



TRUST BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held at saltash.net Community School on Thursday 7th December 2017 at 5.15pm

Present: Mr D Buckley, CEO
Mr D Garland
Mr K George
Mr K Johnson
Mr J Kitson
Mr R Newton-Chance
Mrs K Waghorn - Chair

Absent: Mr R Edgeler

In Attendance: Mrs J Lumbard, CFO
Mrs D Stoneman – Clerk to Governors

To provide evidence of challenge, these questions are highlighted in the minutes.

24. **Welcome**

Mrs Waghorn welcomed everyone to the meeting

25. **Evacuation Procedure**

The route for leaving the building in an emergency was explained.

26. **Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interest - verbal**

Mr Buckley as CEO.

27. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Edgeler who had a work commitment.

28. **Approval of the minutes of the meetings held on 16th October 2017**

These had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were unanimously agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Directors agreed that the minutes of Trust Board meetings should go on the SMART website and be circulated to Local Governing Committees once approved at the subsequent Trust Board meeting.

29. **Matters Arising**

M4 Election of Chair and Vice Chair for current academic year - Mrs Waghorn advised that following a discussion with Mr Newton-Chance, their proposal is that Mr Newton Chance takes on the role of Chair from January at which time Mrs Waghorn becomes Vice Chair. They will jointly attend meetings for a short time to facilitate the transition. Directors unanimously supported this proposal. Directors thanked Mrs Waghorn for the tremendous amount of work she has done as Chair for several years.

M7 Matters Arising:

M116 Update by the CEO: j) SMART Day – Mr Buckley advised that it is not possible to provide a crèche.

M132 Directors Email Addresses – The email contact list has been updated.

M142 Finance Report: f) Lettings – Mrs Lumbard advised that the utility bills are paid for by the person renting the property.

M145 CBU - Mr Newton-Chance advised that he can forward information to Mrs Lumbard to assist with benchmarking.

M141 Matters Arising: M128 Change to Articles of Association – Mrs Stoneman was asked to get a quotation from Wolferstans for carrying out this change. It was noted that the clause should refer to SE Cornwall not Looe. **ACTION: D STONEMAN**

M148 Governance Procedure – The Scheme of Delegation had been recirculated.

M20 Adoption of Policies:

Safeguarding Policy – the amendments have been done.

Staff Discipline and Grievance – Mrs Stoneman was meeting with Mr Buckley on Monday and they would check to see if the comments raised by Mr Edgeler had been incorporated.

ACTION: D BUCKLEY/D STONEMAN

Early Years Foundation Stage – this has been completed.

Whistleblowing – a Director suggested that this needs to be reviewed to make sure that this is fit for purpose. An example was given and Mrs Lumbard offered to follow this up.

ACTION: J LUMBARD

Directors were advised that after a considerable amount of time was spent on investigating, it was discovered that the matter raised did not involve one of the schools in the MAT. It was noted that recent guidance has indicated this this policy needs to make it clear that anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Mr Johnson, Mr Buckley and Mrs Stoneman would review this policy.

ACTION: K JOHNSON/D BUCKLEY/D STONEMAN

Staff Appraisal and Performance Management Policy and Capability Policy – Mr Newton-Chance had looked at these and had no suggestions for changes.

See Confidential Appendix.

30. **Receive recommendation from Audit Committee**

Mr Kitson advised that the Audit Committee recommend that the Letter of Representation is agreed and signed and the Report and Accounts are also agreed and signed.

He reported that the Audit Committee felt that the traffic lighting in the report is not significant and due to the capacity issues in the CBU.

Mrs Waghorn expressed the Board's gratitude to Mrs Lumbard and her team for the huge amount of work they have done. It was noted that in any future Due Diligence for expansion, the capacity of the CBU should be taken into account.

The professionalism of the Finance Staff was also highlighted as having had a significant impact on the success of the expansion.

31. **Approval of Report and Accounts for 2016-17**

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee these were unanimously approved. **Directors suggested that it would be helpful to have the report from each of the schools in the same format in future.** Directors were advised that a table in the same format had been sent to each school to complete but they had been returned in a different format. It will be emphasised that they should be consistent in future. Mrs Lumbard advised that she had tried to make the report more concise as requested by Directors last year.

32. **CEO Report**

Mr Buckley's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He summarised the structure of his report and asked Directors for their comments. From this:

- a) A Director asked for an update on saltash.net. Mr Buckley advised that there had been an inspection-style visit by Ann Berger from the RSC's office. She had visited Dobwalls previously and had provided a list of challenges. She was pleased with the way this had been tackled.

She has now visited saltash.net and intends to visit Liskeard then at a later stage Looe and Dobwalls.

- b) See appendix.
- c) A Director advised that at the meeting they had attended with the RSC, governance and school improvement had been paramount. This was discussed and it was agreed that this MAT needs to prove it has the capacity to generate improvement.

Mr Kitson left the meeting.

33. **5 year strategic plan**

Mr Buckley advised that the Heads Forum has looked at this in detail and agreed ways of addressing the ten areas of focus. The schools had been able to choose which ones they would work on. Between them most of these aims have been achieved. The first five items have been completed in every area but not in exactly the same way as intended.

A RAG rated version would be circulated showing progress.

ACTION: D BUCKLEY

34. **Finance Report**

A revised sheet of KPIs had been circulated. From this Mrs Lumbard advised that –

- a) A new column has been added for actual variance which compares the actual spend with the budget proportionately.
- b) She does not have any concerns at present. The costs of services and supplies is overspent and is common for all schools mainly due to curriculum spend which will even out during the year.
- c) Headstart Kernow funding has been received. **A Director asked what this is.** It is a project focusing on mental wellbeing. It is additional funding not included in the original budget which will be used to fund current staff who have changed roles in order to fulfil the commitments. Each school is using the funding in different ways.
- d) It was felt that when comparative data is prepared, this would provide useful benchmarks.
- e) Directors noted that each LGC looks at these reports in more detail.
- f) **A Director referred to the percentage of Pupil Premium funding used for staffing and asked if there is a recommendation for this.** Mrs Lumbard advised that the benchmark has been set at 78% by the MAT. Looe is beyond this and are aware of this; it will be addressed next year. Dobwalls is much lower. **A Director suggested that staffing costs are expressed as a percentage of GAG.** Mrs Lumbard advised that she plans to include this in future reports. Finance and Admin staff will also be included. **A Director commented that Trewidland are not quite at 78% and queried why they are RAG rated at green.** Mrs Lumbard advised that percentages are difficult with small student numbers and they are close to the limit. The benchmark was set taking account of best practice and could be changed in future if further data is available.
- g) It was noted that period 3 accounts will not be available for the 17th January meeting but period 4 will be available for the following meeting in March.
- h) **A Director asked how good value is determined for procurement purposes.** Mrs Lumbard advised that they are fortunate that the Business Managers in the other schools have complementing skills to support each other. Paul Taylor at Liskeard has experience of

procurement and oversees this in accordance with the Financial Regulations. Items for joint procurement are considered as they arise. There is a meeting tomorrow to look at cleaning services. Utilities are done via an energy management company and a comparison has been done for all the schools. **A Director asked if five items should be looked at in detail to evidence this.** Mrs Lumbard advised that they are trying to do this across the MAT. Three quotes are always obtained for large items. **A Director asked what percentage are purchased locally.** Mrs Lumbard advised that this is not known across the MAT but for saltash.net and Landulph, stationery and printing are sourced locally which includes Plymouth, if cost effective.

- i) Mrs Lumbard advised that moving forward, since the budget was set there has been a drop in Sixth Form students at saltash.net and a review of all the secondaries will be done to check this in the other schools too. The saltash.net budget had an in-year overspend of £197K; £87K has already been saved so far this year and further work on this is planned. **A Director asked about the National Funding Formula.** Mrs Lumbard advised that there was a meeting today at the Local Authority to finalise this. A Director asked how strong CASH (Cornwall Association of Secondary Headteachers) is. It was noted that the CEO is not eligible for membership of CASH. Mrs Lumbard advised that at Liskeard, the budget was set taking account of the predicted carry forward which was less than envisaged. The Headteacher and Business Manager are planning to balance the budget within the year. The same applies for Looe. Curriculum modelling will be done for them too. The three primaries are OK although there has been a variance at Landulph due to staff sickness. More reserve will be used than anticipated. There had been an error in the payroll issue which was highlighted yesterday.

35. **Verbal update from individual Directors**

Keith Johnson – attended the Liskeard LGC meeting where there were concerns about attendance and pupil numbers. They are hoping to address this by changes in curriculum. They are also looking at T levels. The Headteacher is meeting with Cornwall Chamber of Commerce to identify where skills are required. **A Director asked if he thought that the governors were challenging.** Mr Johnson advised that he felt that they were. There was a lot of concern about attendance and they are looking at different ways of encouraging students to attend.

Community Governors – all attended a meeting. There was a discussion about having outcomes rather than KPIs. Ideas of how to engage with the community were discussed at length.

Kevin George – it had been a difficult term at Landulph. In addition to staff absence, there had been a permanent exclusion which was taken to Independent Panel Review which upheld the governors' decision.

A Safeguarding meeting has been held with school staff and the policy has now been finalised. A meeting for Safeguarding Local Governors will be arranged after Christmas. Rachel Yelland, Mr Buckley's PA will be asked to arrange this.

ACTION: D BUCKLEY

David Garland – has visited Dobwalls. There was some challenge over the results. It was suggested that the Finance group should meet at the beginning of March. Mrs Lumbard and Ms Carey would attend this meeting.

ACTION: D GARLAND

Mr Buckley advised that it seems that governors value these meetings and they may like them to take place once a term.

Kate Waghorn advised that there had been a Chairs Forum meeting which looked at governor induction and visits. There is a free PREVENT course online; details will be circulated.

ACTION: K WAGHORN

The Clerk had arranged for Director access to NGA training courses. Mr Johnson had completed the

one on Exclusions. Feedback on other courses should be forwarded to the Clerk and this would be reviewed at the next meeting to determine if access should be extended to local governors.

ACTION: ALL

36. **Minutes from SMART Committees: Remuneration 30-10-2017**

These had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted. The Appraisal Moderation Sheet had also been included to provide detail. Mrs Waghorn advised that she feels that the process was more rigorous and the targets set will have an impact. It was noted that 100% of the targets set are impact assessable.

37. **Minutes from LGCs: Liskeard 7-11-2017**

These had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted. **A Director asked how changes would be made to the reporting structure.** The KPI structure for community governors will be reviewed by Mr Buckley.

ACTION: D BUCKLEY

38. **Visits Initiated by RSC**

The letter concerning this had been circulated in advance and discussed earlier in the meeting.

39. **GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations)**

In Mr Edgeler's absence, this will be considered at the next meeting.

40. **Update on appointment of Chairs of LGC**

Mr George has agreed to continue as Chair at Landulph until the end of the current academic year. It is hoped that one of the new governors will agree to take on this role.

Mr Boney has agreed to take the role as temporary Chair at Trewidland. It was noted that an advertisement for additional governors has not yet been placed although it had been forwarded to the school some weeks ago.

41. **Review membership of second tier committees**

Audit: Mr Newton-Chance, Mr George and Mr Kitson

Admissions: Mr Newton-Chance, Mr George and Mr Johnson

Remuneration: Mr Edgeler, Mr Garland and Mr Newton-Chance

Mrs Waghorn would be a reserve for any of the above committees if a director was not available.

42. **Director Appointment**

Mr George would like to take on responsibility for Premises, Health & Safety which leaves a vacancy for Safeguarding and also CSA when Mr Newton-Chance takes on the role of Chair. Mr Buckley suggested someone with safeguarding expertise who may be suitable; Directors agreed that he should approach them. It was agreed that an advert for a Director with CSA or Safeguarding skills should be prepared; the Clerk was asked to provide this.

ACTION: D BUCKLEY/D STONEMAN

43. **Local Governor Appointments: confirm procedure**

Directors unanimously agreed that appointment of Local Governors following nomination by the Local Governing Committee should be done by email after they have been provided with the application form and skills audit.

44. **DBS Check for Members**

It was unclear from guidance whether this is a statutory requirement. However it was agreed to err on the side of caution and have a DBS check done for all Members.

ACTION: D STONEMAN

45. **Review of Policies: agree procedure to include LGC involvement**

Directors agreed that all draft policies should go to LGCs with two weeks' notice for comments and then to the Trust Board for approval. The Clerk was asked to send the current set of drafts to Mr

Mr Buckley advised that the Trade Union reps for the MAT will be asked to meet together to look at the HR policies.

Mrs Lumbard advised that a member of staff at Liskeard wishes to reduce their hours and also draw on their pension. To do this it is necessary for the MAT to have a policy; a draft has been circulated. The policy was unanimously agreed and would form a part of the pay policy when it is reviewed.

Mr Buckley advised that he is doing exit interviews with staff and this would also be included in the pay policy. **A Director asked when these are done.** Mr Buckley advised that these are arranged as soon as notice is handed in.

46. **Letter to Academy Accounting Officers**

This had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was noted.

47. **Report from the Chair**

a) Directors were advised that the SMART day programme had been circulated today.

b) A Director suggested that Health & Safety is included on LGC agendas. This is within the Premises remit which is a focus in the first half of the Spring Term. It could also be raised under Safeguarding.

48. **Dates of future meetings**

Wednesday 17th January at 5.30 pm in Liskeard – Trust Board

Wednesday 7th February at 5.30 pm in Looe - Remuneration

Monday 19th February SMART Day at Liskeard

Monday 5th March at 5.30pm in Saltash – Trust Board

Monday 14th May at 5.30 pm in Saltash – Admissions

Wednesday 20th June at 5.30 pm in Looe – Trust Board

Monday 16th July at 5.30 pm in Liskeard – Trust Board

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	
M141 Matters Arising: M128 Change to Articles of Association – Mrs Stoneman was asked to get a quotation from Wolverstans for carrying out this change. It was noted that the clause should refer to SE Cornwall not Looe.	D STONEMAN
M20 Adoption of Policies: Staff Discipline and Grievance – Mrs Stoneman was meeting with Mr Buckley on Monday and they would check to see if the comments raised by Mr Edgeler had been incorporated. Whistleblowing – a Director suggested that this needs to be reviewed to make sure that this is fit for purpose. An example was given and Mrs Lumbard offered to follow this up. Directors were advised that after a considerable amount of time was spent on investigating, it was discovered that the matter raised did not involve one of the schools in the MAT. It was noted that recent guidance has indicated this this policy needs to make it clear that anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Mr Johnson, Mr Buckley and Mrs Stoneman would review this policy.	D BUCKLEY/ D STONEMAN J LUMBARD K JOHNSON/ D BUCKLEY/ D STONEMAN
M33 5 year strategic plan - A RAG rated version would be circulated showing progress.	D BUCKLEY
M35 Verbal update from individual Directors – A meeting for Safeguarding Local Governors will be arranged after Christmas. Rachel Yelland, Mr Buckley's PA will be asked to arrange this.	D BUCKLEY

<p>It was suggested that the Finance group should meet at the beginning of March. Mrs Lumbard and Ms Carey would attend this meeting.</p> <p>There is a free PREVENT course online; details will be circulated.</p> <p>The Clerk had arranged for Director access to NGA training courses. Feedback on other courses should be forwarded to the Clerk and this would be reviewed at the next meeting to determine if access should be extended to local governors.</p>	<p>D GARLAND</p> <p>K WAGHORN</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>M37 Minutes from LGCs: Liskeard 7-11-2017 - The KPI structure for community governors will be reviewed by Mr Buckley.</p>	<p>D BUCKLEY</p>
<p>M42 Director Appointment - Mr Buckley suggested someone with safeguarding expertise who may be suitable; Directors agreed that he should approach them. It was agreed that an advert for a Director with CSA or Safeguarding skills should be prepared; the Clerk was asked to provide this.</p>	<p>D BUCKLEY/ D STONEMAN</p>
<p>M44 DBS Check for Members - It was unclear from guidance whether this is a statutory requirement. However it was agreed to err on the side of caution and have a DBS check done for all Members.</p>	<p>D STONEMAN</p>
<p>M45 Review of Policies: agree procedure to include LGC involvement - Directors agreed that all draft policies should go to LGCs with two weeks' notice for comments and then to the Trust Board for approval. The Clerk was asked to send the current set of drafts to Mr Buckley's PA, Rachel Yelland.</p>	<p>D STONEMAN</p>