

Full Trustee Board (School Improvement Focus) – Part I Minutes							
Date/Time	28 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 4.00pm		Location		Okehampton College		
<b>Attendees</b>		<b>Initials</b>			<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Initials</b>	
Amanda French		AF	Tania Skeaping	TS	Jeanette Savage	JS	Rebecca Ledger RL
Philip Sanders		PS	Daryll Chapman	DC	Graham Briscoe	GB	

Apologies	Initials	Reason
John Lawlor	JL	Family Commitment
Ian Courtney	IC	Unwell
Jane Dumerseque	JS	Work Commitment

<b>ACTIONS</b>
<b>DECISIONS</b>
<b>QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES</b>

In Attendance	Initials	
Susanne Kiff	SK	CFOO
Hazel Fox	HF	Vice CEO
Melissa Trudgill	MT	Governance Manager

Minutes to
Attendees
Apologies

Meeting started at 4.10pm

1 - Apologies
MT confirmed apologies had been received from IC, JL and JD. AF agreed to Chair this meeting in her role as Vice Chair.

2 – Declaration of Interest
All Trustees present were reminded to declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting.

4 – Agree and Sign off Previous Minutes
<b>Minutes from:</b> Full Trustees meeting (Resource focus) held on 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019 were agreed and signed as correct by AF.

5 - Matters Arising

The meeting agreed to take this item first before the CEO's report.

The Trustees went through the action table for updates:

- Tavistock Athletics Club. PS reported that a meeting had recently been held about this and IC would be able to report back at the next meeting. TAC had put in a bid to manage the Athletics Club and fund its ongoing maintenance costs. However, this could alter the community use agreement and there were financial consequences for breaking this agreement. Michlemore's view had been sought and they had advised this would require Secretary of State approval. **A Trustee asked why was DMAT even considering this new arrangement if there were so many pitfalls.** A Trustee responded that ongoing costs of maintenance and lighting were a future issue as there was no sinking fund. This in itself had been a condition of other grants received so it was a complex web of interwoven issues. One of the factors is that the land which the track sits on has not been transferred over and there were considerations with it being taken over by an outside organisation, as the changing facilities were situated within the school buildings complex. **A Trustee challenged who operationally would be taking this forward and asked if SK and her team had the resources to be involved and would it help if a Trustee was involved?**

**ACTION: AF and SK will have a meeting to unpick the issues involved and AF will produce a diagrammatic diagram including issues, impact and timelines and then report back to the Trustees. AF will liaise with IC to see what the position was currently.**

At this point, a Trustee raised the proposed scheme to build a track and an all-weather pitch for Okehampton College. This would be located at the back of the College close to where the existing pitches are. There had been publicity in the local press about this and it involved the Okehampton Skills and Sports Trust. DC explained that the land proposed for the project had never been transferred over by DCC although the DfE considers it part of the process of schools joining a MAT. Some of the land involved within this proposal belongs to the football club and there are pockets of other land on town council park land and some on a 35-year lease. This would be of huge benefit to the community and the College and provide an athletics facility in this part of Devon, which has none currently. **The Trustees questioned at what stage would the Trustees become aware and informed of this proposal?** The process should be that the proposal should be discussed at local governance level (Dartmoor Federation AC) and then they should come to the Trustee Board with the proposal, but caution was expressed that this should occur before further PR takes place on the project. **A Trustee enquired whether DMAT's processes were working effectively if the Trust Board had not been informed, but it was agreed that it had not yet been brought to the AC in sufficient detail for it to be discussed at Trust Board level.**

**ACTION: TS to ask Dartmoor Federation AC to prepare an update on the project for the Trustee Board. DC to remind Headteachers to go to their AC with any plans or proposals in the first instance.**

RL left the meeting at 4.30pm

### 3- CEO report

DC invited questions from the Trustees on his written report (previously uploaded onto SharePoint).

#### Attendance

**Q A Trustee remarked about the low attendance at HCC in the last academic year (88%).** DC responded that this was a priority KPI at HCC and they were working hard on improving attendance – the percentage for the first term in this academic year is 93.3%. **A Trustee asked if the attendance rate related to Year 11 as there were concerns about how this would affect exam results.** DC said that there was no per year breakdowns for attendance. The attendance data is interlinked with PP and SEND. **A Trustee asked if the college was using the SOL programme?** DC responded that SOL was quite expensive and was not in use at HCC but will soon be introduced at Okehampton College.

**A Trustee asked if the Trustee Board could have access to the SEND Review at HCC.**

**Action: DC to provide SEND report from HCC for Trustees' review.**

HF reported that there had been some useful network meetings with EWOs and it would be positive to keep these going. DC voiced concerns about the Ed Psych service and he had decided to commission an alternative Ed Psych report on the same group of children.

**A Trustee asked about the strategies to deal with poor attendance and had noted further low attendance at North Tawton.** DC said the trend from last year, detailed in his report, is not continuing and he will keep a close eye on this. **A Trustee challenged that the attendance rate at Boasley Cross was inaccurate and DC will review this.**

Neil Swaint Director of SI had undertaken 2 observations looking only at curriculum and reading. The report from Tavistock expressed the effect of the poor environment on the science teaching and it was important to note this comment. The net cap report on Tavistock College has not formally been issued, but the verbal outcome states the net cap in itself is not the problem but the quality of the buildings.

TS left the meeting at 4.55pm

**SEN Attendance**

JS expressed that attendance is a concern in many of those schools and that she would like to unpick this going forward. DC reiterated that the visit notes were not on SEN but on curriculum and reading. He explained that the MAT SENCOs are meeting and networking regularly through an organised DTSA programme.

HF told the meeting that Maths will be the focus for the next visits and SEN can be the focus following. When she undertakes visits and interviews groups of children, she ensures that SEN children are represented in the group.

RL returned to the meeting at 4.55pm

DC told the meeting that the focus should not always be on the quality of the teaching, as it was not always the issue. Results at Okehampton College showed that when disadvantaged and SEN children came into school and attended well, they could achieve their potential. If they have an attendance below the national average, then their outcome progress scores drop down to -1.2

DC said he believes that schools need to be more forensic and identify what the reasons are behind the poor attendance and why pupils are not coming into school instead of always looking to spend the money on the teaching. A Trustee expressed that she hoped that one would not be at the expense of the other. DC said the pastoral aspects of the staff will need to be looked at it to ensure they are providing the right advocacy to encourage the children to attend. **A Trustee asked whether DC was sure that there was a straight-line relationship between attendance and achievement outcomes with disadvantaged or SEN children.**

JS said there had been a lot of interest recently in the wider world on those children whose attendance had dropped but there was not a specific SEN identified and at crisis times an enabler had been put into place to provide an approachable contact for the pupil who also encouraged them to come into school with support.

Holsworthy sits in the bottom quintile (20%) for deprivation although the cohort come from quintile 3. There are multiple and complex factors which underpin the whole area of attendance.

**Finance**

**Q One of the main areas which needs to be focused upon is finance with satisfactory reports to the Board.**

**Q A Trustee asked if the some of the KPI information could be presented in just a couple of pages with histograms and a few issues which are brought to the attention of the Trustees to focus on.**

**Reports**

**Q SLT reports – Safeguarding, HR and Health and Safety – do we get these reports to the Board from the Portfolio Leads? The Trustees asked for reports covering the whole year's activities at some point in the year. A Trustee asked how do we receive reports on our premises and decide how to plan the allocation of funds?**

**Q Re the reports from the Portfolio Leads, it was agreed that there was a large disparity between styles.** AF referred to the SMART guidance which would enable the reports to be compared easily from one term to the next. All agreed that Joe Wood's report was well laid out and would provide a suitable template option for all Portfolio Leads' reports to provide uniformity of structure for the Trustees. SK reminded the meeting that many had only been in post since the summer so were new to providing reports such as these, but would note the positive comments about the Health and Safety Report structure.

**Safeguarding**

**Q Trustees made a challenge and voiced concern that only 3 out of the 17 schools were compliant with their SCRs based on the recent audit. A Trustee queried what type of errors had been flagged up** and SK responded that they ranged from a few simple issues to more major things to be resolved; some are using the incorrect templates and in other cases references are missing. **A Trustee asked whether further training for the schools was required.** All agreed that this was not acceptable and had been flagged for the last 18 months without being resolved. For the benefit of the schools and the importance of safeguarding, there now needed to be a tight deadline given for compliance. If there was a failure on SCR within an Ofsted inspection, it would result in the whole Trust being scrutinised. Trustees agreed that investment had been made in a senior role and it was not good enough that there were still schools not compliant on SCR.

**ACTION: – SK to report back after discussion with safeguarding portfolio lead. The Trustees need to have a written report from JL for the next meeting (19.12.19) with an update.**

**ACTION: Going forward report to Trustees from the Safeguarding Portfolio lead at every meeting (monthly). There is an expectation that all will be compliant by the next meeting and if not, the reasons need to be identified.**

**Q Is there a mismatch in the report - several schools are sitting in Good but are leaning towards RI.** Was there an issue for the school's self-evaluation within the Ofsted framework? AIP are about achievement but there are other reports such as the SEF reports including Leadership and Management; KPIs are more holistic – the API judgement was on previous achievement. Schools are positive about the KPIs and are trying to use the language to spread through the schools. DC said although we need consistency there is little point making schools follow a certain framework if it does not fit for them and he wants them using it in the most effective way for them. As long as Trustees understand the colour code, DC does not mind them using different systems.

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

**Tavistock Athletics Club** – this had been taken under section 5 - Matters Arising

**7 Trustee Board**

- **A Trustee asked whether there was anything we could learn as a Board about the recent resignation of ML. Should a standard process such as an exit interview be offered.** The meeting agreed that MT could conduct this but that it would be unfair to put it in place after the event, when it had not been something introduced nor mentioned on appointment. From now on the mention of an exit interview will be addressed as part of a Trustee's induction.

**DECISION**

**MT to offer exit interview for trustees going forward which will provide them with the opportunity to voice any suggestions or concerns and will be a positive information-gathering exercise for the Trustee Board.**

**7.1 Governance Conference** – The Trustees agreed that this Conference had been very useful and well-attended. Concern was voiced that if the adoption of the SoD is delayed much further, schools which are operating under the new framework as a pilot could have an Ofsted inspection and the SoD they are following has not been formally approved.

It was agreed that this needs to be considered but also acknowledgement of some AC members who had asked for it to be reviewed by our legal representation for comments. There will be a working group meeting in January where the SoD can be reviewed in greater detail.

**ACTION SK will send the draft Scheme of Delegation to solicitors for them to review.**

**ACTION - MT will distribute all questions and answers to all once they are fully typed up and any few remaining questions have been forwarded to the Panel for answering.**

**7.2 St James Primary School Update** – DC had held several meetings with Suzie Stevens in Hazel’s absence. The issue continues to be the land. DC had been in touch with the architect who submitted the plans and he has been in touch with the planning department. It is due to be assessed today and DC is awaiting feedback. The objection to the pitch had come from Sport England and the description of it being for community use, as they did not feel further provision for the community in this area was required. If planners pass it, then it is likely Sport England will take it to the next level. DC had spoken to Simon Niles and there had been agreement that DC would be copied into any future correspondence between DCC and the school. The next action will be for St James to respond to the letter from the Council’s solicitors in full. DC had asked DCC if the school could come into the Trust and leave the playing fields out of the transfer but this had been refused. It appears that the least problematic action would be for the grass pitch to be reinstated. If this can take place, the planners would need to look at the specification, and the 3G pitch to go through the ordinary Consent/Planning process after the transfer. AF had not attended the recent Governing Board meeting at St James, but had raised concerns that no one was leading on this and Sarah Owen was due to withdraw from working with the School in January. It needs pushing forward and there are a few other issues that need to be resolved including warranties. The Trustees agreed that they need to be kept updated about the land issues at St James.

### 7.3 Trustee Visits

- It was noted that JL had been in recently to visit schools.
- JS had held a second SEND meeting 3 governors and had given them homework with items to prepare for at the next meeting. JS will meet with Mary from Okehampton College in January and then again as a group in the Spring Term.

**7.4 Feedback on any complaints made** – It was noted that the Complaints Policy had now changed following recent work and Trustee approval of the new policy. Some complaints, which were already in the system under the old policy, had to be carried through under these guidelines. DC outlined some of the existing complaints: 1) Complaint made to Ofsted following a permanent exclusion at Okehampton College. Ofsted will not take any action but it will be put on file and will be looked at the next Ofsted inspection. The complainant has now sought legal advice and it may go to a tribunal. 2) Complaint made at Okehampton Primary school which included an administration error where the complaint had missed the policy timescale. 3) Ongoing complaint at Tavistock College regarding the Japanese trip 4) Complaint made at Lydford Primary School.

MT reported that some AC members had asked for in-house training on how to deal with complaints as the responsibility lay more on their shoulders to deal with.

**ACTION – The Trustees asked DC if they could have the complaints tracked in a document so they could easily see their progress through the system.**

## 8. Generative Conversation Time

**Q A Trustee asked for an update regarding the Tavistock site and the RSC visit?** Unfortunately, the report will be delayed because of the election. SK had sent the Health and Safety reports to the EFSA and the SMRA had included the condition of the Tavistock buildings in their reports.

**Q The Trustees asked MT to review the schedule of meeting dates as the agreement had been that there would be no more than one meeting a month and it appeared that the months of December, April and May were very meeting heavy.**

**ACTION: To review the schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year and consult with IC. MT would liaise with SK about which meetings were required from a budget/finance importance.**

**ACTION: Following a request from a Trustee, MT would look into the possibility of providing a conference call facility.**

## 9. Policies/Documents – Review and Approve

**9.1 Risk Management Policy** – The Trustees made the following comments:

- A Trustee asked whether we had a risk appetite assessment, which would describe the various levels of risk and where DMAT was comfortable with.

**ACTION: GB would provide an example of a specimen which contained three levels of risk and circulate to SK and NM via MT.**

- Another query was raised that under responsibilities there was no reference made in the policy to where the Heads of School fit into both in section 2 and throughout the document. DC recommended as in the new executive pay policy, to include an over-arching comment to describe the delegated authority on the school to include named officers such as Heads of Schools etc...)
- P3 mentions statements and should read EHCPs.

**9.2 Administration of Medicines Policy** – The Trustees made the following comments

- Under section 7.4 re the emergency treatment of asthma – inhalers will only be used for those diagnosed and even in emergencies will not have access to the inhalers held by the schools. Some Trustees felt uncomfortable with this statement and requested that it be checked. One Trustee referred to advice from the Asthma Association. SK responded that she had debated this with Joe and he had verified this with the correct information from the Department of Health. There was concern from a risk point of view and that Trustees held the ultimate responsibility so needed to be completely satisfied on such an important matter.

**ACTION: SK to ask Joe Wood to clarify his information source and double check whether inhalers could be used for all children in emergencies, even in the absence of a diagnosis.**

**9.3 Use of Reasonable Force Policy** – one query over highlighted section and what this meant.

**9.4 Health and Safety Update** – there were no issues with this and it was approved.

## 10 Academy Committee – Minutes

**10.1 AC Questions to Trustees** – MT had produced a summary report of questions to Trustees raised in the Three Hares AC minutes. Trustees requested that in future due to time constraints, only questions within a Trustee area of responsibility should be forwarded to Trustees for response and the rest should be signposted to the relevant area.

1. Question raised over library books – Trustees responded this was not a decision at Trust level but was up to the Headteacher how they allocated their funds.

2 Question on the number of visits from the Central Team – The Trustees acknowledged the ACs concerns and will look at timings and approaches but ultimately the visits from Central Team are an important part of managing the School and are also meant to act as a supportive process. They are part of the operational function of the MAT.

3. Communication and Business Plan Priorities – DC voiced frustration regarding this query as he spends a lot of time communicating with Headteachers at the regular Headteachers meeting and the information needs to be fed back into the individual schools. It was suggested that perhaps it was communication within the schools which needs to be addressed. For example – it needs to be communicated that financial responsibility stays with the Headteacher with support and guidance from the Executive and Central team. The main provision is that budgets are not exceeded.

4. NGA online training – MT will contact the NGA and find out what the position with our level of membership package as there was concern that the training aspect had expired. Trustees agreed that this was a useful tool.

5. The AC dealing with issues which should be dealt with at Trustee level – the Trustees asked for clarification on which issues were meant here and the Trustees agreed that there was currently a lack of SEN and Curriculum Lead within the Trust.

This is under review.

### 10.2 New Governor Approval

The Trustees approved the appointment of the 3 new governors for the Dartmoor Federation AC but requested a copy of the ACs skills audit to be emailed to Trustees so they can see how the new appointments complement the AC Board and meet any skills gaps.

**ACTION – MT to request skills audit from Dartmoor Federation AC and demonstrate detail of new governors' appointments skills set to meet the skills required in the AC.**

### 10.3 AC Minutes – Received from Three Hares Cluster

#### MEETING REVIEW:

GB read aloud his meeting review assessment.

**ACTION: MT to produce a yearly summary of meeting reviews by Trustees to understand common issues raised.**

### 11 – Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next Audit Committee Meeting – 05.12.19
- The date of the next Full Trustees Meeting (Resource Focus) 19.12.19

The meeting closed at 6.42pm.

Action Table from 28/11/2019

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
IC/PS	To arrange a walk around with Geoffrey Cox at Tavistock College. (delayed due to election)	ASAP
JL/IC	To carry out final independent review of Executive Team Pay Policy	ASAP
IC	To write to the Chair of Tavistock Governors chair to request sight of full Academy Committee skills audit by Christmas.	ASAP
SK	To review and plan when the central recharge will be discussed with Trustees for year 2020/21 – MARCH	DONE
IC	To report in full to Trustees regarding Tavistock Athletics Club (once meeting has occurred).	ASAP
DC	To add GDPR to the final review of the Scheme of Delegation to state Academy Committees have a responsibility to monitor GDPR in the schools and check they are compliant	DONE
NM	To provide Records Management Policy for Trustees	ASAP
JS/IC	To prepare a draft report and forward it to IC in time for the AGM	Jan 2020
SK	To design and implement the Staff Absence Report for Autumn term 2	Spring term
MT	To set dates for 2 meetings per year for Members – AGM	DONE
DC	To add template letters to the Complaints Policy.	DONE
IC	To raise the issue of Trustees not sitting on ACs at the Governance Conference.	DONE
DC	To make the following changes to the Trust Board Objectives document (in minutes).	DONE

AK	To check the surveys carried out at on Tavistock College at the time of transfer need and compare these surveys by NPS (2 years ago) with the current one.	ASAP
SK/MT	SK will email to MT Management Accounts Period 12 and they will be uploaded onto SharePoint. Trustees would be alerted by email from MT.	DONE
MT	To draw up a summary page of all questions within the AC minutes and distribute to Trustees.	DONE
AF/SK	To have a meeting to unpick the issues involved with Tavistock Athletics track and AF will produce a diagrammatic diagram including issues, impact and timelines and then report back to the Trustees. AF will liaise with IC to see what the position was currently	ASAP
TS	To ask Dartmoor Federation AC to prepare an update on the project for the Trustee Board.	ASAP
DC	To remind Headteachers to go to their AC with any future plans or projects in the first instance then bring to Trustees after discussion.	ASAP
DC	To provide SEND report from HCC for Trustees' review.	ASAP
SK/JW	To report back after discussion with Health and Safety Portfolio Lead re use of inhalers in emergency situations.	19.12.19
SK/JL	Update from JL for the next meeting with an update regarding SCR compliance.	19.12.19
JL	Safeguarding Portfolio Lead to provide a report for every Trustee meeting going forward.	19.12.19
SK	To send the draft Scheme of Delegation to Wollens for them to review.	ASAP
MT	To distribute all questions and answers from the Governance Conference once they are fully typed up and any few remaining questions have been forwarded to the Panel for answering.	ASAP
DC	To provide a document tracking complaints so Trustees could easily see their progress through the system.	ASAP
Mt/IC	To review the frequency of meetings for the remainder of the year.	19.12.19
MT/IC	To investigate the possibility of providing a conference call facility at meetings.	ASAP
GB	To provide for SK an example of a specimen which contained three levels of risk (risk appetite) for inclusion in Risk Management Policy.	ASAP
MT/TS	To request skills audit from Dartmoor Federation AC and demonstrate detail of new governors' appointments skills set to meet the skills required in the AC.	ASAP
MT	To produce a yearly summary of meeting reviews by Trustees to understand common issues raised.	End of 2019-2020