

## Board of Trustees

Wednesday 7 December 2022, 4.30pm

Staff Room, St Luke's School

### Attended:

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| Andy Mulcock (AM) - Chair   | Philip Bostock (PB) – Vice Chair                                   |
| James Frampton (JF)   | Teresa Gardner (TG)  |
| Lindsay Hetherington (LH)   | Richard Jacobs (RJ)  |
| Moira Marder (MM) – CEO/ Ex Officio   | Sarah O'Meara (SOM) <i>Virtually</i>                               |
| Saxon Spence (SS) <i>Virtually</i>  | Alex Walmsley (AW)   |
| <b>In Attendance</b>  |  |
| Melody Floyde (MF) – Clerk to the Trust                                     | Tamsin Frances – Director of People & Strategy (TF)                |
| Jon Lunn – Director of Education Performance (JL)                           | Lorraine Mitchell (LM) – Head of Corporate Governance & Compliance |
| Simon Weir (SW) – Director of Behaviour & Attendance <i>For Item 4 Only</i> | Tim Rutherford (TR) – Deputy CEO                                   |

### Apologies:

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| <p>Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)<br/>         Ben Manning (BM)<br/>         Crispin Taylor (CT)<br/>         Sue Pym (SP) – Director of Finance<br/>         Siobhan Meredith (SM) – Director of Education</p> |
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## Meeting Minutes

| Item No. | Business  | Action |
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| 1.       | <p><b>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>AM welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Ben Manning, Lee Elliot-Major, Crispin Taylor, Sue Pym and Siobhan Meredith.</p> <p>MF advised that Lindsay Hetherington would be joining the meeting late.</p> <p>Declarations of interest were noted, as follows:<br/>           AW: Director, First Federation Trust.</p>                                       |        |
| 2.       | <p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting and Update on Actions.</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 19.10.22 were approved as a full and accurate record.</p> <p>All actions were recorded as complete or in progress.</p> <p>AM reminded Trustees that they were invited to attend the Inclusion &amp; Social Justice (ISJ) and Education Scrutiny (ES) panels. CT would be attending the ISJ panel going forwards in addition to SS and LEM.</p> |        |

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|           | <p>It was agreed that the panels were the best place for Trustees to evidence Governance challenge, particularly in relation to suspensions and exclusions. It was also noted that Trustees had appointed Sir David Carter as an external Chair to the ESP to scrutinise the Trust.</p>   |                     |
| <p>3.</p> | <p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>The DBS check was still outstanding for Cameron Lancaster (ASAP) who had been approved as a co-opted governor at the last meeting. MF advised that ID verification had now been completed and the result was awaited.</p>  |                     |
| <p>4.</p> | <p><b>Chief Executive Officers Update</b></p> <p><a href="#">Simon Weir was in attendance for this item to give an update on Inclusion</a></p> <p>MM’s report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that this was in a new format with a focus on key strategic issues. MM gave a verbal update on key points.</p> <p>All primary schools in Plymouth would now have a common transition day, and a common means of sharing information.</p> <p>There had been a meeting with the Regional Schools Director (RSD) to discuss further growth in line with the Trust’s growth principles. The RSD were supportive of the Trust’s aspirations, particularly around key feeder primaries in Plymouth and Exeter. There was likely to be significant growth in the next year.</p> <p>The continuing key priority for the Trust was the focus on attendance.</p> <p><b>Saxon Spence joined the meeting at 16:43</b></p> <p><u>Trust Charter</u> – TF updated on the development of the Trust’s Charter which would look at corporate responsibility in relation to four key areas – wellbeing, equality, sustainability and diversity. The Trust wanted to be an organisation where stakeholders were cared for. Rob Diment would be leading on this.</p> <p>A steering group was being established and Trustee representation was requested. Crispin Taylor and Teresa Gardner had both agreed to be on the steering group.</p> <p><b>Action: Teresa Gardner and Crispin Taylor to be invited to the Charter Steering Group</b></p> <p><i>AW – can we learn from others? Have other Trusts done this before?</i> TF advised there were some Trusts who had taken charters in different areas, not necessarily in exactly the same way. Part of the work would be to find best practice in each area. Links had been made with an American group, Education Thriver, who were doing a huge amount of research looking at how to support leaders and include wellbeing as part of culture development.</p> <p>Trustees were supportive of the Charter.</p> <p><u>Inclusion</u></p> <p>Simon Weir gave a presentation to update on the Trust-wide picture.</p> <p><b>Action – copy of presentation to be circulated on Governor Hub</b></p> | <p>TF</p> <p>MF</p> |

Current absence was 10% for Secondary and 5% for Primary.

There had been 78 PEX in Devon as a whole so far this year which was nearly the same amount as in the whole of 2021-22. This pattern was being repeated nationally.

Locally, the Stansfield centre was full and with a waiting list to access the PRU. 20 of the most vulnerable children in Devon did not currently have a physical school place. Provision was in unregistered provision or home schooling and 1-2-1 mentors.

There were also significant challenges with accessing special school places in Devon and a significant backlog on EHCPs.

*AW – are all the Wave schools full?* MM yes, they are in this area. There may be space in the one near Totnes. *AW - some resource bases have spaces.*

*TG is there any news on the Plymouth PEX position?* We don't have the data, but it is a very similar picture. In Plymouth there is less collaboration between schools than in Exeter.

*AW – attendance is a real problem, what can we actually do in practical terms?* There is a Trust strategic lead for attendance who is ensuring there are thorough systems available in Phase 1. The volume of non-attendance was the first challenge to ensuring there was capacity in the system. JL added that first day calling was a good example however due to the volume this could take a long time.

*AW – what about elective home educating (EHE)?* There are clear processes established with Ofsted to confirm the exact number of children in EHE. There are challenges with Children Missing Education who ultimately become the responsibility of the Local Authority.

The Trust has to meet the needs of every learner. This would be achieved through the SEND strategy and working with partners. There were strategic leads and key staff members for all areas with processes in place for monitoring and review.

LH joined the meeting at 17:09

The Trust has built relationships with some of the highest performing Trusts in the country and benchmarks against them. Attendance was better in TWT than in other comparative Trusts.

Bridge – now that the Bridge was no longer running, structures for working with the Local Authority (LA) and options for a Trust-based solution for Alternative Provision (AP) were being developed. There were financial implications connected to outsourcing and a lack of confidence that other providers would meet the children's needs as well as the Trust.

*AW- we are trying to solve societal problems, this meets the Trust's vision and values. Is there any way we can access other kinds of funding as we are being expected to go above and beyond?* The expenditure on AP as a Trust could be spent better, with a better outcome. The quality of AP is poor and we need to get this right. TWT wants to be part of the solution. The Trust needs to be ruthless in prioritising resource. It is clear what we can do well and what the funding can be used for.

*SS – Do we have any Trust students who have been excluded and are not in any provision currently? How are we dealing with City & District councils on the cost of living?*

There are some children not in provision. Simon has joined the role review panel at Wave and will be aiming to improve the reintegration processes back to mainstream. This will help to develop Wave to be in-tune with schools' needs and to do work around prevention of children going there in the first place.

MM added that the Trust was not having a huge amount of connectivity with councillors on funding, but there was lots of work in the communities. The Trust was working together strongly as a group of schools to support children, families and staff.

*RJ – attendance is currently the most important thing to deal with in the Trust. Engagement with parents is key and the motivation for children to go to school is crucial. AM – this is a key function of the ISTJ Panel.*

The panels and Education Committee need to be challenging the Executive on the huge number of children missing school and to be clear what the Trust was doing. Suspensions were also currently too high.

TF added that the Trust was working on a strengthening communities strategy. A key focus of this was parental engagement. The first Trust-wide parent survey would be launched in 2023.

*RJ – PTAs are a good way to engage parents. This is all part of the bigger picture outside of the academic work. AM – where we are engaging with community partnerships this is an important development of communicating with families.*

*AM – in terms of Reset, children are in school but not in lessons. How does that work? This is part of the baseline behaviour policy for Schools. All schools have high expectations for disruption free learning, each school has a slightly different process. Children are removed for a certain period of time. How do schools make up for the lost learning time? The counter argument is how much learning time is lost if the disruptive behaviour is not dealt with. Do LGBs monitor what is going on in schools? This is closely monitored across the schools and Trust.*

**Simon Weir left the meeting at 17:25**

JL gave a presentation on key Trustwide KPIs that showed all schools were improving. **A copy of the presentation to be circulated on Governor Hub** MF

The Attainment 8 score for pupils across the Trust had been increasing since 2018-19, which was very encouraging.

There was a good increase in Grade 5 or above in English & Maths. TR noted that grading in 2022 was at mid-point for all subjects, so it would be reasonable to expect national figures to decrease further in Summer 2023.

*JF – It is important to challenge ourselves, not just against the national picture.*

Isca continues to receive additional support. There is a new Headteacher and two new deputies. Also support from Trust senior leaders. The Trust's School Improvement function would continue to support Isca to improve.

ASAP and MAP had done well, further improvement was needed at Lipson. MM added that it was worth recognising that ASAP and MAP were two of the most deprived schools in the country. CEC had not been included in the data as there were not enough Disadvantaged

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|    | <p>(DS) children in the cohort to meet the threshold. <i>Trustees noted that it was comforting to see that MAP was moving forwards.</i></p> <p><i>LH – does the data include children who were not attending?</i> Yes, every Year 11 child who was in school at the January census was included. A very small number of children had been removed. The results showed an amazing impact of the Trust, but if all students were attending this could be even better.</p> <p><i>RJ – what are the financial constraints by having too many schools with poor attendance?</i> If a child is permanently excluded then their entire funding is removed, so there is financial repercussion.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that it was important to recognise the impact of the Trust, and noted the incredible achievement considering the pandemic. Thanks were extended to JL for the well-presented data.</p> <p>MM added that it all fed into a positive Post 16 experience for children. There was so much to celebrate and the Trust still needed to build upon this.</p> <p><i>TG – do we track the children that have transitioned in Plymouth to see how well they are doing at college?</i> There is only anecdotal evidence but this would be very positive.</p> <p><i>PB – it is an impressive narrative, how are we going to encapsulate this within promotional material to get the message out there?</i> We are looking at the impact of the journey and bringing feedback about celebrating 10 years of Ted in 2023. We are also looking at Ted Wragg Awards to launch in September. There is an opportunity to do some PR around this to show how students and staff showcase the Trust.</p> <p><u>Growth Update</u></p> <p>PB gave an update on Growth across the Trust.</p> <p>The Schools Bill had been abandoned, it was unclear what this would mean for the Trust’s Growth Agenda and the landscape.</p> <p><b>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the minutes.</b></p> |  |
| 5. | <p><b>LGB &amp; Trust Board Update</b></p> <p><u>Appointments &amp; Resignations</u></p> <p>The recent LGB resignations were noted. There were no new governors to be appointed.</p> <p>An updated list of LGB Chairs &amp; Vice Chairs was circulated for information and ratification.</p> <p>Plymouth Governance remained a challenge. TG could support with potential recruitment of Governors.</p> <p><u>LGB Chairs Group Update</u></p> <p>Three key areas were covered: Governor recruitment; MATSE process and the challenge of recruiting and retaining skilled clerks. LGB Chairs were supportive of the Trust’s common curriculum.</p>  |  |

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|           | <p>LM was leading on the LGB training which had been well received and with a reasonably good uptake.</p>   |                     |
| <p>6.</p> | <p><b>Approval of Annual Accounts &amp; Trustee Report</b></p> <p>The Annual Accounts had been reviewed jointly by the Finance &amp; Resources and Audit &amp; Risk Committees on 23.11.22 and were recommended for approval by the Trust Board.</p> <p>It was a very good audit, with only some minor procedural points raised. No areas for concern were highlighted. There were no changes to the accounts. There was a £1.75m surplus last year.</p> <p><b>The Annual Accounts were received and approved.</b></p> <p><b>Action: Accounts to be signed electronically.</b></p> <p><b>Action –Point 8 of the Letter of Recommendation to be updated to state “other than Fusion”. MF to raise this with Kevin Connor.</b></p>  | <p>MF</p> <p>MF</p> |
| <p>7.</p> | <p><b>Financial Update</b></p> <p>AW gave an update in SP’s absence.</p> <p><u>Management Accounts &amp; Cashflow</u></p> <p>These presented a good picture showing the accounts were £400k ahead of budget, however this was largely due to recruitment problems. Trustees could take comfort from this however it was not the desired position as more staff were needed. 1% vacancies had been anticipated. Cashflow was positive.</p> <p>Liam Dingle was now producing the Management Accounts and Trustees were getting good quality reporting.</p> <p>The budget was tough as we are working in a chaotic sector. The budget showed a £1.5m deficit but there was a plan to reach a break-even position. There would be a further £400k of funding from the Government. Trustees were reassured that the Trust was safe and secure.</p> <p><u>Finance &amp; Resources Committee Update</u></p> <p>AW gave an update from the Finance &amp; Resources committee meeting held on 23.11.22. The main item had been the discussion of the management accounts.</p> <p>Capital Programme – a plan was being prioritised for capital spend.</p> <p>Procurement was kept under constant review due to regulatory thresholds and the embedding of new schools.</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety monitoring had been strengthened and was now a standing item at all meetings.</p> <p>Thanks to the TWT Finance Team the Trust was in a good financial position.</p> |                     |

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|           | <p><i>TG – the huge deficit in staffing will cause a huge impact on wellbeing and also the experience of learners. We need to think about this to have an impact. We are looking at flexible working, not working in silos and succession planning.</i></p> <p><i>RJ – there is some evidence that recruitment is getting easier.</i></p> <p>TR noted the need to be aware that cashflow would reduce due to the backpay of teacher salary increases. The vacancies were largely in support staff. Work was being done to look at remodelling roles to see if they were true vacancies or efficiency savings.</p> <p><u>QE Land</u></p> <p>An options report was circulated with the papers.</p> <p>It was agreed to hold a Trustee focus group meeting to review the options for the land at QE. PB, RJ, AW and JF agreed to do be part of this.</p> <p><b>Action: MF to set up a meeting to review the options available at QE in greater detail.</b></p> <p><b>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the Minutes.</b></p> <p><u>Charitable Arm – South-West Opportunities Fund</u></p> <p>SP would be drawing up a business case for the Trust’s charitable arm. This would be a discreet separate arm and would be a good way to leverage funding and grants.</p> <p>The board would consist of the Director of Finance, the Director of Education plus one Trustee to represent Devon and another Director from Plymouth. This needed to be expedited as some of the governance for the QE land could potentially move to the charitable arm.</p> <p><b>James Frampton agreed to be the Trustee Director. TG would help with finding a representative from Plymouth.</b></p> <p><i>PB – why are we calling it South-West Opportunities Fund? The advice received was that there was a benefit to naming it after the locality, there was also some future-proofing in the name.</i></p> <p>TR extended thanks to AW for the ongoing support with the Finances.</p> | <p><b>MF</b></p> |
| <p>8.</p> | <p><b>Supported LGB (SLGB) Update</b></p> <p>There had been one meeting of the Wipton Barton SLGB, the next one was scheduled for 14.12.22. The SLGB was looking at the intensive support plan to ensure rapid improvement.</p> <p>Sarah O’Shea was Chairing. Sarah has a great deal of experience and would lead this well.</p> <p>Clerking to date had been supported by LM. MF would take on the Clerking from January 2023.</p> <p>An Ofsted inspection was due in the Spring Term.</p>   |                  |



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| <p>9.</p>  | <p><b>Committee Updates</b></p> <p><u>Education Committee 09.11.22</u></p> <p>Minutes had been circulated with the Agenda. The meeting was challenging due to a number of apologies, and late arrivals and early departures.</p> <p>Simon Weir had attended and was refreshingly honest. He had given reassurance on the work being undertaken across the Trust. His positivity and enthusiasm were great.</p> <p>There were a myriad of reasons for students not attending school, including looking at mental health and anxiety issues.</p> <p>Ofsted had been receiving an increased number of complaints. Future Education Committee meetings would focus on feedback from the Trust schools that were receiving additional support.</p> <p><b>SOM left at 18:16</b></p> <p><u>Audit &amp; Risk Committee 16.11.22</u></p> <p>JF gave an update on the Audit &amp; Risk Committee.</p> <p>Cyber security had been highlighted as a key risk and an assessment had been requested from the Head of IT for the next meeting.</p> <p>Recruitment was also a key risk and the committee were looking at the strategies that were in place.</p> <p>H&amp;S monitoring would be retained by Finance &amp; Resources routinely, but would come to Audit &amp; Risk annually.</p> <p>The Trust needed to be mindful of reliance on key members of staff. There would be a new policy to address this in due course.</p> <p>Whipton Barton – communication was key, open channels and it was important to get it correct.</p> <p>Environmental, Social Governance (ESG) policies were becoming key more widely. It was important for TWT to look at this in more detail, considering the impact across the Trust. TF noted that this would be a large part of the Charter to look at best practice and to ensure that this was meaningful.</p> |                  |
| <p>10.</p> | <p><b>Committee Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The revised Terms of Reference for the Trust Committees were circulated.</p> <p><b>These were approved.</b></p> <p><b>Action: MF to sign and circulate.</b></p>  | <p><b>MF</b></p> |
| <p>11.</p> | <p><b>Trust Safeguarding Statement</b></p> <p>The revised Trust Safeguarding Statement was circulated. This was agreed subject to the amendments that TR would send to MF.</p>   |                  |



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|                           | <p><b>The Trust Safeguarding Statement for 2023 was approved Subject to Amendments.</b></p> <p><b>Action: MF to amend the statement and publish.</b></p>  | <b>MF</b>  |
| 12.                       | <p><b>Articles of Association / Members</b></p> <p>In the Trust’s current Articles of Association the Trust Chair and Vice-Chair were both Members and this was no longer considered best practice. This had been highlighted by the DfE who had advised the Trust to move towards updating the membership and the removal of the Vice-Chair as a Member.</p> <p>MF confirmed that legal advice had been sought and it was not possible to change the membership with a resolution due to the ex officio member role of the Vice Chair. This would be achieved as a wider update of the Articles of Association and move to the new model articles. The Diocese were being consulted and PHP would support with the process</p> <p>Trustees had taken on-board the DfE’s recommendation and legal advice. <b>It was agreed to start the process to move towards adopting the New Model Articles of Association, including removing the Trust Vice Chair as a Member, following advice from DfE</b></p> <p>New members were needed, particularly from Plymouth. Trustees were asked to give thought to this.</p> |  |
| 13.                       | <p><b>Trustee Training Opportunities &amp; Needs</b></p> <p>All Trustees had completed Safeguarding training. <b>MF to update training records on Governor Hub.</b></p> <p>A Trustee Skills Audit would be circulated for completion.</p> <p>LM confirmed that Trustees were welcome to join the Trust’s link governor networks.</p> <p><b>MF to circulate details of what training is available for Trustees by email.</b></p>   | <p><b>MF</b></p> <p><b>MF</b></p> <p><b>MF</b></p> |
| <b>Any Other Business</b> |   |  |
|                           | <p><u>Website</u> - the new Trust website was working well. It had been a “soft launch”, snags were being resolved and it would officially launch with a press release.</p> <p>TR advised that the new Annual Report was in progress and would be launched before Christmas. <i>SS – will the annual report be used for any PR about MATs? This would help to engage communities and emphasise the positives.</i> TR noted that it was also important for TWT to be engaged in comparing with other trusts nationally, how does TWT add value. This was the right time and was part of a larger PR piece.</p> <p><i>RJ – is it worth considering the Devon County Show?</i> TF confirmed that the Trust was currently working on a marketing budget and options for other promotional activities.</p> <p>AM reminded all Trustees that it was important to prioritise timely attendance at the full meetings.</p> <p>The meeting closed at: 18:38</p> <p><b>Date of Next Meetings:</b><br/> Weds 8 February 2023, 4.30pm<br/> Weds 29 March 2023 (Away Day) – Time TBC</p>                                      |  |

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| Weds 24 May 2023, 4.30pm<br>Weds 12 July 2023 (Conference) – Time TBC |  |
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Signed by the Chair of the Board:

*ARMulcah*

Date: 08.02.23

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