



## **TRUST BOARD PEOPLE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the People Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 6.30 pm.

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<b>Present</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
Mr S Lloyd - Chair	Yes	Mrs K Williams, Clerk	Yes
Mrs H Casson	Yes		
Mrs L Lawson	Apologies		
Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes		

### **Summary Matters for the Trust Board**

- a) The committee have considered the Risk Register. It was suggested that the Trust Board may need to have a deeper delve into the disadvantaged group.
- b) The committee have discussed the rate of permanent exclusions and suspensions in the schools. The committee recommended that this data is included in the Headteacher's Reports and that Trustees are also involved in the panel review meetings.
- c) The Trust have a new model for safeguarding peer reviews. It has also been recommended that there is a safeguarding standing agenda item for all Trust Board and committee meetings.
- d) The committee has reviewed the Trustee and the Local Governor code of Conducts and would like to recommend them for Trust Board approval.

#### **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

None.

#### **3. Apologies**

Mrs Lawson has sent her apologies in advance of the meeting which were received and accepted by the committee. Timings of meeting were discussed as well as the need to recruit further Trustees to join committee meetings.

#### **4. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

##### **M38. Consider if the LGCs are fulfilling obligations towards People issues**

b) A Trustee suggested that perhaps that this should be raised in the People Link meetings and be part of the agenda for next year's meetings. It was suggested that we could discuss the risks increasing with governors.

*Update: On this agenda.*

#### **M50. Date of next meetings**

The Clerk will check with Trustees that 5.30pm is a convenient start time.

*Update: Complete.*

#### **6. Standing agenda item: Risk Register: Progress on any new or emerging risks and risk monitoring**

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

- a) Mr Buckley explained that based on the audit last year, we have changed the Risk Register to make it more responsive and we have met all the requirements of the audit. Headteachers and governors have also reported this is easier to use although we have not had the discussion to allocate risks to each committee yet.
- b) Mr Buckley advised that Headteachers have been given training on how to use the document. For any particular risk, they are required to report to the LGC (Local Governing Committee) what risk has been reviewed to see if it has decreased or increased and the control measures that are being used.
- c) **A Trustee felt that it is useful to dig deeper into the risk for the school but felt that at this level, the Trustees need to know Trust level risk. A Trustee asked if we still need to allocate committees to each of the strategic goals.** Mr Buckley advised that as part of the review process, we need to discuss and agree which committee takes on each risk.
- d) **A Trustee asked where on the Risk Register have we included Trustees not being not aware of safeguarding issues at two schools and it was suggested that there is a Trust wide risk.** Mr Buckley explained that for risk 6, this could be the responsibility for all three committees.
- e) **A Trustee wondered if this is a broader risk for Trustees not knowing accurately the issues in schools.** Mr Buckley advised that he is confident that Headteachers are considering the risks in a form which is being reported to governors although we may need to define new risks. **Trustees noted that as part of the discussions during committee meetings, they are considering if the processes are working or not and they acknowledged that the Trustees role is to have an overview of processes and challenge what they know and what they might want to see happening differently.**
- f) **A Trustee referred to the SoDA (Scheme of Delegated Authority) and asked if it is a Trustee Risk Register.** Mr Buckley advised that this is a Trustee document. **A Trustee felt that the Trust Board need to identify a risk and by not doing so, is a risk in itself.**
- g) Mr Buckley suggested that the Risk Register being constantly being reviewed by Trustees is useful. **A Trustee asked how do we know that these are the right risks as we are using internal information. It was acknowledged by Trustees that we are recruiting a Trust Improvement Partner and also a Director of Learning which helps as a control measure.** Mr Buckley advised that the Local Authority have been useful in terms of the safeguarding visit and we have used Dr Bull for checks as well as other external partners. Trustees noted that it is their purpose to challenge and they are discussing the use of the Risk Register, the use of reviews from external resources and checks for triangulation so they can be assured with the direction of travel. Trustees felt this is an extremely important document.
- h) Mr Buckley added that last year we had an unprecedented number of external partners working with Saltash and this school's results actually went down. It has been found that additional projects have been going on which have not been included in the SDP and the external partners have not recognised that this is a risk to overburdening staff.
- i) Trustees were interested in seeing which risks are allocated to the committee later in the year and felt it was a strong document which flags where there are high risks over multiple schools. It was noted that disadvantaged is a high risk across all the schools and this may be something that the Trust Board needs to explore deeper.

7. **Discuss Trustee involvement in suspensions and permanent exclusions**

- a) Mr Buckley advised that the number of suspensions and exclusions have increased in three of the schools. The requirements for holding review panels has been a challenge for the Clerk. There needs to be at Trust Board level an understanding that the systems in place to address this are sufficient.
- b) Mr Buckley explained that the support for students has declined especially in terms of mental health support. We have put in place the use of Pupil Disciplinary Hearings for those at risk of permanent exclusion where we scrutinise what the school has done to support the student. The cost of Alternative Provision is high and not sustainable so we are looking at if we can suspend students to go to another school in the Trust. We are trying to set up facilities to accommodate this but it will take some time with a September timeframe being realistic. We are trying to tighten up on behaviour and routines in the schools and our Trust support partner should be able to help with this.
- c) **A Trustee asked if we use Managed Moves between the schools.** Mr Buckley advised that yes we do but this causes disruption to the schools due to the high levels of poor behaviour of the students who require a Managed Move. It was acknowledged that many students are not suitable for mainstream settings. **A Trustee noted that behaviour processes in the Trust are inclusive.** Mr Buckley explained that the Local Authority have held up our behaviour policy as an exemplar. Mr Buckley added that Trustees can request for information to be included in the Headteachers Reports and details on suspensions and permanent exclusions can be included and should be discussed by the TSLT (Trust Senior Leadership Team).
- d) **A Trustee asked if the rate of suspensions and exclusions should be included in the Risk Register.** Mr Buckley suggested that this risk sits at a different level and adding information to the Headteacher Report for scrutiny by governors would be a control measure.
- e) It was acknowledged by Trustees that the number of suspensions and exclusion is a risk so we need to recognise this data by including it on Headteacher's Reports and we may need to drill down on this data for assurances. Mr Buckley added that suspension and exclusion data should be added to the Headteacher's Report as a recommendation from the Trust Board.

**Action: The Clerk**
- f) **A Trustee referred to the wording for suspensions and exclusions and suggested that governors and Trustees need to understand what the definitions are and what the data means.** Mr Buckley advised that having no access to the curriculum is a suspension. We are recording internal suspensions which some Trusts do not record as such.
- g) **A Trustee felt that in terms of having capacity for panels, it would be useful to include Trustees.** The Clerk was very happy to action this as it would help build capacity for the panels needed across the Trust.

**Action: The Clerk**

8. **Monitor the overall effectiveness of pupil and staff wellbeing strategies**

- a) Mr Buckley advised that we are aware of issues that pupils have with using toilets but we have not been able to move as quickly on this as we would like. We have some measures in place to address this but where these measures are expensive and don't have quick timeframes, we then need to be more radical to make changes in the interim.
- b) We still don't have regular reporting and students need to have practice on using the reporting tools. Students need to fully understand that they can report, be confident to do so and that we listen. It was felt by Trustees that that students must use the feedback questionnaire as part of PHSE and this needs to be a Trust instruction to SLTs (Senior Leadership Teams).
- c) **A Trustee noted the importance of taking action when an issue has been raised by students and how this is then communicated to the wider school community as building trust following pupil voice is key.**

- d) Mr Buckley advised that the appraisal system is the main mechanism for staff wellbeing. We have followed up with staff where there have been issues raised.

9. **Review of safeguarding procedures including new Safeguarding Peer Review model**

- a) Mr Buckley advised that a new model is in place for safeguarding peer reviews and we have more confidence in this new model which is a major strength.
- b) It was felt that having a safeguarding agenda item is key for all Trust Board meetings. Mr Buckley advised that safeguarding risk should be discussed by all committees. Trustees felt that the safeguarding lead is competent and hoped there was capacity for this role.

10. **Review of Policies**

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

- a) Local Governor Code of Conduct and Trustee Code of Conduct  
Trustees were content to recommend approval of both policies to the Trust Board.

11. **Guidance/instructions to LGCs**

- a) A reminder of governor involvement in the number of suspensions and exclusions. Trustees have requested that this information is included in the Headteacher Reports and further to this, if there is anything that is not clear or not needed in the Headteacher reports, please let us know by November.

12. **Headteacher's Reports – consider if any areas need a deeper delve at future meetings**

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

- a) **A Trustee asked if this document gives the CEO the information that he needs.** Mr Buckley advised that it does although he is aware of this information anyway but it is useful to see what is being highlighted to LGCs and challenged by them. Governors should be questioning any areas which are red.
- b) Mr Buckley advised that it has been a concern that some data is not being picked up by governors and Trustees such as the numbers of persistent absence or suspensions and exclusions. **A Trustee queried if this is due to not having the right skill set of governors.** Mr Buckley advised that Trustees have also not challenged the data within the Headteacher Reports.
- c) **A Trustee asked where does the report sit in terms of committees or the Trust Board.** Mr Buckley suggested that the TSLT could agree to divide the report into People, Learning and Resources sections. If this report is not useful, Trustees need to let Mr Buckley know how it can be made more useful or if it is useful, why is it not being challenged.
- d) It was suggested that to have better engagement with the report, there should be a “Questions from the Headteacher Report” as a Trust Board agenda item. The key date in the diary is the next TSLT meeting for any changes that need to be made to the Headteacher's Report. The Trustees also need to challenge the red areas on the report.

**Action: The Clerk**

13. **LGC minutes**

- a) To be circulated by email.

14. **Summary Matters for the Trust Board – Agree key points from meeting**

- a) The committee have considered the Risk Register. It was suggested that the Trust Board may need to have a deeper delve into the disadvantaged group.
- b) The committee have discussed the rate of permanent exclusions and suspensions in the schools. The committee recommended that this data is included in the Headteacher's Reports and that Trustees are also involved in the panel review meetings.

- c) The Trust have a new model for safeguarding peer reviews. It has also been recommended that there is a safeguarding standing agenda item for all Trust Board and committee meetings.
- d) The committee has reviewed the Trustee and the Local Governor code of Conducts and would like to recommend them for Trust Board approval.

15. **Agreements made by email**

- a) None.

16. **Date of next meetings**

21-02-2024 and 17-06-2024 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.42pm.

<b>Action Summary</b>	
<p><b>M7. Discuss Trustee involvement in suspensions and permanent exclusions</b></p> <p>e) It was acknowledged by Trustees that the number of suspensions and exclusion is a risk so we need to recognise this data by including it on Headteacher's Reports and we may need to drill down on this data for assurances. Mr Buckley added that suspension and exclusion data should be added to the Headteacher's Report as a recommendation from the Trust Board.</p> <p><b>g) A Trustee felt that in terms of having capacity for panels, it would be useful to include Trustees.</b> The Clerk was very happy to action this as it would help build capacity for the panels needed across the Trust.</p>	<p><b>Action: The Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Action: The Clerk</b></p>
<p><b>M12. Headteacher's Reports – consider if any areas need a deeper delve at future meetings</b></p> <p>d) It was suggested that to have better engagement with the report, there should be a "Questions from the Headteacher Report" as a Trust Board agenda item. The key date in the diary is the next TSLT meeting for any changes that need to be made to the Headteacher's Report. The Trustees also need to challenge the red areas on the report.</p>	<p><b>Action: The Clerk</b></p>