

Full Trustee Board (Resource Focus) – Part I Minutes							
Date/Time	24 th September 2020 4.00pm	Location		Wardhayes, Okehampton College and Virtual via Microsoft Team (due to Covid 19)			
Attendees	Initials			Attendees	Initials		
Morgen Witzel (arrived 5.05pm)	MW	Tania Skeaping	TS	Philip Sanders	PS	Dan Morrow	DM
John Lawlor	JL	Jane Dumeresque	JD	Graham Briscoe	GB	Hazel Fox	HF
ACTIONS							
DECISIONS							
QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES							
In Attendance	Initials			Minutes to			
Susanne Kiff	SK	CFOO		Attendees			
Melissa Trudgill	MT	Governance Manager		Apologies			

Meeting started at 4.10pm

Please note that Trustees agreed for the meeting to be recorded for minute taking and it was deleted on 28.09.20

1 - Apologies
Apologies were received from Jeanette Savage and Daryll Chapman and these were sanctioned.
2 – Declaration of Interest
All Trustees present were reminded to declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting.
3 – Agree and sign off previous minutes
Minutes from: Full Trustees meeting (Resources focus) held on 9th July 2020 and 24th August 2020 (EM) were agreed as a true record and will be signed by TS in person when Covid 19 restrictions are lifted.
4 –Matters Arising
ACTION: TS/DM - To consider setting up a HR committee, which reports to the Full Trustee Board, in the future. (Jan 2021)
5 – Resource Focus
5.1 Resources Introduction

- JD reported that Period 11 accounts had been circulated and SK has done a breakdown of variance analysis for each school, where the differences were between period 10 and 11. The large part was the SCA payment and variations also on grants etc.
- SK has been working on a revised 3-year plan.
- JD and SK have been working on fundraising and this is ongoing.

5.2 To receive Management Accounts P11 and commentary

- Audit has been brought forward to the start of October, which is positive as confirmed year-end figures will be available soon. Report will come to Audit Committee in December (3/12) and come to the Full Board afterwards. The Audit Clearance Meeting is booked in for SK, HF and JD on 5/11. JL will also be attending this meeting as Chair of the Audit Committee. The report will not be available at this meeting.
- Work is being done on 3 year forecast with DM and ideas have been discussed to improve the Trust's position. The ESFA had asked for the Trust to revisit its position and come back with a more realistic view of where we might be in 2021, 2022 and 2023. SK and DM undertook this work and it has gone to the ESFA accompanied by some high-level notes with the forecast. They are happy with the assumptions and proposals made.
- **Q GB asked for confirmation that the structural changes which are being put into this 3-year plan focus on reducing the outgoings of the organisation by more effective and efficient teaching methods and organisational corporate head office structural activities.** DM agreed that assumptions have been made in terms of 'cutting cloth' but it is not about identifying individual savings as work is done on strategy. It was about making sure we could present a realistic version of where we would be, if we were in that situation.
- **Q JL asked for some commentary on the assumptions which have been built into the scenarios.** SK said that DM and herself will formalise their thinking and share the detail with Trustees at a later meeting.
- DM said that these can be raised at the Audit Committee, which can then reassure the Full Board and also suggested a strategy day to flesh out the 3-year plan as a group and go through the details.
- JD voiced that there should be a clear division and that in this case 3 year forecasts sit under resources for discussion and not audit which would focus more on external and internal audit and control measures:
- **Q GB asked that if period 11 = end of July, the end of year is August and the internal audit is looking at the full year, why have we not got the management accounts for the end of August?** JD responded that SK is waiting to do period 12, which will include the adjustments and therefore wants the figures signed off before she does this. SK added that if she issues period 12 without those adjustments, the Headteachers would focus on those figures.
- **Q JL asked for more detail regarding the 1 million under budget and the MAT £60,000 overspend.** SK explained the MAT overspend is due to the redundancies and the one-off cost incurred. The underspend is due to nationwide savings across the board: universal FSM gain, savings re supply costs. JD added that last year's budget setting was undertaken in a short time frame and there was an expectation that Headteachers would improve on their budgets, so there was not a true picture; this year there is a more accurate benchmark to measure against which was not available last year. DM said although it had been difficult to work within some of the functions, SK's skills, knowledge and understanding in driving it, had been appreciated.

5.3 To receive CFOO report

Included above within 5.2

5.4 Formal receipt of ESFA Letters

Trustees acknowledged receipt of the ESFA Letters (July, August and September) and noted the contents.

5.5 Update on Procurement Policy

SK reported that a working party has been set up and Nuala is chairing this. The group are working on a procurement strategy and policy for the Trust, which will feed into the finance policy. The timeline is January when DM arrives.

Q TS asked when would it come to Trustees? First Trustee meeting in January.

5.6 Update on risk register

Group of MW, DM and GB have met to work on the risk register. Next steps – DM has produced a draft and will first circulate to GB and MW. Then it will be brought to the Board by email and get adopted at the next meeting.

Q JL asked how do we make sure that as Trustees, we are aware of significant risks, how are they being monitored and will the register be available shortly? DM confirmed it will be available in the next month.

GB said we should seek an assurance from the CEO and Executive Team that things are being done and not repeating work that is being done at the operations and management level. DM said that another issue which needs to be addressed at the same time, is communication between layers of governance and executive and the clarity and consistency in that communication – without this working properly, the risk register will not be effective.

6 – Matters Brought forward at the Direction of the Chair

6.1 CEO Announcement

DC has approached TS as Chair of Trustees and has asked to be released from his contract as of 25th Sept. HF will be acting Vice CEO and Trustee for the next term. DC has told the Headteachers and staff and TS will inform AC Chairs by email. A PR company has been commissioned to create the communications to stakeholders and articles for local newspapers.

Q GB asked if Trustees can be copied in to all communications going out? TS confirmed this.

A discussion followed around ensuring that DC received formal recognition and a presentation to commemorate his service and celebrate the start of his retirement. Various ideas were suggested. An official presentation could be made at the AGM.

ACTION: MT to inform IC of DC's resignation.

ACTION: TS to inform members of the resignation of DC.

All Trustees acknowledged DC's huge contribution to the Trust and thanked him sincerely for all his hard work and commitment.

6.2 St James C of E Primary School – Update on date of transfer

The transfer is on track for 1/10, subject to some documents that need signing. SK asked for a Trustee to be on hand, at short notice to sign them.

DECISION: Trustees authorised TS to sign the papers.

6.3 Approval of Hazel Fox – representing DMAT on Devon Schools Leadership Services (SLS)

HF is representing DMAT on the Trust Board of Devon School Leadership Service, as a Trustee.

DECISION: Trustees voted unanimously to approve HF as a Trustee on the DLS Trust Board (PS proposed; JD seconded).

ACTION: HF will forward to MT the contact details of the DLS so MT is able to email them formal confirmation of DMAT approval. (HF/MT)

6.4 Coronavirus – Short Update on Return to School in September

HF had circulated a document with attendance data for the first 2 weeks (cumulative figures). They are slightly above Devon figures and in line with national. They show a dip in the 2nd week and HF will keep checking on SEND and disadvantaged/vulnerable pupils' figures in particular. These will be updated weekly and filed in SharePoint.

Q JD asked if HF could include explanations and alerts on specific areas for Trustees' attention. HF agreed to include this in future.

Q DM proposed for the next meeting an executive report which would contain attendance as a heading with a few bullet points for Trustees' particular attention. He felt the detail would be better scrutinised at AC level and the Trustees should be looking at the strategic risk. A discussion followed regarding Trustees interest in the figures versus being mindful of not adding to Headteachers' workload, especially at the moment.

Q GB why were Headteachers reporting attendance data to county? DM responded that there was a responsibility at this current time to report to DCC. It was agreed that there needs to be a system set up to reduce workload so reports can be easily generated by one action, so sharing was easier.

ACTION: HF to include in her next CEO report on attendance, bullet points of overviews.

6.5 Chairs Update on Members

- **New members** - TS and MT explained that Jocelyn Sumner (Exeter University) had retired and would be replaced by her colleague, Dr Tom Begbie and Sue Lockwood as Acting Diocesan Director for Education would be temporarily replacing John Searson, who had also recently retired.
- Action from Audit Committee (15.9.20) was noted: 'At next AGM, in order to demonstrate clear water now between governance layers, the Articles of Association will need to be amended to remove the Chair of Trustees also holding a member's position'.

7 Trustee Board

7.1 Next Steps Discussion – plans for the Trust

Paper on Trust champions circulated. A discussion followed and the questions asked below:

- **Q JD had challenged HF on the funding for the posts at the recent Interim Leadership T&F group and this had been her only caveat.** JD stated that she thought it was an excellent idea and now felt able to fully support, having received explanations that funding would come from central reserves and future costs being covered by outsourcing the individuals. JD would like the reserves policy to be looked at.
- **Q PS asked how this expenditure will affect the central recharge?** It was confirmed that it would come from the central reserves so will not affect the recharge. HF will do ongoing monitoring to check for value of money.
- **Q MW asked how will it work? Are these postholders creating the strategy or implementing it? Do we not have a SI strategy already in place?** HF felt that the Trust had been very inward looking and there had not been the opportunity to look at what was truly meant by school improvement. There was little alignment e.g. in terms of pedagogy or software that has been bought. She explained that these champions would enable capacity for SI function and be able to react quickly to need. HF is currently working alone on this and with her new role as CEO, her time is stretched. Headteachers had welcomed the concept of Trust Champions and understood that it gives the opportunity for Headteachers to grow and release some of the current leaders to spread the MAT identity across the Trust. MW voiced concerns regarding what seemed like a late reaction to the situation on SI.
- JL agreed that the Trust must focus on SI, but felt the decision had been a bit rushed and had concerns about being asked to approve things at short notice. **Q Is this a full-time appointment or fixed term?** HF said it was 2-year fixed term contract with 2.5 posts.
- DM said this had to be seen in the context for the Trust and for the wider perspective regarding imminent Ofsted inspections from January of the whole MAT. Ofsted will be minimising individual school inspections by doing batch inspections of whole MATs. These are very different with central operations being part of the inspections.

Strategy Day

A Strategy Day will be scheduled for the Executive Team to outline the next steps for the Trust.

ACTION: MT to send out doodle poll for Strategy Day date to Executive Team and Trustees.

- DM, SK and HF have considered the funding needed to provide every child in the Trust with a Chromebook. There was a real danger that not all children had access to home technology and if there was a second wave of Covid, particularly the most disadvantaged children, will be going further backwards unless this is remedied. A discussion ensued addressing questions such as what would be the total cost? How many do we need to buy? Do we need to purchase dongles and in some areas would this work?

ACTION: JD and SK to look into the total cost involved in purchasing the Chromebooks as a matter of urgency. Following these investigations, Trustees would be in support of funding the purchase of the Chromebook whilst they are still available and have not increased in price.

7.2 Ratification of TORs for Task and Finish Groups

DECISION: Trustees approved the ratification of 3 TOR documents for the new Task and Finish Groups. One amendment to Tavistock Buildings TOR- remove the word 'challenge' review instead.

7.3 Reports from Task and Finish Groups

These had been read and acknowledged by Trustees.

7.4 Update on Trustee Recruitment Process

TS and JD had conducted a thorough interview process with the 3 applicants. All were very strong candidates and met the skills gaps on the Board. Stewart Biddles and Chris Gould have been recruited for their school improvement skills sets and are current CEO at Riviera Trust, Torquay and Headteacher at Chacewater Primary School and Maths Lead for CODE Maths Hub respectively. Peter Last has a strong background in education, ISI inspector and practising Christian.

DECISION: Trustees voted unanimously for Pete Last (Foundation Trustee), Stewart Biddles and Chris Gould to become Trustees and fill the current vacancies (PS proposed and JD seconded). This was subject to approval by the members, satisfactory references and DBS checks. MT will process.

A discussion followed about how future Trustee recruitment. MW added that although these candidates were outstanding in their skills and experiences, the Board must try harder at the advertising and reaching out to minority groups in the future. These approaches should be more welcoming to ensure that under-represented groups felt that they could apply and make a valuable contribution. It was agreed that although the selection process was carried out well, more effort needs to be put in to ‘fish from a bigger pool’ as the current Board represented a narrow group in society; Trustees were from similar backgrounds and ethnicities. DM agreed that these were good candidates and satisfied the skills required but the Board must consider the ability to be more diverse; diversity of thought from people with different backgrounds and experiences would expand the vision and strength of the Board.

Annual Housekeeping Tasks

- Skills audit forms all completed and added to the board matrix.
- Business interest forms updated – MT still awaiting Members updates before uploading current table onto DMAT website.
- Code of Conduct – new NGA version has just been released. As the current document is based on this, MT will work on updating our current version with the updates from the new NGA model.

ACTION: MT to bring to next Full Trustee meeting a draft updated code of conduct.

7.7 Additional Trustee Meeting Dates

- 15th October 4-6pm EM Trust Board Meeting to hear gag pooling proposal.
- Strategic Away Day – ‘Sharing and Shaping’ – date tbc via doodle poll.
- 5th November – Trust Update meeting for Trustees, AC Chairs and Heads.
- **7.7 Feedback on and complaints made**

The recent case was dismissed and appreciation given to the staff and their professionalism throughout. **Q Are there any lessons to be learnt from this case?** All agreed that this had taken up a huge amount of SK’s time, diverting her from her other vital tasks and this could not be allowed to happen again as it was a risk to the Trust. Methods of reducing stress and time commitment will be considered.

7.8 Possible Changes to Articles at AGM

DECISION: It was suggested that a working group should be set up to go through the Articles in detail and suggest areas which will need amendment. The working group will consist of: JL, AF, DM, HF and MW.

8. Policies/Documents – Review and Approve

8.1 KCSiE 2020

All Trustees acknowledged that they had read the KCSiE 2020 and noted the changes. This would be reported to Jane Lake for her records.

8.2 Academies Financial Handbook

Minuted at the last Audit Committee but all Trustees acknowledged and noted the changes to the AFH.

8.3 Policies Tracker

In addition to the 2 policies circulated, there were minor amendments to other policies listed within the tracker. Trustees requested the polices to be brought in full to Trustees for their comments and approval.

8.4 Safeguarding Policy

DECISION: Trustees approved the policy.

8.5 Online Safety Policy

DECISION: Trustees approved the policy.

9 Academy Committee – Minutes

9.1 AC Summary Sheet

Trustees noted and responded to questions raised by AC Boards. See below.

9.2 Tavistock AC Minutes

Tavistock minutes – question regarding the financial position.

ACTION: TS to contact SS Chair of Tavistock AC to clarify the situation.

9.3 Okehampton Primary AC Minutes

Trustees had read and noted these minutes.

9.4 Three Hares Governor Applications

Trustees thanked the Three Hares AC for the applications to consider, along with a comprehensive skills matrix.

DECISION: Trustees were pleased to approve the new governors for the Three Hares Academy Committee.

10 – Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 22nd October – Full Trustee Board (SI Focus) 4pm

The meeting ended at 6.25pm

ACTION TABLE – from meeting 24.09.20

No.	WHO	WHAT	WHEN
1	Gill Tremain	To design and implement the Staff Absence Report for Summer Term	Autumn Term
2	HF/DC	Update on attendance at Tavistock College, review the plan to raise attendance and feedback on attendance tracking and concerns.	DONE
3	HF/DC/SJ	Request to Executive Team and Sarah Jones for the Summer 1 breakdown for SEN and PP within those attendance figures.	DONE
4	MT	To produce a yearly summary of meeting reviews by Trustees to understand common issues raised.	End of 2019-2020
5	SK/JL/JD	SK to review last year's benchmarking information on the new ESFA portal and share with Trustees at Audit Committee as a training exercise.	December
6	SK/Gill Tremain	SK/Gill Tremain to revisit the HR policies to reflect our organisation and distribute to Trustees for final approval either by email or via a Trustee Meeting. (Executive Pay Policy, Pay policy, Grievance, Disciplinary)	Ongoing
7	MT/TS	To provide and work on a model TOR for the full AC boards.	Autumn Term
8	SK	To provide a report on updating the Business Continuity Plan in light of recent COVID 19.	22.10.20
9	SK	To bring Gag Pooling report to EM Full Trustees 15.10.20 4-6pm	15.10.10
10	SK/MT	To get some dates from John at Bishop Fleming when he is able to Chair this meeting and MT will invite the AC Chairs and Trustees via Team.	N/A see above
11	HF/DC	CEO and Vice CEO to provide list of top 10 KPIs and risks for Trustees' attention.	DONE

12	SK/JD	To collate data so far, produce a fundraising letter to go to local companies for laptops for children, create a fundraising working group.	ASAP
13	JL/SK	To provide: 1) signed letter from Okehampton Skills and Sports Trust to agree to revert the all-weather pitch to grass if required, at no liability or cost to DMAT and 2) up to date finances.	DONE
14	JL/HF/SK	To inform TS when above items are ready and planning application has been approved/denied so EM date can be scheduled.	DONE
15	Jane Lake	To send doodle poll to arrange dates for Trustees' safeguarding training.	DONE
16	Sarah J	To approach local companies for sponsorship of the new ICT Build.	ASAP
17	TS/Sarah Jones	To contact Mel Stride and local MPs for assistance in funding re Tavistock Buildings Project.	Ongoing
18	MT	To send Team invite for EM Full Trustees (St James vote and approve budget) on 23 rd July at 4pm.	DONE
19	MT	To send Team invite for EM Full Trustees (September Opening Plans) on Tuesday 25 th August 2pm for Trustees, Alan King, Jane Lake, Joe Wood and AC Chairs.	DONE
20	HF	Through the T & F Interim Leadership Group report to the Board any concerns or specific patterns emerging re absences due to Covid 19 (X code).	DONE
21	HF	To prepare and hold the overall strategic log for monitoring visits to schools	DONE
22	Jane Lake/SK	To ensure that all SCR uploaded onto SharePoint by the start of term (password protected).	ASAP
23	Jane Lake	To send safeguarding dates for training for both Trustees and Governors.	DONE
24	Jane Lake	To send out updated information for AC Boards on safeguarding and KCSiE.	DONE
25	SK	To share results of survey to staff re well-being and feelings about September returning to school and feedback results to Trustees.	22.10.20
26	TS/MT	To research how to widen SharePoint for all users to be able to access common spaces i.e. training.	DONE
27	HF	To check whether formal guidance for volunteers has gone out.	ASAP
28	MT	To set up first meeting date of this group.	DONE
29	MT	To draft TORs for the 3 new Task and Finish Groups	DONE
30	MT	To notify members of the new T&F committees approved at this meeting.	DONE
31	SK/HF	To draw up Plan B with timeline for St James.	DONE
32	TS/DM	To consider setting up a HR committee, which reports to the Full Trustee Board, in the future.	January 2021
33	MT	To send out doodle poll for Strategic Away Day where the Executive Team will share their plans with Trustees.	ASAP
34	MT	To inform IC of DC's resignation	ASAP
35	TS	To inform members of the resignation of DC	ASAP
36	HF/MT	HF will forward to MT the contact details of the DLS so MT is able to email them formal confirmation of DMAT approval. (HF/MT)	ASAP
37	MT	To bring to next Full Trustee meeting a draft updated code of conduct.	22.10.20
38	HF	To include in her next CEO report on attendance, bullet points of overviews.	22.10.20
39	JD/SK	To look into the total cost involved in purchasing the Chromebooks as a matter of urgency.	ASAP
40	TS	To contact SS Chair of Tavistock AC to clarify the situation.	ASAP

