



## TRUST BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held at Liskeard School and Community College on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 5.30pm

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<b>Present:</b>	<b>Dr S Brownlow</b>	<b>Absent:</b>	<b>Mr B Cook</b>
	<b>Mr D Buckley, CEO</b>		
	<b>Mr K George</b>		
	<b>Mr K Johnson</b>		
	<b>Mr J Kitson</b>		
	<b>Mr R Newton-Chance, Chair</b>		
	<b>Mr P Robinson</b>		
	<b>Mrs K Waghorn</b>		

**In Attendance: Mrs J Lumbard, CFO**  
**Mrs D Stoneman, Company Secretary**

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

81. **Welcome**

Mr Newton-Chance welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Sue Brownlow and Peter Robinson. Everyone present introduced themselves. Dr Brownlow agreed to take on responsibility for HR and to be linked with Dobwalls School; Mr Robinson agreed to take on responsibility for Learning and to be linked with Looe Community Academy; Mrs Waghorn agreed to take on responsibility for Safeguarding.

82. **Evacuation Procedure**

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

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

Mr Buckley as CEO.

84. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Cook who had a prior appointment. Directors were advised that he has resigned as a Member.

85. **Approval of the minutes of the meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

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.

It was requested that file names match agenda items in future.

86. **Matters Arising**

A document giving details of actions from the last meeting had been updated and circulated in advance.

**M68 Matters Arising - A Director asked whether there had been any progress with the**

**appointment of an HR specialist.** Mr Buckley advised that this is in the 5 year plan; there is insufficient funding at the present time. **Directors felt that this needs to be a priority.**

#### **M69 Minutes of Local Governing Committees**

'Matters for Trust Board attention' had been included on most but not all LGC agendas. The Clerk was asked to follow this up. **ACTION: D STONEMAN**

SMART – Capital Grants: The 2018/19 allocation is now known. The School Condition Allocation is £478,993 and the Healthy Pupil Capital Fund is £44,382.

Liskeard - The solar panels are owned by Cornwall Council and a lease is in place.

**M70 Review of Performance Data:** Consideration of the KPIs will be done when the strategic plan is looked at later in this meeting.

**M72 CFO - Finance Report and update on Resources issues:** The cashflow forecast will be forwarded as soon as possible. **ACTION: J LUMBARD**

Costed report about the development of the CBU - The Business Development Plan and budget for 2018/19 will be commenced next week.

**M72 Finance Report and update on Resources issues: b) A Director asked if there had been any progress with providing an insurance policy to cover staff absence.** Mrs Lumbard advised that there had been a meeting with a company last week as a group of schools and quotes are being obtained to take account of the individual needs of each school with a view to having a package for the MAT as a whole. **A Director asked if the scheme run by Devon County Council is still running.** Mrs Lumbard advised that she did not know and did not have any contacts there to find out.

**M74 Director Appointments** – Interviews were arranged and appointments have been completed. There was a discussion about Academy Ambassadors who have recently been in touch to say that they can now assist with appointments. The Clerk offered to co-ordinate this. It was noted that an additional Member is needed. **ACTION: D STONEMAN**

#### **M75 Policies**

**SMART Financial Scheme of Delegation 2016-17** – the process for dealing with tenders and the level at which there should be a Director present will be included in this document.

**SMART Reserves & Investment Policy** - A review of investment accounts to provide protection for invested money has yet to be done.

**SMART Redundancy & Redeployment Policy** - the changes had been done and the policy recirculated to Directors. Further issues have emerged during the process at saltash.net so there will be a further review to take account of these in due course.

**Health and Safety Policy** - SMART purchases an SLA for Health & Safety from Cornwall Council which provides an annual H & S audit. A review of the policy forms part of this audit process.

**M77 Presentation to LGCs by Mr Newton Chance** – Mr Newton Chance had attended each of the LGC meetings and given his presentation. This had been favourably received.

**M79 Additional Items** – It had been agreed that due to the length of this agenda, Admissions would be dealt with by Audit.

#### 87. **Minutes of Local Governing Committees**

Dobwalls 15-3-2018; Landulph 14-3-2018, Liskeard 13-3-2018, Looe 12-3-2018, saltash.net 19-3-

2018, Trewidland 8-3-2018. The minutes of these meetings had been circulated in advance of this meeting.

**Dobwalls** – nothing raised.

**Landulph** – it had been identified that more governors need to undertake Safer Recruitment Training. The Clerk had researched this and there is an online option through the NSPCC for £30 each. A new school secretary is starting shortly.

**Liskeard** – governors seem to be keen to expand the choice of curriculum. Mr Buckley advised that currently national pressure is to narrow it and funding is also restricting this. **A Director asked if there is a business plan to support this.** Mr Buckley advised that currently the sixth forms are viable and any additional subjects would have to be sustainable. **A Director asked if there is funding attached to courses.** Mr Buckley advised that there isn't; schools need 14 students on A level courses to make them viable. At Key Stage 4, schools need to make sure they can offer a course that can be staffed. **A Director asked if there are business plans in place to expand.** Mr Buckley advised that Liskeard would need to include this in their development plan taking account of funding and staffing.

A Director felt Liskeard consider this as a 'wish'. They appreciate that the smaller cohorts are in KS4 so the only way that this could be introduced would be to cater for the less academic students in smaller cohorts which would have an impact on the budget. It was noted that some of these courses would not contribute to the Progress 8 score. **A Director felt it was frustrating that a more appropriate curriculum for these students cannot be provided.** Mr Buckley felt that there are opportunities for these students currently. **A Director asked if it would be possible to transport children from other schools in the MAT for these courses in order to increase cohort size.** Mr Buckley said this could be possible but lessons would need to be done on the same day and the time taken for transport would have to be considered. Having lessons on the same day has an impact when students are absent because they miss a significant amount of work and this would also need to apply across the curriculum which other departments would not be happy about. There is also the issue with it not counting for Progress 8. However, the main problem is timetabling.

**A Director asked about the expansion of the ARB, Area Resource Base, and how this is progressing.** Mr Buckley said the services for high needs students across the county is at breaking point. Saltash have expanded and a feasibility study was done for Liskeard to see if this expansion could be done within their budget. **A Director asked why the situation with these places is at breaking point.** Mr Buckley advised that this is the case across the country and is due to issues with the funding. The main risk for schools is that children who were previously attending a special school are now in ARBs and those in ARBs are now in mainstream schools. Some of these children are not coping with a mainstream education. The Local Authority (LA) had said they would guarantee funding for 20 places even though only 16 are required currently. Although helpful, this gives a shortfall for the student-allocated funding of 4 places. Discussions with the LA are still taking place. **A Director asked if the expansion is going ahead as it would be good for the school.** Dr Brownlow offered to discuss this with the portfolio holder; it was agreed that this would be helpful and she was thanked.

**ACTION: S BROWNLOW**

Directors were advised that Saltash and Liskeard initially had a budget shortfall. Saltash is considering redundancies but Liskeard was able to avoid that with the expansion of the ARB. It was noted that as they are part of the MAT, both processes had to take place at the same time.

**Looe** – had asked for a staff absence insurance policy to be considered and also felt that there were insufficient events on SMART Day for non-teaching staff.

**Saltash** – are keen to know the process to bid for capital projects. There had been a positive response to Mr Newton Chance's presentation. A Deputy Head had been appointed last week, Nichole Sanders. Ms Littledyke is working closely with Wadebridge Secondary School and this is proving positive. The Headteacher there has given leadership training. There has also been a

Learning Walk on Pupil Premium.

**Trewidland** – their concern is with sustainability if the pupil numbers as expected fall to 29. Mr Buckley explained that the MAT can operate a sustainable primary school at Trewidland regardless of the numbers, it is just vital that we regularly review the budget and ensure that staffing levels always reflect the need so that the school remains sustainable. See appendix.

**A Director asked about the car park.** A planning application has been submitted and quotes obtained. It is hoped that this will be one of the projects funded from the central Capital Budget. It was noted that next year's budget is based on 31 pupils who were attending the school when the census was taken in October 2017. It is the 2019-20 budget which will be based on 29 pupils, or the number on roll on census day in October 2018. There has already been considerable discussion about this. **A Director asked if there are children in the catchment area who do not attend the school.** It was thought that there are; particularly in St Keyne. Wrap around care is being put in place and it is felt that this will encourage working parents to send their children to the school.

Dr Brownlow declared that she is married to the Chair of Governors at Trewidland and has links with Trenode, a neighbouring school, as it is a Church school.

A Director expressed surprise that there is still a substantive headteacher at such a small school. Mr Buckley said a lot of work has been done on this and the current position is the most cost-effective way forward at the current time. It was noted that the position is budget led.

88. **Points raised by LGCs for follow-up: appointment of K Iles as Chair of Looe LGC**

Directors unanimously agreed that Kathy Iles should be appointed as Chair of Looe Local Governing Committee and expressed their gratitude to her for agreeing to take on the role after such a short time as a governor. They Clerk was asked to convey their appreciation to her.

**ACTION: D STONEMAN**

89. **Report from Visiting Directors**

Mr Newton Chance advised that this will be a standing agenda item in order for directors to advise the Board of any visits they have made to the schools in the MAT.

90. **CEO – update on Learning Issues**

a) **Expected outcomes from latest data trawl**

A document giving details of progress and attainment data was circulated. It was noted that the Looe data had been provided in a short timescale by the newly appointed Deputy Headteacher. The progress of disadvantaged students in Maths and English was highlighted as an improvement. **A Director asked about the target results this summer.** Mr Buckley advised that the gap has been halved and is in line with the targets that have been set. **A Director asked about reliability of the data.** Mr Buckley said he has concerns. **A Director asked for the reasons.** Mr Buckley advised that this was because the variability between what was achieved and what was predicted had been great previously. It had been suggested that the same end of year tests and assessments are used across all schools and tied to a national scheme. It was noted that these are quite expensive. **A Director asked Mr Buckley if he is saying that the data being provided by the secondary schools is not accurate.** Mr Buckley said he is and this should not be a surprise given the numerous changes in national testing and assessment systems with many qualifications in their infancy. **A Director said they couldn't understand why assessment schemes from courses cannot be applied to provide accurate data.** Mr Buckley said this is because of the accuracy required to make grade predications in a new qualification is difficult with a smaller cohort size. **A Director suggested that this could be overcome if the teachers across the MAT worked together on assessment. This funding could be spent on developing the teams of teachers. A Director asked if the changes to the GCSE grading has impacted on this.** Mr Buckley felt that this was a contributory factor. Schools write their development plans at this time of year but

Secondaries will want to modify them in the light of any surprises from the exam results. **A Director expressed concern that this information wasn't accurate.** Mr Buckley said he feels that the capacity of middle leaders and knowledge of the new assessments needs to be increased and this will help to address this. He gave the example of the primaries who are now using national benchmarking and this has provided an accurate picture. There are now two companies providing this for primary schools and one for secondary. Year 7 schemes have been purchased. **A Director asked about the grades provided to parents and how accurate they are.** Mr Buckley said schools do what they need to do by using past papers to provide the information given to parents. When there were SATs in Y9, this gave them a fixed point which was useful. A Director illustrated the change when levels were abandoned. **A Director asked what the three secondary heads views on this are.** Mr Buckley said initially they were not in favour but at the last meeting they agreed that Maths and English at Key Stage 3 need to be aligned. Mr Buckley said this is not a problem for our three secondary schools any more than it is for any other school nationally.

b) **Likely problem Areas**

**A Director asked if there are any problem areas in the schools.** Mr Buckley said there are not in the primaries but there are concerns about the secondaries. At Looe these are being dealt with by the new deputy. Saltash is trying hard to analyse data and identify areas of most need. Liskeard have done question analysis which the RSC said is sufficiently detailed.

A Director asked about the progress crosses and where they are expected to be. Mr Buckley advised that Liskeard are expected to be slightly below where they were last year, Looe slightly higher and Saltash have narrowed the gap. Landulph and Trewidland are similar in that the cohort has some issues; the expected attainment is not good but progress is good. Dobwalls still have a number of red areas of concern but this is against national data and previously there would have been red in all areas.

c) **Educational Adviser (EA) visit to Liskeard and associated information**

Mr Buckley advised that the inspectors who visited Liskeard were the same as the ones who had visited Dobwalls. All present were disappointed at the lack of useful information which had been forthcoming. See appendix.

91. **CFO - Finance Report and update on Resources issues**

A report and the completed KPI sheet had been circulated. Mrs Lumbard advised that she has made the changes requested at the last meeting which she outlined. She asked directors if they wanted a summary or just to ask questions. From this:

- a) **A Director referred to the summary sheet and the revised reserves, he thought that the projected reserves less the current deficit should give the future reserve and this doesn't match.** This was explained. The carry forward is based on the original budget not the revised one. This would be referred to as the projected budget on the next report.
- b) **A Director queried the percentage on 'unfunded teaching' and asked for clarification.** Mr Buckley advised that this is to distinguish between teaching funded from Pupil Premium and Top Up funding. Whilst this is useful for internal purposes, Directors felt an inclusive teaching line would be sufficient.
- c) **A Director asked where on the sheet they would find the final outturn.** Mrs Lumbard advised that the revised budget takes into account changes which come about during the year. It was suggested this is called the revised forecast. This was discussed at length.
- d) **A Director asked if there is a financial projection for 2019/20 and 2020/21.** Mrs Lumbard advised that there is and she will provide a three-year projection for the next meeting.

**ACTION: J LUMBARD**

- e) **A Director asked if there is a policy about setting deficit budgets.** Mr Buckley advised that no individual school is allowed to do this and this will be adhered to when the budgets for next year are prepared.
- f) **A Director asked about the investment of cash balances.** Mrs Lumbard advised that she hasn't yet researched this.
- g) Restructuring of pay bands for non-teaching staff – a document had been circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:
  - i) **A Director asked how many 'winners' and 'losers' there would be.** Mr Buckley advised that they are all 'winners'. If the pay deal is accepted all support staff in SMART will have an increase in salary. Mrs Lumbard advised that she has done a significant amount of research on this and outlined the reasons behind the proposal.
  - ii) **A Director asked what the financial impact is to the Trust.** This is £163K. Mrs Lumbard advised that she had already anticipated an increase in the national living wage which had been included in the budget. There is an additional £50K that is not already in the budget. It was noted that this increase is not funded by the ESFA. **A Director asked if this includes all associated costs – it does. A Director asked how many staff are affected.** There are 240. **A Director asked how many staff will receive the 7.5% increase.** Mrs Lumbard advised that this will vary from school to school – some will get 2% others will get 9%.

Directors unanimously agreed this proposal.

- h) See appendix.

92. **CEO - update on People issues**

A summary document was circulated. From this:

- a) Saltash redundancies – The Business Case detailing the remodelling of Teaching Assistant provision had been circulated. 9 posts will be lost from a current total of 21. There will be a revised scheme for SEN support. **A Director asked how the process would work.** This was explained and is being overseen by a committee of the Local Governing Committee with advice from James Twine of Wolferstans.
- b) Saltash parental complaint – there has been no further communication from the parents concerned. The recommendations suggested by the panel had been circulated. Directors agreed that this should be forwarded to all schools for action. Mr Newton Chance would prepare a document for circulation. **ACTION: R NEWTON CHANCE**
- c) See appendix.
- d) Looe leadership – currently the headteacher is absent. Arrangements are in place with the new deputy Scott Yeldon who has had an induction to the school. He has been at the school for two weeks. The current acting deputy, Kate Jackman, is currently the senior deputy until the end of Scott's induction. The situation is being reviewed tomorrow with the Chair of the Local Governing Committee. Support has been provided by Liskeard. The length of absence is not known; the situation will be regularly reviewed. **A Director asked if the headteacher is on full salary.** It was confirmed that she is. **A Director asked how long this would be paid.** This would be indefinitely – depending on the conditions of her absence. The correct pay for the correct time will be applied. **A Director asked about the timetable for resolving this.** Mr Buckley felt unable to answer this. A Director advised that the community of Looe are concerned. Mr Buckley is regularly supporting the leadership team at Looe.

- e) Union Recognition Agreement – Mr Buckley advised that the unions had had an arrangement with Local Authorities that any changes had to go through a defined process. He felt that that policy if applied to a MAT, isn't fit for purpose. The MAT is being asked to sign it and until it is agreed, the policy review process is not approved. James Twine has checked this and we are not obliged to sign this. The issues raised were summarised in Mr Buckley's report. Meetings with the unions have been arranged. He has prepared a list of items which will be discussed. **A Director asked how staff are being advised about this.** Mr Buckley advised that the union reps in the schools have been instructed not to talk to MAT reps. **The Director expressed concern about the perception of this by staff. A Director asked if there is a MAT staff bulletin.** There isn't. It was suggested that this could be dealt with by the heads. A Director felt a centrally prepared document would be beneficial to advise staff. **A Director suggested that this could have been done by an HR person and expressed concern that this hasn't yet been prepared. A Director suggested that one of the Business Managers could take this on.** Mr Buckley advised that they are too heavily committed already.

93. **GDPR**

Steve Green, the Business Manager at Looe was unanimously appointed as the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

94. **Chairs report**

- a) **Presentation to Local Governing Committees** – Mr Newton Chance felt this had been a worthwhile exercise, particularly as there had been no negative feedback.
- b) **Members meeting and follow-up**  
Mr Newton Chance advised that after the last meeting, the Members had been in touch and advised that they had felt misled. He feels that there is an issue about the separation of roles. Mr Martin and Mr Newton Chance are going to meet and discuss this in detail. The Members were surprised at what they had been told at the meeting and this shouldn't have happened. It was noted that there are case studies about Members on the NGA website.

Mrs Waghorn will be resigning as a Member. New recruits are needed.

95. **Strategic Plan**

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

- a) Mr Buckley highlighted that the table on pages 7 and 8 should be the focus of the reporting from schools and monitoring by directors. **A Director asked when it would be populated.** This would be done once agreed.
- b) **A Director asked for additional time to consider this document.** It was agreed that responses should be forwarded by 21<sup>st</sup> May which is two weeks before the MAT Leadership Team meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June.
- c) **A Director queried the lack of a defined timescale.** Mr Buckley advised that this is a 5-year plan so the longest time for each item is five years.
- d) Mr Buckley summarised the document which has been agreed by the headteachers and once agreed by the Trust Board, will be circulated to LGCs who need to consider whether this will give them the information they require. The proposal is that the Headteacher's Report is the School Development Plan, compliance document, and community events. LGCs will be asked for their comments at their next meetings. **A Director asked if the Leadership Teams in the schools have seen this.** Mr Buckley advised that the heads have been asked to share this with them.

- e) It was suggested that the strategic overview is extracted.
- f) **A Director felt that there is one area that has been omitted and this is the student outcomes in terms of their destinations** – university, work, etc. Mr Buckley advised that this is a development plan and as this is an area we are strong in, it has not been included. This was discussed; it was noted that sourcing this information is difficult. It was agreed that inclusion of this information or reference to this would be useful.

96. **Adoption of Policies**

Freedom of Information – this had been circulated in advance of the meeting. A Director suggested that the timescale is checked so it is relevant for schools and the terminology should refer to the Trust. Directors agreed that the revised version should be sent to Mr George for final checking. Subject to this, its adoption was unanimously agreed.

**A Director asked if training is provided to staff on how to use information.** This is documented in the Acceptable Use policy.

It was noted that there has been a Freedom of Information request. Steve Green would be advised to contact Mrs Waghorn.

97. **Conferences and Training**

The RSC Regional Conference is on 6<sup>th</sup> July in Exeter. The invite will be checked and circulated if others are able to attend.

The NGA Conference takes place in Manchester on 9<sup>th</sup> June. Due to the location and time involved, no-one was able to attend.

98. **Calendar of Meetings 2018-19**

This had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Directors were asked to check this and advise if there are any date clashes. This would then be sent to LGCs.

99. **Dates of future meetings**

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 5.30pm in Liskeard - Audit

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July at 5.30 pm in Liskeard – Trust Board – *subsequent to the meeting, the date of the next meeting was changed to Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July.*

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

<b>SUMMARY OF ACTIONS</b>	
<p><b>M86 Matters Arising –</b>  <b>M69 Minutes of Local Governing Committees</b>            ‘Matters for Trust Board attention’ had been included on most but not all LGC agendas. The Clerk was asked to follow this up.  <b>M72 CFO - Finance Report and update on Resources issues:</b> The cashflow forecast will be forwarded as soon as possible.  <b>M74 Director Appointments</b> – Interviews were arranged and appointments have been completed. There was a discussion about Academy Ambassadors who have recently been in touch to say that they can now assist with appointments. The Clerk offered to co-ordinate this. It was noted that an additional Member is needed.</p>	<p><b>D STONEMAN</b></p> <p><b>J LUMBARD</b></p> <p><b>D STONEMAN</b></p>
<p><b>M87 Minutes of Local Governing Committees: expansion of Liskeard ARB</b> - Dr Brownlow offered to discuss this with the portfolio holder; it was agreed that this would be helpful</p>	<p><b>S BROWNLOW</b></p>

and she was thanked.	
<p><b>M88 Points raised by LGCs for follow-up: appointment of K Iles as Chair of Looe LGC</b>  Directors unanimously agreed that Kathy Iles should be appointed as Chair of Looe Local Governing Committee and expressed their gratitude to her for agreeing to take on the role after such a short time as a governor. The Clerk was asked to convey their appreciation to her.</p>	<b>D STONEMAN</b>
<p><b>M91 CFO - Finance Report and update on Resources issues – d) A Director asked if there is a financial projection for 2019/20 and 2020/21.</b> Mrs Lumbard advised that there is and she will provide a three-year projection for the next meeting.</p>	<b>J LUMBARD</b>
<p><b>M92 CEO - update on People issues – b) Saltash parental complaint –</b> there has been no further communication from the parents concerned. The recommendations suggested by the panel had been circulated. Directors agreed that this should be forwarded to all schools for action. Mr Newton Chance would prepare a document for circulation.</p>	<b>R NEWTON CHANCE</b>