

Full Trustee Board (Resource Focus) – Part I Minutes

Date/Time	9 th July 2020 4.00pm	Location		Wardhayes, Okehampton College and via Microsoft Team (due to Covid 19)			
Attendees	Initials			Attendees	Initials		
Morgen Witzel	MW	Tania Skeaping	TS	Philip Sanders	PS	Daryll Chapman	DC
John Lawlor	JL	Jane Dumeresque	JD	Graham Briscoe	GB		

ACTIONS
DECISIONS
QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

In Attendance	Initials	
Susanne Kiff	SK	CFOO
Gill Tremain	GT	Trust HR Manager
John Coundon	JC	IT Manager
Mark Butler	MB	IT Manager
Sharon Perkins	SP	Trust Finance Administrator & School Lead
Alan King	AK	Director of Premises and Facilities
Jane Lake	JL	Director of Safeguarding
Melissa Trudgill	MW	Governance Manager

Minutes to
Attendees
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 14.07.20.

1 - Apologies
Apologies were received from Jeanette Savage, Hazel Fox and Nuala McDermott 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 – Presentations from Portfolio Leads
3.1 Introduction and links to Strategic Review Conference

TS and SK gave an introduction to the Portfolio Leads' presentations. TS explained that this was a dress rehearsal for the Strategic Review Conference next week, with Trustees invited to ask questions after each presentation.

3.2 IT – Mark Butler & John Coundon

Mark Butler IT Lead for the Okehampton Hub and John Coundon IT Lead for the Holsworthy Hub gave a power point presentation. They outlined the key findings from the review as being:

1. Aligned networks by 2022 (same experience for staff and children wherever they go within the Trust and the service to be transparent).
2. Reorganise to a Central Team with specialisms.
3. Ensure capabilities to enable remote learning pilot.
4. Set out a 'Core Trust' IT covering standardised essentials.

The following points and questions were raised:

- PS was supportive of a centralising facility, but raised that it would be even more important to build full resilience (i.e. UPS) and create a recovery plan if a major problem occurred. If the MAT became more dependent on one central facility, any major problem and it would mean 16 schools going off grid. **Q PS asked what was the plan for resilience/UPS systems and recovery plan?** The IT Team were aware that the more there is a move away from physical on-site services, it will put pressure on internet connections and it becomes the single point of failure; everything needs to have battery back-up. Re the resilience for internet connections, redundant lines and redundant switching will be looked at. The beauty of moving towards a cloud model is the back-up and security of the data; the infrastructure supporting the data becomes the onus of the cloud services provider. JC added that the vulnerability of internet connections will need to be addressed. MB is advancing towards making Okehampton College resilient and the larger schools have back up connections, but the smaller schools do not. They will be talking to the current supplier to get back up connections for them as well.
- PS added the importance of having alternative back-up systems for telephony. MB answered that the plan was to remove the traditional infrastructure and have it in the cloud, invest in internet circuits, invest in resiliency. By putting device costs onto parents and utilising the cloud this would free some funds to be able to concentrate on the core function and purchase enterprise level resiliency.
- GB voiced his opinion, that it was not a Trustee role to comment on what the Board want to see regarding the operations and management details and the presentations should have more of a governance and strategy perspective. TS felt it was useful to have an overview follow the reviews recommendations on what the operational developments will look like and also keep a strategic view of the direction of travel. She welcomed the planned quarterly reports direct from portfolio leads to the trustee board. MB noted that it would be the SLT/Executive Team who would ask the portfolio leads question on operational matters.
- MW also felt that it was important for Trustees to have an operational overview i.e. when things go wrong in IT, it ends up being a governance issue and a potential reputational risk to the MAT so Trustees having their finger on the pulse can only be a good thing. Trustees do need to know what is going on and welcome the report system. **Q MW asked once the new IT systems are up and running, what would be the key implementation risks going forward?** The IT Team are early on in the scoping of these projects; a risk analysis has not been done as yet. There will be a pilot carried out on the first 8 schools. MW asked to see the risk analysis when it has been carried out and TS added this could be part of the quarterly reports coming to the Trustee Board.
- JL praised the strategic nature of the presentation and suggested different scenarios and perspectives to include for the conference next week, when the audience would be the headteachers i.e. what the changes might mean for them in their schools.
- **Q JD asked at what stage will there be a timeline when actions will be carried out and also a timeline on the risk analysis as it needs to come back to Trustees?** There is a timeline and the IT Team are looking to migrate

Dartmoor Federation Schools by 10th September and internet connectivity by June 2021. Risk analysis will have to be done very swiftly. Projects have taken a back seat because there has not been the capacity recently.

3.3 - Estates – Alan King, Joe Wood & Keith Webber – (Alan presenting) Estates – Alan King, Joe Wood & Keith Webber – (Alan presenting). AK introduced his plan using the recommendations and key actions from the review. (slides attached).

The following questions/comments were asked:

- **Q GB asked who would be managing the outsourced contracts?** AK said they would be managed by the hub perspective rather than the individual schools.
- **Q Are the site leads the previous caretaker role?** AK said they would be more problem solving than a caretaker but would react to local issues.
- **Q JL asked why AK's structure does not tie up with the existing governance cluster structure?** AK said it was a geographical plan and he had looked at the sizes of schools and the remit for the site lead. TS explained we inherited the governance structure and this should not be an obstacle for practical efficiency for the Estates Team.
- PS raised that it would be useful to have in the presentation - the funds identified where the new posts might be sourced from and where the savings can be made. AK said the savings to be made would offset some of the costs of the new posts.
- JD said it was exciting to be able to receive a 3-year development estates plan with proposed costs for all schools, which could feed into budget plans.
- A skills audit of existing staff would be required and a gap analysis where further training or posts may be needed. Securing the essential trades within the organisation would be useful, or a preferred suppliers list to contract on an annual basis, on behalf of the Trust, to provide the relevant specialist support in these areas. The consolidation of contracts i.e. schools can load their existing contracts into one programme with cut off dates so the estates team will have an overview across all schools. This will enable the Estates Team to make plans to move them on to the Trust contract as currently there are a variety of different dates. The Trust can do better by using its own portal, on quality and value for money by using our own contractors and tender process. There will be a discussion to have, on when is the best time to align the contractors rather than always waiting them to finish.
- Energy management across all the schools - how are we going to buy, control and invest in energy in the future and how can we get schools to engage in energy management and controls? Some schools have excellent monitoring systems and others do not have any, so it is very difficult for Keith Webber to have a complete overview across all schools. He needs an apprentice to bring all the data and analysis together so Keith can concentrate on engaging the schools and the strategy. Within 1-3 year all costs will be recouped as savings. Keith has struggled to get schools to volunteer for the Ashden Award and we need to positively and strongly encourage schools to participate and concentrate on the schools who have already signed up.
- Trustees believed that site leads would be a real plus as many schools do not have a caretaker currently.
- PS was mindful of the current staff structure and consideration should be given to the impact on staff. PS asked AK if he had considered working with external partners such as the NHS and other authorities – AK would not dismiss working with any partners. PS said it was positive to hear about the savings, but he would like an understanding of the set-up costs. There needs to be a day to day capability for the school and staff on site to instruct various other workers such as cleaners etc and schools will want reassurance on how this will work. AK said the detailed processes will map out how these operational actions will work.
- AK will include in his next presentation on what has been achieved so far and also on the plans for future CPD for existing staff. Predominantly these recommendations will free up headteachers to concentrate on learning.

3.4 Finance and Procurement – Nuala McDermott and Sharon Perkins

Sharon is presenting on this occasion and works with Nuala on procurement and finance.

Questions asked included:

- Main areas to work on: budgets need to be transparent, clarify the reporting mechanism and strengthen the relationships between the executive leads/finance leads and the Headteachers. Strategic procurement will be looked at e.g. suppliers register across the Trust.
- MW liked the notion of a procurement code of ethics and assumed this will be built into the list of suppliers' catalogue? **Q He asked will we have the mechanisms in place to monitor compliance with these ethical standards?** Nuala is passionate about this and is keen that it is weaved through everything we do and would welcome any help from MW.
- JD liked the window concept and schools working together and it was interesting to see how many suppliers we have so a list of approved suppliers will improve efficiency. SK added that the cost of processing and manpower, is very high so we need to improve efficiency in this.
- TS asked if the word 'community' could be emphasised more in the presentations so we can generate income for the local area. This should be considered in the policy, to state, where possible, we use local people. Re the procurement platform we are going to use, it is possible to put your own suppliers on there and get them registered and this is quite a quick process. Trustees passed their thanks on to Nuala.

3.5 HR – Gill Tremain

Gill outlined the main key actions which came from the Review which include: centralise all recruitment administration, and employ a HR administrator to join the Central Team (hopefully from within the Trust), which will enable the offer of a central recruitment service to support schools with job descriptions and adverts. Advertising posts and coordinating the recruitment process will stay at school level, but from then on, the relevant checks and contracts will be brought back into the Centre. There is currently an inconsistency in practice across the schools and the message needs to be reinforced that DMAT is the employer, not the individual schools.

Questions and comments made include:

- TS supported GT's comment that the emphasis should be that there is one employer and the importance of delivering quality to our employees and to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally. There should be consistency across the Trust and whichever school, the high-quality provision for both staff and children should be expected.
- GB believes this is one area (HR) where Trustees need an assurance that there is one system in operation and we cannot afford for schools to operate different systems. The educational programme can vary, according to local requirements and children's different needs, but operations such as HR should be one system.
- MT asked for clarity about whether these were proposals or definite plans within the presentations? SK said that the portfolio leads had been told this was the outcome of the review and were outlining how they were going to implement the review recommendations and actions and provide a timeline. All agreed that the ethical and cooperative values must be kept at the centre and we are all the co-authors of these decisions. All have been consulted and opinions fed into the review and we need to remind AC Chairs and Headteachers that we were all part of these recommendations. SK will be visiting schools from September and will discuss with Headteachers the details and how we will work together to implement these plans.
- DC said as a Cooperative Trust, we have always had consultation around the issue and then we are co-owners, going forward on the journey together. He felt there should be a continual message that these are the collective

views going forward; normally, however, there would have been a longer consultation period. Headteachers and AC Chairs' input into the Review is the catalyst behind these pieces of work.

- JD agreed that this message is important so we take everyone in agreement with us; we are now consulting on how we implement the findings rather than whether we are going to do it or not.
- **Q What will be the roles of the Trustees at the Conference?** It was agreed that Trustees were having the opportunity to ask questions now and at the Conference we are there to support the portfolio leads. We should not enter into the debate, but listen. Chris Kirk will be there as an observer, but will be on hand to answer questions, if required, regarding how the information was gathered etc.

4 – Agree and Sign off Previous Minutes

Minutes from: Full Trustees meeting (School Improvement focus) held on 25th June 2020 were agreed and will be signed by TS in person when Covid 19 restrictions are lifted.

5 – Matters Arising

Action Points:

No. 11 – CEO and Vice CEO to provide KPIs for the September SI meeting.

No. 12 – SK will give the data of what she has done so far and JD has already liaised with HF. JD will form a fundraising committee.

13 keep on

14 keep on

15 Jane Lake to organise the training

16 Tavistock working party – to bring up at the next Tavistock Buildings Working Group meeting.

17 TS, SK DC have sent a letter to AC Chairs and Headteachers regarding the postponement of most of the SCA projects. TS and SK have had a positive meeting with the Three Hares about trying to get their most urgent projects through, but not in the Summer as anticipated. The AC Chair and Executive Headteacher came away still frustrated, but were reassured that the most urgent projects (health and safety) would be progressed. TS will write to Mel Stride and Sarah Jones to Geoff Cox about future funding.

ACTION: TS/SJ to contact Mel Stride and local MPs for assistance in funding.

Q PS asked whether we were going to contact DCC regarding the handing over of the Tavistock Buildings?

(PS declared a conflict of interest at this point).

JD said that she will be pursuing this action and has asked AK to produce the previous condition survey and the recent one to be able to compare the depreciation in the time span. PS said in his role as a Trustee, he will assist JD in any way he can (but not involved directly with the approach to DCC as a conflict of interest) although was not involved at the time with the due diligence. SK added that the new Tavistock Buildings Working Party have JD and GB as Trustee representatives, but PS will be on it as an AC Governor. She asked Trustees to delegate authority to JD and GB to make decisions on behalf of the Trustees in case things move quickly during the Summer break. SK also asked for a decision on whether to appoint Tim Capps as principal designer for the projects. **Q PS asked whether we have gone out to tender on this?** SK said Tim Capps had done the options appraisal analysis and the reports for the ESFA and this work was leading on from that. PS reminded that this would need to go through as a single tender process.

Decisions: It was agreed to delegate authority to JD and GB to make decisions through the summer break on behalf of the Trust Board.

Decisions: Subject to the correct checks and following the correct single tender process, the Trust Board approved Tim Capps as the principal designer.

The project costs (including a management fee) were within the discussion document which came to the last meeting and were approved.

6 – Resource Focus

6.1 Resources Introduction

JD reported that the finance team were behind on the management accounts, for reasons beyond their control. Since the redundancies in the team, there had been a decision not to back fill them as it had been hoped that the new accountant would start imminently. Unfortunately, this had not been possible so there had been a gap in manpower. This has not been helped by SK having to spend much of her time on the recent high level complaint. JD and SK had agreed to bring someone in on secondment to produce the management accounts P9 and P10 and the St James accounts, which should be ready for next week. No one is comfortable with the current position of being behind. Will is now in this secondment post and is knowledgeable of the software.

6.2 To propose budget for next financial year and receive CFOO report

SK gave Trustees a background on the deficit budgets. Some of the actions to address this, had to be postponed due to Covid hitting. The ESFA were comfortable for some schools to have an in-house deficit, but we need to restart some of those processes in September. SK understands the position next year with: Bridgerule, Holsworthy, North Tawton, Boasley and Exborne. She explained that it was not appropriate yet to agree the budget positions for next year as further discussion was required. JL added that the corrective action at Tavistock was very positive, which is almost in balance. Looking back at Period 7, the Trust is in a better position in Period 8 for our in-year position. In Period 7 there had been some errors in that forecast, whilst the software was new and being learnt by the team. Will is working on Periods 9 and 10 currently and Trustees will be able to see the year-end position by this time next week. With the addition of the new information, we will feel more secure with 4 months of reports in place.

JD advised Trustees to wait for Periods 9 and 10 and then we will go through, have a discussion and ask questions. (EM 23.7.20)

6.3 Approve the writing off of irrecoverable debt and the disposal of surplus and damaged equipment

N/A

6.2- 6.5 – these action points had come from the annual cycle – MT to send SK and JD a copy of the current cycle for them to review.

6.4 Discuss brought in service and agree or recommend SLA within delegated limits.

N/A

6.5 Review staffing structure and staffing needs for the next academic year

N/A

7 Matters Brought Forward at the Direction of the Chair

7.1 St James C of E Primary School – presentation of due diligence report

JL, TS and HF had held a meeting re update on St James transfer. TS said the vote on St James had to be once more postponed. JL gave the following update:

- JL has had a positive meeting with the planning officer and Tim Capps, the agent. The members are keen for the planning application to be approved. The advisor has resubmitted a statement of facts, which should satisfy all her concerns and that document went in 7 days ago. The planning officer will need 2-3 weeks to consider it.
- There are 5 actions outstanding – one is the production of a 3-year forecast for St James and SK has asked Will to produce this for Trustees' consideration on 23.7.20.
- We are progressing with DCC agreeing to transfer the lease (land around the school – 25 years) but they were concerned about the lack of planning approval. If planning is approved this will be fine, but if it is refused, DCC want a commitment that a grass pitch will be reinstated. Okehampton Skills and Sports Trust have been asked to

do this and JL has asked for this commitment in writing. A fence will need to be erected around the area and JL has obtained a quote to do this.

- There has also been a discussion about what happens if there is some consequential damage in the future due to the groundworks and SK is looking into some insurance to cover this.
- Trustees thanked JL for this work on behalf of St James and DMAT.

ACTION: MT to send Team invite for EM Full Trustees (St James vote and approve budget) on 23rd July at 4pm.

7.2 Discussion and Approval of St James C of E Primary School transfer to DMAT by vote

Moved to 23.7.20.

7.3 Coronavirus – Short Update on Return to School in September

DC updated Trustees with important dates involved with the September opening of all schools. All local plans need to be back to DC by 7.8.20. The plans will need to have gone through the ACs first (as before) and approved by them. DC will then need to make them available for the unions (JCC on the 19.8.20). There is enough time built in, to amend the plans if there were any issues to consider, which come back from the unions.

The proposal is for Trustees to hold an EM on 25.8.20 at 2pm with AC Chairs and portfolio leads invited, as a similar exercise as before and for Trustees to approve the final plans.

DC said that on 11th August the next government announcements are due.

PS added that Tavistock College's plans had already been approved by the AC for September. DC has asked for the plans to go through to Joe Wood in the first instance. DC said the secondary school plans would be more complicated due to the normal movement of pupils around the school for specialist lessons etc.

ACTION: MT to send Team invite for EM Full Trustees (September Opening Plans) on Tuesday 25th August 2pm for Trustees, Alan King, Jane Lake, Joe Wood and AC Chairs.

8 Trustee Board

8.1 Feedback on any Complaints Made

Part 2

8.2 Discussion on Strategic Review (plus Governance) spreadsheet

JD explained that the project roll out spreadsheet has a timeline for the governance and the portfolio leads' actions and this has now been passed to SK and her team to further populate with information. They will update as necessary.

8.3 Elect Chair and Vice Chair, Ethos and Resource Lead Trustees and Chair of Audit Committee

- JD proposed TS as Chair for the next academic year and voiced that TS had been exactly the right person to lead the Board at this time; she had done an excellent job with the CEO recruitment process and bringing everyone within the governance structure together. All unanimously agreed with this appointment and thanked TS for her hard work and commitment to the Trust during this time. All voted unanimously.

DECISION: TS was elected as Chair of Trustees for the academic year 2020-21.

- GB proposed JD for Vice Chair and all voted unanimously on this. TS thanked her for all her support during this period.

DECISION: JD was elected as Vice Chair of Trustees for the academic year 2020-21.

- The following elections and votes were carried out with the following decisions:

DECISIONS:

MW to be Chair of the Ethos Committee

JD to be the Lead Trustee for Resources

JL to be Chair of the Audit Committee

8.4 Trustee Vacancies

GB had done a lot of work on this and had contacted 7 MAT CEOs in Devon, South Somerset and North Cornwall. He has received 6 positive responses from CEOs as they will need to give their permission for their SI leader to be involved. GB has

now passed the responses to MT and will pass any others which come through. There is a mixture of primary and secondary SI leaders. MT thanked GB and confirmed that she had already contacted the interested parties and answered their questions. TS would like to hold interviews in September. GB and MW volunteered for the interview panel.

Q MW asked how were we looking for a Foundation Trustee? JD had a possible candidate and was waiting for her to formally confirm an interest. GB asked that MT make contact with any candidate but TS could have conversations about the role, if required. **Q TS asked if the foundation trustee would go through a Diocesan-led process?** MT and MW confirmed that the Diocese had been asked if they could recommend anyone, but they were not part of the process but would be contacted when the candidates had been interviewed for their comments and approval. TS will also be in contact with Amanda French to see what new future plans might be regarding her role as Trustee. GB left the meeting at 7pm.

9. Policies/Documents – Review and Approve

NONE

10 Academy Committee – Minutes

10.1 Tavistock AC Minutes 26.5.20

Noted with thanks.

TS asked DC for clarification on students who wish to take exams in the Autumn and if it was at the School's cost. DC clarified that any student who wants to take an exam in the Autumn series (which had been affected by Covid in the summer series) the exam bill would be paid by the previous host school. If a child had left at the end of the summer term and moved onto another educational establishment/further education for example e.g. had left Tavistock but wanted to sit an exam in the Autumn, it would be Tavistock who would be asked to fund this. **Q TS asked if this was an extra cost?** DC said he had not received the final detail around the summer series of exams/reimbursement. DC expects there will be numerous challenges on results and subject access requests. **Q JD asked if any cost implication needs to be included in the budget and asked SK to estimate the potential cost re the Autumn series exam bill.**

10.2 Holsworthy AC Minutes 13.05.20

Noted with thanks.

Holsworthy AC feedback – re the DMAT Review and the CEO appointment – point 13.5 slight inaccuracy noted.

10.3 Holsworthy AC Minutes 25.06.20

Noted with thanks.

10.4 Okehampton Primary AC Minutes 04.05.20

Noted with thanks.

10.5 Okehampton Primary EGM AC Minutes 22.05.20

Noted with thanks. **Q TS asked what the reason had been for one governor of the AC to not agreed with the extending school open plans.**

10.6 Okehampton Primary AC Minutes 08.06.20

Noted with thanks.

11 – Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 16th July - Strategic Review Conference 4.30pm – 7pm

The meeting ended at 7.12pm.

ACTION TABLE – from meeting 25.06.20			
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.	Pending
3	HF/DC/ Sarah Jones	Request to Executive Team and Sarah Jones for the Summer 1 breakdown for SEN and PP within those attendance figures.	Pending
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	To meet and review the DfE new benchmarking information.	Autumn Term
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.	Ongoing
7	MT/TS	To provide and work on a model TOR for the full AC boards.	Autumn Term
8	SK/GB	To review the Business Continuity Plan in light of recent COVID 19 crisis with JS and GB.	End of Summer Term
9	SK/JD	To bring Gag Pooling report to the Full Trustees (resource focus) in the Autumn Term.	Autumn Term
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.	Autumn Term
11	HF/DC	CEO and Vice CEO to provide list of top 10 KPIs and risks for Trustees' attention.	September meeting
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.	ASAP
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.	ASAP
15	Jane Lake	To send doodle poll to arrange dates for Trustees' safeguarding training.	September
16	Sarah Jones	To approach local companies for sponsorship of the new ICT Build.	ASAP
17	TS/SK/D C	To send a letter informing the ACs about the postponement of some of the projects which had been proposed.	Done
18	TS/Sarah Jones	To contact Mel Stride and local MPs for assistance in funding re Tavistock Buildings Project.	Ongoing
19	MT	To send Team invite for EM Full Trustees (St James vote and approve budget) on 23 rd July at 4pm.	ASAP
20	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.	ASAP