

Board of Trustees
Wednesday 24 February 2021, 4.30pm
Virtual Meeting via Teams

Attended:

Rob Bosworth – Chair (RB)
David Hall (DH)
Moira Marder (MM)
Andy Mulcock (AM)
Saxon Spence (SS)

Philip Bostock (PB)
Richard Jacobs (RJ)
Beccy Mitchell (RM)
Sarah O’Meara (SO)
Alex Walmsley (AW)

Charlotte Davies – Director of Business & Operations (CD)
Jon Lunn – Director of Education Performance (JL)
Melody Floyde - Clerk (MF)

Sue Pym – Director of Finance (SP)
Tim Rutherford (TR) – Deputy CEO

Meeting Minutes

Item Ref	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>RB welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Crispin Taylor (CT) & Lee Elliot Major (LEM).</p> <p>Declarations of interest were noted, as follows: AW: Director, First Federation Trust. RB: Exeter College DH: Exeter University</p> <p>RB also noted that Kelly Dighton, the new Co-opted Governor at Exwick Heights, was an employee of Exeter College.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Previous meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 09.12.20 were approved as a full and accurate record. All actions were recorded as complete.</p>	

3.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p><u>All Saints Academy, Plymouth and Queen Elizabeth’s School</u></p> <p>RB confirmed that All Saints Academy Plymouth formally joined the Trust on 01.01.21 and Queen Elizabeth’s School Crediton formally joined on 01.02.21.</p>	
4.	<p>Appointments & Resignations</p> <p><u>Appointments</u></p> <p>The recent LGB appointments were noted and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jane Whittle – Parent Governor, St James • Owen Davies – Parent Governor, CEC • Layla Crabtree – Staff Governor, CEC • Kelly Dighton – Co-opted Governor, Exwick Heights • Kate Robbins – Foundation Governor, St Luke’s • Helen Sherlock – Foundation Governor, St Luke’s. <p>The transferring LGBs for All Saints Academy Plymouth and Queen Elizabeth’s School were also formally ratified.</p> <p>Action: Siobhan Meredith to be noted as Staff Governor at All Saints Plymouth following the Academisation.</p> <p>Action: MF to formally record and send out appointment letters to the new Governors.</p> <p><u>Rebecca Mitchell - Resignation</u></p> <p>RB confirmed RM’s intention to resign as a Trustee from 31.03.21. RM is unable to continue in the role due to time commitments associated with a new business venture. RB thanked RM for her contribution over the years both at St James and as a Trustee. He noted that the Board had benefited hugely from RM’s sharp eye and analytical skills. This was echoed by other Trustees. RM stated that it had been a pleasure to serve on such a well Chaired board.</p>	<p>MF</p> <p>MF</p>
5.	<p>Appointment of New Trust Chair and Vice Chair (ELECTION PROCESS)</p> <p>An election process was undertaken to appoint the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Trust Board following RB’s and DH’s decisions to step down from the positions. All absent Trustees had been given the opportunity to vote ahead of the meeting by emailing MF with their choices. One Trustee had submitted their vote.</p> <p>The Clerk to the Trust chaired the meeting for the duration of the election process.</p> <p><u>Election for Chair of the Board</u></p> <p>AM shared his reasons for applying to be Chair of the Trust Board. AM left the main meeting whilst the voting process was undertaken. Voting was undertaken by a show of hands from all Trustees present.</p>	

	<p>All Trustees present voted unanimously in favour of Andy Mulcock being elected as Chair of the TWMAT Trust Board.</p> <p>RB congratulated AM on his appointment. It was agreed that RB would continue as Chair until 01.04.21 with AM taking over officially on 19.04.21. It was felt that this would give a good handover period and would be a natural breakpoint. .</p> <p><u>Election for Vice Chair of the Board</u></p> <p>Applications had been received from PB and AW. PB and AW both spoke briefly about their reasons for applying for the position of Vice Chair and what they would bring to the Board if they were successful. Both candidates were then moved to a breakout room to allow for discussion and voting to take place.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the applications and agreed that both candidates were well qualified to undertake the role, prior to voting being undertaken.</p> <p>The votes of the Trustees were counted and with a majority vote Philip Bostock was elected to the role of Vice Chair of the TWMAT Trust Board.</p> <p>RB extended his congratulations to PB and commiserations to AW. It was agreed that DH would step down from the role on 01.04.21 with PB officially commencing as Vice Chair on 19.04.21 so as to align with the Chair.</p>	
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Items For Monitoring		
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6.	<p>Chief Executive Officer’s Report</p> <p>MM updated on the planning in place for the expected reopening of schools on 08.03.21. Some work was needed on the Risk Assessments but this was expected to be minimal and MM was confident that this could be dealt with easily.</p> <p>MM noted thanks to all staff across the Trust for their hard work over the last few months and noted her pride in them.</p> <p>MM requested that Trustees support with the development of the Strategic Plan and visions for the future. Trustee input would be very valuable and four key work streams had been identified following the Governance Review. MM requested that any interested Governors let MF know.</p> <p>MM thanked TR for his fantastic work on School Improvement which had been very positive. The schools in the Trust were becoming more aligned and TR had been leading this work with the Heads. RB also noted the support from Sarah O’Shea, LGB Chair at CEC, on TR’s positive work.</p> <p>SOM queried if the school improvement would be rolled out to Primaries and also how the new roles within the Primary Schools would work. MM confirmed that two new posts would create capacity within the Primary School improvement function. These posts had been advertised internally and amounted to 1.2fte in total.</p>	
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	<p>The importance of not putting undue financial strain on the Trust was noted. MM confirmed that the new posts were fixed term and would allow for future growth within the primary function.</p> <p>TR noted the approach was to clearly identify the schools that required extra support, so that these could be targeted appropriately. MM also noted the two challenging primaries within the Trust, and the need to get these to where they should be.</p> <p>MM also gave an update on the recent recruitment within the Trust. She noted that the advertisement was currently live for a new Executive Head at Whipton Barton as the current head would be retiring at the end of the school year. RB confirmed that all the new roles had been discussed at the Pay & Conditions Committee.</p> <p>JL gave a presentation on school attendance during the national lockdown. It was noted that attendance at the Trust Secondary Schools was generally above the national average whereas the attendance at Trust Primary Schools was largely below the national average.</p> <p>It was noted that the number of staff on site varied considerably between the schools but was consistently higher than the national average across Secondaries. Staff attendance at Primaries also varied widely between the schools.</p> <p>JL had plotted the confirmed cases of Covid-19 across the Trust and noted the small numbers for both pupils and staff across the Trust.</p> <p>JL also gave an overview of the engagement with remote learning across the Trust. The figures were very positive. JL also shared the new dashboard system from SCOMIS which gave an overview of key Trust data.</p> <p>SOM queried why attendance for vulnerable and key worker children was above average in secondaries but below in primaries. JL noted that this could be impacted upon by the local area, for example a hospital in the vicinity of the school. JL also noted that the Trust had been assertive around attendance in primary schools to ensure that only those children eligible were in attendance. TR also noted that secondary schools had identified children who were vulnerable through disengagement and these children had been brought into school.</p> <p>Action: SOM to contact JL outside of the meeting to discuss the data.</p> <p>SS noted the positivity of being able to address the disadvantaged children within the Trust during this lockdown. SS also noted the high proportion of disadvantaged children across the Trust and queried how they would be supported in the future. MM noted the importance of the language being used, and stated that she felt strongly that the strategies in the Trust would help the children to catch up. MM noted the desire to extend the school day and to ensure that disadvantaged children came into school more frequently, which would have the biggest impact. TR noted that all schools had catch up plans in place, they had also been scrutinised and had received feedback from Bill Jerman, which had been published on school websites.</p> <p>PB queried the reason for the high learning engagement at Isca. JL noted that the benchmark was low, and that Isca had put in place a google classroom system from</p>	<p>SOM</p>
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	<p>Lockdown 1 and that had been further developed in Lockdown 2. Isca had met the criteria and followed up consistently.</p> <p>RJ queried the messages being sent out to the public and children at the schools, and noted the importance of communication and avoiding negativity. The positives should be communicated as widely as possible.</p> <p>SOM noted the differing male/female data on the SCOMIS dashboard, particularly in relation to EHCP.</p> <p>AW noted the very positive publicity about Marine Academy’s online learning, however the engagement appeared to be lower. JL noted that there had been a large amount of community work needed on student engagement by the Headteacher at Marine Academy Secondary. MM noted the national issue with the primary school children at Marine Academy Primary.</p>	
7.	<p>Audit, Finance & Resource Report</p> <p><u>Audit, Finance & Resources Committee / Financial Update</u></p> <p>AW updated on the AFR Committee held on 20.01.21. Trust finances were in a reasonable place. Covid-19 related spend was relentless, however financial management was strong and savings had been made during periods of school closure. Concerns about IT spend and loss of income, along with nursery funding in primary schools were evident.</p> <p>The medium term forecasts were in progress and AW had confidence in these. The January accounts were also looking reasonably positive although SP noted it was a mixed picture. The Secondaries, currently in lockdown, were saving money but this would be needed before the year end.</p> <p>AW also noted that the insurance cover for the Trust was due to be reviewed.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the new Audit Committee would be developed so that the committee was up and running by the Summer term.</p> <p>SP noted that a communication had been received regarding a related party transaction with Plymouth City Council, this would be tabled at the next AFR Committee for discussion.</p> <p>RB also noted that SP and AW continued to meet regularly, and that the finances were being well managed during the difficult time. AW noted the strong position and positive planning framework.</p>	
8.	<p>Education Committee Update</p> <p>DH gave an update on the Education Committee meeting held on 27.01.21.</p> <p>DH noted that the meeting had focussed on engagement data and the disadvantaged student strategy. Bill Jerman had attended the meeting to provide further insight and the committee was looking forward to seeing the final version of the document.</p>	

	<p>Further information was still awaited regarding assessment data, and there should be a clearer picture of this after 25.02.21.</p> <p>The reporting of Complaints to the Education Committee had been reviewed with a new process in place. The Trust Complaints Policy was also being updated.</p> <p>The Admissions Policies for Schools for 2022-23 were reviewed and agreed.</p>	
9.	<p>Growth Working Group Update</p> <p>PB gave an update on the Growth Working Group held on 22.01.21.</p> <p>The committee had reviewed the challenges with QE and ASAP but the general feeling was that these were being managed well.</p> <p>The disparity in numbers between primary and secondary students at CEC were discussed. This had led to a discussion on the demographics across Devon and the need for a clear strategy, in relation to pupil numbers, going forwards, to be led by DCC had been identified.</p> <p>The Exeter New School building programme was falling behind schedule due to a number of reasons.</p> <p>Further growth in Plymouth would be reflected on following the outcome of the Governance Review. The need for a clear growth strategy and process was evident and early metrics for any potential new schools would be requested for review from the outset.</p>	
10.	<p>PFI Update</p> <p>The PFI Working Group met on 13.01.21. The project was moving forward well and the Subsidiary Company was in the process of being set up.</p> <p>Suppliers had been identified and the costs were positive. The contracts for services were nearly ready to be signed off and the work was progressing well.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the minutes.</p>	
11.	<p>Plymouth Update</p> <p>AW updated that the LGB in MAP Secondary were bedding in well, although they tended to be supportive rather than challenging. The Acting Chair was happy to continue until a Chair was appointed.</p> <p>AW highlighted four key areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for Governors (MF was currently progressing this). • A city-wide school improvement programme was being undertaken in Plymouth. • Sixth form numbers were significantly increasing. MAP was looking at 70 students starting in September 2021 with only 15 leaving. • Remote Provision – the take-up was concerning. AW had advised the LGB that JL could provide some benchmarking data for information/comparison. 	

12.	<p>Whipton Barton Update</p> <p>SOM gave an update on her work with Whipton Barton Federation.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the minutes.</p>	
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Items for Decision		
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13.	<p>David Carter Governance Review – Trust Response</p> <p>Trustees reviewed the recommendations and the draft Trust response to the Governance Review.</p> <p>RB noted that one key point would be to look at how to make the recommendations happen. He noted that the Board was currently lean and that some additional resource would be helpful to enable these to happen. RB recommended that the “Search” function was added to the Pay & Conditions Committee to add capacity, particularly for identifying Trustee leads for key areas.</p> <p>RB noted that the Growth Working Group would formally become a Committee and that formalising the future growth strategy within the Terms of Reference would be delegated to the committee. RB noted that, although referred to in the review, 20,000 students had not been specifically mentioned by the Trust. It was agreed to convert the Growth Working Group into a formal Committee.</p> <p>RB confirmed that the changes needed to be approved by the Members. The members would be given time to discuss this with implementation planned between April and the Summer holidays.</p> <p>RB confirmed that the request for Trustee help from the Executive team would be circulated. A Trust lead would be appointed to work with MM and TR on this. TR noted that Trustee involvement on the School Improvement Strategy would be particularly valuable.</p> <p>Action: MF to identify Trustee Leads to work with the Exec on the four key strands identified within the Governance Review Response document.</p> <p>The operation of connecting Trustees could be undertaken now, pending Member discussion and agreement to the new Governance Structure.</p> <p>RJ left the meeting at 18:30</p> <p>RB extended thanks to the Executive Team for their work on developing the plan. MM also noted thanks to Tamsin Frances for her support.</p> <p>It was agreed to endorse the proposals.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the minutes.</p>	MF
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Items for Information

14.	<p>Strategic Risk Register (STANDING ITEM)</p> <p>CD gave an overview of the changes to the Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p>Key points were around the need for effective Governance; also to highlight the school improvement section which would be picked up in more detail by the Education Committee. The delays to the Exeter New School also presented a risk.</p>
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Any Other Business

RB congratulated AM and PB for their appointments as Chair and Vice Chair. He also extended his thanks to AW for applying for the Vice Chair role, and noted the very positive input.

RB also thanked RM for her impact and contribution to the Trust over the years.

As this would be RB’s last meeting as Chair, he thanked Trustees for their support over the years. DH thanked RB for his work as Chair, and noted the amount of work put in to the Trust alongside RB’s role at Exeter College.

PB also thanked RB for his fantastic time as chair and the energy put into the job. Also thanks to DH for his role as Vice Chair. This was echoed by all Trustees.

The meeting closed at 18:35

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 28 April 2021, 4.30pm - TBC

Signed by the Chair of the Board:



Date: 28.04.21