

Meeting Minutes
Education Committee
Wednesday 5 May 2021, 4.30pm
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Summary Sheet

Item Ref	Meeting Summary Information
	List of Actions from the Meeting
5.	MF to remind Clerks that Meeting Summary Sheets should include Attendance details. MF to confirm best practice for inclusion of sensitive data in Minutes with MAP Clerk.
11.	MF to make amendments to Complaints Policy as highlighted by SOM.
9.	MF to circulate a copy of AMi's presentation with the Minutes of the meeting.
12.	MF to circulate a copy of TF's presentation with the Minutes of the meeting.
	List of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation
12	The proposed changes to the Governance Structure were agreed.

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Education Committee
Wednesday 5 May 2021, 4.30pm, Virtual Meeting

Attended:

David Hall – Chair (DH)	Moira Marder (MM) - CEO
Andy Mulcock (AM)	Tim Rutherford (TR) – Deputy CEO
Sarah O’Meara (SOM)	Jon Lunn (JL) – Director of Performance
Saxon Spence (SS)	Melody Floyde – Clerk (MF)
Crispin Taylor (CT)	

In Attendance:

Aimee Mitchell – Headteacher Isca (AMi) for Items 9 & 10
Charlotte Davies – Director of Business & Operations (CD) for Item 11
Tamsin Frances – Strategic Projects Lead (TF) for Item 12

Meeting Minutes

Item Ref	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Attendance</p> <p>This meeting was held virtually using Microsoft Teams. No apologies were received.</p> <p>DH welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that it would be his last meeting as Chair of the Education Committee. DH confirmed that he would be stepping down as a Trustee in July. AM thanked DH for his hard work with the Trust and for Chairing the Committee so effectively.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest – No new declarations of interest were made.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 27.01.21 were approved as a full and accurate record.</p> <p>The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed, all had been completed or were in progress.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
For Monitoring		
5.	<p>Minutes from LGB Meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the LGB Performance & Standards Meetings were reviewed.</p> <p>DH noted that a number of children at Exwick Heights are without access to the internet. JL confirmed that the Trust was starting the process of compiling more accurate information on this. Each school would have figures from their own surveys regarding devices and internet action of their students, but this had not yet been centrally collated. The energy was moving towards blended learning. The survey would be undertaken annually to identify</p>	

	<p>gaps and to maintain momentum. SS noted that we learn from these experiences and that this could be a potential way of using the catch up funding. DH noted that the new social justice and inclusion committee could be an ideal place for this to be monitored.</p> <p>AM noted the comment in the Isca Minutes about the outdoor Education policy and that this was particularly relevant at Isca due to their high level of outdoor education. JL confirmed that Isca still have the DfE course that students follow in Year 9, they also have a strong CCF Unit. TR noted that it could be read that Isca wanted to make the policy more relevant to what happened at their school.</p> <p>SOM noted that the West Exe Summary Sheet did not have a list of attendees. Action: MF to follow this up with West Exe Clerk.</p> <p>SOM also noted that MAP Primary minutes were very detailed and noted that there was a high proportion of Safeguarding mentioned within the minutes, particularly the use of specific details. Trustees were in agreement that this was not appropriate. Action: MF to raise this with the Clerk at MAP and to confirm best practice of what should be included in LGB Minutes.</p>	<p>MF</p> <p>MF</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Remote Learning & Pupil Engagement Update</p> <p>JL noted that the results of the School Survey had been covered in the Board Meeting on 28.04.21 so Trustees had already seen these. The main point was not to apportion too much significance on the results as this was the first Trust survey. JL confirmed that some of the takeaways around the small amount of engagement in some schools would lead into the staff survey, and conversations with Headteachers about maximising participation. The survey could formulate questions but not judgements.</p> <p>AM queried what the ideal response would be for the survey to carry weight. JL noted that this was the baseline, and from this point the Trust would build. It was more about building parental involvement in Trust surveys going forwards and ways to improve communication. DH was supportive and felt this was a sensible approach.</p> <p><u>School Review Pilot Update</u></p> <p>An on-site review was held at St Luke’s following the same system as the previous on-site reviews in schools. JL noted that it was a developmental system that blended and used the Ofsted framework to provide CPD for leaders.</p> <p>JL shared the model process for the on-site reviews which included timescales and timetables. He noted that the process had been quality assured by two Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>JL also shared the schedule of reviews for Trust Schools and confirmed that all schools would be reviewed before the end of the Summer term. Schools would be given a report that would go to the LGBs which would also translate into a “heat map” to show visually how the school was doing.</p> <p>SS queried how often the internal school reviews were undertaken. JL confirmed that there was an annual cycle, inspections would start in October and end before Easter each academic year and would cover all Trust schools. Headteachers were feeding back that the reports were giving very positive messages alongside tough messages and were well delivered. It felt very developmental.</p>	

	<p>SOM queried if schools were given an Ofsted style grade as part of the inspections. JL stated that this was not the case. The reviews were developmental and not a replication of Ofsted. SOM felt that it would be very useful for LGBs to receive this information, and that it would be a useful way to move forward with the schools.</p> <p>JL also noted that he provided coaching for school senior leaders ahead of the reviews, and that the Trust was committed to investing in people.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>DfE Catch Up Funding for Disadvantaged Students</p> <p>MM confirmed that there was a Disadvantaged Conference planned to look at how money was spent and the benefits. There were some issues around the timings of the Pupil Premium funding. Pupil numbers within the year had gone up and there would be less money received in year which would be a challenge.</p> <p>Summer schools needed to be planned across Exeter schools. MM confirmed that the Trust was keen for this to be available to all pupils not just disadvantaged.</p> <p>MM also noted that the evolution of the Education Committee would provide a greater focus on the money and holding to account on how this was spent.</p> <p>MM updated that the Trust community was working together and that there was an appetite to share best practice. MM noted that JL had recently given a very strong presentation on how the Trust works with disadvantaged students.</p> <p>DH noted that everything was being completed quickly and was particularly commendable. He was in support of the summer schools being more open and not limited to disadvantaged students.</p> <p>JL noted that the work being undertaken on the cycle of business would incorporate the schools reviews and the external review of disadvantaged. There would be reviews of schools to specifically look at disadvantaged once every two or three years. The feedback would be used and reported back on Trust-wide trends. The same process would be undertaken to look at the Senco provision across the Trust. One school would have the review with two others shadowing. JL confirmed that there were a number of reviewing systems that would be incorporated into the formalised calendar.</p> <p>DH noted Bill Jerman’s message on processes. JL noted that Bill was very thorough and had talked to a large number of people in relation to disadvantaged. MM confirmed that Bill had also reviewed all of the Trust’s disadvantaged policies and that schools were adhering to these and in a consistent format.</p> <p>JL noted that the Disadvantaged conference would have key note speakers from the highest performing MATs, also updates from Bill Jerman and Ofsted. The priorities for next year would be formulated and agreed by the groups. The two main aspects to implement were the quality of teaching and removing barriers.</p>	

<p>8.</p>	<p>External Evaluations</p> <p>JL confirmed that Ofsted inspections had restarted from 04.05.21 for Primary schools and that Secondary schools would start after half-term. These would be Section 8 for Inadequate and Double RI, Section 8 for Good Schools within 5 years and new schools or those who had undergone significant change (30 months + 18 months delay). Outstanding schools were also no longer exempt from inspection and needed to be inspected by 01.08.26 but this was not a priority.</p> <p>DH queried if this was achievable for Ofsted. JL felt that the next academic year would be difficult for them when the number of reviews picked up. MM noted that schools could also request inspections at any time.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Inclusion Project – The Bridge</p> <p>AMi joined the meeting at 17:15</p> <p>AMi gave an update on The Bridge and answered questions from Trustees.</p> <p>SS queried if the number of permanent exclusions (PEX) was increasing due to the current situation. She also noted the apparent increase in the number of isolations. AMi confirmed that there was no significant increase in PEX compared to previous years. There was one more than last year, and some of the PEX had been due to children moving into schools and the provision not catching up.</p> <p>AMi noted that fixed term exclusions was an area of focus for the Trust moving forwards and that Simon Weir was leading on this. This would include looking at ways of working with other partners to address the issues. Generally these had been due to re-establishing routines and boundaries following children being out of school for long periods during lockdown.</p> <p>AMi noted that there was a disparity between the isolation/rest process in Trust schools and noted that, whenever there was a Fixed Term Exclusion, the student would also spend a day in isolation. AMi confirmed that the processes were being aligned and that St Peters were also joining. There was work being undertaken with the Deputies as part of the Exeter Standard to ensure that there was no lost learning time. AMi noted that schools had become creative at providing ways for children to learn outside of the classroom so they would be looking at ways to maximise that.</p> <p>TR noted that the 48% of home schools in the report related to the schools that the students had originally come from rather than home schooling. The Bridge had been used as an intervention model which was positive.</p> <p>SOM noted that the numbers of PEX and internal isolations at CEC were rising. There was also a reduction of isolations at St Luke’s and SOM queried if this was this likely to be as a result of the work of the Trust. SOM also noted that St Peters had considerable lower Fixed Term Exclusions and queried if this was a case of not being able to compare like for like.</p> <p>AMi confirmed that the number of children in CEC had increased. There had also been a rise in the expectations of children around the school. TR noted that there was also additional support for improved behaviour at CEC.</p>	

	<p>With regards to St Luke’s, the internal isolations were not comparing like for like before they joined the Trust. The figures TR confirmed that the figures were now much more comparative.</p> <p>AMi noted that St Peters operated on a different set of parameters for the way they manage behaviour and this tended to be managed internally. AMi noted that the reason for the 0 figure for internal isolation was likely to be because St Peters tended to use a system called “parking” where students were moved to another classroom. St Peter’s had not provided any tangible figures on FTEs.</p> <p>AM queried how new sanctions had been implemented to keep Covid protocols within schools. AMi noted that these had been discussed in the early stages and that there had been no spike in figures related to Covid breaches or Covid safety. JL noted that this was a positive as it was not seen within the Trust. AMi noted that, in the main, students had handled the Covid procedures very well.</p> <p>AMi also gave a presentation on plans for the Bridge for 2021/22 following the end of the current funding agreement in August 2021 and ways to build on the success of the partnership.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Safeguarding (STANDING ITEM)</p> <p>TR noted the three documents that had been shared with Trustees about Safeguarding ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>AMi would be overseeing the safeguarding audits and confirmed that Cabot would be supporting the Trust with the audits next year. Isca had recently had an audit which had raised some new points for focus.</p> <p>AMi noted the need for greater cohesion across the Trust and that Steve from Cabot could support with this.</p> <p>TR confirmed that the MASH SOP was accessible via a hyperlink within the Safeguarding Report should Trustees wish to review this.</p> <p>AMi left the meeting at 5.53pm</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Complaints Monitoring</p> <p>MM updated that there had been only two stage 1 complaints and no stage 2 complaints since the previous meeting.</p> <p><u>Complaints Process & Approval of Complaints Policy</u></p> <p>CD joined the meeting at 5.54pm</p> <p>CD ran through the background of the changes to the Trust Complaints Policy and noted that, as complaints were monitored by the Education Committee, it was useful for the meeting to have an oversight of the policy and approval process.</p> <p>CD confirmed that Governors and Heads had been offered complaints training, via PHP Law, and that this would be offered out again in the future.</p>	

A complaints toolkit had been developed to help ensure that the process was as robust as possible. A governor from Isca, who had recent experience of the complaints process, would be helping to review the toolkit. Training would then be rolled out to LGB Clerks and Complaints Co-ordinators. CD confirmed that Gina Swann provided central support for the complaints process.

The intention of the revised policy was to deal with complaints at early stages to avoid escalation to higher levels. CD also noted the changes in timings within the policy to allow for school days rather than working days to be used as a timescale. The policy had also been reworded to ensure consistency and clarity.

The changes to the Trustee Review stage were highlighted. There had previously been no mechanism for outcomes to be changed if the process had not been followed. The legal advice had been to remove the stage or revise it to make it more meaningful. The view was that it was helpful to have the additional stage. The Trustee stage now had a broader remit and allowed changes to be made to the outcome.

DH queried point 1.1 that stated that the policy could be changed depending on the circumstances of the complaint and if this had arisen from legal advice. CD noted that this point had been in the original policy and was based upon legal advice, but was now more defined and that the rationale for any change needed to be recorded.

SOM noted some spelling errors within the Policy. **Action: SO to send these to MF for amendment.**

SOM queried who had identified the Trust Complaints Coordinators. CD confirmed that these were nominated by the schools.

SOM also queried where LGB Chairs sat within the process, and if they had been removed. CD noted that potentially further work was needed on this as it was a good point. It was important to involve LGBs within the policy process. CD noted the importance of a reporting mechanism and it would be expected that Chairs of LGB would receive reports on complaints within the schools. However this could be added to the policy if this was not happening. SOM stated that she felt this was important and felt it took away from the responsibility of the Chair. TR noted that the Headteacher Reports should include details of reports within the schools and that it was important for schools to include their LGBs. SOM noted that historically the LGB Chair would be the second stage of a complaint within the school, however now it appeared to be dealt with by the Trust.

TR noted that LGBs historically had a lot of delegated responsibilities, for example absence. However, these would now be heard within the Trust not within the school. He felt that good communication was key. AM noted that the Scheme of Delegation would be crucial in defining this.

AM queried the role of the Chair of the Trust in keeping accurate records. He also queried how the Trustees would be called upon and felt that this may need more clarity. CD confirmed that it would not be the whole Board, one Trustee would be nominated as a Lead and they would then put together an appropriate panel. CD agreed that this could be clarified in the policy.

SS queried if there was a system where complainants could have an advocate if needed, for example if there was difficulty in filling in forms. CD noted that, whilst forms had been

SOM/
MF

	<p>included to capture a consistent level of information, there was additional support available. She confirmed that there was flexibility to ensure different opportunities for people’s voices to be heard. CD noted that striking a balance between robustness and flexibility was key.</p> <p>CD confirmed that the feedback would be taken on board, the policy would be revisited and Clerks and Governors would be involved in the process. There would be an updated draft circulated and this would come back to Trustees for further review.</p> <p>MM noted the importance of clarity on the process for complaints on Headteachers. She also agreed with the importance for advocates to be provided and signposted clearly.</p> <p>CD left the meeting at 18:10</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Governance Review – Development of Education Scrutiny Panels</p> <p>TF joined the meeting at 18:15</p> <p>TF gave a presentation on the proposals for implementing the Governance Review recommendations and how everything would link together. TF highlighted the key purpose of increasing the capacity and looking at the timelines. The aim was for final sign off of the proposed changes at the July Board Meeting.</p> <p>TF noted that the proposed structure had been updated since the Board Meeting on 28.04.21 to reflect how the scrutiny and inclusion panel would feed into the Education Committee and be linked into the School Improvement Group. The panels would be chaired by a Trustee with the relevant Executive Members in attendance.</p> <p>DH asked if everyone was comfortable with the changes. This was agreed.</p> <p>TF shared how the data would feed into school improvement plans for the schools. Reports would be RAG rated to give the Education scrutiny panel an overview of each school and the Trust wide KPIs. An overview of the health check for each individual school at the Education Committee could give scrutiny panel their areas of focus for the coming year.</p> <p>The cycle of business was also shared, with one for Trust/Executive level and one for Headteacher/LGB level. The Educational Scrutiny Panel would meet termly.</p> <p>DH queried the separate equality, diversity and sustainability panel and the reason for this. TF noted that it was currently shown twice to stimulate discussion of where it should sit and to avoid it getting lost without sufficient expertise. DH felt that this could comfortably sit within the Inclusion and Justice panel. TF felt that this could be a separate group that could feed into the Panel.</p> <p>DH wondered if, for simplicity’s sake and following feedback from the Trustees, this should be for the Executive to feed back into the panel. SS noted that these were much wider issues that went into staffing and procurement policies, whereas the focus appeared to be on students when looking at inclusion and social justice. TF noted that this could be reviewed over the coming year. TR also noted that, as a group of schools, high level strategy was needed for these areas. He felt that issues of equality and diversity needed high level input and would benefit from some non-exec input. TR expressed concern that this would not be as “front-foot” as we should be. These were</p>	

	<p>three issues that young people would expect the Trust to have a view on. DH noted that this was an interesting point.</p> <p>AM noted the current and contemporary issue, although acknowledged that where it fitted best was unclear. It was important not to duplicate and there was a massive responsibility for the Trust in this area. AM also noted the potential overload of Trustee meetings, and that it was important not to lose sight of this and it should be a priority. SOM noted that she also felt that it was currently very important and agreed with TR. DH suggested that a panel could potentially be trialled for a year. TR welcomed the support and noted the element of experiment over the next year. MM agreed that it was important that, in terms of the Trust’s values and issues coming out of the national debate, the Trust had a consistent approach.</p> <p>AM noted that, even in the absence of the review, this would still need to be covered. SS felt that it was an overall Trust Board responsibility and that if the Trust could influence the culture it would be wonderful, but potentially this could be commissioned as a piece of work for the whole Board.</p> <p>DH confirmed that the Board supported the proposals and the changes made recently.</p> <p>Action: MF to circulate a copy of TF’s presentation following the meeting.</p> <p>TF left the meeting 18:34</p>	<p>MF</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Trust Mental Health Strategy</p> <p>CT updated that services were now reinstated and that, from 17.05.21, mental health services would have a much greater presence in schools. The core services would also be returning to a balanced face to face /virtual service. Moving forward there would be a blended approach of 66% face to face and 33% virtual appointments.</p> <p>CT noted that the acuity had risen and that core services were reporting very high levels of distressed children. Eating disorders had risen and there was a significant rise in the number of children coming into the care system over the past year.</p> <p>CT noted that the work of the Trust in support vulnerable children was very valuable.</p>	
<p>14.</p>	<p>Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>The Risk Register was reviewed. CD confirmed that there had been no further updates since the Board Meeting on 28.04.21.</p>	
<p>Any Other Business and Next Meeting Date</p>		
	<p>MM extended thanks to DH for his time with the Trust and stated that he had played an important role in shaping the Education Committee. DH had given the confidence to not consider education through its narrowest sense and to have an ambitious Trust wide focus for education, including mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff. DH’s leadership was energising and challenges had been made in a very positive way. It had been a very important time and DH should be proud of the committee that he had developed. DH would leave with the knowledge that every single school in the Trust was improving and all children were getting a much better deal. This was echoed by the other committee members.</p>	

	<p>DH noted that the Trust was growing in strength as well as numbers. AM echoed this and confirmed that a future Chair for the group was needed.</p>	
	<p>The Meeting Closed at 18:42</p>	
	<p>Date of next meeting: Autumn Term 2021 TBC</p>	

Signed by the Chair of the Committee:

Date:

DRAFT