



TRUST BOARD RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Resources Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on at 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	In Attendance	Yes/No
Mr Brian Cook, Chair	Yes	Mr Dan Buckley, CEO	Yes
Mr Lee Hallam	Yes	Mrs Jo Lumbard, CFO	Yes
Mr Chris Piper	Yes	Mr Steve Green, COO	Yes
Mr Richard Newton Chance	Yes	Mrs Kate Williams, Clerk	Yes

Summary of matters for the Trust Board

- a) The ongoing issues with Liskeard roofs leaking will be resolved using PFI.
- b) The Recovery Premium funding has been extended for a further two years.
- c) The Bishop Fleming benchmarking data has been reviewed and we are broadly in line with National and Cornish Trusts.
- d) The Resources Committee recommend the approval of the finance policies.

14. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

15. **Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**

None.

16. **Apologies for Absence**

All Trustees were present.

17. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 3rd November 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2021, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record and will be signed.

18. **Matters Arising**

M8. Review of H&S Issues across the Trust's estates

b) A Trustee queried how much more detail is needed in the COO report to give Trustees assurance and perhaps this could be included for further discussion in the Audit & Risk Committee. Mrs Lumbard will discuss with the COO. A Trustee noted the accident information would be useful to triangulate against behaviour incidents.

Update: Mr Green advised that this has been included in the Business Development Plan (BDP) but this has been delayed due reduced capacity from taking on the Dobwalls Nursery so little development has taken place. Mr Green summarised the information included in the BDP and the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating for this.

d) **The majority of items on the H&S Action Plan have been concluded. One outstanding item is having accredited companies for larger procurement and this will be continued to be worked on. A**

Trustee noted that completion of the action plan has been dated all on the same date and felt that in terms of compliance and assurance, this should be completed on the date it was processed. Mrs Lumbard explained that this is likely to have been completed on the COO's SMART working day and he may have used this day to run through his action plan and collated it all on this particular day. Mr Buckley advised that we could sample for assurance. Mrs Lumbard will discuss with the COO.

Update: On this agenda.

M10. Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the staff model used and consider the Annual Pay Settlement for approval to Trust Board

b) A Trustee queried the teacher contact ratio for Looe and thought it was not correct. Mr Buckley advised that the formula might not be correct.

Update: Mrs Lumbard advised that it was an issue with the formula and the correct figure is now 0.97. Trustees felt that this was incorrect. Mr Buckley advised that this might include PPA. Trustees requested that this be reviewed again. To be clear, it should be total number of timetabled periods divided by the FTE x total hours in a timetable cycle (probably 25 or 50).

Action: J Lumbard

19. H&S and Premises Update

A document had been circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

a) Mr Green advised that good progress had been made on the outstanding actions on H&S audit action plan. There are some works planned for Saltash over the summer.

b) **A Trustee flagged a risk around some frameworks and their value for money and suggested caution is required. A Trustee also noted caution around this as some frameworks are national and this can be problematic. A Trustee asked if it is possible to get best value and save time.** It was discussed that these can be tested first. Mr Green advised that a preferred contractor can be used if they are willing to take part in the process.

c) **A Trustee asked if contractors can be approached directly.** Mr Green advised that we can get tenders and then choose not to move forwards with it. **A Trustee asked if the Audit & Risk Committee needs to monitor outcomes of this process.** Trustees felt that it should be fed back from Mr Green as this is operational.

d) Mr Green has reviewed all incidents and accidents across the schools but he has not been able to triangulate this information. One RIDDOR reportable incident was summarised by Mr Green. **A Trustee asked if all the incidents are recorded and reported.** Mr Green advised that Liskeard had reported more in a short period of time and he has explained the best practice of reporting has been discussed with the Operations Manager so moving forwards, data should now be comparable.

e) Mr Green advised that the Liskeard LGC (Local Governing Committee) had raised the leaking roofs. Mr Green explained that it was hoped that PFI would honour their commitment but there is a significant backlog of works under this scheme. We have managed to escalate the issue through the H&S process and it is booked in for work to start in May half term. **A Trustee asked if there was a risk that this might have not been included by PFI and the Trust might have needed to fund the repairs.** Mr Green advised this was a significant financial risk and Trustees thanked the team for the work on securing this.

f) Mr Green advised that the February storm impacted the trees around the sites. The Risk Assessment was completed in the case that the schools should be shut and the impact was more than expected. The schools had closed and were then closed over the half term so everyone was home and safe. Any issues were then dealt with over half term. **A Trustee asked about financial costs of issues.** Mr Green advised that the fencing at Dobwalls did need to be repaired anyway but the cost of this was around 10K.

g) **A Trustee asked about the processes around near misses and how these are captured and how well is this practice embedded.** Mr Green summarised an incident at Looe and explained how

this was logged and reviewed by the LA. An incident at Trewidland with a collapsed ceiling was also reported as a near miss and it was then actioned to ensure there were no further issues. **A Trustee queried if there is need for a near miss report.** Mr Green advised that this is part of the H&S compliance report which is provided termly and three different categories are reported.

- h) **A Trustee asked about the data on incidents and if there is the conclusion that there is an issue at Saltash who have few reported incidents. A Trustee asked what reassurance is there that there is not an issue at this school in terms of not reporting incidents.** Mr Green will follow this up with the Operations Manager.
- i) Mr Green explained that we have taken the DfE spreadsheet and formed this into a compliance checklist and have managed to get it embedded at Looe and there are versions at the other schools. Mr Sanders will be setting up a Teams area to store documents so that there is a live version of the document. The compliance checklist had been shared to Trustees. Mr Green summarised the content of the spreadsheet and moving forwards, the process will include a data report being compiled and then actions taking place. Mr Sanders has taken this forward with the primary schools and we have shared it with Liskeard and Saltash. **A Trustee asked when this will be fully embedded.** Mr Green is envisioning that it will be in place and embedded by the next Resources Committee meeting. A Trustee asked how we manage this in future and how it is brought to the Resources Committee and reported. **A Trustee queried this from a governance point of view and queried where these risks sit between the Resources and Audit & Risk committee. A Trustee suggested that we need to discuss what sits within each committee. A Trustee suggested from an assurance element, that there is a focus on what has been missed and what is late from the compliance tracker are the most important. A Trustee asked if Trustees can see some evidence of this where the items have been completed.** Mr Green advised that on the Lorne Stewart contacts, reports are uploaded and so this is easy to provide.
- j) Mr Buckley advised that parts of the Strategic Risk register are allocated to committees. The Audit & Risk Committee should be looking at high level risk and should be giving assurance to the Board. Internal audit is looking at the controls to ensure that they are appropriate.
- k) Dobwalls Nursery
The internal team has done well to undertake work or arrange it. They have drawn on internal resources.
- l) IT
Having a single domain has been beneficial as the IT service has still be provided despite severe staff shortages and it would have not been possible had we not been on a single domain. Trustees thanked the team for their efforts in getting this in place and the work on the nursery. In terms of cyber security, there are no concerns.

20. Finance Report for information

A document was circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

- a) Mrs Lumbard explained the Recovery Premium funding has been agreed for another two years and provides the Headteachers reassurances that measures can be carried on for future years.
- b) The ESFA have issued some tables to calculate the Supplementary Schools Grant funding and Mrs Lumbard has listed what this funding will look like and this should assist us with National Insurance increases and increases to staff pay.
- c) Originally when we budgeted for support staff pay increases which are applicable from April, there was no increase for the period April 21 to March 22. However, following lengthy negotiations with NJC an increase of 1.75% was agreed. This was subsequently agreed by Trustees for SMART support staff via email. Moving forwards from April 22 we have budgeted for 0.87%, however updated advice from ASCL recommends using CPI of 4.7% so this has now been included in forecast budgets.

- d) **A Trustee asked about the Supplementary Grant funding and what period does this cover.** Mrs Lumbard advised that this is from April 22 until August 2023 and there will be an increase on those numbers. **A Trustee asked if we are expecting the grant** and Mrs Lumbard advised yes but not all in the next five months and we may carry some forward to help with the teachers' pay increase.
- e) We have been given updated information on the teachers' pay increase, the STRB are proposing that M1 grade will increase to £28k in September 2022 and will increase again the following year to £30K. UPS and Leadership scales will have a 3% increase in 2022/23 and 2% in 2023/24. Some of the Supplementary Schools' grant will be used to cover some of this increase. **A Trustee asked if the grant should cover the increase in cost** and Mrs Lumbard advised that yes it will. STRB provides a table of the siding scale of the teachers' pay increase.
- f) Liskeard and Trewidland have both received Pupil Growth funding. Liskeard has received two payments this year, which was unexpected, totalling £109K and Trewidland received £9k. Period 6 management accounts have been returned to Mrs Lumbard. The risk to this current year's budget is staff cover from agencies as this is putting pressure on budgets and supply agencies are looking to increase teacher rates by £25 per day. This is a risk we are aware of. Funding statements are available, and the budgeting process is underway.
- g) The Bishop Fleming benchmarking has been circulated. Mrs Lumbard explained that there is nothing to note and we are not considerably out of line with national or with Cornish MATs. The only thing to bear in mind is some MATs are all primary. **A Trustee queried the one outlier.**
- h) Mrs Lumbard advised that the school resources self-assessment tool information online is still showing 19/20 so not that useful but we are required to complete this for the DfE. This has been submitted and prior to the deadline.

21. Reserves - discuss

- a) Trustees noted the Reserves policy and the requirement within the policy for us to hold 8% of reserves.
- b) **A Trustee referred to benchmarking data and the GAG (General Annual Grant) carried forward rates and asked what this tells us.** Mrs Lumbard advised that this is GAG income rather than designated funds such as PP (Pupil Premium) and is based on funding for pupils. **A Trustee asked if this could this be reconciled to our free reserves.** Mrs Lumbard explained that the benchmarking includes the private funds (parents' donations for trips etc) so if this is removed, we did carry forward 7.6% of reserves at the beginning of this financial year. Looking at the reserves policy, we all agreed that 8% is about right and we are sitting near this. There is about 1% of this which is restricted such as SP (Sports Premium) and PP funding. Mr Buckley advised that 8% is suggested to be the correct level of reserves. **A Trustee asked about education costs per pupil and is this being defined differently and are we really spending more on education per pupil.** Mrs Lumbard advised that this is something to review.
- c) **A Trustee felt that holding high reserves was not prudent and this money should be spent on educating today's students.**

22. Policies to review and recommend for agreement by Trust Board

- a) All are updated policies and attached.
 - Charging and Remissions policy
 - Counter theft, fraud and corruption policy
 - Reserves & Investment policy
 - Donations policy and procedure
 - Financial Regulations procedures and policy
 - Financial Scheme of Delegation

- b) Mrs Lumbard explained that the biggest change is to the finance policy which relates to best practice which was picked up by internal assurance testing. The section on subsistence costs has been included in the finance policy and is already in the support staff pay policy. There are no other significant changes.
- c) Trustees agreed to approve all the policies as presented.
- d) Trustee and Governor Expenses policy – not due for review until 2024.

23. **Agreements made by email**

- a) MFD tender for Liskeard and Looe – March 2021.

24. **Summary table from LGC minutes**

- a) Trustees acknowledged the key points from LGC meetings.

25. **Summary of matters for the Trust Board**

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26. **Date of next meetings:**

Resources and Audit & Risk Committee 08-06-2022 and Resources Committee 14-07-2022.

The Chair of the Trust Board thanked Mr Cook for his hard work and commitment as Chair of the Resources Committee and Finance Trustee. Mr Cook congratulated the Trust Board for the high calibre of Trustees who have served with him.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Action Summary	
<p>M18. Matters Arising M10. Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the staff model used and consider the Annual Pay Settlement for approval to Trust Board b) A Trustee queried the teacher contact ratio for Looe and thought it was not correct. Mr Buckley advised that the formula might not be correct. <i>Update: Mrs Lumbard advised that it was an issue with the formula and the correct figure is now 0.97. Trustees felt that this was incorrect. Mr Buckley advised that this might include PPA. Trustees requested that this be reviewed again. To be clear, it should be total number of timetabled periods divided by the FTE x total hours in a timetable cycle (probably 25 or 50).</i></p>	<p>Action: J Lumbard</p>