



TRUST BOARD PEOPLE/LEARNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the People/Learning Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Monday 17th June 2024 at 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	Present	Yes/No
Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes	Dr John Traverse	Yes
Mr Jamie Crisp	No		
Mr Lee Hallam - Chair	Yes	In Attendance	Yes/No
Mrs Lydia Lawson	Yes	Ms K Williams, Clerk	Yes

Summary Matters for the Trust Board

- a) The committee discussed staff retention and turnover. At the moment the Trust is not undertaking exit interviews but there is an annual staff questionnaire. From September, the Trust will collect quantifiable data for the committee to review on a biannual basis.
- b) Trust attendance processes are in place. Mr Carrington, Director of Education is ensuring that the schools are all using the same systems and they are being applied consistently. The Trust EWO (Education and Welfare Officer) team is in place and are making an impact. The number of Elected Home Educated is in line with national.
- c) The Trust have rationalised the SENDCo provision and Mr Spencer is supporting all three primary schools.

34. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

None.

36. Apologies

Mr Crisp and Mrs Lawson were not present at the start of the meeting but were expected to attend.

The Clerk advised that Mr Crisp was unable to attend as travelling.

37. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21-02-2024

The minutes of the People Committee meeting held on 21st February 2024 having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record.

38. Matters Arising

There were no action points from the last meeting.

39. Consider the Strategic Risk Register

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

Mrs Lawson joined the meeting at 5.45pm.

- a) Mr Buckley advised that all items in the Risk Register are self-explanatory. **A Trustee noted that there were only small changes made by the schools and asked if this is acceptable.** Mr Buckley advised that schools review the risks termly and the risks should be accurately defined to enable the Headteachers to assess the changes to risk easily.

40. **Discuss the current measures for HR required by Trustees and consider if changes are needed to track risk factors associated with recruitment and turnover**

- a) Mr Buckley advised that the Members have questioned the Trust Board about recent rates of staff turnover. Currently the Trust Board has not requested data on this to be maintained. Members are asking you to consider if you believe this needs to be changed
- b) If the Trust Board wished to have reassurance the CEO cited the annual staff survey which is currently positive, giving us confidence that staff are currently served well by the Trust. CEO reported that exit interviews had previously been followed up rather than just offered but were not popular and failed to provide information not already known by school leaders.
- c) There was a concern from Members that there should be a measure of the exit strategy and the they wanted data for this academic year but this would not be possible and Mr Buckley advised that Trustees could instruct Mr Buckley to collect data in this area starting in September.
- d) **A Trustee suggested that we need to look at quantifiable data to look at trends and then look at the quality of the data.** Mr Buckley advised that on a 5 year trend, we are broadly in line although there are some evitable spikes when there are changes in leadership at the schools. We currently believe that overall, we have a contented staff body.
- e) **A Trustee asked if we are doing exit interviews.** Mr Buckley advised that we moved away from undertaking these as a matter of course three years ago due to the resources needed but we do offer them to staff. Resource wise, we have diverted our attention to staff attendance procedures. We have not been tracking staff turnover but the Trust Board might require us to do so. **Trustees suggested that exit interviews can be simple and be offered to staff.** Mr Buckley advised that all staff are given the option to complete an exit interview but these are not taken up if not pursued by school leaders.
- f) **A Trustee noted that nationally the teaching profession is in crisis and there is an issue with impaired morale and suggested that perhaps having meetings with those leaving and asking what could have been better and what problems existed during the time in the post would be useful.** Mr Buckley advised we replaced exit interviews with an annual staff questionnaire which all staff are required to complete and this provides us an opportunity to discuss any issues with staff before they leave. This provides us with all the information that had been suggested.
- g) Mr Buckley asked if Trustees have anything specific that they would like to add to the questionnaire. **Trustees suggested they should look at quantifiable data of those leaving on a school by school basis and noted that the Trust is capturing employees' satisfaction on an annual basis with the questionnaire.** Mr Buckley will add the number of staff leaving into the Headteacher report.
- Action: D Buckley**
- h) It was agreed that Trustees would review the data in the first instance and then look into the deeper details. **A Trustee felt that there should be exit interviews and staff should be asked what three things that would make the school better.** It was agreed that this data would be collected from September. Data can then be compared to national in future.
- Action: D Buckley**
- i) **A Trustee asked if the data will include those retiring.** Mr Buckley advised that this is included and is considered as a positive step. Moving out the area is a neutral step and moving out the profession is a negative step.

- j) **A Trustee asked about confidentiality of the exit interview and what is the process.** Mr Buckley advised that the process can be a challenge. We only have one HR lead for the Trust so there is not capacity for her to undertake all the exit interviews and sometimes staff do not want to discuss the reasons for leaving with the Headteacher, CEO or their line manager. The HR administrators do not have the experience to undertake exit interviews. Where an issue has become apparent, Mr Buckley has become involved.
- k) **A Trustee noted there are complexities involved with exit interviews as they can be resource heavy and the data collected needs to be useful. It was suggested that we need to keep the data consistent and perhaps review biannually.** Mr Buckley suggested that we could ask line managers to record a basic reason for leaving.
- Action: D Buckley**
- l) **A Trustee felt that exit interviews are most impactful from those who are content with their experience at work more so than those that are unhappy.**
Mr Buckley will collate quantifiable data, collect raw data for the reasons for leaving and random sampling will be used due to the resources needed. This will start from September 2024.
41. **To review the proposed pupil and staff questionnaires and what outcomes are required by Trustees**
- a) Mr Buckley asked if there are any questions which should be added to the staff questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire will be circulated to Trustees in the first instance and questions will be sent to Mr Buckley by email.
- Action: All**
- b) **A Trustee suggested that this may provide an opportunity to ask what can be improved and what we have done well.** Mr Buckley advised that these types of questions are included already in the questionnaire. **A Trustee noted that staff feeling valued is critical.**
42. **Discuss the S175 safeguarding audit drafting and submission process ahead of 30th June deadline and update on progress with Chairing the CACE safeguarding network. To update regarding electronic systems in the Trust**
- a) Mr Buckley advised the S175 audit must be completed and submitted to the Local Authority who then provide their suggestions of the actions required. The audit process is completed and we then form our own action plan and we have a robust safeguarding peer review system in place. There are some questions which could be completed Trust wide which would reduce the burden on Headteachers.
- b) **A Trustee asked about the CACE network.** Mr Buckley advised he has been trying to create expert groups and the CACE safeguarding group could take ownership of the S175 and make this electronic. **Trustees felt this would be a positive move forwards.**
43. **Discuss the progress towards improving student and staff attendance and the rates of suspensions and exclusions in the Trust**
- a) Mr Buckley advised that the drop in examination performance last year at Saltash was due to poor attendance. We have been trying to address attendance across the Trust and primaries are above national and secondaries are improving. Mr Carrington, Director of Education is working to ensure that we have the same systems in place across the Trust and that they are applied correctly.
- b) The national picture suggests that staff can't have paid days and time off for personal days so we are consulting with staff on what we can do to improve our Leave of Absence policy.
- c) **A Trustee referred to attendance at Looe which is getting worse not better.** Mr Buckley explained that Saltash's attendance trend is increasing but Looe has been on a downward trend, but since Christmas, Mr Carrington has been involved and attendance is now improving. There has been a change in wording in letters to parents which makes a subtle difference and this is making an impact. We have invested in an EWO (Education and Welfare Team) team who are conducting home visits and are they are also having an impact.

- d) **A Trustee asked how much of a concern is EHE (Elected Home Educated) now.** Mr Buckley advised that the number of EHE is monitored in the Headteacher's reports and this is looking positive. When the data has been tested during Ofsted visits, we have been able to evidence that we have done everything possible to try and keep the student in the school. Mr Buckley summarised the challenges with the inappropriate use of social media by parents and the impact this has on the Headteachers.
- e) The Chair noted that he, Mr Buckley and Mr Carrington had recently met with the DfE and attendance was part of this debate. **A Trustee acknowledged the work of the staff which has gone over and beyond as this has been apparent during Pupil Disciplinary Hearing processes.** Mr Buckley advised the difficulty for staff where there is such high levels of need and those students that are not suitable for a mainstream setting.

44. **Discuss the additional primary resource invested to unify SEND at primary level**

- a) Mr Buckley advised that we have rationalised the primary SEND provision which is being provided by Mr Spencer and he is now the SENDCo role in all three primary schools. He also presented to secondary staff during SMART day.
- b) The Trust wide SEND group is being led by Kate Jackman for secondary and Robin Spencer for primary.

45. **Review of Policies**

- a) None.

46. **Guidance/instructions to LGCs**

- a) From September, staff when they leave will be asked a basic set of questions related to their reasons and as this data builds over time governors may decide to ask if patterns are evident.
- b) Mr Carrington, Director of Education is working with the schools to ensure they all have the same attendance processes in place. The work of the Trust EWOs is having an impact on student attendance.
- c) The Trust have rationalised the SENDCo provision and Mr Spencer will be providing this support at all three primary schools.

47. **Headteacher's Reports – are there any questions to raise on the red areas of the reports. Consider if there are any deep dives required at a future meeting**

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

- a) **A Trustee noted the secondary schools have a lot of red across the data.** Mr Buckley advised that we identify the areas that we are concerned about in red and a lot of the red relates to attendance and we know we still need to do more work.
- b) **A Trustee asked why there is so much red.** Mr Buckley suggested that the Trust tab provides Trust wide data and the spring data shows there is a drop in data for number on roll for Landulph and Dobwalls. It was found after further discussion that there is an issue with the spreadsheet on some devices. It was agreed that a PDF version of this document would be circulated. If there are any further questions on this, Trustees can email Mr Buckley.

Action: The Clerk

- c) The number of EHE has green throughout the year so we have been better than national. The attendance data is still a concern.

48. **LGC minutes**

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting. From these:

- a) **A Trustee noted that Looe are low in governor numbers.**
- b) Confidential appendix.

49. **Summary Matters for the Trust Board**

- a) The committee discussed staff retention and turnover. At the moment the Trust is not undertaking exit interviews but there is an annual staff questionnaire. From September, the Trust will collect quantifiable data for the committee to review on a biannual basis.
- b) Trust attendance processes are in place. Mr Carrington, Director of Education is ensuring that the schools are all using the same systems and they are being applied consistently. The Trust EWO (Education and Welfare Officer) team is in place and are making an impact. The number of Elected Home Educated is in line with national.
- c) The Trust have rationalised the SENDCo provision and Mr Spencer is supporting all three primary schools.

50. **Agreements made by email**

- a) None.

51. **Date of next meetings**

16-10-2024 (People and Remuneration), 26-02-2025 (People and Remuneration) and 16-06-2025.

52. **AOB**

The Chair noted that Mr Lloyd has resigned as HR Trustee and chair of the committee and queried if any of the Trustees would like to chair the meeting in future. There is an applicant Trustee who has met with Mr Buckley and Mr Hallam. Mr Hallam is happy to temporarily join the committee to ensure that it is quorate.

The meeting closed at 6.47pm.

Action Summary	
<p>40. Discuss the current measures for HR required by Trustees and consider if changes are needed to track risk factors associated with recruitment and turnover</p> <p>h) Mr Buckley asked if Trustees have anything specific that they would like to add to the questionnaire. Trustees suggested they should look at quantifiable data of those leaving on a school by school basis and noted that the Trust is capturing employees' satisfaction on an annual basis with the questionnaire. Mr Buckley will add the number of staff leaving into the Headteacher report.</p> <p>i) It was agreed that Trustees would review the data in the first instance and then look into the deeper details. A Trustee felt that there should be exit interviews and staff should be asked what three things that would make the school better. It was agreed that this data would be collected from September. Data can then be compared to national in future.</p> <p>l) A Trustee noted there are complexities involved with exit interviews as they can be resource heavy and the data collected needs to be useful. It was suggested that we need to keep the data consistent and perhaps review biannually. Mr Buckley suggested that we could ask line managers to record a basic reason for leaving.</p>	<p>Action: D Buckley</p> <p>Action: D Buckley</p> <p>Action: D Buckley</p>
<p>41. To review the proposed pupil and staff questionnaires and what outcomes are required by Trustees</p> <p>a) Mr Buckley asked if there are any questions which should be added to the staff questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire will be circulated to Trustees in the first instance and questions will be sent to Mr Buckley by email.</p>	<p>Action: All</p>
<p>47. Headteacher's Reports – are there any questions to raise on the red areas of the reports. Consider if there are any deep dives required at a future meeting</p>	<p>Action: The Clerk</p>

<p>b) A Trustee asked why there is so much red. Mr Buckley suggested that the Trust tab provides Trust wide data and the spring data shows there is a drop in data for number on roll for Landulph and Dobwalls. It was found after further discussion that there is an issue with the spreadsheet on some devices. It was agreed that a PDF version of this document would be circulated. If there are any further questions on this, Trustees can email Mr Buckley.</p>	
--	--