



**TRUST BOARD**

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July at 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	Present	Yes/No
Dr S Brownlow	Yes	Mrs L Lawson	Yes
Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes	Mr C Marshall	Yes
Mrs H Casson	No	Mr Newton Chance, Chair	Yes
Mr B Cook	Yes	Mr C Stevens, Vice Chair	Yes
Mr J Crisp	Yes		

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

- 22. **Welcome and Format of the meeting**  
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Mrs Lawson, the newly appointed Staff and Student Health and Well Being Trustee. The Chair advised the format of the meeting.
- 23. **Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**  
Dr Brownlow in the interest of transparency, declared that her husband is the Chair of Governors at Trewidland school.
- 24. **Apologies for Absence**  
Mrs Casson had sent her apologies in advance of the meeting which were received and accepted by the committee.
- 25. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 05-12-2019 and 29-05-2020**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and the extraordinary meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record and will be signed once social distancing ceases.
- 26. **Progress of action points and matters arising**  
The Chair asked Trustees if there were any matters arising from the last two sets of minutes that were not being covered by today's agenda.

**Actions points completed since last meeting:**

**M13. SMART Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct**

a) It was agreed to defer this to the next meeting. It was discussed this document should be split into two documents for Trustees and Governors.

*Update: On this agenda for agreement.*

**M14. Items from Chair - constitution of Trust Board following Review meeting**

c) It was discussed and agreed that a suitable person for the H&S and Premises Trustee should be approached. Mrs Lumbard will obtain contact details.

*Update: Complete but unsuccessful in recruiting to this post.*

**M20. Wider Reopening of Schools – Consider and agree**

e) The next Audit Committee meeting is on 4th June 2020 and it was agreed that the Risk Assessments will be reviewed and approved during this meeting.

*Update: Complete.*

m) Mr Buckley advised that Risk Assessments include students who cannot sustain 2-meter distancing. A Trustee asked if the wording in the document could be changed and Mr Buckley will amend the wording.

*Update: Complete.*

u) A Trustee asked what is in place should someone start showing COVID-19 symptoms.

*Update: On this agenda.*

v) Mr Buckley advised that there is a sub set of staff who do not have a shielding letter but are self-isolating for different reasons. Mr Buckley advised that they have each had their specific circumstances considered. It was suggested that a specific form should be used in future.

It was agreed that this would be discussed during the People Committee meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020.

*Update: Complete.*

## 27. **Reports and Recommendations from Committees**

Minutes of the meetings had been circulated in advance. From these:

a) People - 10/02 and 02/06

Dr Brownlow advised that the appraisal document has been circulated by email to Trustees and will be discussed under the CEO summary agenda item. The People Committee had also discussed the Stakeholder survey which is a separate agenda item.

b) Resources and Audit - 04/03, 04/06, 24/06 and 16/07

The main item from the Resources Committee meetings is the recommendation of the approval of budgets for 20/21. A procedural item from the Audit Committee, is the need for a new Chair of the Audit committee. The Chair added that the membership of committees will be reviewed at the start of next year.

c) Learning – 11/02 and 22/06

Mr Crisp advised that the discussion which took place during the Learning Committee meetings will be covered under the CEO summary agenda item.

d) The Chair thanked Trustees for their time and dedication in attending the virtual committee meetings.

## 28. **20/21 Budgets – Approval following recommendation from Resources Committee**

The budget documentation had been uploaded to Teams for Trustees to consider. From these:

a) The Chair advised that the management account summaries have been circulated by email. Mrs Lumbard explained that there have been changes since the circulation. There was an error in the circulation of 20/21 budgets and these were uploaded to Teams at short notice. The Resources Committee advised that the budget documents had been circulated for their meeting on 16/07/2020 and they were reviewed in detail. Trustees were advised that they would only be approving the budgets for 20/21 tonight and not future years.

b) Mrs Lumbard advised the government have made last minute announcements on the Teachers' Pay Grant and the Covid-19 Catch up Funding and these both affect the future years' budgets. The Covid-19 Catch Up Funding is higher than the Year 7 Catch up funding which is ceasing. Teachers' pay will be uplifted by 2.75% for UPS and upper pay scales but higher for those lower on the MPS on a sliding scale. With a staff of average seniority, this works out as approximately 3.1% but given our staff contains proportionately more UPS, the costs may be lower. We currently in budgets have accounted for a 3% pay increase. Mrs Lumbard will need to assess the impact on future budgets and will need to look at the staffing profile. Any further information on changes to government funding will be shared with the Resources Committee. **A Trustee asked if these changes materially affect the 20/21 budget.** Mrs Lumbard is not sure until she has assessed further as it depends where the staff fall within the changes. It is hoped that it will not

impact significantly. The Covid 19 Catch Up funding is significantly more than expected which the total amount payable to the Trust being in the region of £280K. **A Trustee asked if there are any recent changes that would prevent approval of the budgets** and was advised that approval can still take place based on the information provided.

- c) **A Trustee asked if the teachers' pay is fully funded** and Mrs Lumbard advised that the teachers' pay grant is still in place. **A Trustee noted that the budget predictions for Saltash and Trewidland budgets in future years are a concern.** Mr Buckley advised that figures for Saltash were reviewed following a recommendation by the Resources Committee. During discussions, minor changes were found which are not material but have led to adjustments in a couple of the indicators normally called for by the ESFA. The assessment for the teacher contact ratio is still low in Saltash and plans are in place to address this.
- d) The Chair summarised the options for Trewidland following feedback from the Local Governing Committee and discussions in the Resources Committee. The Resources Committee has agreed that Trewidland would be supported until they can recruit more pupils. Mr Buckley explained that numbers have increased this year. **A Trustee asked what is the local demography of the area.** Mrs Buckley explained that there are enough children locally to make the school viable. The school have attracted half the PAN (Planned Admission Numbers) for next year and this needs to continue but there are issues with accessibility due to the school's location.
- e) Trustees unanimously agreed to approve the 20/21 budgets as presented.

29. **CEO Summary including the Consideration and approval of the reopening of schools in September 2020**

School Risk Assessments were circulated in advance of the meeting. From these:

- a) Mr Buckley thanked Trustees for their patience as there have been short time frames in circulation of information following consultation with the MSLT (MAT Senior Leadership Team).
- b) Update on pupil figures  
An update on pupil figures from across the Trust was circulated by email to Trustees. Mr Buckley explained that the majority of pupils attending school were keyworker children and these numbers have been increasing. Government guidance advised that schools should only return on a 25% capacity but we have worked above this in some schools, but only where safe to do so. The number of staff returning to school has been increasing. Trustees did not have any questions.

The full return of pupils in September 2020

- c) Mr Buckley explained that the mitigations document has been shared with Trustees by email. This list of mitigations was collected from the best advice available from the guidance both locally and nationally. The Heads have selected the mitigations suitable for their schools. This document has been praised by the RSC and other local CEOs. The latest update provides information as to which schools have adopted each particular mitigation. Trustees had no further points to raise regarding the mitigations document.
- d) Steve Green provided template Risk Assessments for the schools to complete and these were well received. Mr Buckley explained that all schools have the same Risk Assessments. There is specificity for each school and these tie in well with the mitigations document. The Risk Assessments have been reviewed and are thorough.
- e) **A Trustee queried the statement at the beginning of the Risk Assessment which advises that any changes are highlighted in yellow and asked in the absence of any highlighting, if these are new Risk Assessments.** Mr Buckley explained that these are new Risk Assessments for full return of students as there would be too numerous changes to the Risk assessments already in place. A weekly review of Risk Assessments will continue and when this happens, changes will be highlighted in yellow.

f) **A Trustee suggested that the Risk Assessment for Saltash is still not the same as the other schools and does not include any mitigations for ventilation.** Mr Buckley advised that Saltash have transformed the school in preparation for the school to return. The operating procedures for the school are incredibly detailed. Pupil and parent versions of the operating procedures are in place for some of the schools and Mr Buckley is content to share these with Trustee to provide assurance.

g) **A Trustee asked if the issue of possible airborne contamination had been considered.** Mr Buckley explained that following conversations with Public Health England who had been invited to the LA weekly consultation group, he has been advised that the main concern is the risk of droplet transmission rather than airborne and that risk assessments need not mitigate for airborne infection, so this information has been included in the Risk Assessments.

h) **A Trustee queried the use of masks and if there is a possibility of having to ask people wear masks.** Mr Buckley explained that we have gone as far as we can to work around the government guidance. He advised the scenarios where staff have been asked to consider wearing a visor or a mask, such as transition between class rooms. Government guidance sites research that suggests for children under the age of 11, the use of a mask increases the risk so we are advising children to wear masks up to the school gates and then safely remove them. This aspect of the government guidance means we cannot mandate that people wear masks unless we oppose guidance. Mr Buckley explained that three mitigations had been provided as guidance if Heads wished to use them regarding airborne spreading; the wearing of visors, not to use recirculation air conditioning and to disable hand driers.

i) Trustees noted concern at the prospect of all students and staff returning to school in September as the effectiveness of much of the plans in place are dependent on the effectiveness of test, track and trace and without this fully in place and working reliably it seems highly risky. **A Trustee asked if we have checked with legal advisors on liabilities.** Mr Buckley advised that he has sought advice and all key documentation has been passed through the legal advisors. Mr Buckley explained that positive feedback from CASH is that we are considered a cautious Trust.

j) A Trustee noted that the Trust are following government direction and our challenge is to ensure that procedures are in place which have scrutinised and tested and the mitigations in place. **A Trustee noted reservations regarding the advice being provided to the education sector as this differs to other sectors such as transport.** It was noted that we should not deviate from the guidance.

k) **A Trustee queried what will happen if there are Covid cases increasing in the community but we are not in lockdown measures.** Mr Buckley explained that our current Risk Assessment is based on using the 2-metre separation where possible for all staff and hence ensuring they have a safe environment if there are local cases of infection. Guidance suggests that there is a lesser risk to children who contract the virus, so our Staff are our main concern in terms of risk to life at school, noting there are still risks to families outside of school. Mr Buckley advised that he still has concerns over how safe the government guidance is and its apparent assumption that children are less likely to spread the infection. Mr Buckley advised that if numbers of cases are rising in the community, he is confident that the risk assessments have the mitigations needed in place. We are operating on a secure model and we will respond to confirmed cases. If there are local cases in school, we will need to respond quickly. Mr Buckley advised that systems are already in place and symptomatic children have been isolated and bubbles secured. Headteachers have been trained in the processes needed. The re-opening of schools is the Trust Board responsibility. Closure is the Headteachers decision if quick closure is needed.

l) **A Trustee asked for clarification on the position of "shielding" children and the Area Resource Based centres in Saltash and Liskeard.** Mr Buckley advised that the guidance is that all staff and pupils should return in September. He also advised that staff who have visited their GP have received a standard response letter and so OH advice has been considered where previously shielding staff are anxious about returning to school or the school is anxious to allow them to. Mr

Buckley advised that we will have some children that will need to continue with home learning and these children will receive less support as teaching staff are back in school. CHES have offered to help support those children who are unable to return to school.

The Chair suggested that initial approval is given for the plans in place for return in September.

- m) Trustees should meet again at the end of August to review in light of any changes in guidance and then reapprove the plans. **A Trustee asked what will trigger an extraordinary review or should this be a default position and cancelled if not needed and nothing has changed.** It was agreed that the Clerk would schedule a further meeting which could then be cancelled if not required.

**Action: Clerk**

Trustees unanimously approved the strategies to return in September as presented.

- n) Centre Assessed Grades

- o) Mr Buckley summarised the changes to students receiving exam grades. We have produced a document as a solution which has been checked legally. Children will be provided a guidance interview should they require it. Pupils can request centre assessed grades in this interview and having received their grades, they are informed about GDPR for a subject access request using the guidance provided in the data protection policy. We have been clear that all assessments are as a result of collective whole school grading process and not as a result of an individual staff members' assessment.

Mr Buckley advised that there is risk to the Trust of student claiming unfair treatment, but our position and the appropriateness of our policy has been checked by legal advisors. **A Trustee asked if approval of this policy is needed** and Mr Buckley advised that they should.

Trustees unanimously approved this policy.

- p) **A Trustee queried the cohort of children in Year 13 who are leaving the schools and how this is being handled over the summer and during results day and asked for assurance that staff are aware of the Higher Education sector who are short of students and possible opportunities available in light of this.** Mr Buckley explained that advice and guidance is being offered to all students. The low aspirations of students are an issue but it is likely that the majority of students will gain their expected grades. The Headteachers are keen to ensure that students are able to access as many opportunities as possible.

#### Appraisal process

- q) Due to Lockdown, most staff have been unable to complete their appraisal this year so Mr Buckley has devised a process for fairly finalising this year's reviews. This has been agreed by MSLT and is in line with Legal advice. It has now been shared with unions as they have suggested that all staff pass their appraisal. For the appraisal process next year, we have simplified the document to enable an appraisal process to take place which uses continual appraisal to provide support rather than be judgemental throughout the year. This reduced form has also been agreed by MSLT. During the consultation for these forms, a Trustee had suggested the use of the term 'judgement' had been confusing. Mr Buckley has clarified that this was amended in the update.

Trustees accepted this position on Appraisal with no further questions.

#### School Development Plan (SDP) cycle

- r) It has been agreed that the SDP process will be delayed until October half term next year. Trustees acknowledged this change with no further questions.

#### Capital Project

- s) Mr Buckley explained that as part of the agreed capital works set out in the condition survey, there is a requirement to undertake works to the flat roof and tank room on the 3 storey tower block building at Looe Community Academy. This is quite a complex project as there is a telephone mast on this building. Before lockdown, Kendall Kingscott visited the school to review the project. They have now provided a quote for design and project management fees totalling £27,500. As this quote is over the £20,000 threshold that is set in our tender policy, we would

like to seek agreement from Trustees that we may, on this occasion, proceed with engaging Kendall Kingscott to provide these services rather than source other quotes for project management. A Trustee noted that this is a relatively small figure over the normal process.

**A Trustee clarified that the expected normal process had taken place and this was a minor modification due to works being over the threshold.**

Trustees unanimously agreed to the proposal on this occasion.

#### 5 Year Strategic plan

- t) The 5-year strategic plan has been circulated on the normal schedule prior to lockdown but work on it had been halted. The plan is normally circulated to Trustees and discussed, half a term before the SDP process completes. As the SDP process has now been moved to after Autumn half term, Mr Buckley will recirculate the strategic plan and update it further if necessary.

**Action: D Buckley**

### 30. Stakeholder Survey

- a) The Chair explained that the stakeholder survey is intended to give insight into the effectiveness of the Trust Board and that this year's extraordinary events would make comparison of the results extremely difficult. We were also too late in the term to effectively complete the process. Next year, we will have a single central email system for all staff, governors and students across the six schools which will make it much easier to conduct surveys.
- b) The Chair explained that the 360 Review of the Chair process is in place and would provide some information for Members at the annual review meeting.
- c) It was proposed and agreed that a stakeholder survey would not be circulated this year. The Chair thanked Mr Stevens and Mr Marshall for their initial work on the survey.

### 31. Adoption of Policies:

- a) Trustee Code of Conduct - For agreement following annual review  
Trustees unanimously agreed to approve.  
It was suggested that this should be circulated to Members for agreement.
- Action: Clerk**
- b) Governor Code of Conduct - For agreement following annual review  
Trustees unanimously agreed to approve.
- c) Support Staff Pay Policy – For discussion and agreement in principle  
Mrs Lumbard explained that the Support Staff pay increase is under consultation. The original policy was discussed by the People Committee but the annex could not be updated as the information was unknown. The consultation ends on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August and the suggest increase is 2.75% with an extra day's annual leave. It is anticipated that the NJC will agree this amount. We would like to have an agreement in principle and if there are no objections following the consultation, we can apply the pay increase and include in pay for August.  
Trustees were in agreement in principle.  
**A Trustee asked if the equalities impact assessment could be circulated as it would be useful to see the impact of Covid-19.**
- Action: J Lumbard**
- d) Data Protection Policy  
It is now a SMART Policy for use in all schools. Trustees unanimously agreed to approve.
- e) The Donations Policy and the 16-19 Bursary Policy were both reviewed by the Resources Committee on 16-07-2020 who recommended their approval. The Clerk will circulate to Trustees by email for approval.

**Action: Clerk**

- f) For the minutes:  
Agreed by Email on 27/03/2020:  
Governor/Trustee AUP, Complaints, Home School Agreement, Whistleblowing, Premises Management, Charging and Remissions, Counter Theft, Financial Regulations, Financial SoDA,

Reserves and Investments and Capital Allocation.

- g) Agreed by Email on 03/07/2020  
Covid 19 Emergency Policy

32. **Items from Chair**

- a) The Chair thanked Trustees for electing him as Chair of the Trust Board for a further year (Agreement by email on 26-03-2020).

- b) 360 Review of the Trust Board Chair

The Chair advised that the 360 Review will be circulated to Trustees by the Clerk and could it please be completed in preparation for the Annual Review Meeting in September.

**Action: All**

- c) Skills Audit

A copy of the Skills Audit will be circulated to Trustees and needs to be completed and returned to the Clerk. A draft Trustees report will be required for the end of October and forms part of the final audit report.

**Action: All**

- d) Annual Review Meeting in September 2020

The Chair explained that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss how effectively the Trust Board is operating. In light of discussion, the SoDA (Scheme of Delegation) will need to be reviewed and updated with any suggested changes from this meeting. **A Trustee asked about the Annual Trustees report for the audit report and asked if this can be circulated.** The Chair explained that he will be working with the CEO and it will be circulated for comments.

**Action: R Newton Chance**

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

- a) Trustees were in agreement of the individual school Risk Assessments and the mitigation strategies agreed by MSLT in preparation for fully opening all our schools in September. This decision will be reviewed on the 28<sup>th</sup> August.
- b) The Cycle of the SDP has been delayed and will start after October half term.
- c) Trustees approved the 20/21 budgets.

34. **Date of next meetings:**

Annual Review Meeting with Members 17/09/2020 at 5.30 pm.

Full Trust Board with presentation of accounts by Bishop Fleming 10/12/2020 at 5.30 pm, Full Trust Board 30/03/2021 at 5.30 pm and 20/07/2021 for approval of Budgets at 5.30 pm.

Mr Buckley explained that we are looking at mixed virtual/socially distanced meetings at Liskeard.

35. **Items which were raised at the end of the meeting**

- a) A Trustee noted that KCSIE (Keeping Children safe in Education) is being updated but they have retracted any major changes. It was recommended that all Trustees to read the document so they are clear on their responsibilities on safeguarding.

**Action: All**

- b) **A Trustee asked about Trustee vacancies and recruitment.** The Chair explained that the committee membership needs review and we also need to recruit an Audit Trustee and a H&S Premises Trustee. It was suggested that that this is shared with the LGCs to see if they have any contacts.

- c) Mr Buckley explained that there is one major change to KCSIE as we now have responsibilities for following up on what action is taken by supply agencies if a safeguarding concern is raised regarding one of their agency staff. This is a controversial change and so something to draw Trustees attention to.

- d) The Chair thanked Trustees for their hard work and dedication this year.



