



TRUST BOARD

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Tuesday 19th July 2022 at 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	Present	Yes/No
Mr M Aarts	Yes	Mrs L Lawson	Yes
Ms R Brooks	Yes	Mr S Lloyd	No
Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes	Mr R Newton Chance, Chair	Yes
Mrs H Casson	Yes	Mr C Piper	Yes
Mr J Crisp	Yes	Mr C Stevens	Yes
Mr L Hallam, Vice Chair	Yes	Mrs C Storey	Yes

**In Attendance: Mrs J Lumbard, CFO
Mrs K Williams, Clerk to Trust Board**

32. **Welcome**
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Mrs Storey and Mr Aarts, newly appointed Trustees.
33. **Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**
There were no changes.
34. **Apologies for Absence**
Mr Crisp advised that he would need to leave the meeting at 18.45 for another commitment. Mr Lloyd was expected to attend the meeting.
35. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th April 2022**
The minutes of the meeting held on 7th April 2022, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record and will be signed.
36. **Progress of action points and matters arising**
There were no actions or matters arising from the last meeting.
37. **Reports and Recommendations from Committees**
Documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting. From these:
- a) Audit & Risk: Verbal feedback – 14-07-2022
Mr Hallam advised that the committee meeting was held last week. There were four key items which were raised to feedback to the Trust Board: The committee is looking at risk management profile and risk maturity. Mr Buckley and Mrs Lumbard will look at proposals on how risk will progress which will be brought to the next committee meeting for consideration. The external audit plan has been agreed with Bishop Fleming. The only additional item to the plan from previous years will be looking at the Dobwalls Nursery as this is a new activity. The committee are looking at the remit of this committee as there is currently some cross over with the Resources Committee and Trustees want to ensure there is clarity over roles. The committee has reviewed the Business Continuity Plans and the approval of these will be completed by email.
- b) The Clerk advised that Mr Lloyd was trying to join the meeting but his internet connection was unstable.

- c) Learning: Verbal feedback 11-07-2022
Mr Crisp advised that the committee had discussed the Peer Reviews at Landulph and Saltash and there were many positives points from Saltash's. The staged development model was discussed. The committee considered the use of Governor Monitoring Plans and reviewed the LGCs (Local Governing Committees) fulfilling their responsibilities around Learning. The Knowledge Organiser for SEND was also circulated. The five-Year Strategic Plan and the Risk Register was also reviewed and the Trustees had made some suggestions for changes to the Risk Register.
- d) Resources: 08-06-2022 minutes and verbal feedback – 14-07-2022
Mr Newton Chance had chaired both meetings. The draft budgeting process was reviewed during the 8th June meeting. The Chair noted that Mr Aarts will be chairing the committee in the new year. During the 14th July meeting, two areas of concern were discussed; the query on the senior management team at Landulph which has been resolved and the Liskeard boilers which are being replaced under PFI funding.
- e) Trustees have discussed the sustainability of the schools and the climate emergency and it was noted that the Trust Board should be spending time to review this further. The insurance tender process has been considered and the committee have been assured that this is a legitimate process. Our current insurance company Zurich have provided a new quote and the committee recommend approval.
- f) The electricity contracts expire in August so we have agreed to delegate authority to the broker to find the best price with an agreed upper limit. **A Trustee asked if the prices will be fixed to the upper limit of 205%.** Mrs Lumbard advised that the broker can not go above this rate without contacting Mrs Lumbard or Mr Green but it is hoped that the price will come in under 192% and it should be a 24-month contract rather than a 12 month which is more expensive. **A Trustee asked how much access to renewable energy we have and how do we compare to other Trusts.** Mrs Lumbard advised that we have benchmarking in place but unless we do further work, we do not have this information to hand. We will continue to look energy efficiency and the move towards carbon neutral status will cover this. Mrs Lumbard advised that there is no government funding available for schools to help with this.
- g) People: 26-05-2022
Mr Newton Chance highlighted the key points of the meeting on behalf of Mr Lloyd. There is a move towards incremental coaching across the Trust. Mr Buckley advised that the SLFT met and decided that incremental coaching, which is a change to technique, should be a main aim for next year. A governor appraisal type system was also discussed. **A Trustee asked how this is progressing.** The Clerk advised that the governor appraisal process has not moved on due to staff capacity so work on this will resume in September. It was noted that we are looking at a mentoring process as well for governors. The Everyone's Invited agenda has made process across the Trust. The Trust is providing more information to governors in terms of the Knowledge Organisers.

38. **Approval of draft 2022/23 budgets following recommendation provided by the Resources Committee**

Documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting. From these:

- a) The Chair advised that the budget spreadsheet has been circulated and the Resources Committee are recommending the budget for approval for 2022-23. In future years, the budget sheet becomes redder but this is due to budget assumptions and the impact of the reduction in Supplementary Grants rather than issues with financial management. As a Board, we need to be aware of the cost pressures which are being generated outside of our control.
- b) The Chair advised that next year's budget is balanced and on this basis, Trustees were in unanimous agreement to approve the budgets for 2022-2023.

39. CEO verbal summary

a) Cornwall Education Partnership Developments (CEP)

Mr Buckley advised that CEP now exists and he is the chair of this group which contains all the organisations who have responsibility for educating all children of school age. We have agreed the Terms of Reference and attendance will be the first focus of discussion.

b) OFSTED position including Landulph and Dobwalls Nursery

Mr Buckley advised that Dobwalls Nursery have been waiting for Ofsted agreement and we have been advised that there was a problem with emails but this has now been resolved. Mr Buckley and Mr Newton Chance were both present at the Landulph Ofsted outcome meeting. The Chair added that the experiences of Ofsted over the last year have been variable. Mr Buckley explained that individual school experiences of Ofsted have been shared at CACE. We are working actively as CACE to find an alternative system to Ofsted to provide us an internal opinion on educational models in schools.

c) Changes in name, structures and personnel for September

Mr Buckley advised that we are moving away from the use of MAT (Multi Academy Trust) and using Trust which means there are some changes to names. The CBU (Central Business Unit) has become Trust Shared Services (TSS). MSLT has changed to TSLT (Trust Senior Leadership Team) and MGLG (MAT Governance Leadership Group) changed to TGLG (Trust Governance Leadership Group).

d) SDP (School Development Plan) process at implementation of five-year plan

Mr Buckley advised that the five-Year plan has strategies which have been discussed by the TSLT and so the SDPs are now aligned across the Trust. We are aiming to have key milestones in the SDPs which makes it easier for governors and Trustees to interrogate. The milestones which have worked well have included staff presentations, pupil voice and impact measures. We are trying to look at the good milestones in the current SDPs to see what works well. **It was noted by Trustees that there is a much better mechanism for arriving at the strategic plan, which results in a more coherent plan at school level.**

40. Trust Expansion

a) Mr Buckley explained that it has been advised that Trusts should increase to a size of 7,500 students. As a result of this, we do need to invite the other schools in South East Cornwall who have not yet academised to discuss this with us. **A Trustee asked who is in charge of marketing.** Mr Buckley advised that we do not have a staff member in place for marketing of the Trust.

b) **A Trustee asked what are the benefits of expansion.** Mr Buckley advised that there is a risk of small Trusts being broken up and the schools being reallocated to other larger Trusts. The new benchmark is set at 7,500 students and we are currently at 3,500. The Chair added that there is an argument for expansion in terms of offering more sustainability and resources.

c) **A Trustee asked what happens when Trusts are broken up.** Mr Buckley advised that there have been some cases where Ofsted has been used as the leverage and Members were then asked to dissolve the Trust Board. The RSC (Regional Schools Commissioner) are now supporting us in terms of expansion. Mr Buckley has asked RCS to clarify which Trusts are in favour so that we can support those Trusts who are not.

d) **A Trustee asked what was the RCS's answer to Mr Buckley's question.** Mr Buckley advised that we are waiting for a reply. **A Trustee queried the clarity and transparency of mechanisms the RSC are using. A Trustee asked if we will be selective on which schools are approached to join the Trust and have a set criteria or will we be using a blanket approach.** Mr Buckley advised that we would only approach schools which are in South East Cornwall and the criteria they would need to meet is those schools who are willing to join our vision and ethos. We would be inviting schools to join us after having an open conversation.

- e) **A Trustee asked if we are looking to attract certain schools such as those in a category.** Mr Buckley advised that in small schools we cannot gauge their individual capacity by looking at staffing numbers so we are looking at regional capacity instead.
- f) Trustees supported schools joining SMART from the local area. The Trustees were content with the proposals.

41. **Items from Chair**

a) Structure of the Trust Board for 2022/23

Mr Stevens term of office finishes in November and is stepping down from the Safeguarding Trustee role which Mrs Casson will take on. Gemma Adams is being appointed as SEND Trustee by the Members and will sit on the Learning Committee. Mrs Storey has joined the Trust Board and will have a joint role with Mrs Lawson covering Student and Staff Health and Wellbeing. There needs to be a new Chair of the Trust Board from April 2023.

b) Allocation and agreement for school links for new academic year

It was noted that Link roles are not advocating for the schools but are in place to help the Trust Board better understand the individual schools.

Ms Brooks – Liskeard

Mrs Casson – Saltash

Mr Lloyd – Looe

Subsequent to the meeting: Mr Aarts will also jointly link to Looe.

Mr Hallam – Trewidland

Mr Piper - Dobwalls

Mrs Lawson – Landulph

The Chair advised that as the Trust Board is now sufficient in numbers, so we can double up on Link Trustees in the secondary schools so Mrs Storey and Mr Aarts can volunteer to link to a school if they have capacity to do so.

c) Members meeting feedback

The Chair advised we have the original AoA (Articles of Association) which are pre 2011. The DfE is recommending that all schools move to the new model AoA. The only fundamental change would be that the Members would hold an AGM (Annual General meeting). The Trust Board will have to adopt the latest AoA and this will be included on the next Trust Board meeting agenda. The Members will be holding a pilot AGM in December. We have been holding an AGM style meeting in September where we have evaluated the effectiveness of the Trust Board. The pilot AGM will be in December and all Trustees will be invited. The Members will receive the Trust Board approved annual accounts and they will be given a Members' Report which includes information on the educational performance of the Trust. The Chair advised that there is no reason why we cannot adopt the model AoA.

42. **Adoption of Policies: All policies have been through consultation**

a) Governor visits – revised policy

Parent and Visitor Policy – new policy

Disciplinary Policy – heavily revised

Dignity at Work – Revised policy

Flexible working – revised policy

Grievance – revised policy

Leave of Absence – revised policy

Recruitment – revised policy

H&S and Wellbeing Statement – revised

b) Complaints Policy – heavily revised policy

A Trustee noted that it is a long policy and it was suggested that a flow chart would be useful.

The Clerk advised that the policy does contain a type of flow chart which shows the progression of the policy. **A Trustee suggested that rather than having a long policy, it would be easier just**

to provide contact details so that complainants can easily make contact rather than reading through the lengthy policy. It was noted that there does need to be a clear progression of the stages through a complaints policy. **A Trustee asked if this policy needs to be approved today.** The Clerk advised that ideally the policy would be agreed at this meeting. The policy has been heavily revised as it is one of the most commonly used by the schools and whilst in the most part, the complaint does not reach governors and Trustees, complaints generate a huge amount of work for staff. It is therefore beneficial to ensure that the main elements of the complaint are captured at the outset so as not to lengthen the process longer than necessary. The Clerk explained that she works closely with Mrs Callard, Senior HR Officer to review cases and their impact on policies to ensure that our policies are robust and fit for purpose. **Trustees agreed to monitor implementation of this policy in relation to stakeholder feedback.**

c) The Trustees unanimously approved the policies.

43. Items from this meeting for report back to LGCs

a) Thanks to all from the Trust Board for everyone's continued hard work and commitment in what has been another challenging year.

b) The Trust Board have approved the budgets for 2022-23.

c) Trustee Links

Ms Brooks – Liskeard

Mrs Casson – Saltash

Mr Lloyd and Mr Aarts – Looe

Mr Hallam – Trewidland

Mr Piper - Dobwalls

Mrs Lawson – Landulph

d) Changes to Trust Board structure for new academic year

Miss Adams – SEND Trustee

Mrs Casson – Safeguarding Trustee

Mr Stevens – Term of office finishes in November

44. Agreements made by email

a) 16-19 Bursary Policy – June 2022

b) Approval of Trustee appointment, M Aarts – May 2022

c) Approval of Student Health & Wellbeing Trustee, C Storey – June 2022

45. Date of next meetings

07-09-2022 Trust Board informal meeting, 07-12-2022, 29-03-2023 and 19-07-2023 all at 5.30pm.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and for everyone joining the board. He has never been happier with the constitution of the board.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.