

PENINSULA LEARNING TRUST
MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING
5 March 2015, 5.00 at Penrice

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Present: Jeremy Barnard (JB) Claire Bunting (CB) Kevin Johns (KJ) Emma Knowles (EK) Peter Marshall (PM) – Chair Shaun Netherton (SN) <i>items 1-7 only</i> David Parker (DP) - CEO Kevin Pearce (KP) <i>items 6.6 onwards</i> Simon Pollard (SP) Mark Rudge (MR) Paul Towe (PT)</p> <p><i>Also in attendance:</i> Jeremy Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Sandra Beardsmore (SB) – Chair, Mevagissey LGB Paul Sadler (PS) – Member / guest speaker <i>item 7 only</i> Ellie Willcocks (EW) - CFO</p>	
1	Welcome	
2	Apologies: Julie Seyler (JS)	
3	Conflicts of Interest: no additional interests were declared.	
4	Previous minutes of 15 January 2015 were accepted as an accurate record.	
5	Matters arising	
5.1	4.2 Register of Interests. Compilation and publication outstanding. JA to bring list of connected person's interests to next Board meeting for decision.	JA JA
5.2	DP confirmed temporary website in place. http://peninsulatrust.org/ Permanent website is part of the contract Penrice has to update their website.	
6	CEO's report	
6.1	DP explained the focus of this first report was progress and attainment data for the 4 schools. Penrice. The data is weak for the grade of school - primarily due to some qualifications not counting in the league tables eg it appears as if students only did 5 rather than 8 exams. When we re-ran the results assuming all the qualifications counted nationally – it showed both progress and attainment was above the national average. How are we addressing this? We have rebooted the curriculum and made changes to Y11 subjects. DP emphasised the risks of not taking this directed approach – we need to avoid 2 successive years of mediocre results. He pointed out the current Y11 is the least able cohort the school has ever had – significantly below national average (none are above). EK asked which subjects were not counted? Included PE, Business Studies, IT completely; for others it was 'one or the other' eg Art / Art Photography.	

	DP accepted there is an element of 'game playing' involved – but everyone else is doing it.	
6.2	<p>Mevagissey.</p> <p>CB explained KS1 is an area of concern and a big focus – we are below the national average.</p> <p>Cohort has made better progress than 2 years ago, our new Deputy Head is leading on this. We have developed our outdoor space and have lots of intervention in place. We are pleased with Level 3 targets.</p> <p>KS2 is improving year on year – 100% make expected progress, and better than expected progress is also improving. Mentioned the impact of a small cohort - one child equates to 7% of our results.</p>	
6.3	<p>St Mewan.</p> <p>PT started with Reception – makes strong progress from 'broadly average' attainment and we usually end up above average – EYFS is a strength. The level of need increases year on year – this is common across all schools.</p> <p>KS1 data is in line with national averages – but this is a priority for us as we are not above average in any area. Not an easy fix as nothing to do with the quality of teaching. We are trying a range of initiatives but not anticipating improvement this year.</p> <p>KS2 a strength – outstanding for progress and attainment. We do well with higher attaining pupils.</p>	
6.4	<p>Carclaze.</p> <p>SP reported Foundation is doing very well – but this makes it harder later on to evidence progress.</p> <p>Progress and attainment is in line with expectations, KS2 is above expected progress.</p> <p>Pupil Premium pupils are underperforming in writing, largest gap is in Y6.</p> <p>Extra teaching and smaller classes are in place for part of the week – making a significant difference.</p>	
6.5	<p>First joint training day for staff from all 3 primaries was successful – DP was also able to release 6 Penrice staff who have already started making links.</p> <p>40% of Penrice Y8 are at Y6 level - so reading and literacy is a big issue and a key focus for us.</p>	
6.6	<p>Update on Lostwithiel.</p> <p>DP noted working with these 2 schools has taken a significantly greater amount of his time than when the original 4 schools came together.</p> <p>Lostwithiel is further ahead - very supportive parents and majority of governors.</p> <p>DP attended first of three parents meetings – 22 parents attended and 'interrogated' me - final meeting is a community meeting.</p> <p>Property survey returned – main issue is a long retaining wall running through the site which may need strengthening. We will explore financial support from both the LA (not hopeful) and EFA capital funding (should meet their criteria for a H&S issue) - no other significant risks.</p> <p>Questions for the board are do you want to offer them to join and will you offer them a seat on the board? DP thought the latter is a significant issue for their governors.</p>	
6.7	<p>Update on Fowey.</p> <p>Fowey is behind but catching up fast – public announcement has been made and they are starting their consultation.</p> <p>Good building, and a very good head. Building survey commissioned – we are not expecting any problems. Governors appear to be very enthusiastic.</p>	

	Both schools are already working closely together. DP recommends the board makes same offer to Fowey as we have to Lostwithiel.	
7	Discussion topic with guest speaker: “Ofsted and the role of the Multi Academy Trust Board”	
7.1	DP introduced Paul Sadler - Member of PLT, Ofsted inspector and a Trustee of Bridge MAT (Wadebridge Primary sponsoring Looe Primary).	
7.2	PS began by pointing out that the Ofsted handbook says very little on this subject – and the greater emphasis on inspecting governance is quite recent. Inspectors will know very little about what governance arrangements are in place in advance of their visit – especially if there have been major changes since a previous inspection. First contact is with the Head of ‘the setting’ – so the school not the MAT. This in turn will probably be who the website states is the Head – so he recommended each school website explains as much as possible about the school / the MAT / governance arrangements. He urged the board to be proactive, to get involved with the inspection, and be <i>prepared</i> for inspections - eg. clarify the separate roles between Board and LGB, agree who will speak to inspectors.	
7.3	CEO has an important role to brief individual heads, trustees and governors and to plan in advance. If a school is at risk of becoming RI or worse then you need to demonstrate what the trust is doing. This is especially important in small schools where the quality of education can dip very quickly. Inspecting a whole MAT. The current rules are more about the large ‘commercial’ trusts than local ones like PLT. PS re-emphasised the need to ‘be prepared’ – in his experience very few schools do this even if they should be expecting an inspection. Be clear about your strategic direction and emphasise this to the inspectors. <i>Why</i> is the MAT bigger than the sum of its parts? <i>Why you</i> and not the LA? PS suggested board members have a one page summary with key words and messages. He recommended trustees should be more detached and professional than governors of a single school – you are not ‘critical friends’. DP asked if an inspector would speak to both the HT and CEO? PS replied they should do – both have a statutory responsibility. Timing of inspections after creation of a MAT was mentioned – PS thought the ‘5 terms grace’ only applied to new convertors.	
7.4	Current issues. Safeguarding has a very high profile – PS cited the example of Callington College. Curriculum – inspectors will expect this to be part of your vision. Yes you have lots of freedoms but the DfE has given various steers to schools– eg British values. Strategic use of resources - eg Y7/8 Literacy is a great example, or prioritising funding in one school. Provide a consistent message about the trust – not a confusing one. The quality of support should be bespoke and match the grade of the school and the likely outcome. eg a RI school needs to evidence it is moving towards being self-sustaining; a Good school wanting Outstanding needs to demonstrate it is focusing on weaknesses.	
7.5	DP asked directors for their comments and questions. EK and SN felt they needed to know more about progress and attainment and	

	<p>what an inspector might ask.</p> <p>PM noted the need to ensure our websites are upto date and there is a clear link to PLT; we have single sheet CEP reports on each school; and we designate both directors and governors to engage with Ofsted.</p> <p>KP asked if checking what governors say is part of the inspection judgement? Yes.</p> <p>MR asked if they look for links between the vision and the activity in each school? Yes increasingly so - eg British values.</p> <p>KP asked if being inspected before / after a transition such as joining a MAT is taken into consideration? Not really.</p> <p>Timescale for Carclaze? PS suggested trust contacts the regional commissioner as he has some influence.</p> <p>Directors thanked PS for his informative presentation.</p>	
8	Growing the Trust	
8.1	<p>Lostwithiel.</p> <p>PM queried the land ownership issue and the educational charitable trust who collect the rent. DP explained how they use this income.</p> <p>He confirmed we have asked the EFA if they would fund the rent in the same way the council currently does. EW provided an update from a discussion with the council. There <i>is</i> a mechanism whereby the council would continue to pay the rent – but we would not get any agreement in writing and there is no guarantee it would be paid every year.</p> <p>DP confirmed the likely sticking point over the conversion timetable is transfer of the lease. He confirmed the trust is involved in recruitment of the new head – both shortlisting (SP) and interviewing (DP).</p>	
8.2	<p>DP asked if any more questions?</p> <p>CB asked if the limited bidding opportunity for capital funding might be an issue with school-specific projects like Lostwithiel's retaining wall? Yes this may limit what we can do each year.</p> <p>KP asked if there are 'better' or 'easier' schools we should be looking at? DP stated he would like to have Lostwithiel in the trust – they are a good school. Obvious target schools are Pondhu and Mount Charles – both maintained schools, and he is meeting with the Head at Poltair.</p> <p>DP mentioned two further schools who have been in touch.</p> <p>SP pointed out that both Lostwithiel and Fowey have better results than the others, and DP added these other schools are very early in their respective journeys.</p>	
8.3	<p>Directors voted unanimously to confirm their previous offer to Lostwithiel School to join the trust – subject to further information about cost of retaining wall; negotiations over the rent and lease; appointment of the new HT; a detailed financial report.</p>	
8.4	<p>Directors voted unanimously to invite Fowey Primary to join the trust – subject to all the due diligence checks and inspections.</p>	
8.5	<p>Directors discussed the proposal of both schools being offered a place on the board. Issues raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering them a place allows them to get a sense of who we are • What happens if we expand beyond 6 schools? • Need to incorporate a skills-based approach to this • In the future it will be more a case of 'we are doing them a favour' – so don't feel we should be concerned <p>SP pointed out that we expect the HTs to start leaving so this will create vacancies.</p>	

	Views differed as to whether to invite them to come and observe meetings before joining – but it was agreed to invite them to the Visioning Day. PT confirmed the plan is to invite the HTs to join our Executive Leadership Team in advance. Directors voted to offer a place to both schools on the board.	
9	Audit Committee Minutes of 5 February 2015	
9.1	Trustees noted the proposal that the committee was too small and needed to expand, ideally by recruiting members with specific experience.	EK/JA
9.2	Code of Conduct approved – Directors signed a copy. JA to produce a version for LGB governors based on this version.	JA
9.3	Conflicts of Interest Policy approved. JA to send to LGB governors.	JA
10	LGB Terms of Reference	
10.1	KP queried 7.1 - directors agreed that this should be amended to indicate the LGB implements / delivers the Trust's strategic aim and vision.	JA
11	Items for next agenda	
11.1	PM to discuss with EW and DP content of future CEO's reports.	PM/DP/ EW
12	AOB: none	
	Meeting finished at 7.19	

Signed	Date
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