



**Education South West**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

**6pm Thursday 2 February 2023**

**KEVICC/Teams**

**Attendees:**

Matthew Shanks (MS), 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)

	Agenda Item
<b>ESW 452</b>	<b>Apologies, Declarations of interest</b> None were declared by Trustees.
<b>ESW 453</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meeting &amp; matters arising</b> <b>ACTION 1: SW to request HT's to include Bromcom contact information in the next newsletters.</b> MS no issues with Bromcom aside from with one school. Concern from the parents point of view as it won't do things the way it did before so some staff are not doing it properly. At the last Govs TEI meeting they wanted to go back to the old system and we need meeting in the middle. This is being looked at now and in retrospect, better communication around the implementation of the new Bromcom system would have been beneficial. <b>ACTION 2: MS to facilitate communication to parents around the benefits of Bromcom.</b> As above.  <b>ACTION 3: KK to convey to Chairs and MS to convey to HT's about attendance being focus for the next LGB meeting (PTD to draft email) (Complete)</b>
<b>ESW 454</b>	<b>Shared Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Any questions arising from the Shared Services report</b>  <i>AH enquired if a communication had been sent to Wynstream?</i> SW the plan is for the HT to talk to staff next week about a significant restructuring and redundancies as they are massively overstaffed. The Chair and the HT recognise that they need to distance themselves that this will happen literally the day after they join ESW. HT thinks that the staff will understand as this would have happened regardless of the school joining the Trust. The roll has plummeted from 420 (2021) to 300 in September (2023) and there is a risk of a PR disaster but SW confirmed to Trustees that we are doing all that we can. Shortly after half term will be commencement of the formal TUPE process. This is close to the redundancy process starting and we are legally obliged to mention this in the TUPE process. We will </li> </ul>



communicate that the HT and Chair have already informed staff and ESW that significant restructuring is necessary and that this process has already begun.

*AH stressed that the planning of the communications to parents needs to be clear and timely.* MS explained the communication plan and he has let the RSC know that this will happen and that this will have a negative impact. If the conversion does not go through on 1<sup>st</sup> April because of issues elsewhere then DCC PIPs team will be notified. SW reiterated that have to start this immediately so we can give staff notice by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 so that costs are reduced by September 2023. TH said that parent voice showed that ESW was the preferred Trust by the majority, but it is not going to be a smooth process.

*GA asked if there was capacity to transfer some staff to other schools in the Trust?* TH confirmed that it was a possibility, however there are very few vacancies across ESW. *AF inquired about the falling roll and asked why has it gone down and what is the prospect for turning this around?* MS said that this was predictable as there are too many classes that need streamlining.

KK asked about the risk register and if Wynstream is now added as a reputational risk. MS confirmed that it will be and then it will be shared.

**ACTION 1: MS to share risk register when updated, with Trustees.**

*BT enquired about the land situation at KEVICC.* SW explained that it has been sitting with the Secretary of State (SOS) for the last 8 months. Our lawyers believe that there is no reason that it could be legally challenged and for the SOS not to approve it. The reality is that when we get approval, building will not commence until 2026/27 or 2027/28. Even then, the money will be released to ESW in tranches after the different stages are built which will take sometime

*BT asked if we had enough reserves for micro regeneration of energy?* SW has not considered a wind turbine and shared that the money ESW gets back on the water turbine that feeds KEVICC is minimal. The challenge is what we prioritise to spend our capital on.

*AH enquired if ESW has any Trust targets relating to the of lowering carbon emissions?* SW responded that there are not set specific targets but that we are doing work to identify where we can reduce our energy consumption. The team is looking at data to identify unusual energy spikes (ie over a weekend) and are finding out the cause and resolving it.

*DP asked if we have engaged an external expert to review our buildings to identify possible energy reducing strategies.* SW indicated that the quote for this is far too expensive. DP believes that we need to understand all the possibilities about energy consumptions and be ahead of the legislation and regulation regarding alternative energy sources.

**ACTION 2: DP and SW to meet to discuss ESW's carbon footprint and energy consumption to review options.**

- **Finance committee update**

- a) GA outlined the highlights from the 8<sup>th</sup> December meeting. The possibility of retendering for the auditors was discusses as they as ESW has used them now for the past 5 years. SW and GA have a meeting with Francis Clarke lead partner to review the scope of the audit and ensure that we are maximising our learnings from the audit.



	<p>b) The scope of our internal audit was discussed and the is still work in progress. GA has been doing some work on it and will bring back to MS and SW ahead of the next FC meeting to ensure that we are doing enough in this area.</p> <p>c) October Management accounts were reviewed</p> <p>d) The Committee looked at the audit report and SW and team were congratulated</p> <p>e) They also looked at annual report and recommended them to the Board to put forward for the AGM.</p>
ESW 455	<p><b>Education Performance &amp; Safeguarding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Any questions arising from the DoE report</b></li> </ul> <p><i>BT wanted to know about the validity of the data and what is it telling us.</i> TH has increased the focus on disadvantaged and the KS5 data not as good as it was previously with the new Bromcom but it is being sorted out. Year 10's are doing better than year 11's generally and there are lots of catch-up programs going on across most of the schools. There is no slack this year in terms of the grades so we are pushing for the maximum achievement. This data is from data drop 1 and by next time we will have information from data drop 2 and we hope to see the impact of the interventions. The assessments that are being fed into the Bromcom are more robust so the data feels more secure.</p> <p><i>GA noted that the secondary national data is from 2019</i> and TH explained that we have not national data on the secondary pupils so this is presented as the year behind. MS shared that we received all the schools P8's this afternoon.</p> <p><i>AH wanted to know why the UTC SEND support for pupils has shot up to about 75%.</i> TH told Trustees that the pupils join at year 10 and for many of them mainstream school has failed them. Pupils now are starting to choose the UTC after the rebranding and it is important to note that we are taking to pupils within year and these tend to be moving because they are experiencing difficulties. TH noted that there are small numbers that skewed the % data.</p> <p><i>KK noted that 48 extra pupils have required SEND support and asked what is the assurance that the school is getting this right in terms of identifying the students and giving them the right support?</i> TH shared that Steve McShane did a review in the Autumn term and this figure is accurate. The SENDCo is brilliant at the UTC and these children have very particular needs.</p> <p><b>ACTION 3: TH to include SEND with the data presented to Trustees.</b></p> <p><i>AH asked about the attendance data and its accuracy as it includes primaries, secondaries and all through?</i> TH directed Trustees to look at the national data and broadly all of our schools are in line with national data.</p> <p><b>ACTION 4: AH asked TH that the attendance data be re-looked at so it is more accurately presented to Trustees.</b></p> <p><i>AF asked about turnover in staff and the safeguarding situation now we are half way through the first Spring 1 term.</i> TH reassured Trustees that they are continuing to invest a lot of time with those schools with JK and SM and RC attending onsite regularly, so we are very confident regarding safeguarding and the culture of safeguarding. They need to challenge week teaching and we are supporting them improve.</p>



*KK why did 10 children leave from DAR?* TH explained that we have had a really unsettled time in secondary with no English teachers and behaviour has been an issue. This has settled now and Paul has established clear guidelines for behaviour which was not received well by some parents. We have moved staff across the trust to stabilise the situation. TH added that there is a significant positive difference with the behaviour statistics this half term and it is greatly improved. *KK asked if we are getting the support right for the children with SEND and disadvantaged needs?* TH confirmed that PEX are going down across the Trust, but suspensions are going up. When a child comes back from suspension, what are we doing to help them to be successful is being really looked at. We can direct pupils offsite in another school without parental consent which is a change in the law. This can give children a fresh start and it works for some but not others. MS added that this is what the aspect of adaptive teaching is all about. Incidentally, Bloomsbury publishers have commissioned Jon Eaton to write a book on Adaptive teaching. We need to push what we are doing around adaptive teaching and this is really positive and no one else is doing anything around this topic.

TH added that we are not there yet but it is getting there and something has to change when the child comes back to school from a suspension. We are getting better at this and there is a huge focus on this at the moment.

- **PSC Committee update**

*DP summarised the PSC meeting that was held on the 9 Jan 2023.* Met with CDLs on inclusion (Sam Battershall and we heard about the SEND community being built across the Trust and how they are learning from each other. Challenges around EHCP plans were discussed and Nichola Offer and John Reid spoke about disadvantaged. They reiterated as to how the South West very poorly rated nationally. Is interesting to see how people see their curriculums and the visions for the children. Tina Graham and Steve Tucker spoke about the challenges when TG joined KCC and checked in with the chair ST to determine 'how do you know'.

*BT added that he really enjoys the PSC meetings and praised the presentations and the knowledge of the experts who join the meeting.*

**ESW 456**

**Strategic Direction**

- **Risk register overview**

MS will share this with Trustees, which will include the latest update.

- **CEO report**

Trustees thanked MS for his report and had no questions.

- **Strategic Plan Review**

- FOCUS: Objective 2

Be a leader in the sector; working with and for others for the greater good

MS shared that he has been asked to extend his time with Devon up to Christmas 2023 in order to complete some of the projects that are currently underway. There is a new CEO arriving at DCC and this will be depending on their wishes. The benefit is that Devon pay 2/5 of MS salary for a term. In turn, we can use this to keep Steve McShane who has been amazing around the SEND for the Trust. In addition, this will give capacity to TH to give more of her wisdom and brilliance to other people. Our intention is to advertise for two positions in the School Improvement area and they will go around the schools, similarly to the role that Rob Coles is doing now and around a 0.4 fulltime position.



*AF asked if S McShane is available to stay and MS said he is desperate to stay. DP asked if there is there any other benefit for the Trust from MS's proximity to DCC? MS confirmed that we get benefits in kind (a positive reputation for ESW in supporting Devon). The benefits are more for Devon than for ESW but MS can also push ethos and values that we have in the Trust. There is great professional development for MS and it is really challenging to have a boss for the first time since 2009 who holds him to account. Staying on at Devon will benefit the Trust when those projects are completed. MS will step away from DCC if this is not achieved.*

*DP asked about the optimal plan for growth for the Trust. MS shared that today we were asked to take on two more primary schools in Exeter which we are considering. We have 12 schools at the moment and there is a possibility that we can move to 20 over the next few years with the current schools we are working with end up joining us.*

- Update on Objective 4

Invest in leadership potential whilst managing talent

*AF wanted to know about the situation in ESW around succession planning for senior Trust leaders. Appointing two more School Improvement leads on a part time basis. We have seen a turnover in HT's relatively recently so will this affect current HT's? MS noted that some HT's have been in place 4 or 5 years which is around the time they might start to look for a new challenge so this may fit it and it will strengthen the support the Trust can give. TH added that we need to think about the middle leaders and how we can support them to grow. DP enquired if this is a similar situation for SW and his team? MS confirmed that we need the right people running the Trust with the right skill set and values. TH added that we also don't want to lose excellent leaders. SW believes that it is also about that when we promote or bring people in that we ensure that they are the right people. There is a danger when other schools join the Trust and we 'find' a position for them that they may not be ready for or capable of.*

*KK summarised that we need to focus on succession planning for all of you, MS, TH and SW and stressed the impact on the Trust if one of them was no longer in place. MS asked for support of the Trustees when interviewing potential candidates in these senior positions. We need to ensure that we are bringing people on and that they are transferring their skills as well as building new skills. Trustees were supportive and GA noted the importance of on the job training and how it can benefit all involved.*

**ACTION 5:** The action plan to be tabled at the next meeting so Trustees can update the Trust strategic goals

**ESW 457**

**Governance**

- **LGB (headlines/minutes)**

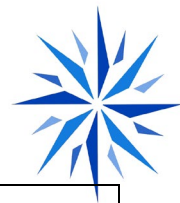
MS shared that there have been positive outcomes from the LGB's meetings that are always attended by MS/TH/JK.

- **Policies**

- Code of Conduct for Employees Policy (MS/AH)

**ACTION 6:** Code of Conduct for Employees Policy to be tabled at the next Board meeting

- Leave of Absence Policy (MS/DP)



	Approved by all Trustees
<b>ESW 458</b>	<b>AOB</b> <i>BT introduced Chat GPT which is an AI learning tool that is free for now but Microsoft has just bought it. It is extraordinary and it is a disruptor for education so how do we tap into it? AF was concerned about its accuracy as a learning tool. MS responded that when we know it has the required accuracy going forward then we can tap into it.</i>
	<b>Next Meeting: 6pm, Thursday 23 March 2023 @ Coombeshead</b>