



Education South West

Board Meeting Minutes – PART I

6pm Wednesday 12 October 2022

Microsoft TEAMS

Attendees:

Matthew Shanks (MS), Jeremy Fothergill (JF), David Potter (DP), Kellie Knott (KK), Graham Austin (GA), Annelie Fearon (AF), Jenny Sutton (JS), Barrie Taylor (BT), Adrian Hines (AH)

In attendance:

Stuart White (SW), Tracy Hannon (TH)

Apologies:**Notes:**

Pippa Truman Davies (PTD)

Quorum:

50% of the total number of Non-Executive Directors
(4, not including MS)

ESW435. Apologies

No apologies.

Welcome extended to Adrian Hines.

ESW436. Declarations of interest & Directors statement

KK [Head of Vulnerable Children's Unit (South West) at the DfE] is works in a team that makes decisions about Schools joining Trusts but has no input into the decisions that are made. Remaining Trustees had nothing to declare.

ESW437. Minutes

i. Minutes of previous Board meeting, 14 July 2022

GA noted two points to change in the minutes. Clerk to make the changes then Trustees approve that the minutes Part 1 and 2 are true and accurate.

ESW438. Matters arising from the previous meeting

ACTION: Discussion on governance to be tabled next term as a separate meeting for Trustees (PTD)
Ongoing review of us as a Governing Body against the paper that was produced by CST should be a reminder that we should be reviewing what we are doing as a Board all the time. MS suggested that we should focus in future board meetings on alignment of the strategic plan with appropriate elements of the CST plan. All agreed that this was a sensible approach.



MS confirmed that we have just had Ofsted at Teign School and the results will be communicated when received from Ofsted. It has been a huge journey for us as ESW and for the Staff at Teign and Trustee are looking forward to receiving the outcome.

ACTION: TH to look at training for Governors on Exclusions

TH has developed the partnership re exclusions for cross Trust participation of Governors on Exclusion panels. The Trust has secured the NGA to facilitate a training session.

ACTION: LGBs to receive the new SoD and ToR in their September meeting.

This was shared but the feedback is that the SoD is to be revised so it is less complicated.

ACTION 1: MS to consult Trustees regarding simplifying the SoD

ESW439. Items for start of academic year

i. Appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair

DECISION: Kellie Knott was nominated (BT) and seconded (DP) and all Trustees voted KK as Chair of the Trust.

DECISION: Graham Austin was nominated (BT) and seconded (DP) and all Trustees were in support of GA being Vice Chair of the Trust.

ii. Code of Conduct

ACTION 2: PTD to circulate the Code of Conduct for Trustees to agree to and return to Clerk on email.

iii. Appointment/ratification of legal advisors

SW is in support of Wolferstans who cover all our legal advice for all of the schools in the Trust with unlimited access to them, including HR advice for £15,000 p/a.

DECISION: All Trustees confirmed the retention of Wolferstans as the legal advisors to the Trust for the next year.

iv. Annual Board Competency Review

ACTION 3: All Trustees to complete the NGA Board Evaluation and return to Clerk before the next Board meeting

ESW440. Trust and education matters from CEO

i. Written report

Regarding CEO report (point 3) on the Strategic Plan, as mentioned earlier in the meeting, all Trustees have agreed the mapping approach linking the Strategic plan to the CST document.

Positive response received from LGB Chairs about the start of the year meetings with them, HT's and Trust management. Ofsted did comment that LGB's are not always



commenting on things that they want to bring to the Board, even if they state that they have nothing to bring to the attention of the Board.

MS commented that Risk register is in the process of being reviewed. MS invited Trustees to ask any questions at any time.

- ii. Update on applications to join ESW
AF requested an update on any applications to join ESW.

PART 2 DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWED

GA requested feedback on KEVICCs? MS advised that it has been positive and that they are finding us challenging but they are saying this is good and we give them more support.

AH asked if there was an issue regarding expanding the Trust outside of the Devon LA county area? Ms confirmed that it is encouraged.

PART 2 DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWED

GA asked about the strategic plan and its agenda. KK agreed that there should be a sharper focus on strategy. MS would be sending this to GA and KK next week for review.

PART 2 DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWED

KK asked about the NLG EGR report where it says that we need External validation of School Improvement and what that would look like. MS said that this external validation would be coming through Steve McShane who has not been part of the Trust before 1 Sept 2022. He is going around the schools conducting the reviews for this year and we will continue to look at this and developing this in the future.

KK noted that SM has a direct link into us so what is the outside assessment of you and TH? MS said we are looking at Paul Walker (runs First Federation) to review Primaries and we are looking at possible people to run the Secondary reviews - ie Paul smith who runs the Whitehorse Federation and also approaching the Cabot Learning Federation in Bristol.

ACTION 4: MS/TH to explore the options for the external validation for a paper to present to Board in Spring 2023.

BT asked about the Trust capacity issues with KEVICC coming on and speaking to others – do we have capacity or are we looking to expand it?

MS is growing capacity with existing leaders and is looking at developing existing leaders and transferring skills across the Trust.

JF said that this enables good teachers in our good schools to can see a better career path.

PART 2 DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWED



ESW441. Report from Director of School Improvement

i. Written report, to include Attendance, Outcomes, Safeguarding and SEN update

TH noted that there were a few issues around premises that have been shared with SS. Nothing that we should be worried about as a Board.

AH asked if there were any concerns arising from the Safeguarding audit at KEVICC? TH responded saying nothing that the Board should be worried about.

KK asked what ESW has implemented in response to the updates to KCSIE in addition to updating the policy. TH responded staff have been educated with a new cyber security compulsory training module educating staff and Governors and we have a system where any search for something unsavoury is reported to DSL's. All staff had training on the non-pupil day and Governors/Trustees/Members have had the same training. The Trust Safeguarding lead is analysing the results to identify further training needs. In secondaries there is a weekly safeguarding briefing but it is less evident in primaries so will be a development point for this year.

GA wanted to know about the Governor training attendance and methods to engage Governors so that we are assured that they are skilled? TH explained that clerks are encouraging monitoring of attendance or viewing of training and we have the new National College platform where training can be uploaded and viewed at a later date.

KK asked how do reassure ourselves that the LGB's have the skills to do the job? TH responded that the Training is one aspect, the LGB minutes is another and suggested that Trustees attended some LGB meetings to witness first hand their effectiveness.

AF noted that the lower attendance on Governor training tended to be in small schools and smaller LGB's. Do we push forward for more of a Hub Governance structure?

BT commented that there is a real balance to support these Governors and their engaging on any level. Realistically you cannot be a Governor of a school and not know what you are doing. The training and engagement that ESW is doing is excellent. Can the Chairs' Group perhaps to address this Governor training engagement so that they really understand their role as a Governor?

KK asked for feedback on the performance data. TH responded that since sending out the secondary data we now have an updated one which is not as positive as the algorithm we have shared but this is the same for all schools in the country. All secondary schools have had the more details information about how their departments have done and are being reviewed. In primary we are not happy with writing but are happier with reading. Writing is a big focus going forward. We do not have an English CDL, so Jayne Keller is working with English leads across primary so we can begin to develop a writing curriculum to support development in that area.

ESW442. Report from Finance Director and COO

i. Finance Director and COO Report

SW stated that the financial side things are going up and down with the Governments varying plans. It is showing a positive outcome for us at this moment but we need to make significant cuts with staff cuts planned optimistically for intakes that do not materialise. The Government is likely



to extend the energy grant and we are not panicking. We need to make some adjustments and keep adapting to the changes the Government implements.

DP asked SW to explain further the contributors to the low numbers in part I of the report. SW responded that all schools are all contributing to it in 23/24 due to energy and wage extreme inflation affecting all schools. UTC, being a new launch is expected to be running at a loss. KEVICC's cost base is too high for the size of the school and this is being addressed. The impact of the energy grant is huge numbers and the Government has only committed to 6 months subsidy which has been accommodated and reflected but beyond that it cannot be considered. Likely hood there will be energy grant from the Government so the picture will not be as bad but it is not a certainty.

DP would like a more of a narrative summary in SW's report that provides more context but that does not overlap with the finance committee.

DP mentioned the Information and Security report. On what basis do we not report information of names, DoB addresses by accident to the ICO? SW responded by making a judgement on whether it has a material affect (consequences) on the person involved. DP was concerned that this was not a reportable breach of information security.

BT wanted to know about targeting reserves, is there a % of or an amount of reserves that we try to target for the schools? SW responded that there is a minimum reserve requirement for each school which the FC are happy with. This is based around the impact on funding a that a 5% change in pupil numbers will make and there is a calculation behind that so it is a suitable cushion. We have a Trust wide financial management strategy plan that allows some flexibility so that the Trust is solvent so that in aggregate the Trust has sufficient finances.

AF asked if we are on track for numbers at the UTC to get to the breakeven number? SW responded that it is on a positive trajectory looking at the role. AF asked about the CHD role and why is it going down and where are they going? SW said TEI and CHD role have declined. A small number has gone to UTC and the rest are going to Exeter College and South Devon College for the experience they those sixth form colleges offered. The subjects are not really the issue it is the experience that the children do not want in what we offer as a sixth form which we are now focussing on.

ii. ESW Audit Planning Report 2022

Trustees acknowledge receipt of the Audit plan.

AH asked if retendering will happen now for next year as noted in the Academy Trust Handbook as this has not been retendered for a number of years and the Handbook suggests retendering every 5 years.

SW commented, as expressed in the Finance Committee, that there is not a lot to gain and an awful lot to lose.

PART 2 DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWED

KK would welcome thoughts on whether we should be retendering or appointing the same Auditors for next year.

ACTION 5: Trustees are invited to review whether the Trust should retender for Auditors for next year



ESW443. Governance

i. Succession Planning

MS shared that this was about looking at the Trust Board and the skill set now and, in the future, and advertising for Trustees in LinkedIn and other platforms.

ACTION 6: Trustees support publishing adverts for new Trustees

ii. Board Committee Membership

GA to be removed from PSC as he is now chair of the FC.

JF stepping down from chairing FC and GA will now Chair the FC.

iii. Feedback from Chairs' Forum

MS had nothing to note. Matters arising from LGBs

iv. Governor training

Training for the year communicated to Trustees, Governors and Members.

ESW444. Policies

i. Policies – for review and approval

DECISION: Delegated Trustees to review the policies and communicate with Operational staff then Board to approve

TH suggested that we go back to SoD again to look at policies and delegation of approval.

#	<u>Policy Name</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Last Updated</u>	<u>Comments</u>
i	Exclusions Policy	TH/AF	Oct-21	Amended
ii	Staff Wellbeing Policy	TH/AF	Oct-21	Amended
iii	Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy	MS/GA	Oct-21	No Amendments
iv	<i>Support Staff Appraisal Policy</i>	<i>SW/GA</i>	<i>Oct-19</i>	<i>Moved to December Board for approval</i>
v	<i>Financial Admin</i>	<i>SW/JF</i>	<i>Oct-21</i>	
vi	<i>Redundancy Policy</i>	<i>SW/JF</i>	<i>Oct-19</i>	
vii	Curriculum Teaching and Learning Policy	TH/JS	Oct-21	No Amendments
viii	Prevent Policy	MS/KK	Oct-21	No Amendments
ix	Equality and Diversity Policy	MS/TH	Oct-21	tbc
x	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	TH/KK	Oct-21	Amended
xii	Acceptable Use Policy	SW/BT	Oct-18	Amended

All Trustees approve the policies other than Exclusions which will be reviewed by AF.

ii. Assigning Trustees to Policies

ACTION 7: MS/KK to review the Assigning Trustees to Policies schedule



ESW445. Items signed on behalf of the trust and significant matters to be brought to the Board

MS signed a £10k from the Trust School improvement Board.

MS signed on behalf of the Trust for Roger pope to do 5 days work for the teaching hub as an ESW associate.

Next meeting

Board – 6pm Thursday 8 December 2022