Board of Trustees

Wednesday 22 October 2025, 4.30pm
Great Moor House, Exeter

Attended:

Andy Mulcock (AM) - Chair	**Philip Bostock (PB) – Vice Chair**
James Frampton (JF) – Virtually	
Teresa Gardner (TG)	**Richard Jacobs (RJ)**
Moira Marder (MM)	**Sarah O'Meara (SOM)**
Jade Otty (JO)	**Alex Walmsley (AW)**
In Attendance	
Melody Floyde (MF) – Trust Governance Professional – Minutes	**Tim Rutherford (TR) – Deputy Chief Executive**
Mo Marchant (MDM) – Head of Governance	**Tamsin Frances (TF) – Executive for Item 6**

Apologies:

Shraddha Chaudhary (SC) **Lindsay Cooper-Smith (LCS)** **Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)**

Meeting Minutes

Item No.	Business	Action
1.	**Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest** AM welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from SC, LCS and LEM. Declarations of interest were noted, as follows: AW: Director, First Federation Trust & Member of Diocesan Education Group AW, RJ, AM: Directors, Fusion School Services Ltd JO: Vice Principal, Exeter College The meeting was confirmed as being quorate. The responsibility of Trustees to attend all scheduled meetings and to be fully involved was noted.	
2.	**Minutes of Previous Meeting, Update on Actions and Matters Arising** The minutes of the meeting held on 09.07.25 were approved as a full and accurate record. The actions were marked as complete with the following updates: TB0907.6 - Safeguarding would now be a standing item on the Trust Board agenda.	

	TB0907.7 – AM, PB and TG had booked onto Safeguarding Level 3 training, as advised following the safeguarding review. AM noted that the training had been very useful, reassuring and well run.	
3.	**LGB & Trust Board Update** <u>Confirm Trust Chair & Vice-Chair for Year</u> It was agreed that AM would continue for another year as Chair and PB would continue for another year as Vice Chair. Thanks were extended to both for their hard work and dedication. <u>Trustee Appointment</u> Lindsay Cooper-Smith (LCS) had been approved by the Trust Members as a Trustee and would now be formally appointed for a four-year term of office. Lindsay would be taking on the SEND Lead Trustee role and had agreed to sit on the Education Committee. **Action: Commence the Induction Process for LCS** <u>LGB Appointments & Resignations</u> Trustees reviewed and approved the new co-opted and Trust governor appointments: • Hannah West, Tor Bridge • Alex Boyle, St Luke's • Clare Babbage, Exmouth (subject to SCR checks being completed) • Brad Turner, Tor Bridge • Denise Smith, ASAP • Alex Blagdon, Exwick Heights (subject to SCR checks being completed). Trustees approved the re-appointment of Pat Patel as Chair at MAP Primary and Co-opted Governor at MAP Secondary for a further term of four-years. Trustees approved the following LGB Chair appointments: • Sarah O'Shea – West Exe • Aaron Meredith – Tor Bridge Thanks were recorded to the outgoing Chairs of both schools. Trustees noted the newly elected parent governors: • Roxane Dunbar, MAP Secondary (subject to SCR checks being completed) • Katie Conn, MAP Secondary (subject to SCR checks being completed) • Helen Earnshaw, Whipton Barton The recent governor resignations were also noted, with thanks being extended to those governors for their support. Recent governor recruitment had been positive with several new governors in the process of being appointed. The social media adverts had been successful and had generated interest. **Action: Complete the onboarding process for newly appointed governors.**	 **MF** **MF**

	<u>Scheme of Delegation</u> MDM gave an overview of the proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation (SoD). Further work was required on curriculum and Sarah Parsons would be able to support with this. It was noted that the recent Ofsted pilots had been very specific in their questioning of governance on curriculum design detail. Clarity was needed on what governors and trustees should be responsible for in relation to the curriculum. **It was agreed to form a working group** to further review the SoD as a longer-term project ahead of the next academic year. The suggested changes would be presented in the Spring Term. SOM agreed to join the working group, further Trustee and Governor input would be sought. **Action: Request support with the Scheme of Delegation Working Group from Trustees/Governors.** Some immediate changes to provide clarity to the current SoD would be made. A full record of these is in Part B of the minutes. <u>Ofsted</u> Once details of the new Ofsted framework were known, training and guidance would be developed for Governors and Trustees. Trustees noted that it was important for this training to be accessible and that advance notice was given. <u>Committee Cycles of Business and Terms of Reference 2025-26</u> The updated documents were circulated for review and approval. Some additional minor changes were agreed prior to publication. *How does the Safeguarding risk item on the Audit & Risk (A&R) Cycle differ from the assurance report being delivered to the Education Committee?* A&R should have an overview from a structural point of view, i.e. where are risks going and how are we managing them. It was confirmed that the Trust People Policy was reviewed and approved by the Executive. This included reference to the renewal of DBS checks and an annual statement for any new convictions to be declared. *What assurance have the Trust Board got that Trustees and Governors have declared any changes to their DBS status? If there was a serious safeguarding incident, the Trust Board would be automatically responsible, so it is important to have oversight.* A statement relating to DBS checks and the annual declaration is included in employee contracts. Confirmation was needed that this also applied to volunteers. This would be further strengthened for next academic year. **Action: Confirm where reference to DBS annual declaration is included in Trust policies and if this covers Governance and Employees?** **The Annual Cycles of Business and Terms of Reference were approved, subject to the minor amendments and assurance over the DBS process.**	**MDM** **MF**
4.	**Policies for Approval** <u>Trust Safeguarding Statement</u> – This was approved. **Action: Publish the Trust Safeguarding Statement as per the process.**	**MF/Ali Moxey**

5.	**Proposed Admission Policies 2027-28** School Admissions Policies 2027-28 Trustees reviewed the proposed admissions policies for 2027-28, ahead of the public consultation. A summary of proposed changes had been circulated. Tor Bridge – the proposed introduction of Selection by Aptitude for Rugby and Basketball academies. Tor Bridge had historically been oversubscribed, the places for the sporting pathway would be additional to the normal PAN (10%). Advice had been sought from DCC on the proposed changes. *Trustees queried where the additional children would come from, noting previous experience in schools where similar programmes had led to changes in the PP numbers.* There is a need for this in the local area, it will be supported by local partnerships. *Trustees also asked if the opportunity for specialisms could be extended to other schools in the future.* This would be explored at a future date. Trustees requested an update on the sports programme at Tor Bridge at a future meeting. *How flexible are the PANs within the year?* The PAN is set by the Trust Board and can only be reduced, after policies have been determined, with authority of the Secretary of State. Schools do have working PANs for in-year admissions. The PAN is the legal requirement for the minimum number of places. **Trustees approved the proposed Admissions Policies for 2027-28 to be published for the public consultation.** **Action: Publish proposed 2027-28 admissions policies on school websites, with details of the public consultation.** Updates to 2025-26 and 2026-27 Policies Trustees reviewed and approved the change, after determination, to the previous year policies related to provisions for in-year applications from children of crown servants. **The updated 2025-26 and 2026-27 Admissions Policies were Approved** **Action: Publish updated 2025-26 and 2026-27 Admissions Policies on school websites.**	 **MF** **MF**
6.	**Trust Charter KPI Consultation Exercise** TF joined the meeting to facilitate the exercise. *Trustees queried if all staff in the Trust were aware of the Charter?* That is the vision. The implementation model will ask staff to consider aspects of their work through the lens of each charter stream. We will provide training for all teams and link this to impact assessments. *Who is the charter being produced for?* The work starts with the leaders, who have the responsibility to ensure everyone is armed with the skills to thrive. *Is the Charter internal guidance principles rather than external?* A version for parents and children	

	to aid their understanding of the Charter would be valuable. It is important to be clear about what the aims are and to improve the experience of all groups. TF noted the Trustees' responses to the exercise; these would be reviewed and incorporated into a suggested Charter dashboard. TF would report back to a future Board Meeting.	
7.	**Executive Team's report to the Trust Board** The report had been circulated in advance. MM and TR gave an overview of key points. The role of Trusts was evolving, with major change expected in the sector. Trusts were increasingly taking on a system-leadership role. Developing place-based expertise would be key in the future. *What is place-based working?* Organisations working together in an area as opposed to working in silos, giving shared accountability for an area. Schools are a key point of where the developments can grow from, TWT are taking a lead in this. Funding for a transition portal for Exeter and Exmouth had been received. There could be co-location of services in schools. SEND Hub work was in the early stages in Exmouth and Honiton. Devon County Council were leading the way on automatic enrolment for free school meals (FSM). 1000 children had been identified which would bring in extra funding for the schools. TWT had played a key role in this. *What is happening with auto enrolment for FSM in Plymouth?* There are currently some legal issues and Plymouth are taking a cautious approach. An update is expected. Torbay will also be doing auto-enrol. Roles and responsibilities in Executive – there would be no change to the composition however capacity and functions were being reviewed. *Strategy Day – what were the outcomes and recommendations?* The notes from the day would be shared for feedback and to agree actions. The Opportunities Register is a key document and prioritisation of this will be a priority **Action: circulate strategy day recommendations to all Trust Board.** The annual strategic decision-making cycle used by the Executive was noted. Drafted priorities would be shared with Trustees in the Spring Term. **Action: Ensure review strategic priorities is added to the Agenda for the Spring Term meeting.** KS4 results would be an area of focus for the coming year. Clarity was needed on school's expected outcomes.	 **MF** **MF**

8.	**Feedback from LGB Chairs Group** Holding the meeting at GMH had worked well, there had been good attendance and positive engagement. Ofsted had been a key area of discussion, the request for governor training and clarity on the LGBs role had been noted. Code of Conduct – the updated document had been reviewed with constructive feedback received. Triangulation of information between the Trust Board, LGBs and the Executive was important. LGB involvement in the Scheme of Delegation working group would help to support this. It was noted that the LGBs were a constantly evolving group and their remit had changed as the Trust had grown. Chairs were positive about future opportunities to connect with Trust committees where governors could be co-opted for specific skills. This would be particularly useful in the Education Committee. The induction process for Governors was being improved. Chairs had appreciated seeing how their feedback at previous meetings had been taken onboard i.e. the governance conference and the Trust awards.	
9.	**Safeguarding Update (Standing Item)** Trustees suggested that this could form part of the Executive Report. An overview of major or emerging safeguarding risks that Trustees should have oversight of would be useful. The Safeguarding audits were continuing. ECC were still aligning with TWT so were being closely monitored. A Trust-wide safeguarding and assurance plan was being developed following recommendations from the last safeguarding audit. Work was being undertaken on contextual safeguarding, looking at the context of the wider environment of children and how this was impacting on their lives. The process for reporting Safeguarding complaints against senior staff was confirmed.	
10.	**Approve Pay Range Recommendations for Senior Executive Team (PART B)** **TR, MM and JO left the meeting at 18:37** **This item is in Part B of the minutes.**	
Items for Information		
INFO	**School Term Dates 2027-28** The term dates for 2027-28 were noted.	

INFO	**F&R Committee Update** The minutes and escalation report were shared. Feedback on the escalation report was requested, the intention was to produce this for all committees.	
INFO	**Education Committee Minutes 26.09.25** These were shared for information.	
INFO	**Trust Standard 2025-26** This was shared for information.	
INFO	**Academy Trust Handbook 2025 and Summary of Changes** A summary was shared for information. The F&R committee had reviewed the changes in detail.	
Any Other Business		
	None recorded. The meeting closed at 18:54 **Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 3 December 2025**	

Signed by the Chair of the Board:
Signed on Governor Hub
Date: 03.12.2025