



Full Board Meeting

27 March 2024 – 6pm

MINUTES

Present: Mark Williams (Chair), Kim Taylor (CEO), Sue Bailey, Rebecca Berton, Becky Caldwell, Billy Mollison, Julie Perry, Anthony Upshall

Apologies: Michael Westcott-Rudd

In Attendance

remotely: Stephanie Ward (Clerk)

No.	Minutes	Actions
1.	<p>Declarations of interest and apologies</p> <p>No changes to declarations of interests, no interests declared in terms of the agenda, and apologies received from Michael Westcott-Rudd.</p>	
2.	<p>Approval of previous minutes and matters arising (where not covered elsewhere)</p> <p>Policies were circulated and approved by Trustees prior to meeting.</p> <p>A Members Meeting took place, where the Members appointed Genevieve Cowcher, former Finance Manager as a member.</p> <p>The new Articles of Association were approved pending DfE approval, and a few notes had been received.</p> <p>The Members approved the appointment of all co-opted Trustees as member-appointed Trustees for the remainder of their term. MW noted that co-opted Trustees can't appoint Trustees, which could cause future problems, so now all Trustees are member-appointed. In future, the Autumn meeting where accounts are approved will see the co-opted Trustees appointed by Members.</p>	

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	<p>MW asked for comments on the minutes, and for approval.</p> <p>BM raised concerns and said he would send his notes to the minutes around after the meeting for approval. The minutes were not approved.</p>	
3.	<p>Sub -Committee reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching, Learning and Welfare <p>RB briefed on the meeting of the committee, noting discussions about absences, the deamalgamation of RMA, mental health training for staff, and a discussion around the quality of teaching, information on which was less clear from Wisbech Green, and this has been requested for report at the next TLW.</p> <p>Safeguarding has been reviewed at SCA, and the School Improvement Partner was pleased with progress. JP added that when the external review was received, it highlighted some gaps which were to be expected with the transition to MyConcern. The full action plan will be discussed at the next TLW. JP added that she is meeting Tom, DSL at SCA soon in her role as safeguarding lead Trustee to discuss actions following the report.</p> <p>Heads to attend the next meeting, and the agenda has been circulated.</p> <p>BM asked about the staffing situation and whether the Trust was recruiting. KT said that SCA is fully staffed but that there is always a need for more staff in special schools. RMA are recruiting for vacancies. Staffing for SCA and PWA has been discussed, as some staff are moving within the Trust. RB added that the site struggling the most has been Wisbech Green. KT added that it was difficult for the St Neots site initially, which has improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance, People and Premises <p>The Trust has £1.3m in the bank. There is an outstanding debt with Norfolk Council, which might have to be pursued through the DfE. The resources to schools were discussed and it appears to be being resolved. Nothing was raised in terms of shortness of funds. The utility bills were noted to be the cheapest available. KT said that the expenditure patterns had been analysed to save on utilities, but that a recharge was</p>	

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	<p>due as some lights installed were being charged to the Trust. BM added that there were some variations in budget headings, the position was healthy, and opened to comments.</p> <p>SB asked about the building repairs. On Saturday they discussed keeping on top of the decoration at RMA St Neots. KT said that this would be attended to in the holidays as it would be a big job. SB noted that graffiti removal had been raised as a problem.</p>	
4.	<p>Chief Executive Officer's report</p> <p>Two policies were presented for approval:</p> <p>HEdT Appraisal and Capability Policy HEdT Staff Sickness Policy (discussed at FPP for final approval by the Board)</p> <p><i>The board approved these policies, with no feedback for amendment.</i></p> <p><u>Risk Log</u></p> <p>KT first drew attention to the risk log, noting that the Trust was doing well to manage risks. The most significant risk was the electricity issue at PWA. KT hoped that after the Easter holidays this would be resolved. The water issue had been resolved, noting that this was a wider issue with quality, but Morgan Sindall and the Local Authority had been responsive. The reduced timetables were noted to be a risk, but this was being worked on at Academy level. Sufficiency of teachers was noted to be mitigated by supply staff, and while temp-to-perm arrangements were not ideal, it was important to be staffed adequately. KT opened to questions. MW asked, if Heads are doing their own risk logs, were they consistent with Trust risk logs? KT said yes, and that she delivered the training, and logs were managed according to DfE guidance.</p> <p>BM said that three risks were noted as high risk; when were these to be resolved? KT said some things were not the Trust's responsibility to resolve, and some of them would resolve naturally, for example, as those on part-time timetables leave. KT was concerned that Heads had chosen their own pupils but were not managing to put provision in place. SB asked if this was because paperwork didn't match the child. KT said Heads were endeavouring to meet students prior to placement. SB asked if any of</p>	

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the year 7 students were on reduced timetables. KT said yes, but some had not accessed education for some time previously, and that some students struggled to access school due to anxiety, where some were not supported to attend by parents, and others struggled to be around other students but had managed online learning and so this option was available to some. BM said that he could see a lot of work was being done to resolve this. RB added that the target at RMA was 80%, and that the target was being hit if the reduced timetable students were not included in the figure.

The Trustees accepted the risk log.

Bound Book Co-Production

Senior Leaders Groups are taking place every 3 weeks. KT shared the Bound Book that has been created, and noted that this was not compulsory. BM asked if behaviour was a big issue. KT said no, but it can be an issue with children who are very aggressive and it's important to protect everyone. RB asked if a copy of the information would be added to pupil records. KT said yes, but that the book was intended as 'having information all in one place' and that previous books had been archived. Not all staff are trained in TeamTeach, and some training cannot be accessed without completing Therapeutic Thinking training, so the Bound Book is intended as an interim measure. SB asked about printing costs, and BM asked if this could be electronic. KT said it could, but that electronic things could be lost or breached more easily. SB suggested a secure PDF snapshot of the book.

Equalities Objectives

There was a smaller than expected uptake to the equalities questionnaire. KT has used previous years forms in conjunction to formulate the objectives. This document was circulated to the board. KT noted progress was made in a number of areas since the last review.

The Trustees accepted the equalities objectives.

Communication Strategy

KT shared this, and that the intention was to make it clear how the Trust communicates with one another. It also covers social media and the websites, and we have had

excellent feedback on our online presence. MW said, that with the Communication Strategy, it is good to be seen to consult with a range of people. How much consultation had taken place? KT said the consultation had been Trust-wide, across AAGs, staff and more. MW said that he felt people would appreciate the process of being consulted. RB added that there was a subheading about communications between Trustees/heads and others, but that AAGs were not specifically mentioned, and that this was something to work on. RB asked that this could be included. SB said that the content was around press releases and public information, but not specifically consultations. MW clarified that he meant staff consultation, rather than parent and wider community consultation. KT noted that this was aimed at Trust communications. SB noted communications more widely could be noted within the Trust, and KT said further consultation could take place with staff and the strategy could be brought back before the board at a later date. BM said it was important to acknowledge this was a major step forward, and that he felt it was important to recognise and publicise achievement.

Mobility Clause in Contracts

This has been implemented for all staff. There was some anxiety noted among staff about the implication of this, but staff had been assured a dialog would take place with them. KT said its about making sure that each child within the Trust was the responsibility of every member of staff. BC asked if it would be used frequently. KT said she didn't expect so, but that staff had been reassured they would have a home base.

Facilities Management

There is now only one cleaner at SCA.

Update on PWA

The land survey had been completed and a copy was received by the Trust. This was one of the main obstacles that could affect receiving funding. Once the land is received, legal documents would be exchanged. There would then be a pre-Ofsted inspection at the start of the Summer term. Once complete, a UPN number would follow, and the school could become its own entity. KT noticed that a final date of occupation had been noted at 17th July 2024, in a communication from the Local Authority to the DfE. Solicitors were appointed to deal with the land issues and legal contracts.

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	<p><u>De-amalgamation of RMA</u></p> <p>KT said that the de-amalgamation was approved for consultation, and that this would go out soon to collate responses, which would be collated into a report. A new document regarding 'significant change' had been released, and some training on this was to take place for the DfE, and KT would meet the relevant people after this had taken place. The important thing was to ensure criteria were fulfilled.</p> <p>JP asked, did KT need the board to approve KT to submit the significant change, or would the board have sight before submission? KT said that the board would have sight before submission, but she wanted to ensure that the new guidance didn't impact the work already done on this. JP added further that it would be beneficial for advocates and stakeholders to support the application and send support to the Headteacher Board. MW asked if this work needed to be done via email. KT said she could offer an online meeting if Trustees requested it.</p> <p><u>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM REDACTED</u></p>	
5.	<p>AOB</p> <p><u>Trustee Attendance at AAGs</u></p> <p>SB asked about Trustee attendance to the AAGs. MW was noted to attend St Neots consistently. SB asked whether other Trustees could attend. MW said that it relied on Trustee capacity and availability. KT shared that Trustees could join online. SB said it was more about Trustees visiting schools and knowing the schools. MW said JP had become an informal link to Wisbech. RB said she would be willing to attend some, but could not commit to all meetings. KT said most Heads would welcome even a 5-minute conversation. BM said he could do afternoons at SCA. MW suggested BM trial this without creating expectation. RB said she would be happy to mentor a Headteacher.</p> <p><u>Actions Following the Strategy Day</u></p>	

	<p>JP asked, what happens following the strategy day on Saturday. KT said that the information would be collated and reported upon. MW asked for a timeline on actions – <i>SW and KT to discuss</i>. SB asked whether Chris Carey, Head at Wisbech Green could feedback his information. MW suggested the Heads meet without the CEO to debrief and discuss. KT noted that the Heads enjoyed the meetings together, and that they knew they could bring her in any time. BM added that Jon, Amy and Jo should be included in discussions.</p> <p><u>Meeting Attendees</u></p> <p>JP asked whether Jon Panther and Jo Conlon should be included in meetings. MW said that Jo Conlon would attend FPP, and the board whenever finances were reported on.</p>	
6.	<u>Confidential Session Redacted</u>	
7.	<p>Date of and Next Board Meeting 22 May 2024 at 6pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location – Spring Common Academy 	

Meeting ended at 7:32pm

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