



**TRUST BOARD**

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 5.30 pm.

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

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

1. **Welcome**  
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Rachel Brooks, Community Relations Trustee and Steve Lloyd, HR Trustee. The Chair expressed gratitude to them for joining the board.
2. **Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**  
None.
3. **Apologies for Absence**  
Mrs Lawson is still on maternity leave and Mr Crisp had sent his apologies which were received and accepted by the committee.
4. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record and will be signed.
5. **Progress of action points and matters arising**
  - M43. Items from Chair**  
h) A Trustee asked how thanks is being passed back to staff. The Chair will circulate a thank you from the Trust Board to all staff. A Trustee asked if the Chair could record a short video to go to staff. The Chair was open to this suggestion, but on consideration decided that flooding people’s inboxes with large video files of him might prove irritating. Consequently, an email has been sent to all staff.  
*Update: Complete. Staff appreciated the email sent by the Chair.*
  - M44. Adoption of Policies:**  
SMART Behaviour Policy  
a) **A Trustee noted a previous request from parents regarding the danger of knives being added in policies and this should be included specifically in this policy.** Mr Buckley advised that the SMART Behaviour Policy is an overarching statement for the Trust and it then feeds into the specific school Behaviour Policy. Mr Buckley advised that we could include this in the central policy or ensure this is included in specific school policies. It was suggested that a short paragraph is added about knives.  
*Update: Complete.*
  - b) Mr Buckley asked if just the revised paragraph can be circulated to Trustees for agreement and it was agreed that this would be appropriate.

*Update: Complete.*

d) Mr Buckley advised that the two suggested changes will be circulated for approval.

*Update: Complete.*

#### **M48. Date of next meetings**

Mr Buckley added that a Peer Review has been completed and the report will be circulated to Trustees.

*Update: Complete.*

### **6. Reports and Recommendations from Committees<sup>1</sup>**

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

a) Verbal recommendation from Audit & Risk committee on draft Annual Accounts for Trust Board approval

Mr Hallam advised that Trustees had been assured during the Audit & Risk Committee meeting and they were content to recommend that the Trust Board approve the Annual Accounts. Trustees unanimously approved the draft Annual Accounts.

b) People (S Lloyd)

Mr Lloyd advised that there were four key points from the People Committee meeting. The committee was pleased with the appraisal system for support staff which is progressing well. The committee had raised a point about possibly drafting a letter from the Trust Board about their concerns of diminishing external agencies for young people and staff for mental health. Trustees thought that sending a letter would be a good idea and timely. Mr Buckley summarised the issues with the LA (Local Authority) budget cuts and the failures in the area of SEN (Special Education Needs). Mr Lloyd was happy to draft a letter to the local MP.

**Action: S Lloyd**

c) The committee recognised the value of the safeguarding peer reviews and the value to the leads and the opportunity to show great practice. **A Trustee asked if there is any involvement from the LA safeguarding lead in the Trust safeguarding peer reviews.** Mr Buckley advised that it is doubtful if the LA would have capacity to attend the reviews but we could ask them to take part in the exercise.

d) The use of the common checklist is making the process more robust. Mr Buckley advised that we could have SEND included in CACE reviews. Mr Buckley explained that all schools complete a S175 audit and this is checked by the LA and commented on by them. Honesty within internal audits was acknowledged by Trustees.

e) **A Trustee asked who is the Trust safeguarding lead.** Mr Buckley advised that in the business management services contract this is allocated to Mr Green but Mr Buckley advised he has been leading this area. Mr Buckley advised that someone from the schools' DSLs could be the nominated person in future. **Trustees queried the need for a strategic lead for safeguarding for SMART.** It was suggested that this would be best practice but not a statutory requirement. Mr Green was considered to be a lead in this area in terms of policy. It was agreed that this would be added to the next People Committee meeting.

**Action: D Buckley/Clerk**

f) Remuneration (R Newton Chance)

Mr Newton Chance explained that the minutes have been circulated and the annual appraisal process was robust and any issues have been addressed. The Teachers pay policy has been amended and circulated for approval. Benchmarking for CFO pay will be circulated when ready.

g) Resources (B Cook)

The Resources Committee has good quality financial information and this is being built on by the

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<sup>1</sup> To include items raised for TB consideration by LGCs

documentation from the COO (Chief Operating Officer). There are issues with the roof at Liskeard and ongoing discussions with the Local Authority. There was also an issue with the ceiling at Trewidland and this was dealt with quickly and effectively. The year end accounts have been discussed. The committee discussed the Recovery Premium which is being extended but starting salaries for teachers is being increased to £30k and funding for this will be included in the increased pupil funding. Mrs Lumbard advised that we are still waiting for information on this matter. The Teachers Pay policy was reviewed as well. The energy contract was renewed in October which was timely and therefore avoided substantial increases.

- h) **A Trustee queried if the issue with the Looe teacher contact ratio had been corrected.** Mrs Lumbard explained this was an issue with the number counted.
- i) Learning (J Crisp) – meeting being held on 13-12-2021  
This meeting is being held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

#### 7. **Discuss and agree governor removal process**

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

- a) The Chair explained that governor removal is something which we have not come across before and our policies were not adequate to deal with this. The Chair and the Clerk met with governors to discuss the situation and we have worked to respond to the concerns raised by them.
- b) The Chair provided a suggested governor removal process which includes the use of a governor removal committee. It was suggested this process could be included in the Code of Conduct or as an appendix to the SoDA (Scheme of Delegated Authority).
- c) **A Trustee asked what is the legal position with the governors, Trustees and the Trust.** The Chair advised that Trusts do not have to have LGCs (Local Governing Committees) but SMART do have them and they are formalised in the SoDA, although the LGCs do not have legal responsibilities for their schools as these lie with the Trust Board.
- d) Trustees were happy to adopt this process.

#### 8. **CEO verbal update on Dobwalls Nursery**

- a) Confidential appendix.

#### 9. **Discussion regarding the five-year Trust Review document circulated on 1st December incorporating the CEO report up to and including November 2021 and agreement as to the next steps in establishing the future strategic direction of the Trust**

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

- a) Mr Buckley advised that we are in year 5 of the current MAT Strategic Plan and the new one launches in September. We have needed to evaluate the principles and values in the current plan to identify if we have stayed true to them. The document provides an assessment of this and a set of discussions on vision and values. The strategies for this is the next stage.
- b) The Chair of the Trust Board noted the work put into this, the members comments made in the Annual Review meeting and how the Trust Board monitors and evaluate against this. The framework for the plan is the agreement to the approaches used. The CEO has made an assessment on how things are working and Trustees can query this.
- c) **A Trustee noted the SMART idea of SMART leaders, SMART learners etc really works. The change of name was thought to be a good starting point and worth preserving. A Trustee suggested that continuity in the larger statements was useful and noted that staff are coming together so to completely reinvent at this stage would be unwise. A Trustee suggested that the simplification and the reduction of the 12 aims to 8 aims would be supported.**
- d) It was suggested that moving forward, each SMART area should be separated into a responsibility

of a committee and discussed in more detail.

- e) **A Trustee strongly endorsed keeping community as a core area.** A community strategy would be worthwhile and Ms Brooks would be happy to discuss with staff and the Learning Committee in the future. Mr Buckley advised that we need to firstly understand the key areas and then identify the key strategies. We have some strategies which would take place over 5 years, if the agreed direction is right, the strategies should be detailed if they are in place already or need to be added.
- f) At the next Trust Board meeting, the 8 aims would be provided so we could begin discussions with those leading the strategies. Mr Buckley added that we need to share what our five-year goals are for the Trust Board to agree. How these are achieved is not purely operational at this level but we need a discussion on the areas of focus and input into this is valuable.
- g) **A Trustee suggested that community strategies have not taken priority due to Covid and the need to prioritise other areas and would be happy to help with this.** Mr Buckley advised that we want to be a positive civic entity and we need to agree on how to go about this.
- h) MSLT (MAT Senior Leadership Team) are critical to this plan and the principles of the operation of the organisation are our responsibility. Trustees were happy with the framework and the reduction to 8 aims.
- i) Mr Buckley added that the Members receive a copy of the document as they will monitor the Trust Boards role in forming the plan and so will not be commented on the strategy. Mr Buckley advised there have not been any modifications from MSLT so the next wave of works is on the 8 goals. Trustees agreed that the 8 areas are the focus moving forwards.

10. **Consider nominations and approve Chairs/Vice Chairs for Local Governing Committees**

- a) Dobwalls: Alan Johnson/Rebecca Manning  
Landulph: Clarissa Newell/Helene Ansell  
Liskeard: Ian Williams/David Young  
Looe: Kathy Iles/Keith Simmons  
Saltash: Sam Gardner/Tim Parkman  
Trewidland: Gary Powell-Jones/Geoff Pratt
- b) It was agreed that thank you letters should be sent to those who have recently stepped down as Chair or Vice Chair and a welcome letter should be sent to those joining. The Chair explained that we now have in place thank you letters for governors who have left the LGC as this was a previously an oversight.
- c) Trustees were happy to approve the Chairs and Vice Chairs for 2021/22.

11. **Items from Chair**

- a) Finance Trustee term of office  
The Clerk advised that Mr Cook's term of office is ending in March 2022. Efforts to recruit a new Finance Trustee have so far been unsuccessful and if Trustees have any possible leads, could they please let the Clerk know.

12. **Adoption of Policies**

- a) EYFS – Updated policy  
Trustees content to approve as presented.

13. **Items from this meeting for report back to LGCs**

- a) The Trust Board have approved the draft Annual Accounts.
- b) The Trust Board will be drafting a letter to the local MP regarding the diminishing external

