



TRUST BOARD PEOPLE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the People Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held at Liskeard School & Community College School on Monday 14th October 2019 at 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	Yes/No
Dr S Brownlow	Yes	Mr C Marshall
Mr C Stevens	Yes	Yes

In Attendance: Mr D Buckley, CEO
Mrs K Williams, Clerk to Trust Board

- 1. Welcome and Evacuation Procedure**
The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The evacuation procedure was explained.
- 2. Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**
All trustees had completed a recent written declaration and there were no changes.
- 3. Apologies for Absence**
All present.
- 4. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 17-06-2019**
The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.
- 5. Matters Arising**
 - M17. Matters Arising**
 - M7. Issues raised by LGCs**

Trewidland – It was noted that the confidential appendix needs to be circulated to the Trustees. It was queried if the circulation of confidential appendixes should be raised at the Trust Board meeting to clarify and confirm the process.
Update: The circulation of confidential appendixes was discussed at the last Trust Board meeting and it was agreed that these can be circulated by email.
 - M18. Issues raised by the LGC's**

b) Trustees agreed that they would still like receive the Headteachers report but also receive draft copies of LGC meetings minutes to compare. It was recommended that Trustees need to be responsible for their own sections and cross check the Headteacher's report and minutes to satisfy themselves that LGCs are challenging appropriately. Some concern was expressed about the workload implications of this for Trustees but it was agreed to proceed on a trial basis. Clerk to add to future agendas and meeting papers.
Update: The draft LGC minutes had been circulated with the meeting papers as requested.
 - M19. Gender Pay Gap Report**

e) The SMART Gender Pay Gap Report is in line with the sector. Trustees noted the reasons for women working part time and in the catering and cleaning sector. This report will be reviewed when next year's data is available and Trustees will be able to raise more specific questions relating this. It was suggested that Trustees would review this further when the next report is available. Clerk to add to a future agenda.
Update: This needs to be added to a future agenda.

M20. KPIs – Headteacher’s reports

Liskeard

j) HR – **A Trustee queried the amount of staff on long term sick** and it was noted that the number has not been highlighted as an area of concern and that it is a historical problem at the school. HR4 – **A Trustee noted that there are more staff working at below minimum.** The reasons were clarified in the narrative and Mr Buckley explained that the figures relate to four members of staff and it was queried if support is being provided. Mr Buckley will address this with Mr Lingard.

Update: Mr Buckley has met with Mr Lingard who has advised that staff are receiving support.

l) It was felt that this committee should be providing assurance to the Trust Board and identifying any MAT wide issues relating to HR, Safeguarding and Community. **A Trustee asked about the reporting models used in other trusts** and Mr Buckley noted that SMART are ahead of other schools. Our structure is being used by other MATS (Multi Academy Trusts). Trustees recommended that there should be an item on the Trust Board meeting agendas so that Chairs of committees can update the other Trustees. Clerk to add.

Update: Mr Buckley advised that we adopt the reports which work best for the MAT.

m) A Trustee asked how we move forward to ensure that the right information is brought before the Trustees. Mr Buckley will review the Headteachers report and compile a report for the Trust Board.

Update: Mr Buckley has written a summary which has been circulated with the papers for this meeting.

6. Headteacher’s reports and LGC minutes

The Headteacher’s report and draft LGC minutes were circulated in advance of the meeting. From these:

a) Mr Buckley explained that he is written a strategic summary of the Headteachers’ reports.

b) **A Trustee asked how should this section of the meeting be approached?** Mr Buckley advised that he should not be the only source of data and it was still necessary to review the Headteacher’s reports and the LGC meeting minutes as triangulation of information is required. **A Trustee commented that the CEO summary was very useful** and that trustees should review their own link sections. The Trustees agreed that this is was the best approach.

c) The Trustee agreed that they should identify positive and negative issues from across the trust, to understand if the LGCs are also identifying the key issues and hold the governors to account. It was agreed that a sampling approach would be most useful.

d) HR

A Trustee asked Mr Buckley if there are any concerns. Mr Buckley advised that staff sickness is an ongoing concern but there have not been any changes since the summary report was written. **A Trustee noted that there are patterns of long term absence which remains higher than one would hope or expect.** Mr Buckley explained that governors have been involved with recent panel hearings which relate to long term staff sickness. In one instance, there had been a challenge to performance which has resulted in sickness absence. It is expected that the situation will improve following the results of the governor hearings.

e) **A Trustee noted that staff well-being and mental health is an issue and asked how is this being monitored.** Mr Buckley explained the results of a recent staff survey which show that it is staff members’ perception, that as a Trust, we do well with dealing with mental health and well-being but we may not always address long term poor performance of staff and it was discussed this could be due to capacity. Mr Buckley is supporting the Headteachers to address this.

f) Safeguarding

Mr Buckley explained that a Safeguarding Peer review system is in use across the MAT. Trustees noted that this was a valuable system. Mr Buckley explained that each school is visited by a DSL (Designated safeguarding Lead) or DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) from across the MAT to ensure that systems and reporting are robust. **A Trustee asked how many visits have been completed** and Mr Buckley advised that there have been two and these visits are scheduled each

half term. **A Trustee asked what is being done towards succession planning for DSLs.** Mr Buckley explained that this process will increase the experience and capacity of the DSLs and DDSLs across the MAT and uses the expertise of the Liskeard DSL to train these staff. Mr Buckley advised that the culture of safeguarding being everyone's responsibility is well understood by staff.

- g) **A Trustee noted from Mr Buckley's report that the issue of attendance is being addressed.** Mr Buckley explained that this is a slow process to improve. **A Trustee asked what background and training the Safeguarding Link Governors have.** Mr Buckley explained that governors understand what they need to ask during the safeguarding visits and there are four opportunities for safeguarding training per year. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next Link meeting. Clerk to add to the order of business.

Action: Clerk

- h) Community

A Trustee noted from the reports that there are key areas of interest from a community perspective which include: data for higher education from Liskeard and Looe has not been provided; gender stereotyping work is a key factor for primary schools and there appears to be a good level of parental engagement.

- i) It was discussed that IAG (Individual Advice and Guidance) is important at secondary schools and as the schools are aware of which students have progressed to university, it is useful for this information to be circulated to trustees. Mr Buckley explained that if there is data missing from the Headteacher's report, then this should be added to the next review. Trustees recommend that destination data is included in the Headteacher's report. A Trustee requested that we have a destinations and IAG agenda item for the next meeting with the relevant data. Clerk to add.

Action: Clerk

- j) A Trustee commented how valuable the CEO report is to give an overview of information provided in the Headteachers' reports and LGC minutes.

7. **Issues raised by the LGC's - None**

- a) None.

8. **Governor application form**

- a) It was discussed that the governor application form and skills audit should be included in the People Link meeting for further consultation.

Action: Clerk

- b) Mr Buckley suggested that there are three key skills which need to be identified using the form which are; Why do you want to join the LGC, what can you bring to the LGC and how it fits with the LGC.

- c) It was recommended that "why are you interested in becoming a school governor" should be the first question on the form. It was discussed that past experience of being a school governor is useful but Trustees did not want this question to be off putting. The equalities monitoring information is still required but should be held separately and not circulated to governors or Trustees.

1. Why do you wish to become a governor and what can you will bring to the LGC?

2. Knowledge skills and experience

3. Trustees recommend that an extra section is added for the Chair of the governors to complete to comment on whether the applicant has the skills that are needed by the LGC and for the Chair to include their recommendations.

- d) **A trustee asked about the processes in place to ensure safeguarding when recruiting governors.** Mr Buckley explained that this is not a legal process. DBS checks are completed and we ensure that the schools do not put governors in a position to endanger them. A Trustee asked if the Clerk would contact The Diocese of Truro Governance Team to ask what is considered good practice when recruiting governors.

Action: Clerk

- e) It was agreed that the governor application form would be revised and discussed at the People Link meeting. Following this, it will be circulated to the Trust Board for approval.

9. **Lessons learned from recent disciplinary process –**

- a) Confidential appendix.
- b) The Clerk advised that following each of the governor hearing panels, she has met with Chloe Callard, HR officer to identify any learning points and suggest possible changes to policies and working practices. Together Mrs Callard and the Clerk have drafted template documents to aid Headteachers in the investigation and reporting. This will aid Headteachers in a consistent approach to capturing information which will provide governors with the required information to make a fully informed decision.
- c) A Trustee noted that there is a problem with the capacity of the Headteachers and the LGC to deal with arising issues and perhaps there is a need to provide training for the Headteachers and the governors. Mr Buckley explained that he is advising that Headteachers follow the policy and then ask questions if needed.
- d) It was agreed that governor hearing panels should be discussed at the People Link meeting. Clerk to add to order of business.
Action: Clerk
- e) **A Trustee noted that if these decisions are being delegated to the Headteacher and LGC, there is potentially no direct oversight by the Trust Board and perhaps this should be reviewed and in cases of dismissal, a trustee should be on the panel.** Mr Buckley explained that Mrs Callard, HR Officer is involved in these cases and legal advice is being sought. **A Trustee voiced concern over the capacity of the LGC to sit on dismissal panels.** Mr Buckley advised that he is discussing this with CEOs across the county who have a pool of experienced governors to sit on panels.
- f) It was discussed that a pool of people who are experienced enough to sit on appeal panels would be a useful approach to address this situation. This will be discussed further by Mr Buckley, Mrs Callard and the Clerk.
Action: D Buckley/C Callard/Clerk
- g) It was recommended that every panel should have a suitably experienced external person to sit on the panel. It was recommended that potential panel members should be reviewed and agreed by the People Committee.

10. **Stakeholder survey**

- a) Mr Stevens advised that he is discussing and liaising with Mr Newton Chance on the results of the survey and noted that this will be an annual process. Mr Buckley explained that procedures around this need to be strengthened.
- b) **A Trustee noted that there are two key questions which are, what do staff think of the Trust and what do parents think. It was added that pupil voice is also important.** A consistent view of the MAT is valuable. It was recommended that the survey should not link to any individuals' appraisal. **A Trustee noted that some of the comments were extremely negative and critical of core processes.** Mr Buckley noted that this survey was open to trolling and previous surveys had not received such a level of negative comments. It was discussed that if this level of animosity is evident across the MAT, it would be addressed. **A Trustee asked if the previous survey results have been reported to the Trust Board** and Mr Buckley explained that this information has been circulated and is also included in the Headteacher's report. The results of other surveys conducted across the MAT were discussed at length.
- c) It has been highlighted that for future surveys, there will be more preparation and it needs to be a controlled process. **A Trustee asked if SMART receives the results of the school surveys.** Mr Buckley explained that these are available online as the schools purchased systems to conduct surveys.

- d) Mr Stevens will return to the People Committee with a structured control process in the spring. He asked if Trustees could please suggest some questions.

Action: C Stevens

11. **Strategic Risk**

- a) Mr Buckley explained that a Risk Register has been completed by all the Headteachers. This will be tabled for the Trust Board to review this term.
- b) **A Trustee asked if the Risk Register has a section for the People Committee?** Mr Buckley advised that this document can be circulated to trustees and there is a ESFA statement which is critical of MATS who listed more than 30 risks in their Risk Registers. The MAT Risk Register includes 28 of the most serious risks. Mr Buckley explained that the process for identifying risk was to use the strategic plan and recommended risk registers together.
The Clerk will circulate the Risk Register to the People Committee.

Action: Clerk

12. **Review of Policies:**

Safeguarding

Mr Buckley explained that this has been published on the website already as approved by email.

Recommended changes –

Page 6 last paragraph “We want to ensure that your needs are being met” should be on page 1.

Page 12 jigsaw - has loose letters.

Page 25 last paragraph – he/she should be used instead of just he.

A Trustee asked if staff have to sign the document to confirm they have read it. Mr Buckley explained the Union’s stance and that we cannot enforce this but it has been circulated to all staff and this has been documented. Mr Buckley explained that “governor” is a global term when used in policies and refers to both local governors and trustees.

Mr Buckley explained that the above are not material changes and do not require further consultation. Trustees have scrutinised and endorse the policy for approval by the Trust Board.

Intimate Care

Mr Buckley explained that this is a new policy.

Recommended changes -

Page 3 paragraph 2 – “those adults that provide that care” should be changed to “those adults WHO provide that care”.

Page 5 Second to last paragraph – Remove word – “those” staff that are in the vicinity.

Page 6 first paragraph - there is no timeline (immediately or within 24 hours would be preferable). Mr Buckley explained that “within one working day” is the most commonly used wording. **Trustee asked where this policy is in the approval process** and Mr Buckley explained that comments have been requested from Headteachers, Local Governors and Trustees prior to Union consultation. Trustees agreed to recommend this policy for approval by the Trust Board as a basis for Union consultation.

Redundancy and Redeployment

Mr Buckley explained that this policy has been fully consulted on following some changes made during the first round of consultations with the LGCs, Trustees and Unions.

Recommended changes -

Page 13 - redundancy for each year of service (should have FULL year).

A Trustee noted that there is no reference to the CBU team. Mr Buckley advised that this is included in a heading as CBU staff are classed as a school but Mr Buckley will check that this has been included.

Action: D Buckley

A Trustee noted that redundancy is also a dismissal and it would be prudent to have an independent person on any appeal panel. Mr Buckley explained that the approach to panels should be added during the next policy review but there is nothing to prevent us using this approach now. Trustees agreed that we should be consistent in how we approach appeal panels across the range of policies, and that any appeal relating to a dismissal should have an extra level of assurance (e.g. the independent member approach suggested earlier). Trustees recommended the policy to Trust Board for approval.

Staff Attendance

Mr Buckley advised that this policy has been fully consulted on.

Recommended changes –

Page 19 flow chart- tier 4 and 5 boxes are cut.

Mr Buckley advised that this is only a material change and can be adjusted and doesn't need to be consulted on. Trustees discussed that this procedure could result in a dismissal and at the stage of appeal, it should have an approved panel member. Trustees recommended this policy to Trust Board for approval.

13. **Guidance/instructions to LGCs (added on recommendation of RNC)**

- a) Discuss governor application forms and governor hearing panels during the next People Link meeting.

14. **Date of next meetings:**

10-02-2019 and 02-06-2020.

The meeting closed at 19.37.

Action Summary	
M6. Headteacher's reports and LGC minutes g) A Trustee noted from Mr Buckley's report that the issue of attendance is being addressed. Mr Buckley explained that this is a slow process to improve. A Trustee asked what background and training the Safeguarding Link Governors have. Mr Buckley explained that governors understand what they need to ask during the safeguarding visits and there are four opportunities for safeguarding training per year. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next Link meeting. Clerk to add to the order of business.	Action: Clerk
M6. Headteacher's reports and LGC minutes i) It was discussed that IAG (Individual Advice and Guidance) is important at secondary schools and as the schools are aware of which students have progressed to university, it is useful for this information to be circulated to Trustees. Mr Buckley explained that if there is data missing from the Headteacher's report, then this should be added to the next review. Trustees recommend that destination data is included in the Headteacher's report. A Trustee requested that we have a destinations and IAG agenda item for the next meeting with the relevant data. Clerk to add.	Action: Clerk
M8. Governor application form a) It was discussed that the governor application form and skills audit should be included in the People Link meeting for further consultation.	Action: Clerk
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M9. Lessons learned from recent disciplinary process – d) It was agreed that governor hearing panels should be discussed at the People Link meeting. Clerk to add to order of business.	Action: Clerk
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M10. Stakeholder survey d) Mr Stevens will return to the People Committee with a structured control process in the spring. He asked if Trustees could please suggest some questions.	Action: C Stevens

<p>M11. Strategic Risk</p> <p>b) A Trustee asked if the Risk Register has a section for the People Committee? Mr Buckley advised that this document can be circulated to trustees and there is a ESFA statement which is critical of MATS who listed more than 30 risks in their Risk Registers. The MAT Risk Register includes 28 of the most serious risks. Mr Buckley explained that the process for identifying risk was to use the strategic plan and recommended risk registers together.</p> <p>The Clerk will circulate the Risk Register to the People Committee.</p>	<p>Action: Clerk</p>
<p>M12. Review of Policies:</p> <p>Redundancy and Redeployment</p> <p>Mr Buckley explained that this policy has been fully consulted on following some changes made during the first round of consultations with the LGCs, trustees and Unions.</p> <p>Recommended changes -</p> <p>Page 13 - redundancy for each year of service (should have FULL year).</p> <p>A trustee noted that there is no reference to the CBU team. Mr Buckley advised that this is included in a heading as CBU staff are classed as a school but Mr Buckley will check that this has been included.</p>	<p>Action: D Buckley</p>