



MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING

18 May 2017, 5.00 at Penrice

| Item | Subject | Action |
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| | <p>Present: Michael Cooper – Chair Emma Knowles (EK) (<i>via Skype</i>) Shaun Netherton (SN) Kevin Pearce (KP) Chris Price (CP) Ramon van de Velde (RV)</p> <p><i>Also in attendance:</i> Jeremy Alder (JA) – Trust Secretary Jason Hurr (JH) – Consultant <i>item 1 only</i> Austin McNamara (AM) – Interim CEO</p> | |
| | <p>Apologies: David Parker , Ellie Willcocks (EW), Julie Seyler (JS), Jeremy Barnard (JB)</p> | |
| 1 | Primary Data and MAT Boards | |
| 1.1 | <p>Presentation from Jason Hurr. The Chair welcomed JH to the meeting and thanked him for the work he has been doing for the Trust. JH gave a brief summary of his background – primary teacher, part of Cornwall Council’s school improvement team, worked on tracking systems, and a self-employed consultant for the last 6 years. He is also the Chair of Governors at Hayle Secondary school. JH started by summarising what the Board needs to know – including how do schools compare to national standards, expected outcomes for 2017, future changes to assessment, and how effectively is the Trust challenging and supporting each school? This can include more than just data –eg a precis of reports from the SIP Justine Hocking.</p> | |
| 1.2 | <p>Next JH explained the latest assessment system and that the Combined Attainment % for Reading, Writing and Maths is a key indicator at Key Stage 2. He showed Directors the compare school performance website and explained Floor Standards and the Coasting threshold. He confirmed that currently none of our schools are below Floor Standard. He took Directors through an example report prepared for a PLT school, and confirmed all the Trust’s schools are using the same tracking system so Trust level reporting is straightforward for primary schools. He updated Directors on Ofsted’s recent announcement that it is not currently possible for schools to predict any Progress measures.</p> | |
| 1.3 | <p>Other statutory assessments include end of KS1, phonics and Early Years. These do not appear on the school performance website but do in RAISEonline and Ofsted dashboards.</p> | |

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| | <p>He summarised what these assessments look at and emphasised that comparing the performance of disadvantaged children against the national average for non-disadvantaged children is a key line of enquiry for Ofsted.</p> <p>JH completed his presentation by identifying other indicators the Trust could track including attendance and absence; and summarised the potential changes which DfE are currently consulting on.</p> | |
| 1.4 | <p>Questions and comments.</p> <p>AM confirmed the Trust needs a further conversation with JH to consider a more planned input in the future which includes the Board as well as LGBs.</p> <p>The Chair thanked JH for his very clear presentation and commented that this was very helpful.</p> <p>Directors asked if the replacement system for RAISEonline will look or be very different? JH commented that from the little information he has seen he expects it to look familiar.</p> <p>Directors also noted that only a single set of data needs to be produced but different people may need it for different purposes – eg CEO, Board. AM confirmed that currently most of this analysis is sitting in school's SEFs and plans, but it is what both he and our SIP use in discussion with Heads.</p> | AM |
| 2 | Conflicts of Interest: no additional interests declared. | |
| 3 | Previous minutes of the 16 March 2017 were accepted as an accurate record.. | |
| 4 | Matters arising: none. | |
| 5 | Chair's Actions | |
| 5.1 | Confirmed the Headteacher at Mount Charles is now a permanent appointment. | |
| 5.2 | No feedback or questions have been received about the Health & Safety Policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy presented to the March Board meeting. Both policies therefore approved in their current format. | AM |
| 5.3 | The Chair confirmed that the Chief Finance Officer is leaving the Trust for a post with Cornwall Council in mid-August. | |
| 5.4 | A Task & Finish group to create improved processes for future Due Diligence on potential new schools is being formed. CP and JS have agreed to serve on this group. | |
| 5.5 | The Capital Spending group will be meeting at the end of June to look at bids from schools. The Chair highlighted that having a secondary school appears to have made a significant difference to the level of funding received from the DfE. | |
| 5.6 | All Directors had confirmed by email (30 March) their approval of a £30K overspend to extend the Interim CEO's contract till the end of July. | |
| 5.7 | <p>The Chair will be visiting all 8 schools this term with LGB Chairs invited to attend if available.</p> <p>Carclaze already visited where there is a lot going on, and a very positive attitude. St Mewan. Current deputy appointed as Head of School and a very good example of succession planning. Fitted in very well, and has a very good relationship with LGB Chair.</p> | |
| 5.8 | <p>The Chair and AM summarised their recent meeting with the DfE.</p> <p>The issue of the longer term leadership of the Trust was flagged up, plus wanting to see evidence of improving performance across the Trust.</p> | |

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| | <p>They encouraged us to develop working relationships with other trusts. AM reported he had discussed with ELT their views on any merger with another trust. They felt our priority is to strengthen and consolidate what we have and to be in a stronger position for any future expansion.</p> | |
| 6 | CEO's report | |
| 6.1 | <p>AM highlighted the focus on non-teaching areas in this report. Fowey HT appointment. Directors agreed to confirm this appointment. Summarised two recent critical incidents and confirmed both investigations took place within 24 hours. MC confirmed he was informed with the full details rapidly as well. Directors agreed they liked this format and a similar report 2 or 3 times a year was appropriate, with by exception reporting in-between for any urgent items. Directors noted that much of the estates and premises work had been reactive and this re-emphasised the need for a more planned approach. AM confirmed addressing this is part of the draft strategic plan.</p> | |
| 6.2 | <p>Office space. Very little choice available locally which meets our size and quality requirements. Business Park option is a minimum 3 year commitment. Directors queried whether this off-site location was ideal and added extra travelling time for staff? AM acknowledged that it would impact on some, but would in fact be more convenient for others. It is still within 30 minutes travel time for all our schools. AM to check on additional travel costs for re-locating the place of work for central team staff. The Chair stressed the need to have a permanent base for the Trust and establish realistic costs for the future.</p> | AM |
| 6.3 | <p>SCITT Ofsted took place last week. 2 stage process which starts with 3 days in spring mainly observing the trainees and then oral feedback. They return in the autumn and then we receive the final written report. Initial feedback was balanced and fair we feel, and includes development areas we were already aware of. JB is considering being our representative on the SCITT Board.</p> | |
| 7 | Audit Committee 30 March | |
| 7.1 | <p>EK summarised the items covered at the meeting including internal and external audit. She confirmed the committee had discussed the timing of including risk management within the internal audit workplan but concluded it sends out a strong message. Internal audit's completed report should be presented at the June committee meeting. EK confirmed that internal audit will be including contracts and procurement within their workplan. The committee were re-assured by the update from the Director of IT.</p> | |
| 7.2 | <p>EK informed the directors that she has received confirmation from the Director of IT that following the news of recent cyber attacks against other public services all of the Trust's servers have been checked and are fully patched.</p> | |
| 8 | Scheme of Delegated Governance Functions | |
| 8.1 | <p>AM thanked EW for preparing the report and JA for his input. The aims of updating the current scheme are to improve clarity and reduce ambiguity, bring it upto date by including agreed changes, and to take the opportunity to fill some gaps.</p> | |

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| | Research did not identify any great examples from elsewhere for us to copy the format. AM confirmed that this version will be the basis for further consultation across the Trust, and invited comments from Directors as to whether they felt this version was an improvement? | |
| 8.2 | <p>Directors commented that they felt this was a good document, and noted the need to then match this up with current reporting arrangements to ensure there were no anomalies or gaps.</p> <p>JA highlighted that the one major difference to the current version is there is no management delegation shown from the CEO to the Headteacher, so the need for a separate scheme will need to be explained to LGB Chairs.</p> <p>Directors requested the following amendments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. VFM – Audit Committee is not responsible for <i>delivering</i> VFM. 2. Change Principal to Headteacher to better reflect terminology in current usage by the primary schools. | EW |
| 8.3 | <p>Next steps.</p> <p>The Chair will consult with both the Members (16 June) and the LGB Chairs (26 May). AM to take to ELT and SCITT.</p> <p>Target date to sign-off final version is the 22 June Board meeting.</p> <p>Directors thanked EW for the work involved in updating the scheme.</p> | MC AM MC |
| 9 | LGB Reports | |
| 9.1 | <p>The Chair thanked JA for compiling the feedback and confirmed he would be discussing the reports at the LGB Chairs meeting on the 26 May.</p> <p>Directors commented that they found the reports helpful and they provided a significant improvement to their understanding of our schools, in particular the positive things schools and children have been doing.</p> | |
| 9.2 | <p>Some reports had too much detail about the SIP but not enough on any issues or problems.</p> <p>Some local management issues were raised and opinions varied as to whether this was the right forum to raise these. AM confirmed EW is already looking at these.</p> <p>Risk Management responses suggest this process is not yet clearly understood by LGBs.</p> <p>Some common themes clearly emerged including induction and training, and premises. AM confirmed these are all included in the draft plan for the Trust.</p> <p>It was suggested introducing some RAG ratings might be helpful.</p> | |
| 9.3 | <p>Directors asked the Chair to include the following when he met with the chairs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall how did you find the task of completing this first report? 2. Where do you need more specific guidance as to content needed by the Board? 3. Please assume this process will evolve and change in the future. <p>They also noted that they would like to see the SIP's reports on individual schools. JA was asked to collate all the questions / issues raised to the Board into a report for the Chair prior to the LGB Chairs meeting.</p> | MC AM JA |
| 10 | Policy approval procedure | |
| 10.1 | <p>AM thanked Jill Gerrish for compiling this report.</p> <p>He highlighted the recommendation that the Trust introduces an IT solution to assist with the overall management of policies and compliancy across the whole organisation, which could be either in-house or from a third party provider. Jill has identified a product designed for MATs and is arranging an online demo, as well as contacting existing customers for feedback. The indicative cost is £5K for a three year license.</p> | |

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| | EK reminded Directors that the Audit Committee have previously raised concerns about compliancy and evidencing implementation of policies. She also queried whether a generic policy package might not be cheaper? AM to follow-up on this suggestion. | AM |
| 10.2 | Directors agreed to delegate to the Chair and Vice-Chair approval for any expenditure on procuring a software solution. | MC |
| 11 | Items for next agenda | |
| 11.1 | Strategic Plan / Central Services – both a follow-up from joint meeting. Risk Management. Budget monitoring / Finance items. Meeting schedule for 2017.18. | |
| 11.2 | July Board: Approve budget. Verbal update on SATS results. | |
| 12 | AOB | |
| 12.1 | The Chair alerted Directors to the possible need to hold an extra meeting to look at the Central Team and plan for the departure of the CFO. | |
| 12.2 | Directors thanked AM for his work with professionalizing the Trust. | |
| | Dates of next meetings: 25 May Board – joint session with ELT . <i>5-7 Informal meeting at Penrice.</i> 20 June Audit 22 June Board 13 July Board | |
| | Meeting finished at 7.12 | |

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