

Meeting of the Trust Board of Directors

1.30pm 9th February 2017

Venue: Hitchcock Pavilion, Kilmington

MINUTES

Directors present:

Initials	Attendees	Category	Initials	Attendees	Category
BI	Brian Impey	Foundation	NW	Nigel Whitaker	Foundation
AR	Andrea Rice	CEO	LA	Lesley Adams	Directors appt
BA	Barry Allsop	Foundation	MVdW	Mark Van de Weyer	Foundation
PM	Paul Middlemast	Foundation			

In attendance: Veronica Dower (VD), Clerk to the Board & Company Secretary

Item no	
1	Welcome & Apologies for absence NW welcomed directors to the meeting and Lesley Adams, attending as a recently appointed director. Apologies were received from DW (illness) and EF (holiday).
2	Declarations of Pecuniary Interests & Eligibility The chair invited members to declare any interests in the agenda items. No interests were declared.
3	Confidentiality & Register of attendance 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 Part 2 None
5	MINUTES of the Directors meeting held on 1 st December 2016. Part 1 minutes were circulated ahead of the meeting, Part 2 minutes were tabled at the meeting. The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. <u>Matters arising:</u> The following matters arising were noted: i. The Appraisal Panel to meet with AR for objectives to be set for 2016/17 (NW, PM, BA) ii. RAISEonline training, a date in March to be confirmed by VD for governors and heads iii. Review of SENCO details and SEN information report on the Axminster website – report from EF (Action) iv. HMI report still to be received, to be forwarded by AR. (Action) v. Draft staff code of conduct has been worked on by BA, to be added to the next agenda vi. The 'Academies Financial Handbook' was examined by MVdW, CP and VD in a meeting and action points will be followed up. vii. It was agreed that BI would attend the next meeting of the Bestic Trust. (Action) viii. Local Governing Bodies – a meeting was held with chairs prior to the board meeting. Actions arising were: a. To separate Axminster & Membury LGBs and review St Andrew's & Mrs Ethelston's joint LGB in July. b. To review of the role of LGBs in monitoring finance & premises. Directors discussed

	<p>this further and agreed to amend SoD to 'monitor' finances rather than 'manage'. (Action: Clerk to amend).</p> <p>c. LGB chairs requested an annual meeting with all MAT governors and directors.</p>
<p>6 6.1</p>	<p><u>MAT STRATEGIC PLAN & VISION</u> The discussion was introduced by the chair.</p> <p>Areas discussed in detail by directors were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust's expansion, a review of the optimum number of academies and pupils, enabling the Trust to be large enough to achieve critical mass yet small enough to retain close relationships with all its academies • The implications of the proposed national funding formula for primary and secondary schools on MAT growth and financial forecasting. Sixth form provision has been hit particularly hard, which has focussed the attention of secondary schools. The new funding formula seems to favour smaller primary schools • The Academies Growth Fund application and discussions with the DFE in relation to this. • The influence and potential involvement of Exeter and Salisbury dioceses, along with Dorset and Devon LAs. • Directors <u>agreed</u> that working collaboratively with both of the dioceses was important, and that the MAT should be open to any opportunities for growth, subject to a consideration of capacity and geographical location • The vision of the MAT to improve teaching & learning and share best practice to improve outcomes for children, the CPD programme, opportunities for career progression and the maintenance of the unique identity of each school • The need to approach both dioceses and LAs for informal joined up discussions (AR plus director) • The importance of producing a strategic vision that could be used as a short document to summarise the vision, aims and key strengths of the MAT. It was agreed that the summary in the Scheme of Delegation could be used as the basis for this prospectus. <p>Actions: AR and LA to put together a short, one page prospectus to summarise the aims & vision of the MAT (to be approved by Board). VD to add 'Vision & Aims' from the SoD to the website.</p> <p><u>Report on MAT three year business plan</u></p> <p>The Board considered the need to put in place a three year business plan with funding from reserves if the academies growth fund is not forthcoming. The Board agreed with ARs suggestion of paying for accountancy services on a project basis. The Board reviewed other areas on the operational side that should be planned for and could become areas of excellence, including: Admin, IT infrastructure, HR and Premises. AR commented that IT infrastructure included the need for a new financial operating system, a new website, intranet, performance tracker and a new tracking system for standards, attainment and the progress of children. Directors discussed the detail around putting in place an Enterprise Relationship Management plan and the need to produce an action plan for this.</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>Action: It was agreed that an action list would be prepared by PM and BI, to be reported back to the next board meeting. LA to explore the possibility of COO providing advice or a model plan <u>Academy schools update</u> BA reported that in order for Devon County Council to undertake a feasibility study into the expansion of schools in Axminster, they required the approval of the MAT Board to expand Axminster Primary to 420 pupils. BA confirmed that the feasibility study would come back to the Board. Resolution: The board approved the resolution to expand Axminster to 420 pupils.</p>

	AR to write to Devon CC to confirm (to be signed by NW) (Action).
7	<u>GOVERNANCE & DELEGATION</u>
7.1	<u>New Competency Framework for Governance</u> The clerk drew the Board's attention to the framework, distributed prior to the meeting.
7.2	<u>LGB structure</u> Appointment of LGB governors: Directors <u>approved</u> the appointment of Sara Cranfield and Molly Barrell as community governors to Membury LGB, Alec Duffield as a community governor to Axminster LGB and Liz Dunns to Loders LGB.
7.3	<u>Scheme of Delegation</u> MVdW explored the need for the board to approve unbudgeted items. It was agreed that the F&A committee would review this in more detail (Action : VD to add to F&A agenda). BI commented that staff turnover should be reviewed and reported to the board.
7.4	<u>Pay & Performance committee</u> The Board reviewed the process for the approval of CEO pay and the role of the P&P committee. The clerk proposed the amendment to the ToR of the P&P committee, to increase the membership to 4 and create a further line to include the remuneration of the CEO. The SoD would then be amended to reflect this. For approval in September. (Action : VD)
7.5	<u>LGB MINUTES</u> The minutes were circulated and noted by the board.
8	<u>Current situation & reports</u>
8.1	<u>CEO REPORT</u> A verbal report from the CEO was received by the Board. The report included reference to the following, which the Board discussed: <u>Educational standards</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An education specialist, Paul Jones visited Loders and Mrs Ethelston's in January. He visited classes, spoke to pupils, staff and governors and reviewed key documentation. No written reports have been received to date, but at Mrs Ethelston's, his verbal indications were that the school was on track, writing was the only issue. At Loders, GR as an experienced Head of teaching & learning has been supporting and the school should be back on track by this summer. • Literacy: The literacy coordinators across the MAT have been instrumental in redefining what the schools do in writing and reassessing it, they have had a huge impact and have made a difference in improving practice across the MAT. Maths coordinators have been reflecting the best practice of the literacy coordinators. • Early Years Tapestry online recording system has revealed some problems over the accuracy of judgements • AR <u>proposed</u> the formation of a 'Standards Committee' of directors, to monitor standards in depth and analyse the relationship between performance data and school development plans. The Board discussed the options and the recruitment of a director with educational experience. It was agreed that RAISEonline and standards would be the main focus for the next board meeting. A decision would then be made on whether to set up a sub-committee. <u>Parental Expectations</u> The Board discussed the recent increase in parental expectations within some schools and the pressure being placed on staff and other parents. The Board expressed concern and support. Actions agreed included a letter from BA and the encouragement for parents to sign up to a social media policy. The Board agreed that an immediate and positive story needs to go out, along with updates on the realities of the current educational environment and the national

	<p>funding situation.</p> <p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>The Board discussed ways of improving general communication. It was noted that school newsletters are now improving their communication through the SLT, with regular information on the benefits of being within the MAT.</p>
8.2	<p><u>Family Support worker update</u></p> <p>AR reported that no replacement had been found</p>
8.3	<p><u>CEO/Board Communications</u></p> <p>The Board discussed the role of directors and operational vs strategic and agreed that this is a difficult balancing act. Directors were urged to maintain their strategic focus and avoid becoming operational managers.</p>
8.4	<p><u>Role of external consultant in the MAT</u></p> <p>The Board reviewed the role of Graham Jones as external consultant to the MAT. AR reported that he is now doing school visits once a term, but is not on a contract. BA proposed an external consultant is brought in to review and evaluate the work of Graham Jones.</p>
8.5	<p><u>Early Years/Pre-School</u></p> <p>AR reported that at Axminster there has been a substantial change to the Early Years setting. None of the staff within Early Years were appointed to senior positions and an early years' consultant has been brought in from Babcock, funded from preschool reserves. As a result there will now be a re structure of staff. An early years' specialist across the MAT will need recruiting for September, based in Axminster but in a leadership role across the other early years settings in the MAT.</p> <p>Loders early years' provision will be restructured, to move to 4 classes instead of 3, with reception and Y1 to be together in an early years' unit. A business plan will be put together, to see how many preschool children will be needed to make this viable. The Board confirmed that EF would continue with the Early Years portfolio.</p>
8.6	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING, SEND & INCLUSION</u></p> <p>The safeguarding report '<u>Keeping children safe in education</u>' had been circulated, directors signed to confirm that they had read Part 1.</p> <p>BA highlighted key details of the safeguarding report circulated before the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a notable contrast between Axminster and the other schools in terms of MASH referrals and CP conferences. • The need to check the SCR and ensure it is always up to date • The need to ensure all staff, including sports coaches are DBS checked • The MAT should ensure the Safeguarding Policy is prominent on the website
8.7	<p><u>Pupil premium, SEN & Inclusion</u></p> <p>The Board discussed the format and detail of Pupil Premium website reports. AR commented that the LGBs needed to be much more aware of where the money is being spent and the effectiveness of the PP funds. One of the support areas for Axminster will be a pupil premium review. The information from this can be disseminated through the MAT and should improve the use, monitoring and effectiveness of PP funds in improving outcomes.</p>
8.8	<p><u>Equality Objectives & Plan</u></p> <p>The Equality Policy and Objectives was distributed prior to the meeting. The Board noted and <u>approved</u> the policy and objectives. AR confirmed that the SLT were finalising equality action plans for the next three years. These will be monitored by the Board.</p>

8.9	<p>SIAMS & ETHOS <u>Christian Character & Vision.</u> The clerk commented that a foundation director should be appointed to the Ethos Committee – to be confirmed at the next meeting. Training through the diocese was also a requirement for all foundation directors. Clerk to distribute training schedule from the diocese and confirm the correct course for trustees to attend. (Action)</p>
8.10	<p><u>PR/Marketing</u> A report from MVdW was circulated and noted by the Board.</p>
<u>OPERATIONS & FINANCE</u>	
9	<p><u>HR, STAFFING & ADMINISTRATION</u></p>
9.1	<p><u>Staffing update & HR report</u> PM reported that non- teaching staff have contracts that are not fit for purpose so should be reviewed with reference to the Support Staff Appraisal Policy.</p>
9.2	<p><u>Appointment of Head of School at Loders.</u> AR reported that a very strong group of candidates had been interviewed over two days for the position of Head of School at Loders. AR & the panel recommended the appointment of Peter Beer, currently assistant head at St Marks in Southampton. The trust board <u>approved</u> the appointment.</p>
9.3	<p><u>FINANCE & AUDIT</u></p>
	<p>The Minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on 2nd February 2017 were received and noted. MVdW through a written report highlighted key matters which had been discussed at the meeting.</p>
9.4	<p><u>Monitor annual budgets</u> The Board received and noted the management accounts and report from the Finance & Audit committee, including the reduction in the projected budgeted surplus.</p>
9.5	<p><u>Risk Register</u> The Board noted that the risk register would be distributed 2 weeks prior to the next Finance & Audit committee meeting in March and analysed at the meeting.</p>
9.6	<p><u>Re-appointment of the auditors</u> The Board <u>approved the re-appointment</u> of Francis Clark.</p>
9.7	<p><u>PREMISES & HEALTH & SAFETY</u> Premises and health & safety issues were reported to the Finance & Audit committee. BI commented that the MAT was awaiting the outcome of CIF bids, detailed in the minutes and report. Site investigation works would now be undertaken at Mrs Ethelston's, in readiness for the outcome of the CIF bid.</p>
10	<p><u>TRUST BOARD EFFECTIVENESS</u> <u>Report on annual skills audit of directors</u> To be reviewed and discussed further at the next meeting. The clerk reported that an analysis of the skills matrix revealed two main areas for training and development; performance data and knowledge of current educational policy. Directors were encouraged by the clerk to attend the MAT RAISEonline training in March</p>
11	<p><u>POLICY REVIEW & APPROVAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Policies - approved • Anti-bullying Policy - approved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti –Racism Policy - adopted • Complaints Policy - approved • Cyberbullying Policy - adopted • Homework Policy - approved • PSHE policy - adopted • SEND Policy - approved
12	<u>Chair's/ Clerk's business - update from EFA Bulletins and correspondence</u> BA commented that he had received a notification from Salisbury diocese regarding the appointment of a new Member. BA to forward email to clerk
13	<u>Review of impact of meeting</u> NW asked directors to review the meeting and comment on the effectiveness at the next board meeting.
14	<u>Issues raised with the Chair before the meeting</u> None
	<p>The meeting closed at 4.45pm</p> <p>Date and time of the next Board meeting: 30th March 2017 1.30pm Finance & Audit Committee: 20th March 2017 9.30am Pay & performance Committee: 27th April 2017 1.30pm Ethos Committee: 13th June 2016 4.15pm</p>

Actions

5.i	The Appraisal Panel to meet with AR for objectives to be set for 2016/17. (NW, PM, BA)	Feb
5.iii	Review of SENCO details and SEN information report on the Axminster website – report from EF (Action)	March
5.iv	HMI report still to be received, to be forwarded by AR. (Action)	Feb
5.v	Draft staff code of conduct has been worked on by BA, to be added to the next agenda	March
5.vi	BI to attend the next meeting of the Bestic Trust	TBA
5.vii	Clerk to amend SoD	Feb
6	AR & LA to put together a one page prospectus on the vision and aims of the MAT	Feb
	VD to upload 'Vision & Aims' from the SoD to the website	Feb
6.2	3 Year Business Plan: - an action list to be prepared by PM and BI, to be reported back to the next board meeting.	March
	LA to explore the possibility of her COO providing advice or a model plan	March
6.3	AR to write to Devon CC to confirm board approval of Axminster expansion (to be signed by NW)	Feb
7.3	VD to amend the ToR of the P&P committee, to increase the membership to 4 and create a further line to include the remuneration of the CEO. To amend the SoD to reflect this.	Sept
8.9	Clerk to distribute training schedule from the diocese and confirm the correct course for trustees to attend.	March

12	BA to forward email from Salisbury diocese to clerk re new Member	Feb