



TRUST BOARD RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Resources Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held at Liskeard School & Community College on at Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	In Attendance	Yes/No
Mr B Cook, Chair	Yes		
Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes	Mrs J Lumbar, CFO	Yes
Mr R Newton Chance	Yes	Mrs K Williams, Clerk	Yes

50. **Welcome Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The evacuation procedure was explained.

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

None.

52. **Apologies for Absence**

All Trustees were present.

53. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record and were signed.

54. **Matters Arising**

**M8. CFO Finance Report**

**h) A Trustee asked when the audit will be complete.** The auditors will be in the CBU until the end of next week. The audit clearing meeting is on 18<sup>th</sup> November. Mrs Lumbar will circulate the details.

*Update: Complete.*

**M16. Date of next meetings:** – 12-02-2020, 04-06-2020 and 15-07-2020 all at 5.30 pm.

It was discussed that the meeting on the 12-02-2020 would need to be changed. It was suggested that could be either the 4<sup>th</sup> March or 5<sup>th</sup> March. Clerk to circulate suggested dates for agreement.

It was discussed that a further Trustee is asked to join the committee until the H&S and Premises Trustee is recruited. Clerk to email and discuss with Mr Newton Chance.

*Update: Complete.*

55. **Issues raised by LGCs**

a) **Trewidland – Increase in pupil numbers**

Mrs Lumbar explained that pupil numbers are increasing by a positive but small amount. **A Trustee asked which year groups these children are joining** and Mrs Lumbar explained it is Y4 and Y2.

b) Mr Buckley summarised the changes in staffing at the school. Mr Buckley explained the positive changes following additional input into the school since the Peer Review. Trustees discussed the volume of investment by the Trust in Trewidland at length.

c) Mrs Lumbar explained that the planned cessation of the Sports Premium funding will affect the

school's budget significantly.

- d) Mr Buckley advised Trustees of the potential for a Primary School Improvement Officer which will give the CEO increased capacity to provide support for the secondary schools. The cost implications of this within the CBU budget were discussed. **A Trustee queried the timescale of the possible appointment** and Mr Buckley advised it would be potentially after Easter.
- e) Trustees were in support of the effort of the CEO and CBU in driving school improvement with an appointment of School Improvement Officer within the financial constraints of the CBU budget.

56. **Finance update – For information**

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

- a) Mrs Lumbard advised that she has received updated information about the Teachers' Pay increase since the papers were circulated and that it is a possible 2.5% increase on UPS pay scales in September 2020. There is a possibility of a 6.7% increase on all other pay scales. It is suspected that this would be partly included in the Teachers Pay Grant. Unions are suggesting that the Support Staff increase should be a 3.5% increase. Mrs Lumbard is going to use these figures when completing the budgeting update next week. The lack of timely information on funding is making budgeting difficult. **A Trustee asked when the financial year starts for the Local Authority (LA)** and Mrs Lumbard advised that it is the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

- b) **A Trustee asked what drives the projected deficit at Looe and queried the contact ratio.** Mr Buckley advised that this has been formulated from the curriculum structures. Mrs Lumbard will check and advise.

**Action: J Lumbard**

- c) **A Trustee queried the assumptions being made on pupils per number.** Mrs Lumbard explained that this assumption was made using LA information but this information has now been updated by the ESFA. **A Trustee questioned the higher teaching contact ratio and smaller class sizes.** Mr Buckley explained the benchmarks are per school as the ESFA provide benchmarks for the specific school. Mr Buckley will look at this in detail.

**Action: D Buckley**

- d) It was discussed that income is lagged. It was advised that pupil numbers have increased since this data was produced. **A Trustee asked where the extra pupils are coming from** and Mr Buckley summarised the movement of pupils in the local area.

- e) Mrs Lumbard explained that the Bishop Fleming benchmarking report has been circulated and there are no anomalies.

- f) **A Trustee noted the cost of agency staff and asked if there is an issue with under budgeting.** Mrs Lumbard explained that this is an issue but it is difficult to budget for as it is an unknown. The staff absence insurance policy does not always cover the costs. **A Trustee asked who we are insured with.** Mrs Lumbard explained that we use a broker. The primaries have a smaller policy. Liskeard and Saltash are using a stop loss policy as the premium is lower. Saltash have almost reached their threshold. There are measures in place but the budgets have been affected by a number of long term absences. This issue is also raised by the LGCs and attendance is reported in the Headteachers report.

- g) **A Trustee asked who makes the decision on the level of insurance cover required.** Mrs Lumbard explained that this is decided by the Business Managers and agreed by the LGCs. **A Trustee asked if we should have a Trust wide policy** and this was discussed at length.

- h) Trustees noted that three year projections are looking healthy overall. **A Trustee asked what is the timeline for oversight of the budgets.** Mrs Lumbard explained that LGCs will be presented

with initial budgets in the first half of the summer term. The LGC meetings in June/July will approve the budgets which will then be finalised by the Trust Board at the meeting in July.

- i) **A Trustee noted that the expenditure of CPD is low.** Mrs Lumbard explained that much of the training is being provided internally and we are using our apprenticeship levy. Mr Buckley explained we have addressed internal CPD but we need staff to select and attend external courses to bring new ideas into the Trust. Training pathways for leadership training are in place.

57. **Update on IT project – For information**

A document was circulated in advance of the meeting.

- a) Mrs Lumbard explained that the project is on track. The clarification on roles has been useful.

58. **Window Walling project Saltash – verbal – For information**

- a) Further to the email agreement of the window walling project at Saltash, Mrs Lumbard gave an update.
- b) Kendall Kingscott have appointed a project manager who is already familiar with the school and will be revisiting the site again. The asbestos survey will be performed after Easter. They are looking at lead times for the windows.
- c) **A Trustee asked why there have been issues with getting this project up and running.** Mr Buckley explained that this has been a capacity issue due to skills gaps which Mrs Lumbard has been addressing and she has made considerable improvement. **A Trustee asked for a summary of management structure** which Mrs Lumbard provided.

59. **Insurance provision – verbal – for information**

- a) Mrs Lumbard explained that she wanted clarification from the ESFA about buying into the RPA scheme. Mrs Lumbard advised that she is meeting with Zurich who price on a per pupil basis and she will also discuss the valuation of buildings with them.
- b) Mrs Lumbard needs to look at the valuation processes. The RPA scheme uses a table top scheme but will pay the full rebuild costs. **A Trustee asked if the per pupil rate is the same for all schools.** Mrs Lumbard explained that it is the same cost across schools in Cornwall. The rebuild costs need to be found.

60. **Policies – For agreement**

a) **Charging and Remissions**

Page 3. Final paragraph – the final part of the paragraph needs to be removed.

It was discussed that parents need to be able to read and understand policies, therefore the policies need to be written clearly.

b) **Counter Theft**

Mrs Lumbard explained that the only amendments were the change from MAT to Trust. No comments by Trustees.

c) **Financial Regulations**

There are a few minimal changes which relate to Company Secretary and mileage rates. Audit committee functions could be updated as there are currently no ToR (Terms of Reference) for this committee in the SoDA (Scheme of Delegated Authority) and this is a must in the AFH (Academies Financial Handbook). Mrs Lumbard has updated the policy with the ToR from a previous version of the SoDA. It was queried if this policy needs further consultation with the LGCs. It was agreed that this is not a substantive change and does not need further consultation. It was agreed that the ToR will be lifted from the policy and included in the SoDA. Clerk to add.

**Action: Clerk**

- d) **Financial SoDA**  
There have been no changes to this policy.
- e) **Reserves and Investments**  
Mrs Lumbard explained that there was a quote relating to the RSC and MAT expansion which has been removed.  
Page 4. CFO moving between Trust accounts. **A Trustee queried the potential risk around the processes of this.** Mrs Lumbard explained that the Financial SoDA gives the process of this. It was agreed that a reference to this is needed in this policy.  
**Action: J Lumbard**
- f) **Capital Allocation**  
The only change is the removal of the Healthy Pupil Fund which was a one off and the year and deadline date on the form. **A Trustee asked if any of the schools had submitted bids for projects** and Mr Buckley explained that there was no funding left over and bids for funding are now being linked to the School Development Plans.
- g) Trustees agreed to the policies following the suggested changes.

61. **Date of next meetings:** 4<sup>th</sup> June at 6.30 pm

The meeting closed at 19.03

<b>Action Summary</b>	
<p><b>M56. Finance update</b></p> <p>b) A Trustee asked what drives the projected deficit at Looe and queried the contact ratio. Mr Buckley advised that this has been formulated from the curriculum structures. Mrs Lumbard will check and advise.</p> <p>c) A Trustee queried the assumptions being made on pupils per number. Mrs Lumbard explained that this assumption was made using LA information but this information has now been updated by the ESFA. A Trustee questioned the higher teaching contact ratio and smaller class sizes. Mr Buckley explained the benchmarks are per school as the ESFA provide benchmarks for the specific school. Mr Buckley will look at this in detail.</p>	<p><b>Action: J Lumbard</b></p> <p><b>Action: D Buckley</b></p>
<p><b>M60. Policies – For agreement</b></p> <p>c) <b>Financial Regulations</b> It was agreed that the ToR will be lifted from the policy and included in the SoDA. Clerk to add.</p> <p>e) <b>Reserves and Investments</b> Mrs Lumbard explained that there was a quote relating to the RSC and MAT expansion which has been removed. Page 4. CEO moving between Trust accounts. <b>A Trustee queried the potential risk around the processes of this.</b> Mrs Lumbard explained that the Financial SoDA gives the process of this. It was agreed that a reference to this is needed in this policy.</p>	<p><b>Action: Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Action: J Lumbard</b></p>