



TRUST BOARD

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Friday 29-05-2020 at 2 pm.

Present	Yes/No	Present	Yes/No
Dr S Brownlow	Yes	Mr J Crisp	No
Mr D Buckley	Yes	Mr C Marshall	Yes
Mrs H Casson	Yes	Mr R Newton Chance - Chair	Yes
Mr B Cook	Yes	Mr C Stevens	Yes

In Attendance: Mr D Buckley, CEO
Mrs J Lombard, CFO
Mrs K Williams, Clerk to Trust Board

17. **Welcome and Format of the Meeting**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The virtual meeting protocol was circulated in advance and the format of the meeting was explained.

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

None.

19. **Apologies for Absence**

Mr Crisp had sent his apologies in advance of the meeting which were received and accepted by the committee.

20. **Wider Reopening of Schools – Consider and agree**

A document had been circulated in advance of the meeting. A guidance message from Pam Tuckett, Bishop Fleming had also been provided. From this:

- a) **A Trustee asked if delegation of the decision of the wider opening of schools should be given to the CEO, Headteachers and Local Governing Committees or should it be a Trust Board decision.** This was discussed at length.
- b) **A Trustee asked if the closing of a school under more normal circumstances such as snow, would be the Headteacher's responsibility** and Mr Buckley advised that it would be. It was discussed that the legal responsibility of opening the schools lies with the Trust Board as the employer.
- c) After careful consideration, Trustees concluded and agreed that the wider re-opening of schools is a Trust Board decision.
- d) **A Trustee asked to what extent have the LGCs (Local Governing Committees) been consulted?** Mr Buckley explained that the Headteacher's have circulated the Risk Assessments to the LGCs.
- e) **A Trustee asked if the Audit Committee should be tasked with discussion of the wider re-opening of schools and then give a recommendation to the Trust Board?** Mr Buckley advised that due to the timescales in place, there is not enough time to hold an audit of the implementation of the Covid 19 measures in each school. A Trustee noted that risk needs to be monitored at local level following any decisions made today. The next Audit Committee meeting is on 4th June 2020 and it was agreed that the Risk Assessments will be reviewed and

approved during this meeting.

Action: Audit Committee

- f) Mr Buckley explained that the key question is how many children can the schools safely accommodate. The government guidance does not insist that staff and students should be 2 meters apart but as a Trust, we are insisting that staff and students adhere to the 2-meter rule. This then reduces the capacity of the schools. The local requirements of the buildings and the number of staff available, have also impacted the number of children that can be safely accommodated. Mr Buckley believes that by using these calculations, the projected numbers of children in schools are safe. Most schools have decided to use an “allocated desk per student” approach.
- g) Parents have been asked if they wish to send their children to school and its had been made clear that there is risk to children being in school and that there will be no implications for not sending children to school if that is the parent’s wish.
- h) **A Trustee noted the use of “pods” at primary schools is being used elsewhere and asked who made this decision?** Mr Buckley explained that the decision to use “pods” or ‘bubbles’ as we are terming them, has been made for this Trust in addition to enforcing 2m distancing. He advised that some children do not understand social distancing so the “bubble”/pod approach is always used as an additional measure to maintain social distancing between ‘bubbles’ and reduce the risk of contact with other groups of children.
- i) **A Trustee asked for clarification on the numbers for Y10 and Y12 as they look higher than expected.** Mr Buckley explained that no more than 25% of children will be in school at any one time (with the exception of Dobwalls) as students will be attending on a rota.
- j) **A Trustee asked for clarification on the meeting with the teaching unions.** Mr Buckley explained that we held a meeting with the unions, which was attending by local and regional representatives. The General Trust Risk Assessments were shared with them and no particular fault was found. Mr Buckley explained the measures needed to ensure social distancing at primary level causes him the most concern and he does not agree with that the “pod” method should allow groups larger than 6-8 per classroom. Trustees commended Mr Buckley for meeting with Unions.
- k) **A Trustee asked if there are any groups of children which should be identified and prioritised?** Mr Buckley explained that the Headteachers’ have performed Risk Assessments for their children. During Lockdown, there have been instances of domestic violence and the number of vulnerable children has increased. The care for these students has been second to none.
- l) It was confirmed that 2-meter distancing for all groups will be adhered to, in all cases from Reception to Y12. Measures are in place with the “bubble” method being used as an additional measure for those children who do not understand social distancing. Trustees were in agreement to this approach.
- m) Mr Buckley advised that Risk Assessments include students who cannot sustain 2-meter distancing. If the student is in the vulnerable group, they will be maintained on site. In all other cases, it has been made clear to parents that this is an invited place and we can rescind the place to ensure the safety of everyone on site. **A Trustee asked if the wording in the document could be changed and** Mr Buckley will amend the wording.

Action: D Buckley
- n) **A Trustee asked if there are students who have SEND needs who may breach the 2-meter rule due to their needs or understanding,** Mr Buckley summarised the students who have

additional needs and what has been put into place and agreed for these children. Individual Risk Assessments have been completed. He explained that children who require regular intimate care have not been provided with a place at this time due to the insecurity of supplies of PPE. This stance was accepted by the Board.

- o) Mr Buckley advised that schools have contacted parents and an attendance rota is in place as this is the most workable solution. The places have been prioritised for the children of keyworkers and vulnerable students and the additional places offered to the key year groups. **A Trustee asked if there is any discretion over the key year groups.** Mr Buckley explained that we do have discretion over the principles of offering places to students. It is confirmed that keyworkers and vulnerable students are most in need of places. A rationale of not accepting a key year group would need to be provided.
- p) **A Trustee asked which groups Mr Buckley would be prioritising if he was able and not restricted.** Mr Buckley explained the research and evidence regarding the risk of cross infection of Reception and Y1 children as balanced by the research that more progress is made for younger children and concluded this decision would have been in the balance if we had not been instructed to take them by DfE. Mr Buckley explained that Dobwalls will not be accepting Reception and Y1 as they have prioritised places for keyworker and vulnerable children and do not have capacity to accept Reception and Y1. Trewidland have advised that the risk is manageable. Landulph have minimised the risk with 6 children.
- q) **Trustees noted the community liability implications as well as employer implications and felt that numbers of children attending the schools should not be increased until test, track and trace is in place and effective.** It is hoped that an effective system should be in place by September. **A Trustee asked where the reliable information of the effectiveness of test, track and trace would be found** and Mr Buckley advised the likely reliable sources.
- r) **A Trustee queried the PPE stocks in schools.** Mr Buckley advised that the Headteachers have been instructed to close the school if there is not sufficient PPE.
- s) **A Trustee asked about the offer of education for Y10 and Y12 for those students who are not attending the school.** Mr Buckley stated the government line that face to face sessions are supplementary to home education currently. For this reason, we are retaining staff capacity to provide for students learning at home. Feedback from Liskeard and Looe on the provision of home learning is good. Saltash feedback is also largely good but has had some mixed feedback which has not been substantiated. Moving forwards, recorded sessions and Q&A sessions will be offered.
- t) **A Trustee asked for confirmation of the monitoring of the practical requirements of PPE and cleaning.** Mr Buckley explained that we have principles in place and SLT will be monitoring these.
- u) **A Trustee asked what is in place should someone start showing COVID-19 symptoms.** Mr Buckley advised that he has reviewed the letters sent to parents from the schools and explained that a standard paragraph on the importance of self-isolation if a student or family member has symptoms was not always included. The message of self-isolation needs to be included in all communication to parents. It was agreed that this will be discussed further by the Audit Committee next week.

Action: Audit Committee

- v) Mr Buckley advised that there is a sub set of staff who do not have a shielding letter but are self-isolating for different reasons. Mr Buckley advised the principles being used for these staff at the moment but this could change depending on government directives. **A Trustee asked if these staff have had individual risk assessments.** Mr Buckley advised that they have each had

their specific circumstances considered It was suggested that a specific form should be used in future.

It was agreed that this would be discussed during the People Committee meeting on 2nd June 2020.

Action: People Committee

- w) Mr Buckley advised that the LA are not taking responsibility for Health and Safety from Covid 19 of student transport and so there are policies in place for those students that need to use alternatives to travel to school.
- x) The government have advised that the wider opening of schools is to reduce the disadvantage gap but their return model is not built around this hence, following the guidance, ours is not geared in this way either
The government guidance of 25% occupancy is not met at Dobwalls school but measures are in place to reduce risk and ensures everyone's safety.
Trustees were satisfied with the measures in place and approved.
- y) The conditions in place will carry us through until September and Mr Buckley asked Trustees what they feel would trigger a further process requiring Trust Board approval. Trustees concluded that there are too many unknowns at this time and there may be a need for further discussions and agreements as the situation changes. It was agreed that there should be consultation between Mr Newton Chance as Chair of the Trust Board and Mr Buckley and if any concerns arise, a further meeting will be scheduled.
- z) Proposal of a wider re-opening of schools: Trustees agreed that a formal vote should be taken. Mr Cook proposed and Mr Marshall seconded. All Trustees agreed to support the return of schools as laid out in the paper provided by Mr Buckley dated 29-05-2020.

21. **Date of next meetings:** 21-07-2020

The meeting closed at 15.20

Action Summary	
<p>M20. Wider Reopening of Schools – Consider and agree</p> <p>e) A Trustee asked if the Audit Committee should be tasked with discussion of the wider re-opening of schools and then give a recommendation to the Trust Board? The next Audit Committee meeting is on 4th June 2020 and <u>it was agreed that the Risk Assessments will be reviewed and approved during this meeting.</u></p>	<p>Action: Audit Committee</p>
<p>m) Mr Buckley advised that Risk Assessments include students who cannot sustain 2-meter distancing. If the student is in the vulnerable group, they will be maintained on site. In all other cases, it has been made clear to parents that this is an invited place and we can rescind the place to ensure the safety of everyone on site. A Trustee asked if the wording in the document could be changed and Mr Buckley will amend the wording.</p>	<p>Action: D Buckley</p>
<p>u) A Trustee asked what is in place should someone start showing COVID-19 symptoms. Mr Buckley advised that he has reviewed the letters sent to parents from the schools and explained that a standard paragraph on the importance of self-isolation if a student or family member has symptoms was not always included. The message of self-isolation needs to be included in all communication to parents. <u>It was agreed that this will be discussed further by the Audit Committee next week.</u></p>	<p>Action: Audit Committee</p>
<p>v) Mr Buckley advised that there is a sub set of staff who do not have a shielding letter but are self-isolating for different reasons. Mr Buckley advised the principles being used</p>	<p>Action: People Committee</p>

<p>for these staff at the moment but this could change depending on government directives. A Trustee asked if these staff have had individual risk assessments. Mr Buckley advised that they have each had their specific circumstances considered It was suggested that a specific form should be used in future.</p> <p><u>It was agreed that this would be discussed during the People Committee meeting on 2nd June 2020.</u></p>	
---	--