



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

28 April 2016, 5.00 at Penrice

Part A Public

Item	Subject	Action
	<p>Present: Jeremy Barnard(JB) Michael Cooper (MC) - Chair Kevin Johns (KJ) Emma Knowles (JEK) Kevin Pearce (KP) - <i>chaired</i> Chris Price (CP) Julie Seyler (JS) Ramon van de Velde (RV)</p> <p><i>Also in attendance:</i> Jeremy Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Richard Baker (RB) – Secondary Principal Paul Towe (PT) – Primary Principal Ellie Willcocks (EW) – CFO</p>	
	KP welcomed Michael Cooper to his first Board meeting.	
	Apologies: Shaun Netherton (SN), David Parker (DP) – CEO, Mark Rudge (MR)	
1	Conflicts of Interest: no additional interests declared.	
2	Previous minutes of the 17 March 2016 were accepted as an accurate record subject to the following two amendments being made:. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part A 6.3 Replace EM with KP.• Part B 4.1 Remove 'From DfE' after the final sentence.	JA
3	Matters arising	
3.1	JB queried why the Action Tracker hadn't been included? KP explained that it would be updated and presented at the next meeting.	JA
4	CONFIDENTIAL	
5	Medium Term Financial Planning	
5.1	EW confirmed that she had re-issued the appendix due to an error, and once budget monitoring had been completed she would update it to cover the full 5 year period. She confirmed that the figures are based on the 2016.17 reduced level of funding. She highlighted the list of assumptions made in producing this forecast and that it is from 2018/19 onwards that finance becomes challenging. EW emphasised that the Trust will need to make changes, to look at new models and methods of working; and that the Board, Local Governing Bodies and schools need to understand this. She did provide some reassurance that compared to many other local schools and Trusts we are in a very stable position financially.	

	<p>She also reported that the RSC's visit supported our assumptions of no change in funding which suggests we shouldn't expect any early benefits from fairer funding. DP and Executive Leadership Team have the task of identifying the savings we will need to find.</p>	
5.2	<p>EK commented we do now need a medium-term strategy which we can attach these budget projections to. She also noted that it doesn't feel like we have much slack in our budgets and in the wider business world 3% would be an absolute maximum for in year efficiency savings.</p> <p>CP felt that with our current reserves of around £1.2m then we are not faced with a 'major' problem. EW agreed but made the point we do need to make sure that all decisions from now on are made with this position in mind.</p> <p>Directors discussed possible implications for the current policy on reserves.</p> <p>JS highlighted the advantages of implementing savings early as they are cumulative.</p> <p>JB emphasised we shouldn't just think in terms of savings but also how we can increase income.</p>	
6	Business case for centralisation of business support services	
6.1	<p>KP summarised previous discussions on this topic and suggested that there is now enough assurance in place to allow DP and EW to implement this.</p> <p>He highlighted the benchmarking around our costs compared to other academies.</p>	
6.2	<p>RV thanked EW for producing this report and asked if it was possible to put a figure on the potential savings of option 3? (paragraph 30).</p> <p>EW confirmed she had discussed this in advance with KP, but they had decided it was very difficult at this stage. She noted that building the 2016.17 budgets differently from last year has highlighted inconsistencies which influenced this decision.</p> <p>CP suggested that option 3 was in fact a different decision and effectively separate from centralization. He also suggested considering a temporary appointment to seek the evidence for a permanent additional post.</p> <p>KP agreed he could see the merit in this, and MC confirmed he likes option 2 but feels we should be moving towards option 3.</p> <p>EW cautioned that based on the medium term projections it seems unlikely we can have this as a permanent appointment, and there will be a finite amount of savings we can identify.</p> <p>CP asked if the £195K savings are based on cash or time?</p> <p>EW confirmed they are cash-based and budgets will be reduced accordingly. She also added that there have been some staff changes across the MAT which assist with implementing this option.</p>	
6.3	<p>CP asked for clarification as to whether option 2 included procuring a new ledger system? No. EW summarised her previous views that the market offers little choice at present and she would prefer to delay this, and pointed out that changing current systems and procedures will produce savings and efficiencies anyway.</p> <p>EW also explained that although other 'generic' ledger systems are available we will not get the benefit of the education system suppliers making the regular software changes to meet the latest Department for Education requirements.</p> <p>EK added that from an Audit Committee perspective there are some control issues so the sooner we can make changes the better.</p>	
6.4	<p>RV asked about the speed of implementation? EW expects some changes to be in place from September due to vacancies, with a mix of some staff wanting to move into the central team and others happy to reduce hours.</p> <p>CP asked if there is any scope to look at the remaining £500K admin budget for savings? EW agreed we do need to look at this but feels it is linked to looking at</p>	

	finding new ways of working. She also pointed out this budget currently includes the CEO's costs.	
6.5	<p>KP asked directors if they were happy to approve the three recommendations? – The Board unanimously agreed the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve option 2 – centralised team maintaining current services - as the future structure for business support services. 2. Delegate authority to the Chief Financial Officer to implement option 2 over the summer term 2016. 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer explore opportunities for shared business support services with other multi-academy trusts and a further paper brought to the Board for consideration if possible partners identified. 	
7	Celebration and Communications session planning	
7.1	<p>JA outlined what he had discussed with DP, and MC fed back from his recent phone conversation with DP. PT reported that at their recent meeting the Heads felt the timing is not ideal, and 'we only have part of the story to tell people'.</p>	
7.2	<p>Following discussion the meeting agreed it would be better to postpone this session until the autumn term, but also consider widening it into a bigger event with all the governors invited. It was also decided to retain the venue booking and have a joint meeting with the Heads followed by a formal Board meeting (and cancel planned meeting on 12 May).</p>	JA
8	Mount Charles conversion	
8.1	<p>KP confirmed that Mount Charles governors have made their final decision to join. Directors agreed to approve the resolution that they join the Trust.</p>	EW
9	Luxulyan budget 2015.16	
9.1	<p>PT gave an update on plans for recruiting staff. Directors approved the budget.</p>	
10	Finance Committee minutes - 3 March	
10.1	<p>Directors noted there had been a verbal update from this committee at a previous meeting and had no further questions.</p>	
11	AOB / Urgent items	
11.1	<p>EK thanked EW for covering in David's absence.</p>	
11.2	<p>Directors thanked KP for covering the role of Chair over recent months.</p>	
	<p>Dates of next meetings: Board 12 May 5.00pm – cancelled. Celebration and Communication session – 19 May 2.00pm – cancelled but replaced by: Joint Heads / Board meeting 2-5 (apologies from CP) Audit – 14 June 5.00pm Finance – 30 June 5.00pm</p>	
	<p>Meeting finished at 6.47</p>	

Signed	Date
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