

**Meeting of the Trust Board of Directors**

2.00pm Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016

Venue: Acorn Centre, Axminster

**MINUTES**

**Directors present:**

Initials	Attendees	Category	Initials	Attendees	Category
BI	Brian Impey	Foundation	NW	Nigel Whitaker	Foundation
AR	Andrea Rice	CEO	LF	Liz Fraser	Mrs Ethelston's
BA	Barry Allsop	Foundation	MVdW	Mark Van de Weyer	Foundation
PM	Paul Middlemast	Foundation	VD	Veronica Dower	Clerk

In attendance: Lesley Adams (LA)

	Agenda Item	Action
1	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies for absence</b> NW welcomed directors to the meeting and Lesley Adams, attending as a new director. Apologies were received from DW.	
2	<b>Declarations of Pecuniary Interests &amp; Eligibility</b> No interests were declared.	
3	<b>Confidentiality &amp; Register of attendance</b> The confidentiality statement was on the attendance sheet signed by all attendees.	
4	To consider any items which the Chair thinks should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances and items to be dealt with under <b>Part 2</b> . (Item 5).	
5	<u>Minutes</u> of the Directors meeting held on 22/09/2016. Part 1 minutes were circulated ahead of the meeting, Part 2 minutes were tabled at the meeting. The minutes were <b>agreed</b> to be an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. <b>Matters arising</b> i) VD to progress MAT training on RAISE online. The proposed free training mentioned in the Lord Nash letter is provided in the south west by Best Practice. ii) The editorial and advertisements for new directors ran in the Midweek Herald and local parish papers. iii) BA contacted the Salisbury director of education and has resigned as a Member. iv) Family support worker – deferred to the next meeting v) Skills audits were completed vi) Staffing update: The meeting went in to <b>Part 2</b>	VD    AR/VD
6 6.1	<b><u>Governance &amp; Delegation</u></b> <b><u>Approve Trust Board Scheme of Delegation</u></b> Directors reviewed the proposed new Scheme of Delegation, recommended by the Finance & Audit committee. This had been distributed prior to the meeting. Minor changes were proposed and accepted. NW proposed an amendment to SoD 7.5: to remove 'OJEU limit' and substitute 'Trust Board to approve expenditure or contracts over £50,000'. This was agreed. The directors clarified SoD 10.4 (Premises) and agreed that the commissioning of repairs or works up to £5,000 should be delegated to LGBs. The Scheme of Delegation was <b>approved</b> , subject to the amendments. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to amend and distribute, to include TW at EDEN. Clerk to upload to website.	VD

<p>6.2</p>	<p><u>Ofsted MAT review</u>  AR gave the directors an update on Ofsted MAT reviews which was an area covered at the recent academies conference attended in Bristol. The MAT review is a report on the performance of the MAT and would take two weeks for Ofsted to conduct. The key questions would be around challenge, governance, impact of the CEO, the disadvantaged and the most able, the pace of change and the geographical spread and growth of the MAT. Individual schools would be inspected within the MAT, selected based on results, it is likely to be three schools. The second week would be with the CEO and directors, looking at the effectiveness of the MAT, recruitment, succession planning and training would be important areas. There would be no graded judgement of the MAT.</p> <p>AR explained that Ofsted are very detailed in what they are looking for around standards and the curriculum and drew directors attention to two documents mentioned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The review of 7 stronger performing MATs (published Oct 2016). Areas noted in the seven stronger performing MATs were: the ability to recruit and retain powerful and authoritative executive leaders, a broad and balanced curriculum, high quality education for all pupils, CPD of teachers and the sharing of expertise across the schools. Clear frameworks of governance, accountability and delegation, effective use of assessment information and a cautious approach to expansion.</li> <li>2) The review of 7 weaker performing MATs (published March 2016). Areas highlighted were around poor progress &amp; attainment, insufficient scrutiny of the impact of teaching on progress, a lack of strategic oversight by the trust of academies, insufficient challenge from governors and trustees without confirming accuracy and a confusion over governance structures with a lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities. The first thing that Ofsted would look for would be a published Scheme of Delegation. In terms of governance, in some MATs, reviews show a lack of transparency and clarity about levels of governance and Schemes of Delegation are insufficiently clear about the demarcation of responsibilities between the Trust Board and LGBs. LGBs should also understand the SoD and it should be on all academy websites. In addition, some governing bodies focus too much on operational matters.  <b>Action:</b> MVdW to forward report from the conference to directors</li> </ol>	<p>MVdW</p>
<p>6.3</p>	<p><u>Appointment of new director (under article 50).</u>  The NW proposed the appointment of Lesley Adams as a director under article 50 (directors may appoint one director), PM seconded. Lesley Adams was <u>appointed</u> to the trust board of directors.</p>	
<p>7 7.1</p>	<p><b><u>Current situation &amp; reports</u></b>  <b><u>CEO Report</u></b>  AR outlined the key details from the CEO report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Numbers on roll are currently strong. The SLT have met to look at RAISEonline, they noted that the % of SEN is too high and needs investigating. <b>LA queried the high % of SEN at Membury, is this likely to be revised?</b> AR responded, this is unlikely to change; the % at some other schools however may be revised. Directors noted in the report the high % of PP children at Axminster.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u>  AR highlighted that St Andrew's attendance this term needs further investigation; this is down to persistent absence. Axminster has had a focus on attendance and has shown improved attendance figures. At Membury there is one child on flexi schooling. AR explained the reasons behind the agreement, it is being reviewed in a week for an interim report during which current attendance will be assessed.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u>  The numbers of MASH enquiries and CP conferences at Axminster are of concern; this also has an impact on behaviour. An additional needs lead will be needed in the school. AR drew directors attention to the commentary on behaviour, as a MAT it is possible to place children in schools where the management of behaviour is more effective. EF reported that she had observed extremely good management of disruptive behaviour in a</p>	

7.2	<p>recent visit.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from EF on the SENCO role at Axminster</b>, AR reported that BC had taken on the SENCO role, with support from an HLTA as additional needs lead.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> EF to review the SENCO details on the Axminster website.</p> <p><u>Standards &amp; Achievement Data</u></p> <p>AR outlined predictions for 2017. EYFS is a mixed picture, in RAISE online, the levels at EYFS are being used to predict progress at KS2. Tapestry has been introduced - an online system for recording learning. AR noted that Marshwood figures are low, although small numbers have an impact. <b>In response to a question from BA, AR confirmed that this will be monitored with the focus on phonics and literacy.</b></p> <p>EF commented that Tapestry is settling in well and the data produced from it is helping, it is also saving teachers time.</p> <p>Year 2: The schools are working on the quality of writing, the feedback from moderators in Devon was that there wasn't enough writing to moderate. A meeting has been held with all teachers across the MAT and expected standards put in place for every year group. The minimum expectation for writing for a moderated piece of work has been agreed; by Year 2 children need to develop writing stamina and be able to write at length.</p> <p>Year 6: Axminster predictions are looking better, Y6 are on track and are improving. HMI have not yet sent through their report from their thorough visit in November. (<b>Action:</b> AR to distribute)</p>	EF
7.3	<p><u>RAISEonline report</u></p> <p>AR reported that all schools were affected by the writing moderation, particularly the moderation within Dorset and at Lodders. This had an impact on all the other schools.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from EF</b>, AR confirmed that from next year the moderation of all the MAT schools will be done by Devon. Mrs Ethelston's resubmitted their writing data, but this may not be accepted in the validated data. The MAT is working on the writing assessment using the 'Somerset Literacy Network Criteria'.</p> <p>AR drew directors attention to further detail in the report on the quality of teaching and raising attainment, leadership &amp; management, church school distinctiveness and the safeguarding audit. AR highlighted the new Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan that needs to be completed.</p> <p><u>Staffing:</u> Heads of School will be recruited at St Andrew's and Lodders in the early spring. In general, recruitment and finding good supply is becoming incredibly difficult.</p>	AR
7.4	<p><u>Expansion of Early Years provision</u></p> <p>AR explained that the provision will change in September 2017, when hours will increase to 30 hours. EF noted the flexibility offered at Axminster and wide age range,</p>	
7.5	<p><u>Premises</u></p> <p>NW queried the removal of the building on Stoney Lane. AR commented that this is still going ahead, the plan is to widen the road and create a footpath; the timescale is as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>Reports from portfolio leads</b></p> <p><u>Safeguarding Report (BA)</u></p> <p>BA reported on a recent training course attended. A MAT code of conduct was mentioned, this sets a general tone for the company, how people relate to each other and respect each other across the MAT and would cover governors and staff.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> PM to send example to clerk and BA to review</p> <p>The importance of the SCR being kept up to date was stressed, for example maintaining references. The DBS checks of volunteers were also important and could be examined. AR confirmed these were in place.</p>	PM
7.6	<p><u>Pupil premium, SEN &amp; Inclusion - EF</u></p> <p>The portfolio report was distributed prior to the meeting. ER suggested that trips, for example the 'Invigorite' trip to Lyme for gifted and talented children were an area where the</p>	

	<p>MAT could add value and should be increased.  <b>EF queried the cross sharing of resources, can more be done to expand this?</b> AR commented that this was being encouraged between schools and was now increasing.</p>	
7.7	<p><u>Early Years - EF</u>  <b>In response to a question on the expansion of early years from EF</b>, AR confirmed that at Loders this could be expanded, there is need and capacity. At Marshwood however this would be more difficult, with lower demand and space available. At St Andrew's and Axminster, a questionnaire will be going out regarding the 30 hours. AR recommended that EF should attend training on the 30 hours in January</p>	
7.8	<p><u>SIAMS &amp; Ethos</u>  A report was circulated from the Ethos Committee. NW noted the proposed MAT concert, to be held during Pentecost and to include both the church and community schools and external performers. To manage audience numbers, this could be confined to Y6 pupils. It was <u>agreed</u> that the concert should be taken forwards by the Ethos Committee.</p>	
7.9	<p><u>PR/Marketing - MVdW</u>  A report was received from MVdW. AR noted that marketing of the MAT has been progressed, a two page brochure is being put together to promote all the schools. This would be principally for estate agents and new houses.</p>	
7.10	<p><u>LGB minutes</u>  Directors noted the LGB minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that the role of LGBs, vacancies and current performance should be reviewed in more detail. <b>Action:</b> AR to meet to discuss with VD and NW.</p>	AR/VD /NW
	<p><b><u>Operations &amp; Finance</u></b></p>	
8	<p><b><u>HR, staffing &amp; administration</u></b>  Staffing update &amp; HR report – covered under item 7.1 (CEO report).</p>	
8.1	<p><b><u>Finance</u></b>  <u>Finance portfolio report – report from Chair of F&amp;A.</u>  MVdW drew the attention of the Board to the minutes of the F&amp;A committee and finance portfolio report. MVdW recommended that the F&amp;A committee meet to go through the Academies Financial handbook in detail. (<b>Action:</b> MVdW/VD/CP).</p>	MVdW
8.2	<p><u>Monitor annual budgets</u>  These were discussed at the F&amp;A committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and covered in the finance report.</p>	
8.3	<p><u>Approve Trust Annual Pay award</u>  The trust board <u>approved</u> the 1% pay award for all teaching staff of the MAT. The support staff pay award will be in April.</p>	
8.4	<p><u>Approve CEO Performance Pay Award.</u> The CEO's salary was reviewed, directors recognised that 2015/16 was a challenging year and awarded an annual performance pay award. (The meeting was under Part 2 for the discussion during which AR left the meeting).</p>	
8.5	<p><u>Approve 2015-16 Trust audited accounts &amp; annual report of the Trustees</u>  The trust board <u>approved</u> the accounts.  It was agreed that in 2017, more time would be provided in the timetable to review &amp; discuss the annual report.</p>	
8.6	<p><u>Risk Register – review</u>  MVdW reported that there was nothing new on this.</p>	
8.7	<p><u>Premises &amp; Health &amp; Safety - BI</u>  BI reported that the asset management plan was in progress.  Monthly health &amp; safety inspections were now taking place; the fire alarm system at Mrs Ethelston's has been put forward as a CIF bid.  BI commented that at the F&amp;A committee it was agreed that a proportion of reserves would be used for CIF bids. After discussion, the trust board <u>agreed</u> that this subsidy could be included in the CIF bid.</p>	

9	<b>MAT Strategic Plan</b> NW reported that the working party had met and will meet again at the beginning of February, LA was invited to join. Website improvements were being progressed.	
	<b>Administration</b>	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on annual skills audit of directors &amp; director recruitment. VD reported that skills audits had been received and a matrix would be developed. LA was appointed as a director after the recruitment process. NW proposed that LA should take on the School Improvement &amp; Standards portfolio. (<b>Action:</b> VD to send ToR).</li> <li>Approve term dates – 2017/18 The trust board approved the term dates.</li> </ul>	VD
11	<b>Policy review and approval</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay Policy - approved</li> <li>Staff Appraisal Policy – deferred, to be re-written</li> <li>Grievance Policy – adopted &amp; approved</li> <li>Safeguarding &amp; Child Protection Policy - approved</li> <li>DBS Checks disclosure Policy – approved</li> <li>Whistleblowing Policy – adopted &amp; approved</li> <li>Gifts &amp; Hospitality Policy - approved</li> </ul>	
12	<u>Chair's/ Clerk's business - update from EFA Bulletins and correspondence</u> AR and NW to reply to the Bestic Trust letter ( <b>Action</b> ). <u>Email Security</u> PM commented that emails were subject to public disclosure and should be treated cautiously. Opinions and personnel comments should be reserved for meetings.	AR/N W
13	<u>Review of impact of meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>Discussion of Ofsted MAT reviews</li> <li>CEO report, review of standards &amp; attainment, attendance, safeguarding &amp; RAISE online.</li> </ul>	
14	The meeting closed at 4.30pm.	
	<b>Date and time of the next Trust Board meeting</b> 9/02/17 1.30pm: Acorn Centre Axminster Finance & Audit Committee 2/02/17 9.30am: St Andrew's	

### Actions

Item No		Date
5i)	VD to progress MAT RAISEonline training	Jan
5iv)	AR to progress family support worker, VD to add to next agenda	Jan
6.1	VD to amend and distribute Scheme of Delegation & upload to website	Dec
6.2	MVdW to forward report from the academies conference to directors	Dec
7.1	EF to review SENCO details on the Axminster website	Dec
7.2	AR to distribute HMI report	Dec
7.5	PM to send company code of conduct to VD & BA for review	Jan
7.10	AR/NW/VD to meet to discuss LGBs	Jan
8.1	MVdW/CP/VD to meet to go through the Academies Financial Handbook in detail.	Jan
10	VD to send School Improvement ToR to LA	Dec
12	AR and NW to write to the Bestic Trust	Dec