



Trust Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday 21 March 2024 – Teams

Present: Paul Howieson (PH), Sue Bowen (SB), Brendan McCarthy (BMc), Jo Levasier (JL), Louise Ellis (LE) (Chair), Brendan Mullany (BM), Les Lane (LL), Martin Tiffin (MT), Kat Hearn (KH), Martin Copsey (MCO), Rod Woodford (RW)

In Attendance: Sue Bennett (SEB) Minutes

Apologies: Michael Crane (MCR)

		Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies Apologies were received from MCR. RW was welcomed to his first trust board meeting.	
2.	Declarations of Interest for items on this agenda	
3.	Draft Minutes and actions from the Trust Board Meeting on 08 February 2024 The minutes of 08 February 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
3b	<u>Actions arising from the minutes</u> <i>PH to find out more information about the cost of DfE loans and share this information with Trustees.</i> PH advised that he had ascertained that there isn't any access to DfE loans for an academy trust if they are receiving SCA funding. In highly exceptional circumstances there may be the possibility of assistance from the DfE. <i>PH where possible, remove any irrelevant information from the Admissions Policies 2025-2026 for Swanage and Lulworth and Winfrith.</i> Action complete. SEB to add strategy for organising schools in the Purbecks to the March agenda. On the agenda at item 6a. <i>LE to re-look at the allocation of link trustees to schools.</i> On the agenda at item 9.	
3c	<u>Achievement Committee 06 and 20 March 2024</u> BM outlined the main points from the meetings: - Discussions around St Luke's and the work being done to stabilise the situation. - Considered data from the recent results which showed some concern around maths outcomes. - Considered inclusion, especially around pupil premium. CM will be reporting back at the summer 2 meeting with an inclusion plan for 2024/2025.	

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3d	- Covered SEND and the excellent work that has been done by EC. SEND continues to be a key area of focus. - Due to ongoing significant challenging behaviour in some schools, consideration is being given to a specialist behaviour role being introduced. <u>Resources Committee 11 March 2023</u> BMc outlined the main points from the meeting: - Received termly reports for Staffing, Operations and Data Protection. - Considered the absence figures for last year which indicated that mental illness days lost exceeded days lost for coughs and colds. - Discussed the use of AI for report writing in one school. - Approved contracts for energy, finance and budget software, waste and staff insurance. - Received a good internal audit on budget, forecasting and reporting. - Recommended to trust board that the reserves policy remain unchanged for next year. GAG pooling to be considered for the future. A trustee advised trustees that creating a fair funding formula involved a huge amount of work which should be considered when planning to move forward with GAG pooling. A trustee asked whether staff assaults was discussed at the resources committee. BMc responded that the committee had discussed the number of assaults that had occurred and the possible correlation between assaults and SEND. There is a recommendation by BCP to make inoculations available to staff who are in danger of assaults and this is something we are investigating further. A trustee asked if the assaults on staff were by both parents and children. BMc responded that in the context of these reports it is assaults by children. There are currently 28 children across the trust who have special school officially stated on their EHCP but there aren't the places to accommodate them.	
3e	<u>Member Meeting 28 February 2024 and 18 March 2024</u> There were no comments.	
4.	Reserves Policy (document circulated with the agenda) Trustees are asked to approve the 2024-2025 Resources Policy There are no substantive changes to this policy. PH highlighted: - The continued growing trend of trusts in the UK moving to GAG pooling, now at 32% - He is working with headteachers to demonstrate the long term benefits of GAG pooling. BMC proposed to approve the Reserves Policy for 2024-2025, LL seconded and all Trustees were in favour.	
5.	Gender Pay Gap Report (documents circulated with the agenda) PH advised trustees that the position is broadly unchanged from last year. <u>Trustee questions / comments</u> The quartile analysis on the final page shows that in our lowest quartile females are paid more than men in their hourly rate but in all other quartiles the mean	

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	hourly rate is higher for men. We know that at CLP men and women are being paid the same but this table doesn't demonstrate this very effectively. PH responded that the published report doesn't include this table; this was just additional information for trustees. Is it ever appropriate to try and recruit one gender over the other? PH advised that we cannot advertise for a particular gender, we need to seek the best person for the role and seek to achieve the right kind of balance and expertise for the school. There inherent flaws in gender reports which generally don't tell the whole story. It would be good to see women encouraged to apply for senior positions much earlier than they do, it has been proven that men apply for a senior position around 3 years earlier than women.	
6. 6a	Strategy for Managing Falling Roll (documents circulated with the agenda) <u>Strategy for Managing Falling Roll in the Purbecks</u> PH advised trustees that since writing the paper circulated with the agenda, he has now set up a meeting with Dorset County Council in May to discuss the future of Purbeck schools. <u>Trustee questions / comments</u> [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] SEND provision in the Purbeck areas is really weak and it would be good to look at increased funding in this area. We will exercise caution around community management and engaging DCC and Salisbury Diocese on the management of this will be critical. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] If we have a headteacher vacancy we need to look at whether filling the vacancy is the right option or whether there are some wider more efficient options. The intakes for St Mark's and St George's are low for September; should we be starting this journey now? We are having conversations now but [REDACTED] [REDACTED] We also need to understand to what extent DCC sees the possibility to use part of our premises for specialist provision as this will make a financial impact on our decisions. Swanage secondary school is really short of space and they are next door to St Mark's, is this an option for consideration? We will be exploring all options. PH to update the Board after the meeting with DCC in May.	
6b	<u>Merger of St Clements & St Johns Infant and Bethany Junior Schools</u> PH previously shared a 10 step implementation plan which included the feasibility of pursuing in the medium term the legal designation as a single primary. Becoming a single school will involve reduced funding and PH is currently working on how much this will be.	PH

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	If we remain two separate schools it will mean two inspections but will also mean more teaching resource. The Regional Director is supportive of us putting forward a proposal to create a single primary, however, they have said we need to be really sure about the finances as once we have done it, it can't be reversed. We have asked The Regional Director to signpost us to two similar schools that have been through this process. <u>Trustee questions / comments</u> What is the definition of medium term? We will start the next academic year and let the leadership settle in, and then at some point during next year, probably around spring we can begin consulting on the possibility of becoming a single school. What do we know about the local authority 'structured opportunities' in relation to SEND? We are waiting on further information but at QPIA and St Clements & St Johns we have set up a separate provision for SEND children and the LA have agreed to funding this. We previously discussed that we would guarantee children in the infant school would move to the junior school. This has been the case for the last few years, however, if they became one school we would need to change the admissions policy. The sums of money we may lose by becoming a single school is a worry. Lulworth and Winfrith are an example of where this has occurred and they have expressed regrets as it has lost them £50-70k per year. <u>Special School Satellite at Oakdale Junior School</u> Trustees are asked to give their approval to proceed with the project being undertaken for Linwood Special School to set up satellite provision in a section of Oakdale Junior School premises PH advised that unfortunately, although the whole school is an attractive school, the only part of the school that is right for this project is the nicest looking part of the school. The headteacher has taken time to consider the proposals and has now given her agreement. PH attended an LGB meeting and updated the governors on the satellite proposals and they are wholly supportive of us progressing, although they were slightly worried about the consultation process and whether this may create tricky discussions with parents. With regards to finance, it will increase our reserves every year by around £122k. PH suggested we should put Oakdale's needs first for the first year of income as they have a number of fairly urgent capital projects. The LGB would like us to commit to a percentage of the income going to Oakdale each year but they have been told that won't be possible. <u>Trustee questions / comments</u> Have BCP confirmed their funding for this project? We haven't had confirmation yet but I feel confident it will go through. It doesn't feel right for Oakdale to have the whole £122k in the first year when there are a number of other urgent capital priorities?	

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	They have not been told they can have all the money in the first year, just enough to cover some of the more urgent works. Due to the ongoing work we are considering, and the way we are using our money, we need to have further discussions about GAG pooling sooner rather than later. PH advised he would be reluctant to move forward with GAG pooling until we have reached financial stability by adding a further school. MC proposed to approve the project for Linwood School to set up a satellite provision at Oakdale School, KH seconded and all trustees were in favour.	
7.	Growth – Update on Future Pre-Schools PH advised that Salisbury Diocese has accepted that we are going to relocate Corfe Castle pre-school into the main school. However, they have now instigated two outstanding rent reviews, one from 2018 and one from 2022. As a result of the rent reviews the pre-school is anticipating a bill of around £5k in backdated rent. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] DCC has agreed to consider us for a grant of £35k for a contribution towards capital works to integrate the pre-school.	
8.	Strategic Plan (document circulated with the agenda) PH advised that most of the items to discuss in the strategic plan have been discussed in previous agenda items. Some key things to note: • It is clearly evident that SEN remains an educational and financial barrier. • The ongoing challenge at St Luke’s has been a drain on capacity and resource. • There were a number of complicated unknown terms and conditions against the TCaf money of £325k which we were given 4 months to spend. A trustee asked about the comments from the Regional Director about needing to see some significant improvement in KS2 results before recommending us to potential schools? PH advised that he had challenged them on this and they were clear that they regard CLP as a strong trust and would happily signpost schools in our direction.	
9. 9a 9b	Trustees <u>Membership Update</u> LE advised trustees that she was pleased to welcome Rod Woodford to the Trust Board; Rod will be sitting on the Resources Committee. At the end of this academic year, LE will be stepping down as Chair and trustee and MCR has also resigned and will leave at the end of the academic year. We therefore need to recruit two more trustees, one with educational experience. We will start this process after Easter with a view to recruiting ready for September. <u>Member Group Update</u> Members had an additional meeting to discuss the makeup of the Member group and what this looks like going forward. There are currently two vacancies leaving three members, one of which is the Chair of Trustees. However, Members have agreed there should be some	

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9c	separation between trust board and members and the Chair of Trustees will no longer be a member from 1st September 2024. Member vacancies will be advertised over the coming weeks. <u>Link Trustees</u> (document circulated with the agenda) LE advised that trustees had agreed to review the link trustee scheme after a year and asked people for their thoughts on the scheme going forward. Trustees agreed: • It is a valuable programme which we should continue for this year. • It appears to be working and schools seem to see the value. • We should commit to a further year and have a check point at the beginning of the new academic year to tighten it up the process. • Headteachers see this as an overwhelmingly positive engagement with the trust something they are finding worthwhile. • BM and LE to link to the new schools next term and then re-allocate schools next year when there is a change of trustees. • The school visits were a very enjoyable and positive experience.	
10.	Items from LGBs (document circulated with the agenda) There were no significant comments from LGBs.	
11.	Key messages for Staff and Governors • The Reserves Policy for 2024/5 was approved. • Trustees are continuing to explore falling roll in schools, especially in the Purbecks • The Gender Pay Gap Report was discussed. • The DfE enjoyed a tour of Heathlands Primary Academy which helped them understand the challenges our staff are facing. We continue to establish a good working relationship with the DfE. • Trustees continue to show real interest in how schools are challenged by SEN issues and are seeking to strengthen their engagement with the local authorities. • Discussed the value of the link trustee relationship which is a positive experience for both trustees and headteachers. This scheme will continue into the next academic year. • Trustees were pleased that a headteacher appointment has been made at St Luke's.	
12.	Any Other Business There was no other business.	

Meeting closed at 20:50

Next meeting: Thursday 23 May 2023