



EDUCATION SOUTH WEST TRUST BOARD

Part 1 Minutes of the meeting of the Trust Board of Education South West held at Teign School / virtually at 6.30pm on Thursday 12th December 2024.

Name	Role	Absent / Present
Graham Austin GA	Trustee, Chair	Present
Beth Brooks BB	Trustee	Absent
Gail Brown GB	Trustee	Present via Teams
Annelie Fearon AF	Trustee	Present via Teams
Jennifer Gibbs JG	Trustee	Absent
Adrian Hines AH	Trustee, Vice-Chair	Present
David Potter DP	Trustee	Present
Matthew Shanks MS	Executive Principal and Trust Leader	Present
Jenny Sutton JS	Trustee	Present via Teams
Barrie Taylor BT	Trustee	Absent
Executive Board		
Rob Coles RC	Deputy CEO	Absent
Andy Goodwin AG	Trust Safeguarding and Attendance Lead	Absent
Jayne Keller JK	Director of Education	Present via Teams
Suzannah Wharf SLW	Director of Education	Present
Stuart White SW	Chief Financial and Operating Officer	Present
Invitees		
Jackie Ridding	Governor Services Clerk	Present via Teams

1	<u>WELCOME</u>					
	GA welcomed everyone to the meeting.					
2	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>					
2.1	Apologies for absence were received from Beth Brooks, Jennifer Gibbs and Barrie Taylor.					
2.2	Trustees consented to these absences.					
3	<u>DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND BUSINESS INTERESTS</u>					
3.1	No declarations of pecuniary or other interests regarding items on the agenda were made.					
3.2	No declarations of gifts or hospitality had been received or given since the last meeting.					
4	<u>MINUTES</u>					
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24th October 2024 were approved and would be signed by the chair.					
4.2	Matters arising from the minutes					
	Action Point	Agenda Item	Action	By Whom	By When	Status



	<table><tr><td>AP1</td><td>3.3</td><td>Clerk to ensure register of interests was uploaded to the website.</td><td>Clerk</td><td>ASAP</td><td>Completed</td></tr><tr><td>AP2</td><td>7</td><td>Trustees to confirm they were not automatically disqualified from acting as trustees on GovernorHub.</td><td>Trustees</td><td>Next meeting</td><td>Completed</td></tr></table>	AP1	3.3	Clerk to ensure register of interests was uploaded to the website.	Clerk	ASAP	Completed	AP2	7	Trustees to confirm they were not automatically disqualified from acting as trustees on GovernorHub.	Trustees	Next meeting	Completed	
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	<p>MS noted the scheme of delegation did not include the deputy CEO (DCEO) role but would ensure it was updated when it was due for review at the end of the year. AH suggested they should include a record of the changes made. GB suggested until it was updated, the CEO would delegate to the DCEO.</p>													
5	<u>FINANCE</u>													
5.1	<u>Finance and Internal Assurance Committee report from the meeting held on Thursday 7th November 2024 and Thursday 12th December 2024</u>													
	<p>AH reported on the meetings held on 7th November 2024 and 12th December 2024 and explained the following items had been discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial updates and planning.• The secondary catering review had a positive start and they were making progress.• The Going Concern statement was approved.• Cyber-security and possible actions to be taken to reduce the number of breaches.• Health and safety risk dashboard.• Safeguarding dashboard.• Structure of the finance committee now the trust was due to exceed the £50M income threshold. They would need a separate Audit and Risk Committee and the terms of reference was being prepared.• DP had agreed to chair the Audit and Risk Committee.• Climate action plan.• The annual reports and accounts were approved.• They had received a clean audit report. <p>Trustees commended SW and his team for their work on the audit and throughout the year.</p> <p>Trustees approved the recommendation to sign off the accounts.</p>													
5.2	<u>Shared Services Verbal Report</u>													
	<p>SW explained the catering plans would be applied to the primary schools in a similar way to the secondary schools. He said this should start at the beginning of January 2025.</p> <p>SW reported they had applied for the low carbon skills fund which would provide funding for experts to carry out a heat decarbonisation study at each school. He explained the studies would be needed to apply for extra grants. SW said they had been informed they had been unsuccessful in the random allocation rank but were told their application would have met the requirements.</p> <p>Trustees asked what the next steps would be. SW explained they were working with another group called Retrofit Action for Tomorrow (RAFT) who were much cheaper but they would not be able to carry out a study at every school. He said the</p>													



trust would pay for the studies which would cost between £15,000 and £20,000 and would enable them to apply for some capital money to carry out work.

Trustees asked if the trust had identified which schools they should focus on for the studies. SW said RAFT would help to select the schools based on those they would most likely receive funding for.

Trustees asked if South Devon UTC had any merits for innovation funding. MS noted it would be worth exploring.

SW reported they were working on a new IT HR system which would provide a fully integrated model and provide more data. He explained there would be an application tracking system job candidates would be able to apply through. SW said the system was called My New Term and currently had 25%-30% of teaching vacancies on it.

Trustees asked if it changed how they would advertise. SW explained it was an automated process where schools could advertise their jobs and it linked with other platforms. He said they would need to buy a licence to use it which would cost £14,000 but noted they would still advertise on other platforms.

Trustees asked if they were getting any candidates from SWIFT. MS explained this was the first year of their training through SWIFT but they had already identified some trainee teachers who would fit into vacancies.

SW explained they were rolling out a platform to manage the schools' websites over the next 6 months which would make the websites much easier to manage.

SW explained he was working with Tom Dring to improve the physical network resilience ensuring they had business continuity and disaster recovery built in. He said in some cases, this would involve installing additional servers or broadband connections.

Trustees asked if the DfE recommended on-premises backup or cloud backup. SW said they currently had a combination of both at the trust but the DfE did not recommend either. He suggested they could meet to discuss the options.

Trustees asked what the procurement process was for apps and software. SW explained they purchased all software and hardware through the public sector framework and sought 3 quotes for the larger purchases.

Trustees asked if they were always satisfied with the clauses in the contracts they signed up to. SW explained they always carried out due diligence. He said they had recently procured some printers but needed to help write the contracts with support from the DfE.

7.01pm JS joined the meeting.

SW reported they had built a database for initial teacher training and had been asked to build a similar system for the teaching school hub.

SW explained Tom Dring had explored 14 different options for email pop-ups but they were all approximately £20,000. Trustees suggested they needed to identify if it was the same people making the mistakes and to establish the risk of not putting something in place against the cost of putting it in place. SW explained the breaches



	were usually emails being sent to the wrong people. He said the breaches they had never reached the threshold where they needed to be reported. MS suggested it needed more consideration because it was a lot money which was needed elsewhere.	
6	<u>PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS</u>	
6.1	<u>Performance and Standards Committee Report from Monday 25th November 2024</u>	
	<p>AF reported back from the Performance and Standards Committee. She explained Tom Graham who was a director of curriculum, quality and innovation (DCQI) spoke about the shared work on developing the curriculum and ensuring it was accessible to all.</p> <p>AF reported David Goldsmith who was chair of South Devon UTC LGB said the developments at the school were having an impact with attendance and results. She said they had issues with the number of students in KS5 possibly because of the issues related to T-levels.</p> <p>AF reported parental feedback at South Devon UTC had been positive and David had expressed his wish for the trust to publicise what was on offer at the school.</p> <p>AF said the committee also had a presentation from Rupert Greeves who was the trust leader for maths.</p> <p>MS shared an update from Rob Coles:</p> <p><i>The pre-public exam (PPE) outcomes were higher than at the same point in the previous year and there were raising standards checklists in place across the primary and secondary schools. The reviews had focused on English and maths, particularly the quality of education. The key areas of focus were book writes, curriculum, developing a trust-wide reading scheme and looking at the way maths and English were taught in primary schools.</i></p> <p><i>The curriculum in primary schools would have the 12 curriculum areas fully sequenced and resourced by the end of the current academic year and all 15 fully sequenced and resourced by the end of 2026. The primary curriculum delivery had moved into a collective responsibility phase to drive co-ownership of the curriculum and resources. This would continue to move to each subject having a monitoring week followed by a network meeting to discuss the data; this would take place once per term to develop the curriculum.</i></p> <p><i>In secondary schools, by the summer of 2025, the majority of the KS3 common curriculum would be developed which would include resources. They would also be largely synchronised in terms of the common GCSE specifications and plan sequences.</i></p> <p>MS explained the curriculum work had been happening for over 4 years and they needed a new iteration linked with the desire to improve the outcomes whilst continuing to be inclusive. He said they also needed to identify the new leaders and ask the curriculum leaders and raising standards leaders to continue to collaborate with the development of the GCSE schemes, except for English, maths and science.</p> <p>A discussion was held which was recorded in the Part 2 minutes.</p>	



MS reported the majority of students surveyed in the safeguarding audit said they felt safe at school. He said 9 schools still needed to complete their safeguarding audits and the main areas of focus were the upskilling of safeguarding governors, staff training on honour-based abuse and children missing from education and improving students' understanding about factors and terminology relating to radicalisation. MS explained they would formalise the supervision of DSLs and noted the DSLs had met twice so far this year and had focused on the consistency around operational tasks. He said there were challenges for the DSLs balancing their time for safeguarding and other activities.

MS reported the attendance hub had met twice with the main focus being embedding a new strategy and considering ways to reduce the barriers to attendance. He said the attendance officers were communicating regularly to share good practice. MS noted the overall attendance was better than the previous year but the data had been impacted when the trust agreed to keep the schools open during the snow. He said they were discussing with Devon County Council if they could amend this because some children were unable to get into school in the snow but the trust chose to keep the schools open to support families.

MS reported the school reviews had taken place at all schools, except for Kingsteignton which was cancelled due to an Ofsted inspection. He said the reviews had been completed and they had shared with the headteachers the action points as part of the school improvement quality assurance framework.

MS explained from January 2025, there would not always be a named person visiting each school once a week or once a fortnight and they would focus on the schools who needed the support more.

MS reported instructional coaching was embedded across the trust and the engagement levels had increased. He said they would have community hubs around some of the primary schools which would provide early intervention and family support.

A discussion was held which was included in the Part 2 minutes.

MS reported the trust had spent lots of money on the maths block at Teign but due to an increase in prices, they were unable to do all the work they wanted. He said Nick Banwell had created links with the Rotary Club who had agreed to provide planters and benches.

Trustees asked if the LGB governors were engaged. MS reported most of them were but some governors were not always aware of the role of the LGB governor.

MS reported Homelands Primary School had applied to join ESW despite the Regional Director telling them they could not. He said the Regional Director visited ESW and would share the data with the trustees.

MS explained he shared the high-quality trust framework with the Regional Director which stated what the trust was good at. He said the Regional Director had agreed ESW were a good trust. MS shared some examples where the trust had supported pupils even though there had been a negative impact on the data.



	<p>GA explained the visit from the Regional Director had been useful and they had stressed the ethos of inclusion and collaboration. MS said the Regional Director was very focused on data but he felt they had been listened to.</p> <p>Trustees asked if there had been any indication the Regional Director understood the work ESW did. MS explained they had often received comments demonstrating they understood but this was not always reflected in the decisions made. JK said there had been interesting conversations where the Regional Director indicated they wanted ESW to collaborate in regional work.</p> <p>Trustees asked if there were any conclusions to be made from the Denford termly review. MS reported the headteachers had given positive feedback from working with Denford because it was saving them lots of work. He said the trust needed to get better at putting positive information on social media. MS said there were still negative comments made on social media and in the press but Denford had been good at picking these up.</p> <p>Trustees asked if the annual report had been used proactively to promote the trust. MS reported it had been sent to every councillor, every local primary school and secondary school in the catchment areas as well as every MP and the chair of the confederation of school trusts. He said they had put hard copies in all schools' reception areas.</p>	
6.2	<u>Deputy CEO Report</u>	
	The DCEO report was included in item 6.1.	
7	<u>STRATEGIC DIRECTION</u>	
7.1	<u>Strategic Plan Overview</u>	
	The strategic plan overview was included in item 6.1.	
7.2	<u>CEO Verbal Report</u>	
	The CEO report was included in item 6.1.	
8	<u>GOVERNANCE</u>	
	<p>Trustees discussed the committee structure and it was agreed AF would remain on the finance and audit and risk committees but would leave the performance and standards committee. They discussed the need for the terms of reference to be amended to include a separate audit and risk committee.</p> <p>MS suggested they could consider a hub LGB model with Kingsteignton and Rydon as the schools were close together and it would help with the numbers.</p> <p>Trustees asked if the schools welcomed the relationship with the LGBs. SLW said the LGBs provided scrutiny and challenge. JK noted the problems occurred when governors joined and expected the same level of focus as governors in a maintained school would have.</p> <p>The list of governors to be appointed or reappointed was shared on GovernorHub prior to the meeting. Trustees approved the LGB governors to be appointed or</p>	



	reappointed. It was noted one LGB had more than 2 parent governors and MS agreed to amend the LGB terms of reference which stated there should be only 2 parent governors.	AP1
9	<u>POLICIES FOR REVIEW</u>	
	Trustees noted the following policies had been approved : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Policies 2026/2027 which had been reviewed by the LGBs • SEND Policy 2024-2025 • Sexual Harassment Policy • Staff Wellbeing Policy 2024-2026 • Teacher Appraisal Policy 2024-2025 	
10	<u>FEEDBACK FROM LGBs</u>	
	The feedback from the LGBs was shared on GovernorHub prior to the meeting. MS noted not all LGBs had submitted feedback. He asked clerks to ensure this was discussed at every LGB meeting. GA noted it was good to see there were positive points raised about the trust reviews.	
11	<u>MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIR OR CEO</u>	
	There were no matters brought forward by the chair or CEO.	
12	<u>PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/2024 AT 6.00PM</u>	
	Trustees confirmed that the next meeting of the Trust Board would be held at 6.30pm on Thursday 6th February 2025 following the AGM. Trustees agreed the programme of meeting dates for the 2024/2025 academic year as follows (locations to be confirmed): Thursday 27 th March 2025 at 6.00pm Thursday 22 nd May 2025 at 6.00pm Thursday 10 th July 2025 at 6.00pm	

The meeting closed at 7.51pm.

Signed

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Dated

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Action Log

Action Point	Agenda Item	Action	By Whom	By When	Status
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AP1	8	MS to amend the LGB terms of reference to allow for more parent governors.	MS	Next meeting	
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