Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees

held at 5.00pm on Monday 25 March 2019
at Mary Rose Academy, Gisors Road, Southsea, PO4 8GT

Present:  
Mark Mitchell (MM)  Chair  
Alison Beane (AB)  Executive Headteacher, Trustee  
Andrew Hill (AH)  Trustee  
Gareth Morgan (GM)  Trustee  
Kimberley Worthy (KW)  Trustee  
Alistair Gray (AG)  Trustee  
SJ Davis (SD)  Trustee

In attendance:  
Lorraine Swanson (LS)  SAT Business Operations Director  
Karen Frost (KF)  Company Secretary  
Kyle Ball (KB)  SAT Head of Finance

14/19 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.

15/19 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS
There were no declarations of pecuniary interest relating to the agenda of the meeting.

16/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Minutes from the meeting of the Board held on 4 February 2019 had been received in advance of the meeting. They were unanimously agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

17/19 MATTERS ARISING
Trustees reviewed progress towards the actions agreed at the last meeting:
1: Completed.
2: Completed.
3: On agenda for discussion.
4: Completed.
10/19: On agenda for discussion.
11/19: Completed.

KW entered the meeting at 5.15pm.

18/19 VISION AND VALUES

Draft mission, values, priorities and KPIs were received in advance of the meeting.

Overall, trustees were in agreement that the document read well but it was agreed to look at some of the KPIs again. It was felt it should be an interactive process that would be developed over a few months. Once agreed, the KPIs would be kept under review and amended if it was felt necessary.

Trustees discussed the proposed KPIs and suggested the following:

- To change the wording of the KPI that said schools would be outstanding in the Ofsted Leadership and Management grade within 2 years of joining the Trust, to say they would be either good or outstanding which was felt to be more achievable.
- There could be a KPI about risk management.
- To change the wording of the KPI that said 100% skills coverage would be maintained on the SAT Board at all times, to say instead that the Trust would endeavour to have 100% skills coverage. It was decided to leave the wording as it was as the KPIs should be aspirational.
- To include a figure/target in the KPI about patterns of pupils’ attendance. It was noted this would be difficult as targets were different for each school. Trustees suggested a composite measure could be used.
- The financial targets could include a target about adhering to regulatory timelines, the % of staffing costs or a maximum variance versus budget.

Trustees were asked to send in any further proposed amendments to AB who would re-circulate the document once it had been updated.

Action: AB

Trustees asked what the plans were for rolling the vision and values out across the Trust. It was agreed they would be distributed to academy governing bodies once the KPIs had been finalised.

Action: MM/KF
**Trustees asked** how the Trust made sure internal policies and procedures were kept up-to-date and relevant. AG reported that he had met with KF and LS to look at the policy review process. A scheme of work would be brought to a future meeting.

It was noted that the Executive Headteacher report in future meetings would include an update on progress towards the agreed KPIs.

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**EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER’S REPORT**

A written Executive Headteacher’s report was received in advance of the meeting. The Executive Headteacher summarised key points in the report:

- All three Portsmouth schools had their Challenge Partners reviews for this academic year. Mary Rose and Cliffdale were outstanding in all areas and Redwood Park was outstanding in school improvement and good in teaching and pupil outcomes.

- The introduction of the revised curriculum and new assessment framework had continued to go well across all three Portsmouth schools.

- The Teaching School SSIF project for “Improving outcomes for SEND pupils in mainstream schools” had been a real achievement.

- Littlegreen had been judged to be inadequate. A robust strategic plan was in place.

The Chair explained that the budget continued to be under significant pressure for the Trust overall. This had been made more challenging by the proposed withdrawal of outreach funding by the Local Authority as they would be moving to running outreach centrally. Trustees discussed the impact on the Trust and what the Trust’s response would be. It was noted the Trust might be less able to support outreach work in the future which would compromise the Trust’s mission to deliver outreach work in mainstream schools.

**Trustees asked** about pupil numbers for next academic year. The Executive Headteacher said the schools were full and the Local Authority was looking for additional places. As a result of the demand for places, there might need to be a change to the admissions criteria for Cliffdale, which would have a number of implications for the school.
20/19  EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER RECRUITMENT

The Chair reported that the Executive Headteacher post had been re-advertised but no new additional applications were received. The appointment panel had met and decided to recommend that AB be asked to continue as Executive Headteacher for another year.

A more professional approach to recruitment would be taken next academic year, starting in the autumn term with a view to recruiting a new Executive Headteacher for 1 September 2020. The panel had decided to use a recruitment company for the process. MM and AG would meet with some recruitment companies during the summer term.

The Board was in agreement with the panel’s recommendations.

Trustees suggested thought be given to offering a better relocation package.

21/19  REPORT FROM STANDARDS COMMITTEE

AG gave a report from the Standards Committee. The committee had reviewed where the Trust had got to with the new Earwig software. Incredible progress had been made since September and the software evidenced areas important to the Trust, focusing on the quality of teaching and learning. The Trust were currently looking at how it would be possible to report on and monitor progress using the new software.

The committee had reviewed the minutes from the autumn term Academy Governing Body (AGB) meetings and took comfort that the AGBs were focusing on standards and safeguarding.

The committee had considered the Challenge Partners reports for Mary Rose and Cliffdale. They had asked for reports to be circulated in advance so that reporting in the meeting would be by exception.

At their next meeting, the committee would be focusing on a dashboard of KPIs for the Trust, updated SEFs for all of the schools and progress with Littlegreen.
**FINANCE REPORT**

a) **Solent Academies Trust**

A budget monitoring report and management accounts were received in advance of the meeting. The Business Operations Director drew attention to key areas in the reports:

- The forecast outturn position as at 31 August 2019 was a deficit of £65,428. The estimated fund balance for the Trust as at 31 August 2019 was £175,615. At Littlegreen, the estimated fund balance was a deficit of £60,176 and at Mary Rose a deficit of £103,451.

- In terms of the budget variances, a common factor was the cost of supply staff across the Trust. This was due to a significant amount of sickness and a high turnover of staff, particularly teaching assistants. It was noted that the cost of a supply teaching assistant was considerably more than a teaching assistant employed by the Trust.

- The draft budget for Littlegreen had projected an in year surplus of £33,383 but it was now understood that the final closing balance was predicted to be in deficit. As a result, the Trust would be invoicing West Sussex for £30,000 spent on invoices pre-conversion.

*Trustees said* the amount spent on supply staff was nearly five times the budget to date.

*Trustees asked* what level of confidence there was in the projected outturn position. The Business Operations Director said she was confident the figures were accurate and included all known staff movements. Staffing was the area where there was the biggest movement in spend. *Trustees said* the Trust was down £170,000 on the budget and it was only half way through the year. They asked if the trend was likely to continue as the level of reserves was low and couldn’t continue to support such large variances to budget.

Due to their concerns over the financial position of the Trust, trustees asked for a response plan, details about the costs of bandings and ramifications if there was no increase in funding to be prepared in advance of the next Finance and Audit Committee meeting on 29 April 2019. Members of the Trust Board would then meet with representatives from the Local Authority to make a case for a review of bandings for pupils at the Mary Rose Academy.

**Action:** KB/SD

It was noted that conversations with West Sussex Local Authority might be needed to review the banding of pupils at Littlegreen.
The Business Operations Director reported that Cliffdale had found an old bank account totalling £18,000 and had received significant donations from outside agencies.

b) Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance (PTSA)

A budget monitoring report and management accounts for the PTSA were received in advance of the meeting. The Business Operations Director reported that as of 28 February 2019, there was a surplus balance of £102,193.

*Trustees asked* whether top slice was taken from the PTSA. The Business Operations Director reported that it was although she would be reviewing the amount taken to ensure it was covering costs.

The Executive Headteacher reported the Trust wouldn’t be receiving the Portsmouth Education Partnership income next financial year.

23/19 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

A confidential item was discussed.

24/19 GOVERNANCE

a) Board Membership

It was noted that there were vacancies for three trustees on the Board. Meetings had been arranged with two interested candidates. Trustees drew attention to the lack of people on the Board with an educational background.

b) Report from Meeting of the Chairs of the Trust

Notes from a meeting of the Chairs of the Trust had been received in advance of the meeting. The Chairs had raised concerns about communication in the Trust and the roles of Academy Governing Bodies. In order to help improve communication, it had been agreed to organise termly meetings of the Chairs and trustees were invited to attend.

It was suggested that Chairs of AGBs could be invited to attend meetings of the Board. It was also agreed to distribute the minutes from SAT Board meetings to all governors in the Trust, once they had been approved.
c) **Scheme of Delegation**

The Scheme of Delegation for the Trust was due for review. Initially, MM and KF would be meeting to go through it.

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**25/19 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

It was noted that the Trust needed to publish equality information annually and equality objectives every four years.

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**26/19 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

- Curriculum presentation.
- Equality and Diversity.

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**27/19 AOB**

The Chair reported that it was the last meeting for LS who would shortly be leaving the Trust. Trustees passed their thanks onto LS for all her hard work and contribution.

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**28/19 CORRESPONDENCE**

A letter from the ESFA to Chairs of Trustees and Accounting Officers dated 15 March 2019 had been received in advance of the meeting.

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**29/19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was Thursday 9 May 2019 at 5.30pm.
## SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18/19</td>
<td>Re-circulate the KPIs once amendments are made.</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Apr 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>18/19i</td>
<td>Circulate the vision, values and KPIs to the Academy Governing Bodies once amended.</td>
<td>MM/KF</td>
<td>Apr 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>22/19</td>
<td>Produce a response plan, information about the cost of bands and ramifications if there is no increase in the level of funding by 20 April 2019.</td>
<td>KB/SD</td>
<td>Apr 19</td>
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