

Board of Trustees

Wednesday 24 May 2023, 4.30pm
Staff Room, St Luke's School

Attended:

Andy Mulcock (AM) - Chair	Philip Bostock (PB) – Vice Chair
James Frampton (JF)	Teresa Gardner (TG)
Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)	Ben Manning (BM)
Richard Jacobs (RJ)	Sarah O’Meara (SOM)
Jade Otty (JO)	Moira Marder (MM) – CEO
Saxon Spence (SS) Virtually	Crispin Taylor (CT)
Alex Walmsley (AW)	
In Attendance	
Melody Floyde (MF) – Trust Governance Coordinator	Tamsin Frances – Executive Director of People & Strategy (TF)
Jon Lunn (JL) – Director of Education Performance	Lorraine Mitchell (LM) – Head of Corporate Governance & Compliance

Apologies:

<p>Lindsay Hetherington (LH) – Trustee Siobhan Meredith (SM) – Executive Director of Education Sue Pym (SP) – Executive Director of Finance & Estates Tim Rutherford (TR) – Deputy CEO</p>

Meeting Minutes

Item No.	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>AM welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Lindsay Hetherington, Siobhan Meredith, Tim Rutherford and Sue Pym.</p> <p>Declarations of interest were noted, as follows: AW: Director, First Federation Trust. AW, AM, RJ: Directors, Fusion School Services Ltd (Item 12)</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting and Update on Actions.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 29.03.23 were approved as a full and accurate record.</p> <p>All actions were recorded as complete.</p>	

3.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>None</p>	
4.	<p>Chief Executive Officers Update</p> <p>The CEO Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. MM gave an overview of the key points.</p> <p>The ASAP Ofsted and St Luke’s SIAMS reports had been published, both were very positive.</p> <p>Whipton Barton was likely have an Ofsted inspection within the next half-term. CEC, MAP and St Luke’s were also in the Ofsted window however there were still some significant delays with inspections.</p> <p>The paperwork for the Trust Foundation had been submitted and was waiting for final sign off.</p> <p><u>Strengthening Communities</u> – TF gave an overview of the ongoing work around strengthening parental relationships. The focus was on building strong relationships and following up concerns with individuals. This had moved forward at pace.</p> <p>Listening sessions were being held for parents in the Exeter schools in response to social media and other pressures some schools had been experiencing. 100 parents from across the Trust had signed up for these to date. It was noted that this was only a very small minority of parents. The sessions would focus on three key areas - behaviour systems, toilets and homework (in relation to the behaviour system). The Executive would meet after half-term to review the key themes and to develop action plans for schools to implement from September.</p> <p>Early feedback indicated that generally parents were happy with the quality of education, the challenges were largely around the behaviour systems. The Executive would look at inviting some parent groups back in the Autumn term to follow up.</p> <p><i>How are you trying to get a representative mix of parents?</i> The initial listening sessions have been responsive and have been led by parents who feel that they don’t have a voice. There has been positive feedback from the sessions to date and parents feel they are being listened to.</p> <p>The Autumn term sessions will focus on communications and building relationships with families, mechanisms will be in place to ensure a more representative cross-section of parents. All schools will receive training in listening skills over the summer term to be able to hear a wider voice in the Autumn.</p> <p><i>What does your learner voice say? What plans are there to work with and listen to the students and feed changes back to them?</i> Some schools have already started that and each school is different. Schools will be supported to ensure that this is done effectively. We will work with HTs to put the plans in place, and where there are changes being made to get the student voice involved.</p> <p>In terms of the Trust-wide student survey it does not look in detail at those key areas. This is feeding into the wider strategy for next year. This is an area of challenge and</p>	

it needs to be built in, as part of an ongoing process. We are currently working on the behaviour curriculum for the Trust.

The third year of the school review system has been completed. Consistent feedback from students is that the behaviour systems could be applied more consistently. Students perceive lessons being disrupted by children being asked to leave the room. They are the biggest critics and they want it to be consistently applied.

It is a triangulation of all the information. We will be supporting headteachers to use all the information from their schools. We are looking at making the rhythm of the year more consistent across the Trust schools.

Behaviour is one of the key stones of good Education. It is positive to speak and engage with parents and to make minor tweaks where necessary. Are local governors involved in helping to shape this in the schools?

Trustees and Governors could potentially attend the autumn term listening sessions. This could be facilitated if you would like to take it forward.

Trustees noted that it was positive to have done the listening exercise across the board, giving parents the opportunity to feedback was very valuable. They noted that the time being taken by the team on the piece of work was vast, and it would need to be viable and sustainable going forwards.

Outcomes

JL gave an overview of Ofsted outcomes. **Action: A copy of the presentation to be circulated with the minutes.**

MF

CEC, Isca, West Exe and St James were now counted in the MAT performance tables.

Should the size of the Trust be relevant to the data? The data only shows Trusts with more than three secondaries. There is still debate about the optimum size of Trusts.

Trustees noted the strong performance across Trust Schools.

The message appears to be that we are doing better on attainment than progress, why is this? The Trust's strength has been in English and Maths as this has been the priority over previous years. Schools have tended to focus on the core subjects rather than subjects in the open bucket. TWT is stronger on attainment and stronger on disadvantaged data.

Where do you see best practice? TWT appears to be quite high on the low EAL (English as an Additional Language) and high FSM (Free School Meals). *Is there anyone doing good work on this?* There are only two Trusts with more than one school there. In that data set there are only 105 schools that meet the criteria. TR is leading on a project nationally to look at successes.

Reading programmes are good. West Exe is particularly strong and has a good reading programme from Year 7.

Have you done any modelling on what effect this will have on the results next year with new schools coming in to the Trust? That information is in the dashboard. Greyed out schools are not being counted this year.

	<p><i>Is that likely to improve the position in the tables? Progress is an unknown quantity. We are going back to pre-Covid 2019 figures. Attainment is holding up. National estimates of progress will be published in September/October. All TWT schools have historically incrementally improved every year.</i></p> <p><i>It sounds like there has been a lot of centrally co-ordinated efforts with reading and maths. What is there in the other subjects to ensure that all children get a rich curriculum? Are there plans for a common approach to other subject areas and how do we share best practice not just in English and Maths? We are developing subject networks across the Trust. Historically we focussed on English, maths, science and Ebacc when the Trust was smaller, but now we are developing other areas. There have been challenges i.e. around recruitment of technology teachers and there is still work to do.</i></p> <p><i>You now have Post 16, it doesn't seem sensible for schools to do different specifications? It is important to make the central offer irresistible. The Marine Academy Primary (MAP) curriculum is now across all the Trust primaries. Schools who are using Sparx classroom are now the highest performing in the region. Ebacc is now the next big focus. It is important not to undo the relentlessly positive collaboration, we are using the consistent core as leverage each year to add value.</i></p> <p>Growth Update</p> <p>PB gave an overview of current Growth opportunities for the Trust. These would be covered in detail by the Growth Committee on 08.06.23.</p> <p>SEND Provision – remained a key priority for the Trust.</p> <p><u>Away Day feedback</u> – Consideration would be given to this in greater depth at the Chairs Committee on 08.06.23. Some training was needed and further evaluation around particular points raised in relation to committees. Action: Additional Feedback on Trustee Effectiveness to be sent to MF by 10.06.23</p> <p>Training was being utilised by some Trustees. JO and TG were completing the CST Essential Trustee programme. Other training opportunities were available.</p> <p>Post 16 – Trustees with skills in that area would be utilised to support development.</p> <p><u>Headteacher Appointments</u></p> <p>Harrison Littler had been appointed as Headteacher at St Luke's.</p> <p>Gemma Wills had been appointed as Headteacher at Exwick Heights.</p> <p>Action: Circulate slides from Trust Leadership Day with the minutes of the meeting.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the Minutes.</p>	<p>All/MF</p> <p>MF</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Update on New Schools</p> <p>TF gave an update on the new Schools due to join the Trust over the coming months.</p> <p>Honiton College – Trustees agreed to proceed with the transfer of Honiton College with a target joining date of 01.07.2023.</p>	

	<p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the minutes.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Financial Update</p> <p>AW gave an update in SP’s absence.</p> <p>Currently ahead of the predicted budget position, this was largely due to difficulties in recruiting which was not ideal. Cashflow was also fine. The Trust’s finances were well managed and controlled.</p> <p>Whilst TWT was budgeting for a deficit in 2023-24, it was noted that the pressures on the sector were currently unbearable, and TWT were in a strong position compared to some others.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to Sue Pym, Liam Dingle and the Finance Team for their hard work with the Trust’s Finances.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the Minutes.</p> <p><u>Fusion</u> - Related party transaction restrictions remained a frustration with the wholly owned subsidiary. Other Trusts were experiencing similar and we would continue to lobby for change.</p> <p><u>Capital Programme Expenditure</u> – the proposed expenditure had been reviewed in detail at the F&R Committee, however formal board approval was needed under the scheme of delegation.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees Approved the Proposed Capital Expenditure as recommended by the Finance & Resources Committee.</p> <p>Action: It was agreed to review the delegated authority for the Capital Programme under the Scheme of Delegation for 2023-24.</p>	<p>MF/SP</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>LGB & Trust Board Update</p> <p><u>Appointments & Resignations</u></p> <p><u>Trust Board</u></p> <p>Trustees approved the reappointment of Lee Elliot-Major for a second term of four years from 02.07.23 (subject to DBS clearance)</p> <p><u>LGBs</u></p> <p>The new Governor appointments in the Trust were reviewed and approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Reeves, Whipton Barton • Ben Hooper, Whipton Barton • Clare Jones, Matford Brook • Mark Llewellyn, Matford Brook • Julio Andrade, QE 	

	<p>There would be a new governance officer for Whipton Barton from September who had been appointed centrally. MF would continue at Whipton Barton for advice and support. There would also be a bespoke induction day organised for Whipton.</p> <p>Action: Ask Whipton SLGB if they would like some level of Trust support to continue.</p> <p>It was noted that Governors were still needed across the Trust. Particularly in Plymouth where Chairs were also needed for both Lipson and MAP Secondary. Action: BM to speak to potential candidates from City College.</p> <p>RJ left the meeting at 18:09</p> <p><u>LGB Chairs Group Update</u></p> <p>The meeting had been held on 16.05.23. It had been a productive meeting. The challenge from Chairs on some key areas was positive. The LGBs wanted to have more say in what was happening in the schools with the opportunity to challenge and develop. LGB Chairs remained on board, and had questioned what was needed from them in their role. The Conference would help to look at the creative end of being a local governor, and how to shape and develop the role.</p> <p>SEND remained a consistent theme across all schools.</p> <p>Trustees were very appreciative of Governors across the Trust.</p>	<p>MF</p> <p>BM</p>
8.	<p>Proposed Governance Meeting Dates 2023-24</p> <p>The proposed dates for Committee Meetings in 2023-24 were agreed. Action: Publish final dates for Governance Meetings in 2023-24 and send calendar invites.</p> <p>It was agreed that a fifth Board Meeting would be held in May 2024 as Trustees felt that the proposed reduction to four meetings in the year would not be sufficient. This would be held on the same date as the Education Leadership Conference, with the Board Meeting starting at 4.30pm.</p> <p>It was agreed that there was little value in holding the meetings in other Trust schools after the schools were closed. However, a visit to Plymouth would be beneficial without being onerous to any particular school. BM noted that this could be held at the City College if needed. Action: MF to liaise with BM re holding a Trust Board Meeting at Plymouth City College during 2023-24</p> <p><i>Do we ever do an overnight event? We have lots of formal meetings, however lots of the best networking happens outside of these.</i> This would need planning well in advance but could add some value.</p> <p>Trustees had been invited to have lunch with the Executive Team on 22.06.23 however it was acknowledged that there were difficulties with meetings during the working day for several Trustees.</p> <p>It was agreed that the recent Trust leadership conference had been a very positive experience for the Trustees who had attended.</p>	<p>MF</p> <p>BM</p>

<p>9.</p>	<p>Policies for Approval</p> <p>The Trustees agreed with the recommendation from the Finance & Resources Committee to approve the Trust Investment Policy and the Trust Collective Resourcing & Reserves Policy. These were Approved.</p> <p><u>Trust Health & Safety Policy</u></p> <p>Trustees reviewed the new Health & Safety Policy. It was noted that PEEPS was not evident in the policy and that it did not state who had responsibility for this. TF advised that each school had its own emergency planning document that was bespoke to the school, however PEEPS could be referred to within the policy. Action: TF to ensure that this PEEPS is included within one of the H&S Policies.</p> <p>The policy was approved subject to this being included.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to Julia Prince, Head of Estates for her work on writing the Policy.</p>	<p>TF</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Update on Schools Receiving Intensive Support</p> <p><u>Whipton Barton SLGB</u></p> <p>There remained continuous improvement on the Intensive support plan. The school was now in a stronger position in preparation for Ofsted.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to those involved in the ongoing support at Whipton.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Risk Impact Review</p> <p>JF gave a brief update on the recent Audit & Risk Committee. A formal report would be circulated at the next Board meeting.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Application of the TECKL Exemption</p> <p>AM, AW and RJ left the room for this item. PB Chaired for this item.</p> <p>The requirements of applying the TECKL exemption were discussed in relation to Fusion. Advice had been given by PHP Law who were comfortable with using this meaning that the cleaning element of Fusion work would go forward without competition. SP would be meeting with the ESFA about this in early June.</p> <p><i>Do we have written advice from PHP to confirm this is ok? Please ensure this has been received formally. We will ensure that this is received.</i></p> <p><i>Is SP confident that the ESFA will approve this based on discussions? Yes, SP is confident and there is now a better strategy in place.</i></p> <p><i>At the moment we are only 81%, how do we maintain that going forwards? It will need constant monitoring.</i></p> <p><i>How are we going to monitor this? There needs to be a mechanism in place going forwards. This would be fine at the time that the exemption is being applied, but would need checking every time the exemption is to be applied in the future. The</i></p>	

	<p>expectation is that this will increase over time rather than decrease. It does need to be monitored. TWT is reliant on tendering under the correct guidelines so the exercise needs to be undertaken.</p> <p>Trustees asked for a request to be made to the Fusion Board to undertake regular monitoring, and if the amount of Fusion’s activities with its “parent” went below the legal parameters they must inform the TWT Board.</p> <p>The Board approved the use of the TECKL Exemption as an alternate to the competitive procurement of the cleaning element of the 2021 PFI Contract, subject to discussions with the ESFA and the Fusion Board undertaking regular monitoring.</p>	
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Any Other Business

	<p>AW and AM returned to the meeting at 18:34</p> <p><i>Could the ManBACC be developed in Plymouth?</i> Yes, this is definitely something that could be considered in the future.</p> <p>Trust Conference 12.07.23 – The Trust Board would meet in the morning; Sir David Carter would be attending (virtually) to give feedback from Education Scrutiny Panel for the year.</p> <p>The focus of the afternoon conference would be on LGBs. The details would be discussed and finalised at the Chairs Committee on 08.06.23.</p> <p>Governor Networks – it would be beneficial to increase Trustee presence at Local Governor networks to strengthen the connection between the Trust Board and LGBs.</p> <p>The meeting closed at: 18:41</p> <p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Weds 12 July 2023 (Conference) – 9.30am-4.30pm</p>	
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Signed by the Chair of the Board:

Signed electronically via Governor Hub

Date: 12.07.23