</p> <p>TL commented it has been a really difficult process – striking a balance between what is reasonable and achievable versus getting the best educational outcomes. Feel we have achieved this and the majority of Heads have welcomed the transparency.</p>	
7.1.3	<p><i>Q: Trustees noted that biggest change in 2nd draft budget was a reduction in TA hours and asked about the likely impact of this if implemented?</i></p> <p>TL confirmed that teachers are very used to having TAs in the classroom – and historically the first move to improve outcomes was often to recruit an extra adult. However this is not always the best solution and we have observational evidence they are not always fully utilised. This can lead to some overstaffing and little or no impact made on improving the quality of education. Trust acknowledges this needs to be a change management priority – providing support and training for leaders, teachers, and support workers – but we cannot continue working in the same way.</p>	
7.1.4	<p>Latest Draft budget.</p> <p>SP confirmed that the Trust does not anticipate needing to make any redundancies – but there will need to be some movement of staff between schools.</p> <p>The volume of EHCPs at each school is reflected in draft allocations – especially for younger children.</p> <p>Pencoys will need to drop a class to reflect falling role – TL has already met with the staff to explain why and the implications of this.</p> <p>SP drew attention to his report and a list of further areas where cost reductions might be achieved - both in year and beyond.</p> <p>He explained the “4% version” draft budget in his report shows the position should the Trust choose to apply a blanket 4% pay rise rather than mirror national pay award.</p>	
7.1.5	<p>NL apologised for having to cancel the scheduled FAR Committee meeting which would have looked at the draft budget in detail. He reported he had discussed the position with SP and could confirm to the Board the basic issue is funding increases do not keep up with rising costs.</p> <p>Both MH and SP cited evidence from elsewhere that the Trust is in a much stronger position than other local MATs.</p> <p><i>Q: Do we know if it is the lack of funding or rising costs which has had the biggest impact?</i></p> <p>Feel it is a combination. Inflation since Covid in non-staffing costs a factor plus support staff pay increases which have been much higher than previously and have not been funded at all. Rough estimate is that since introduction of the Living Wage we are paying almost £500K extra – all unfunded.</p> <p><i>Q: Is the declining birth rate having an impact?</i></p> <p>Yes. Overall roll projections for 2024.25 show a decrease of 120 – this equates to 4 teachers. SP confirmed this was one reason for implementing our staffing principles.</p>	
7.1.6	<p>SH explained to Trustees that although no decision was required today he would welcome a steer from them about whether to move away from mirroring NJC pay rises – ie the 4% draft version. He reminded them our pay policy does not require the Trust to automatically adopt national pay awards for support staff – and he expects many other</p>	

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	Trusts will have this conversation with the unions. A decision will need to be made in about 4 weeks time – before the next Board meeting. Trustees commented they would prefer to see more detail about the impact on individual pay / pay bands before making a decision. It was agreed more details will be provided via email.	SP
7.2	Finance updates. CFOO report – SP thanked his team for producing this in his absence. This is usually prepared for FAR Committee but it had been agreed it was useful to share with whole Board in the circumstances.	
7.3	Confidential item	
8	GOVERNANCE	
8.1	Board meeting dates 2024.25. Trustees noted the proposed dates for next year: 15 Oct, 10 Dec, 11 Feb, 1 April, 20 May, 15 July	
8.2	Governance Improvement Plan update. Trustees noted the revised plan and the various changes made including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress with reviewing small school hub governance arrangements and trialling a new approach • Monitoring responsibilities now allocated to Board or Committee • Board / local governance actions now separate 	
8.3	Co-opting local governors onto committees. MH reported one governor had been interviewed and would be attending next round of committee meetings plus the Strategy Day.	
9	AOB	
9.1	DR reported she had presented Community Awards at Roskear and found it a very positive experience and would recommend it to her fellow Trustees.	
	Meeting finished at 3.20.	

Dates of next meetings: 21/5 LGC Chairs 4/6 Governance Support 14/6 Members 25/6 FAR Committee 1/7 SIG Committee	9/7 Board / LGC Chairs 10/7 Strategy session
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