

Full Trustee Board (School Improvement Focus) – Part I Minutes							
Date/Time	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2021 4.00pm	Location		Virtual meeting via Microsoft Team (due to Covid 19)			
Attendees	Initials			Attendees	Initials		
Tania Skeaping (Chair)	TS	Morgen Witzel	MW	Philip Sanders	PS	Stewart Biddles	SB
John Lawlor	JL	Jeanette Savage	JS	Graham Briscoe	GB	Dan Morrow	DM
Jane Dumeresque (Vice Chair)	JD	Chris Could	CG				

**ACTIONS**

**DECISIONS**

**QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES**

In Attendance	Initials	
Susanne Kiff	SK	CFOO
Melissa Trudgill	MT	Company Secretary/ Executive Liaison Facilitator
Hazel Fox	HF	Vice CEO
Fiona McNeile	FM	DTSA Business Manager
Martin Smith	MS	Director of Dartmoor TSA

Minutes to
Attendees
Apologies

Apologies	Initials	Reason
Pete Last	PL	SIAMS Training
Amanda French	AF	Maternity Leave

Meeting started at 4.07pm

Please note that Trustees agreed for the meeting to be recorded for minute taking and it was deleted on 26.01.21.

<b>1 - Apologies</b>
Apologies were received from Pete Last and these were sanctioned.
<b>2 – Declaration of Interest</b>
All Trustees present were reminded to declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting.
<b>3 – Agree and sign off previous minutes</b>
<b>Minutes from: Full Trustees Meeting (Resource Focus) held on 10<sup>th</sup> December</b> were agreed as a true record and will be signed by TS in person when Covid 19 restrictions are lifted.
<b>4 –Matters Arising</b>
<b>3. GB and JD to discuss the appropriate level required for Trustees re the access to the DfE benchmarking site and then SK to arrange for all Trustees to have the appropriate access and to have individual log-ins.</b> JD had been on the site and

noted that the data was very operational and had suggested to SK that internal audit might be better placed to get involved and have a look but she does not believe it to be a board tool. GB agreed that the level of detail mean that is a member of the finance team might use it during a report and or a presentation to the board to reinforce certain points.

**4. To include in her next Vice CEO, report the bullying logs to be populated and EHCP attendance data at Tavistock.** HF reported that there was no specific data but it would continue to be monitored and reported back at the fortnightly update meetings with trustees and AC Chairs.

**9. 7 10 To press for project timetable from Oxenham and present to the Task and Finish Group** SK confirmed that the timetable and the risk register has been presented to the T&F and there was a meeting schedule of the group. She added that the planning had been submitted but there was some concern that due to Covid and home working there may be a delay.

## **5 – School Improvement Focus**

### **5.1 DTSA Strategy Proposal**

SB declared his potential conflict of interest in this item as: CEO of Riviera Education Trust, which operates the Torbay Teaching School Alliance and partner on the Strategic Board of Teaching Schools South West (TSSW).

TS thanked for HF for the revised DTSA strategy proposal which all had found very informative. There was a full discussion and the following questions and points were raised:

- JD shared the following challenges which centred on the income and assumptions on partners and their membership fees; staff costs were going down, who were we losing and what was the impact? and how were the Trust Champions incorporated in the plan? HF responded that the costs were due to go down as MS's hours were reducing from February half term and HF's cost were being built into the plan for 10 days, for the remainder 2 terms, but she is confident that the year has been well planned.
- At the moment HF believes that more income can be brought in through the Trust Champions than has conservatively been estimated in this proposal. Within proposal A, HF has explored a management agreement for delivery where SWIFT would get the core funding, but they would guarantee us a budget going forward and then after this there is funding as delivery partners but it is unknown what the budget would be.
- Re potential income: MS added that a core grant from the teaching school hub and an allocation out of membership fees has been included, but what has not is an income stream is Dartmoor's contribution to a number of DfE programmes; the early career framework will be one of those with an estimate of up to 200 NQTs in September and a need for 16 professional leads needed which will draw additional funding from the national provider. He explained the same model will apply for NVQs and in addition there is an appropriate body service (assesses NQTs) which will shift to teaching school hubs.
- FMcN clarified that HF salary was coming from 21/22 not this current year and the Trust Champions salaries will be offset by being commissioned on a daily rate and will benefit for the DMAT schools and DTSA members there will be a recuperation of some costs for the TCs through the training school.
- GB asked for clarification on the DTSA governing board; he thought the DTSA sub-committee of the Board should be a small strategic group of 6-7 members including 3 trustees, an external member and Vice CEO and there should be a separate, bigger, advisory group for the partnership and stakeholder voice with the external interest, feeding into the Vice CEO and CEO and it would not be appropriate of this large group to be a sub-committee of the Board more have any governance role. The meeting agreed that this would be a good model.
- **MW feels there might be a risk of relying too heavily on the Trust Champions and asked how do we retain them or replace them of the same quality?** HF responded that it was not the individuals who were the champions themselves but they have a role to champion our trust and our schools and they are creating a people strategy of talent growing and looking outward and benefiting from spotting future leaders and champions and regionally we will all benefit from this. HF says that sit is an opportunity for current staff strong leaders within the Trust will benefit and is a very fluid and exciting role. FMcN said throughout the last 4 years DTSA had been lucky with MS at the helm and that whilst there is a good opportunity with the TCs, we are going to be able to talent spot in the

local area and MS will be able to signpost those people to Dartmoor in order to develop our programme and DTSA will never be reliant on one source.

- MW suggested spinning TSA off completely either as a subsidiary company or a public sector mutual in which we retain a stake which has its own formally appointed board of its own on which trustees could sit and runs as a subsidiary and which might simplify the governance aspect and might be less risky.
- TS added that this might be a discussion for the future but focus was required on a plan for the next couple of years and developments could arise as the MAT evolves. TS added there would be a risk in not having a robust governing board for DTSA. MW felt that it might be easier to carry out all the organisational changes at the same time and can see at the subsidiary would improve the governance by creating a strong board with more powers.
- PS urged that Trustees need to make a decision as to which of the 2 proposals to support and then the governance issue can be explored further at a later date. PS asked for someone to provide a paper on the different options for a governance model for DTSA, with a recommendation to the Board, but in the meantime, he felt that the Board could decide on the proposals.
- DM agreed there is a broader conversation to have around the governing board. He responded on the subsidiary nature of the company idea and although he understood the concept, in the MAT world there has been a move away from the umbrella arrangements for governance so he does not think the subsidiary company discussion will have traction in the sector.
- CG agreed about the governance, but he emphasised the importance of the teaching school attached to our MAT and said there was a real advantage, particularly at the moment in the current climate, of having this vehicle which will be the driver, which is exciting and wished to support Proposal A.
- HF said that she was open to governance models being suggested. There was a responsibility to continue the local offer which feedback had seen as a strong positive and there was a legacy and ethical stance, which MS and FMcN have built and which HF is honoured to continue.
- **Q JL asked for clarification on the two alternatives of financial model; in both proposals the costs are the same but the income in option A mentions the infrastructure grant and potential additional income and asked if this income as guaranteed?** MS said the core grant from the TS hub is guaranteed (£12,000) and then there is a further allocation within the TS hubs budgets to provide specific contracts with the partners as well (approx. £5,000) and it is safe to assume this is included. MS said these are best estimates.
- HF said this paper had been taken to the existing stakeholder board and they had supported proposal A and were involved in the recommendation.
- TS thanked MS and FMcN for providing the helpful insight. MS added that it has been a privilege to talk with each of the partners around each of the proposal. He said it was important to protect the expertise and capacity which DTSA has grown with Dartmoor and across the area with successful alliances in Plymouth, Torbay, Exeter and North of the county.
- MS summarised by explaining that the partners had been approached about the proposals and they had all been supportive of Proposal A. He wanted to give reassurance that lots of groups were scrutinising this proposal at a number of levels and there had been broad endorsement.

**ACTION: HF/MT/DM to work on proposal governance and advisory boards for DTSA and bring recommendations in March.**

**DECISION: Trustees voted unanimously for Proposal A (proposed by PS and seconded by GB).**

(SB did not take place in the vote).

### **5.2 CEO Report**

DM explained the importance of acknowledging formal receipt of the CEO report at this Board meeting although it was being shared it with Trustees and Chairs at the Fortnightly Update and Monitoring Meetings. He highlighted the following points:

- In terms of FSM and overall learning provision we have significantly improved where we were. The change in FSM provider has been well received. There had been an improvement in the number of devices and the connectivity via dongles and partnership with Vodaphone and there was a scrutiny of how to help individual families.
- Stamina – DM said the importance of thinking around stamina – how do we keep our people (pupils and staff) motivated and engaged and focused on their well-being.
- Resilience – ‘building in the bounce back’. When the pandemic is over, there is an expectation that people will automatically bounce back and it is more likely that communities will be more likely to fall down and we need to over staff at the moment and doing some large strategic pieces of work around HR, operations, finance and the re-visioning part.
- DM said in terms of the operational aspects DM is confident we are making good steps to have everything in place, but the data collection aspect has been quite weak.
- On 11<sup>th</sup> Feb, DM will present: his CEO report with recommendation and actions to inform and discuss; his overall project plan for the change management process up to Easter and after; priorities identified out of these so we can form our 3- and 10-year Trust Development Plan.
- DM said that although recovery was important, there would be repair work to be undertaken first.
- DM said he would submit the papers on 1<sup>st</sup> February and then he will schedule a 30 min individual call with each trustee to go through any questions and ideas.

**ACTION: DM will circulate papers on 1<sup>st</sup> February and will schedule 30-minute individual calls with each trustee to discuss any questions.**

- **Q JL asked about the position of opening the schools in the half term and Easter holidays and how does DM plan to manage this re staffing?** DM has met with all school leaders to discuss and has framed this around our need to support public servants as part of national response. There is also an understanding that it is not about asking leaders to do extra work, but to undertake it differently and a rota will be devised so that breaks are built in and the Trust Champions will be utilised and integrated into the rotas. Critical workers and vulnerable children numbers are high and it is essential that in particular, vulnerable children have that contact. JL said he would be interested to learn more about the plan. DM clarified that this was an operational plan, but will be framed with the teachers as leaders of their schools and with their agreement and input.
- **MW added that the effects of the pandemic will last for a long time, with outbreaks and variances continuing for up to 5 years.** He said that planning for the recovery whilst building for the long-term future of the Trust, would involve key pieces of work being undertaken simultaneously. Agile thinking will be required to develop and move forwards, whilst repairing damage at the same time. DM responded that the HTs were genuinely appreciating agility as a newer mindset and every day is about prioritising urgent and even more urgent actions.
- **Q SB expressed support for DM’s words but had concerns that as a Trust who put people first, asked for further clarity over holiday opening i.e. is this a child care provision so key workers can get into work and our part to support the NHS or will they be one as an education provision?** DM gave further detail on what the provision would look like and said it was about supporting the overall position and not about formalised learning. There would be hub provision for half term without compromising bubbles and which would negate staffing levels about what and approximately 480 children across all of the schools and 38 adults required on a fairly basis.
- **DM said that the positivity amongst the educational leaders which is**

### **5.3 Vice CEO updates – Trust Champions & Secondary data**

- Data has some caveats as assessments have been unsatisfactory up to now; solid teacher assessments and moderation will be introduced across the Trust. DM confirmed there was not a decent assessment system, nor an assessment monitoring system underneath and work is also needed on the curriculum model.
- JD thanked HF for the useful data and acknowledged the questions; she asked when there might be answers to those questions. HF said the culture shift was rapid and it will be part of a short- and long-term plan. JD asked for a timeline in due course.

- DM explained that the responses will be included in his plan at the next full board meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February and fellowship passports will be introduced which will keep children motivated and engaged but will also include how children will be assessed and will give teachers an oversight of what is happening in each subject. DM said it was difficult to address any of those questions and some answers were unknown an going back to unpick would needlessly go back into the past. **Q TS said at all KS stages, how do know, as a Trust, if children are ready for their next stage of their education and have not been disadvantaged?** DM said there is individual knowledge but it is not aggregated. DM said there are Covid gaps and there are also gaps which we have had for the last 3 years and there are issues which we have been aware of for some time.
- CG said we need to be aware that the predicted data shown in the report will be even worse now, due to the pandemic and a term's lost learning; the issues now are more significant and there is some concerning data particularly in the primary and are we going to be clear to match the Covid catch up with the work of DTSA to put plans in place.** CG said there were some opportunities for quick wins if we know the gaps i.e. in maths the we can start to support subject knowledge. HF said we are treating children as individual are trying to ensure they have rapid improvements for the individual and own challenging and supported planned curriculum ahead.
- PS said as a Board member and not an educationalist, he had found some of the data concerning and he did not feel in some places it was a simply an issue of the type or lack of reliable information. HF confirmed that some of the schools with concerning data did have very small cohorts (under 5 children).
- JS said she appreciated the report with the explanatory comments alongside the data and was relieved to hear that there is a recognition that our approach to assessment is not good and we are noting and observing and recording and committed to addressing the issues with those children with SEND; she feels the change is starting to happen.
- SB added that some of the historic issues were about the quality of teaching and wanted to have assurance that this is being addressed?** DM said that the quality of teaching was better than he had expected what is less good is the framing of the curriculum and expectations. There are some real inversions of structures that need to happen. He said it is not the teaching ability but teacher shave been asking to do lots of unnecessary aspects and layers of complications, but a few very important aspects which would make a difference and have not been asked. DM said there has been a lack of strategy but instead lots of tactics.
- HF gave a verbal update on the Trust Champions.** EF and GS have built a website to help teachers on remote learning, have been out in the schools and helped teachers in practical ways. They have also worked with the digital team and have supported teachers with any issues with resources such as Google Classroom. Well-being boxes had gone out to schools filled with treats thanking them for their front-line work, which had been paid for by donations. The donations had been kindly match funded by Waitrose. The TCs had gone out to deliver these well-being parcels which had been much appreciated. Jules Ruddick (Trust Champion for SEND) is progressing through the Free School bid and JS had contributed her time to support in this. Expression of interest for resource space at OPS for autistic children has been successful and parental consultation is taking place; this will be a valuable resource and will be open in September. Neil Swait has been supporting Deputy HTs at OPS and Rebecca Mullions has been working on a people strategy and a recruitment pack. They will be holding a meeting with PLMR to learn how they can champion our Trust at a strategic level and promote themselves and the MAT through social media as a group rather than just as individuals. Veronica has worked with DTSA and has been very well received and has written an impressive paper on a 3-year plan to tackle the quality of teaching and learning. DM thanked the Trustees for supporting him initially in the idea of the Trust Champions, despite it being quite a unique idea, which was now paying dividends.

**6 – Matters Brought forward at the Direction of the Chair**

None.

**7 Trustee Board**

**7.1 Trustee and Member Appointments**

- A resignation from Kevin Wilson has been received (individual member). TS said that she will propose later on in the year that the Chair of Trustees should no longer also be a member to follow guidance from the NGA regarding having clear water between governance layers. This will mean another individual member vacancy later in the year.
- A GM will be called when the governance structure plan is ready to be approved by Members.
- TS announced the resignation of JD due to her other commitments. TS expressed her sincere regret about this news and praised the invaluable skill set which JD has brought in her role as a Trustee and thanked her for her support. The vacancy will be advertised asap with a consideration of the financial skills required and the need to explore wider the potential pool of applicants and improve the diversity and inclusivity of the Board.
- JD confirmed that she would offer a hand over period and would not leave until the vacancy had been filled. She also added that she would consider applying for the position of Member as she would be sad to lose contact with the Trust.
- TS said MT and herself were awaiting a response from AF about her decision following her maternity leave.

#### **7.2 Update on FSM Deliveries**

Nothing further to report since Fortnightly Update and Monitoring Meeting with AC Chairs and Trustees.

#### **7.3 Approval of addition to Chair's Action document**

**DECISION: Trustees approved the addition of the emergency paragraph added to the Chair's Action document (to delegate authority for closure of a school, out of hours decision, to delegate to the Chair and CEO).**

**Proposed GB; Seconded JL.**

#### **7.4 Annual HR Report**

- **Q JL asked for more information re time scale of introducing new management system.** TS agreed the report was lacking some time scales but this would be covered in DM's report for 11<sup>th</sup> February.
- **Q MW suggested having exit interviews being 'opt out' rather than opt in (making this a standard requirement) so that more information and data is collected.** MW remarked that the report did not reflect at all on the current pandemic and its effect on staff well-being and he would like to know what did GT's perceive as being top priority (what would be keeping her awake at night?). DM said that SK, HF and himself would be reporting to the Board on a regular basis on HR matters until a more developed strategic plan was developed.
- JD said she had hoped that the report might have contained proposals relating to movement of staff on to Trust contracts and hoped that this would be explored in DM's paper on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### **7.5 Review of Business-Critical Risk Register**

Will be reviewed at next meeting on 11.2.21.

#### **7.6 Confirmation of Board Evaluation Exercise**

MT confirmed that the WG (PL, GB, TS and MW) had been formed and they would be meeting to consider and determine which type of the evaluation/appraisal process to use (e.g. NGA, CST) and how to involve the whole Board in helping the completion of this. They will be discussing the schedule on carrying out the self-evaluation process after Easter.

#### **7.7 Approval of amendments to SOD**

- JL explained that Audit Committee had gone through the revision in detail. There had been some minor changes which reflected the changes approved by the Trustee Board re the HTs now being line managed by the CEO. Audit Committee recommend that Trustees adopt the SOD V3 to reflect the reporting structure.

**DECISION: Trustees approved the changes made to the SOD V3 to reflect line management changes and adopted the new version. (PS proposed; JL seconded).**

- PS highlighted the following minor discrepancies/suggestions to the SOD table of responsibilities: transfer the headings onto the top of each page; No.13 including all company law but not exclusively; 19 & 20 seem to read as the same thing and the page numbers seem to read the same.
- JL said when the governance restructure was considered a thorough analysis of the SOD would be required.

#### **7.8 Reports/Minutes from Ethos and Audit Committees**

**These were received for information. MT highlighted the action tables on both.**

JL wanted to formally express his thanks to Susanne and her team for the clean audit and the progress made in this area.

#### **7.9 Report from Link Trustees**

PS said he had been keeping in regular contact by email with Sarah Jones in his role as link trustee. MW and JL were also offering this contact and support. MW added that the relationship between the Board and the HTs and the HTs really appreciate the support they are getting in the Three Hares.

TS said that she would shortly be resigning as a link trustee for the Dartmoor Federation Primary and Okehampton AC due to time commitments and to follow the best governance practise of clear water between governance layers.

**7.10 Draft Email Protocol**

This had evolved as request out of the Ethos Leads Meeting and she had received comments from TS, MW and SK. This will be discussed at the Executive Team meetings and drafted for Trustee approval. Trustees agreed that it was not so much when an email was sent but when people receive them and the expectation of time to respond. It was recognised that people work in different ways, but there was a need for respect for work/life balance

**8 Academy Committee – Minutes**

**8.1 Policy Tracker**

**8.2 DMAT Child Protection and Safeguarding and Policy**

Not presented.

**8.3 DMAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (addendum re Covid)**

**DECISION: Trustees approved this policy.**

**8.4 DMAT Pay Policy**

**DECISION: Trustees approved this policy.**

**8.5 DMAT Conflict of Interest (Register of Interests Policy)**

**DECISION: Trustees approved this policy.**

**8.6 DMAT Critical Incident – Business Continuity Plan**

**DECISION: Trustees approved this policy.**

**8.7 DMAT Discretions Policy (LGPS)**

**DECISION: Trustees approved this policy.**

**8.8 DMAT Gifts and Hospitality Policy**

**DECISION: Trustees approved this policy.**

**9 - Academy Committee – Minutes**

**9.1 AC Questions**

JD asked for the answers to be supplied alongside the questions and requested that the associated AC minutes following, would include these responses especially when corrections were necessary and clarity had been given.

**9.2 Holsworthy AC 12.11.20**

**9.3 Holsworthy AC 10.12.20**

**9.4 St James AC 30.11.20**

**9.5 OPS AC 7.12.20**

**9.6 Tavistock AC 16.12.20**

**9.7 Three Hares AC 12.11.20**

**9.8 Dartmoor Federation AC (Primary)**

**9.9 Dartmoor Federation AC (Sec)**

The minutes had been read and acknowledge by Trustees. DM commented that there were inclusions in the minutes which would be better communicated by more direct methods and not reserved for official records.

**9.10 Approval of New Governor (T Toft Holsworthy)**

Trustees were unable to easily read and learn about the new governor application and have asked for this to be resubmitted for their information and approval at the next meeting.

**ACTION: MT to request electronic copy of application so Trustees were able to review the information in a clearer format. Resubmission to next meeting 11.2.21.**

**10 – Dates of Next Meetings**

**Fortnightly Monitoring and Update Meeting – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 12pm**

**Full Trustees Meeting (Resources Focus) Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 4pm**

The meeting ended at 6.02pm

**ACTION TABLE – from meeting 21.01.21**

No.	WHO	WHAT	WHEN
-----	-----	------	------

1	SK	To check that FSM children and families are being supplied with meals whilst off school and also to report back on the provision intended during holidays.	ONGOING
2	Gill Tremain	To provide an Annual HR Report for Trustees by the end of the year.	DONE
3	GB/JD/ SK	GB and JD to discuss the appropriate level required for Trustees re the access to the DfE benchmarking site and then SK to arrange for all Trustees to have the appropriate access and to have individual log-ins.	DONE
4	HF	To include in her next Vice CEO, report the bullying logs to be populated and EHCP attendance data at Tavistock.	Reported on, at fortnightly update meetings.
5	SK/HF/ TS	To facilitate the change to the SOD to reflect line management change and the financial regulation regarding budget setting etc from 1.1.21 and then get it checked with Trust's legal advisers ready for Trustees to approve on 10.12.20.	DONE
6	HF	To bring further information and details about the DTSA Strategy Proposal to the next (SI Focus) Full Board Meeting (21.1.21).	DONE
7	ALL	To volunteer for the Board Evaluation Working Group to MT.	DONE
8	Audit Comm	To review additional risks to BCRR at their next meeting on 12.1.21 and then recommend them to the Full Board on 21.1.21.	11.2.21
9	AK	To press for project timetable from Oxenham and present to the Task and Finish Group	DONE
10	Tav Build T&F Group	To identify and monitor the project risks regarding the Tavistock New Build and Reconfiguration Project	DONE
11	TS	To email SJ to advise of the Trustee Board's approval to proceed with the Tavistock New Build and Reconfiguration Proposal.	DONE
12	MT	To produce a yearly summary of meeting reviews by Trustees to understand common issues raised.	As part of Board Evaluation – Spring Term
13	MT/TS	To provide and work on a model TOR for the full AC boards.	Following Cohesion Strategy
14	TS/DM	To consider setting up a HR committee, which reports to the Full Trustee Board, in the future.	January 2021
15	DM	To work on a proposal to include KPIs and to include balanced scorecards (and include examples from other MATs) to present to Trust Board in the Spring Term.	Spring Term
16	HF/MT/ DM	To work on proposal governance and advisory boards for DTSA and bring recommendations in March.	18.3.21
17	DM	To circulate papers on 1 <sup>st</sup> February and will schedule 30-minute individual calls with each trustee to discuss any questions.	1.2.21
18	MT	To request electronic copy of application so trustees were able to review the information in a clearer format. Resubmission to next meeting 11.2.21.	11.2.21

**DRAFT**