

AGM Minutes							
Date/Time	26 th January 2021 at 6pm		Location		Virtual		
Attendees	Initials			Attendees	Initials		
Tom Begbie (University of Exeter)	TB	Tania Skeaping (Chair of Trustees)	TS	Kevin Wilson (Individual)	KW	Ian Luke (Plymouth Marjohm University)	IL
Christina Mabin (EDEN)	CM						

Apologies	Initials	Reason

ACTIONS
DECISIONS
QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

In Attendance	Initials	
Susanne Kiff	SK	CFOO
Hazel Fox	HF	Vice CEO
Dan Morrow	DM	CEO and Trustee
Melissa Trudgill	MT	Governance Manager
Peter Last	PL	Trustee
Morgen Witzel	MW	Trustee
Philip Sanders	PS	Trustee
Jane Dumeresque	JD	Trustee
Graham Briscoe	GB	Trustee
John Lawlor	JL	Trustee

Minutes to
Attendees
Apologies

Meeting started at 6pm

1 – Notice of this meeting and apologies
MT confirmed apologies had been received from: Stewart Biddles, Jeanette Savage and Chris Gould and these were sanctioned.
Declaration of conflict of interest: GB – Independent Trustee - Marjon Student Union.
2 – Introduction of Dan Morrow CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TS – Expressed thanks on behalf of Members and Trustees to HF for stepping up as Interim CEO during the Autumn Term. DM had undertaken position analysis to look at where we are. The Trust Board had previously undertaken a review to look at Trust operations and governance; good starting point, strategic piece of work to address gaps and areas for development. DM undertaken six months of transition. Focus with team on 3 specific areas:

1. Organisational structures – Look at whether effective and efficient to deliver quality education and services.
2. Underpinning culture and ethos operating within the MAT to test whether true with articles, vision and values.
3. Consider capacity to address any issues identified from above strands of work.
 - Conversations with senior leaders and governance colleagues have provided positive energy for change and improvement at all levels and true understanding of where we find ourselves as an organisation.
 - In last three years a number of very good pieces of work were undertaken but not always on an overall strategy to bring lasting and sustained change. Climate strategy work uniting who we are as an organisation and single employer and insuring we maintain bespoke and unique identify of all of our schools.
 - Cohesion strategy – Understanding two questions: who are we? and who are we becoming?
 - Trust Development Plan – to look at culture, operations and structures.
 - DM advised that he has been in post four weeks, feels progress has been at pace, with culture pieces identifying there has been issues and beyond them and acceptance from executives, paid professionals and volunteers of the need to change. Builds on what is already good within organisation and what needs to improve. Overall, the strategy reveals we need to find authentic co-operative aspects within organisation to work laterally because we have been a siloed organisation and this has revealed a number of champions within the organisation who are able to provide strength and capacity to take forward.
 - Looking broadly at how we can ensure we are system leaders and produce content and knowledge in the overall proposition for education in the South West equally in the times of a pandemic: each and every member of school community is safeguarded.
 - Significant piece of work by Easter is Governance Restructure. Piece of work undertaken by a Task and Finish Group which has contained governance volunteers and paid professionals from a number of different groups.
 - DM confirmed that the length of transition was a real privilege, he had attended 300 hours of meetings before he joined the Trust. This has meant that the last four weeks have felt like a continuation. He had received a warm reception as well as support and challenge from the Board, AC colleagues and paid professionals.
 - The ten-year Development Plan will be based on civic principles. Crucial we reach out and look to University partners, church partners and beyond Devon to national system.

TS gave the opportunity for questions.

- DM advised the need to improve inclusions. Currently best at serving children that need us least, not doing exactly what we need for the children we don't. Look at curriculum and learning and teaching and re-empower all of our classroom champions.
- **Q A Member asked: What was the most unexpected thing and if you are going to breakdown silos, how are you going to afford to do that if it means moving people around, due to difficult budgetary constraints?** DM advised that senior/middle leadership could have been an area of weakness. He has discovered however that it is not, it is an area of strength, an area that has not been built upon. Wonderful people within organisation and therefore about liberating leadership. The second point: finding how to build the capacity in different teams with flatter structures that move away from some traditional hierarchy. Capacity which therefore self-replicates and offers capacity into the Devon system, as a Trust we need to be a system giver and build and refine our own capacity.
- **A Member asked: What is your timeline?** DM advised that there is some agility around delivery. Needs to understand aspects of structural/operational and cultural. Difficult to timeline. Expectation to leaders that their approach to standards and inclusion will be sharpest rise. Not interested in quick fixes. Importance of HR piece of work:
 1. Operate as one employer. Equity and equality.
 2. Entitlement for staff is built in.
 3. Culture. Spoken to parents, they do not know who we are. Family of schools need to form engagement with community.

- Delivery overall: Organisation will be delivered for September. Governance by April. Culture – Ongoing. Civic leadership.
- **Q A Member asked: Is everyone on board with this?** DM advised that they were and all heading in the same direction. DM confirmed that he has a direct style, everyone is on board.
- **Q A Member asked: Values and ethos underpin everything, do you feel that political policies are a potential threat, i.e. development of regional schools/institute for teaching.** DM confirmed that we do what is right for our children and community, organise our own strategy and organisation around our moral compass. As CEO will ensure key stake holders understand what we are about.

TS expressed thanks for questions and thanks to DM.

3 – Approve AGM Minutes 2020

Minutes of AGM 2020 on 13th February 2020 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 - The receipt and adoption of the report of the Directors and the audited accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 August 2020.

The Members thanked the Trustees and the Executive Team, for the audited accounts and the report of the Directors. The following points/questions were raised:

- **Q A Member asked: Pupil numbers are falling in a number of smaller schools, risk to the academy trust, how are these numbers currently and if they are still falling, what are your plans to address this?** DM advised that three strategies being undertaken.
- Ensure we have full understanding why the numbers are dropping. There has been some work undertaken. Genuine issue with birth rate round some of our schools and housing does not encourage families with children into area. Discussions going forward with social housing. Joined up thinking around local plan.
- Numbers projected forward for next two years, a number of schools are recovering. Some schools are good at building pre-school provision 0-4 years has increased numbers in these areas. Strategy 0-5 years offer across Trust, bespoke approach for parents and carers in community can work flexibly/customer oriented.
- Midwifery based in some of our schools. Broad strategy to ensure that we have flow of children into reception. Reception children are showing speech and language delays. DM reiterated that base numbers on current circumstance and numbers coming through show that pupil numbers are looking healthy/need to look at viability of our schools going forward but not just looking through the financial lens. This is due to a piece of work around income pooling, which would ensure we can look at the family of schools.
- **Q A Member asked: Holditch identified as opening 2021, what is happening?** DM advised that it will be delivered. SK confirmed that the building work was planned for completion at the beginning of January 21. There have been some delays due to contractors experiencing problems due to Covid. Was due to be handed over last week, now hoping to hand over at the end of this week. Snagging work to be undertaken, can then be furnished. HF advised that this is an exciting opportunity in relation to inclusion. Should sit within our whole SEND offer across the whole Trust. Specialist input which will enable students to thrive and find themselves again, and be reintroduced to main stream. Have employed a lead inclusion professional. SEND framework across the whole Trust. Funded for all our schools and anticipate that it will be outreach for Primary. Equality of access for all, located in Okehampton but want students from Holsworthy and Tavistock to benefit from it and have use of the facility. Working towards being a no permanent exclusion MAT.
- **A Member asked: Condition of buildings and in particular the Tavistock rebuild. The Trust did not secure funds from DFE, what are your plans without DFE funds and plans for primary sites?** SK advised that Tavistock new build will be funded from SCA £1.3 million carry forward from last year. Receive SCA and capital funding every

year. Have a five-year plan. Confident that within the five years we can address most of the significant concerns. Prioritised based on health and safety. Also, looked at need to improve facilities so that children get a quality education. SK gave an example of South Tawton Pre-School. Currently works out of a hall separate from the school. Plan to bring that into South Tawton Primary School and hope that will attract more people to that Pre-School. DM advised that a number of sites are not quite fit for purpose. Key priorities:

- Transfer some of our reserves into capital to accelerate some of the plans. Some jobs are getting more expensive the longer they are left.
- Meeting Simon Niles (DCC) and conversation with EFSA in relation to funding.
- Wider groups for fund raising. Contributions from these areas make a difference.
- Creative with sites. Increase lettings and rent incomes. As a community space; potential growth in this area.
- DM reiterated that family of schools, schools have had to make their own sacrifices to ensure that Tavistock can have what they need. However, it does not take away the needs of those schools. Need to think creatively and broadly.
- SK advised that Trust is looking for alternative sources of funds and successfully secured over £300k from the Governments Decarbonisation Grant. Number of our schools will be benefitting from that and it will significantly reduce energy bills. For example: Holsworthy College anticipate savings will be £20k a year on their energy bills. TS advised that the board wrote to both local MP's expressing concerns in relation to this situation.

TS gave the opportunity of further questions. No questions were asked.

DECISION: Members reviewed and approved the Annual Report and Annual Accounts year ended 31 August 2020.

5 - Ratify and note Trustee appointments as appropriate and Member resignations since AGM 2020.

5 - Ratify and note Trustee appointments as appropriate.

5.1 New Trustees

- TS confirmed the following new Trustees:

Morgan Witzel

Pete Last – Foundation Trustee

Stuart Biddles

Chris Gould.

New Trustees were welcomed.

DECISION: Members approved and ratified the new Trustee appointments.

- Amanda French – Currently on maternity leave. Hoping to welcome her back before Easter.

5.2 Trustee - Resignation

TS advised that the Vice Chair and Resources Lead - Jane Dumeresque is resigning. Sad to be losing her. Thanks were expressed. Looking to replace her skill set in particular her financial expertise.

5.3 Member - Resignation

TS advised that she has received a letter of resignation from Kevin Wilson. Resignation with effect from 28th February 2021. He was a Founder Member of the Trust and thanks were expressed. An individual Member would be sort to replace him.

5.4 Trustee – New CEO

MT proposed a verbal resolution to appoint DM as a Trustee. To be followed by signing of all Members of written ordinary resolution. MT to send out the form next week.

DECISION: DM appointed as a Trustee. Proposed: Christina Mabin. Seconded: Ian Luke. Approved.

GB advised that as Company Director DM has had full responsibility since 1st January 2021.

6. Auditors - It is proposed that Bishop Fleming be re-appointed as auditors.

TS proposed that Bishop Fleming be re-appointed as auditors.

DECISION: TS Proposed, Christina Mabin, Seconded.

Members approved the re-appointment of Bishop Fleming as external auditors to the Trust.

7. Appointment of Company Secretary

TS advised that the role previously sat with SK (CFOO). Decided to bring under Governance arm of the organisation.

Governance lead professional: MT. Recommend that she is appointed to the role. Been acting within this role.

DECISION: MT appointed as Company Secretary.

8. Any other ordinary business

The following points were discussed:

- TS opportunity to reflect on extraordinary effort by all staff and leaders during pandemic. Thanks expressed to SK and HF. People working very hard on ground. Wonderful stories in relation to free school meals undertaken by volunteers and operations team.
- CM reiterated massive thank you to all staff, TS, all Governors, MT, SK and everyone.
- KW echoed the above and gave feedback. Appreciate the joined-up thinking. Expressed thanks.
- TS stated that the Local Academy Committees have been extraordinary over the last year. Chairs keep regular contact with Heads. Held emergency Covid meetings/fortnightly updates. AC's pick-up voices on the ground and are useful link for Trust Board.
- TS advised that Members will be meeting before the end of the term to look at Governance structure.

TS expressed thanks to everyone.