



Education South West

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday 15 July, 2021 – 6.30pm

Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Peter Di Giuseppe (PDG), Matthew Shanks (MS), Jeremy Fothergill (JF), David Potter (DP), Lindsay Yelland (LY), Kellie Knott (KK), Stephen Tucker (ST)
In attendance: Stuart White (SW), Tracy Hannon (TH), Caroline Battong (CB), Martin Smith (MSm)
Apologies: Jenny Sutton (JS), Barry Taylor (BT)
Notes: Pippa Truman Davies (PTD)
Quorum: 50% of the total number of Non-Executive Directors (4, not including MS)

ESW351. Apologies

Apologies have been received from Jenny Sutton (JS) and Barrie Taylor (BS). Also noted that Steve Tucker (ST) will be late joining.

JF, DP, ST and PDG had a meeting on 13 July 2021 with Sir David Carter as part of the Ambition Institute review of our Trust. We should do something in September where we have a meeting without an agenda to discuss how we run our Trust and find someone to lead the discussions.

ESW352. Declarations of Interest & Directors statement

No declaration made. PDG reminded Trustees to complete their annual declaration by 30th July 2021.

ESW353. Minutes

- i. Minutes of previous Board meeting, 20 May 2021 – Part I and 2 attached.
All approved as a fair record
- ii. Minutes from Performance and Standards Committee meeting (no meeting held)
- iii. Minutes from Finance Committee meeting (April and July 2021). April minutes noted, July minutes are still in process.

ESW354. Matters arising from the previous meeting

Trustees noted the action points completed and those still in progress. No questions were raised.

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ESW355. Report from CEO, including strategic planning document 2020-2026

JF asked MS how will we know what has changed in the report next time? MS will be adding another column so that the Trustees will be able to track the changes over time. KK found the RAG rating really useful but felt that it was only a snapshot of what was happening. The impact was not noted. Ultimately, she wanted to know what the impact was on children at completion.

MS stated that the RAG rating shows how we have met the agreed success criteria where the impact has already been considered. SW, TH and MS will be meeting weekly to review the document and this report is linked to Heads of Schools and HT's improvement plans so the themes are cascaded down.

TH noted that the PSC will report in more detail around achievement.

KK would like the document to capture more so we need less additional information, resulting in the document being clearer. Overall, she liked the document.

No further challenges.

PDG asked MS for an update on student attendance and the effect of COVID at Teign and Coombeshead.

MS said that Public Health England (PHE) were concerned about the number of cases in the community. We took the decision to close year 10s' at Coombeshead and Teign so the children are now at home engaging in home learning. There is a similar situation percentage-wise in year 7 at Dartmouth where the virus was spread socially at a skate park. MS noted the pressure on resources at these schools the last few weeks with the track and trace process. In the meeting PHE confirmed that schools from next week are no longer conducting track and trace, however they would like Teign and Coombeshead to continue to track and trace. PHE also pointed out that if we find children have been in contact with a positive COVID case, we have no jurisdiction to instruct parents to enforce isolation. We should not risk confrontation with parents as they can insist on their children returning to school.

PDG asked if PHE instructed or advised the Trust? SW commented that PHE are recommending to us that we continue track and trace but it is not backed by law or the DfE at this moment in time. They don't have the legal foundation on which to reinforce it.

LY stated that the Board is supportive of the schools' current approach – schools can only carry on doing what they are doing and it is a quite fortuitous that term ends when it does.

PDG said Trustees are happy to support whatever legal position the schools choose to take.

Martin Smith joined at 6.58pm

MSm introduced himself. He is the Director of the Kingsbridge Teaching School Hub and a wider partnership called the South West Institute for Teaching. Trustees will know that ESW has been a key organisation in supporting schools across Devon, Plymouth, Torbay and the wider area, as a teaching and research school and also as a provider of NPQs. Colleagues like MS have supported schools through their NLE role in addition to a number of SLE's within the Trust. ESW has a large-scale outreach program of which SWIFT and Kingsbridge Teaching School Hub are part of.



John Eaton runs the Research School and Sarah Frame is the Deputy Director. Overseeing this is Roger Pope who is the strategic lead.

As a Trust it brings us the ability to work with the best of national and best of regional. For example, as a Teaching School Hub, we took on the delivery of the new Early Career Framework 2-year programme. As a result, all of the Trust's early career teachers had access to the training a year early. In addition, we sourced a delivery lead from within the Trust so we have gained a lot of benefits.

This has impacted positively the growth of Trust leaders as they have gained experience and skills that is fed back into the Trust and helped their career progression.

Additional benefits – we run a wide range of courses for teachers and teaching assistants and wider workforce. The Trust schools can request bespoke training and we support the Trust that way.

We have been very well supported by Shared Services; providing financial management data reporting and the IT support. They also utilise Zoe Williamson and her team.

Expertise in the Trust assists the organisation immensely. It is a symbiotic relationship that benefits the Trust and the wider network of Schools and other networks out there.

PDG asked about the training aspects and the impact on retention of staff, especially the career path for early career teachers (ECF). MSm responded that they provide excellent support both at the start of their careers and moving through their career. We would like to track the progress of ECF over time to monitor the impact of this work.

JF asked what is the take up of CPD of teachers across the schools.

MSm did not have that information to hand. The information exists in multiple areas across the Trust and he is currently working with Rob Skegg on a reporting system that can answer this on a termly basis by school across the Trust.

PDG concurred that it would be helpful to benchmark.

MSm left the meeting at 7.12pm.

ESW356. Report from Director of School Improvement

LY asked if all the LGB Chairs were level 3 safeguard trained? It has been recommended that at least one person on each LGB had training alongside the nominated safeguarding governor.

ACTION: TH will confirm which Chairs have completed the training.

PDG noted that the section of the report reviewing complaints was very informative.

MS noted that we agreed to a weekly update to the chair of the local board for the complaints produced by the executive leader from that School. In terms of the Link Governors, Paul Girardot will produce the report.

LY questioned if a monthly report would be better than a weekly one?

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There followed a Part Two discussion.

LY questioned why UTC was at 0% for safeguarding training

TH responded that this was just linked to the Hays training programme which the staff/governors do once as part of their general induction. Due to the mid-year handover of UTC, the existing UTC governors have not done this training. Their safeguarding lead is part of the safeguarding group across the Trust and they will come onboard with the rest of our safeguarding.

LY raised a concern about the risk that the UTC board had no safeguarding training.

TH said from September, there will be a catalogue of safeguarding training available to all, developed by our DSL's for those who have completed the Hays training already. A suggestion is that LGB's start 10 mins early to do a training together at the start of the meeting.

DP referred to the section about support for other schools and asked for further clarification.

TH responded that some of this sits outside the teaching school support. For example, Wynstream have bought in 10 days of time and CTSM is buying into a management partnership.

DP asked is this part of the Trust's wider contribution or is it a mini-consultancy?

MS said that this is supporting children where people have reached out to us. It also supports the growth and development staff, and builds the reputation of the Trust in addition to helping children. It is encouraging expansion of the Trust and improving education in Torbay. MS confirmed that this is part of our strategic objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5 in the strategic plan.

KK asked about the internal safeguarding training using internal expertise and from where do we get our external assurance?

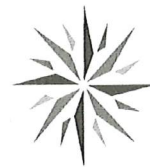
TH responded that our Trust DSLs Jo Chappell and Andy Goodwin attend the Devon updates with safeguarding training. We have bought into the National College so they are getting the top-level training across all safeguarding topics.

LY asked about where the money goes that is generated when we work with other schools, especially as the staff being utilised are being paid from the School Improvement budget

MS confirmed that it goes into the Shared Services budget and that helps to fund the school improvement team costs. It is useful because we gave three weekends supporting Gloucestershire schools, and in return we received fantastic MFL support from their MFL national lead. We do this to support other schools and it then provides developmental opportunities for our own staff, in turn, improving staff retention.

TH also noted that we have schools who have not been inspected by Ofsted in a long time, and it is good for them to have exposure to other schools.

DP felt it would be good conversation to have on how we work as a Trust, including the wider focus of working with external education establishments.



MS reminded trustees at the conversation at Finance Committee around Central Services budget for school improvement expenditure which primarily involves re-distribution of and not additional costs to the Trust as a whole.

ACTION – MS to report on the impact of increased spending on school improvement at next Board meeting.

PDG asked there anything that needs to be drawn out from the appendices.

TH highlighted the capacity risk register is designed to show changes from the last report.

There followed a Part Two discussion.

PDG asked if the LGB's get a more detailed breakdown for their schools?

TH said they do not at the moment but will do from September. HTs have improved at identifying weak/strong areas.

PDG finds appendix I a useful document.

TH pointed out that the Subject Communities are developing leaders to support improvement across our schools.

PDG asked about assessments.

TH - Examination boards have been in touch with all schools and asked for sample work and assessments. We are in the process of receiving feedback.

ACTION – TH to include the assessment information at next Board meeting, if available

There followed a Part Two discussion.

ESW357. Report from Finance Director and COO

SW noted that the Board needs to approve the budget for the 11 schools, Kingsbridge Teaching school hub and SWIFT. These last two budgets had been presented to the Finance Committee for the first time so that the Committee and Board are aware of the strategic risk.

There followed a Part Two discussion.

JF proposed on behalf of the Finance Committee that the Board approve the carefully prepared budgets. It was important to note that because of the financial strength of the Trust we are able to support a deficit budget.

Board approved budget for 2021/22 unanimously.

SW asked the Board to separately approve the budgets for SWIFT South and the Kingsbridge Teaching School Hub. It was important to note that both establishments are financially attached to Kingsbridge and therefore ESW.



JF – Finance Committee recommended that these budgets be approved. Board approved the SWIFT and Kingsbridge Teaching School Hub budget for 2021/22 unanimously.

DP asked if the DfE is giving us any support /resources to help us be ahead of the game with respect to cyber security.

SW said that we are ahead of the DfE and have the top industry accreditations, Cyber Essentials Plus. We work with a cyber security expert from Francis Clarke. We have an annual audit to ensure we are meeting standards. However, cyber security moves so quickly that Cyber Essentials Plus does not always keep up with real time development. Tom Dring, our IT manager, is very well connected and knowledgeable with the result that we are doing things in the Trust that are beyond what a cyber security audit would do.

DP wanted to know if we are doing enough and raising awareness about Safeguarding threats and disruption of education systems.

SW explained that the students are authenticated when they log on in a network secure way and also noted that we have an enhanced programme to identify safeguarding threats. We are evaluating a more enhanced solution that will improve this further and are working with the SGL's.

Board formally note the observations on Capital Planning that were approved by the Finance Committee.

PDG mentioned that an ESFA letter was sent to Matthew (as the Accounting officer) to be distributed to the Board. It highlights that there have been changes to the Trust Handbook, including suggested changes to the Articles of Association.

Trustees acknowledged they had seen the letter.

ESW358. Report on Teaching School Hub (SWiFT) (*Minutes from 29 June meeting and update from Martin Smith*)

ESW359. Governance

- i. Matters arising from LGB's
Nothing to report
- ii. Report on Members meeting from Peter Di Giuseppe
One positive applicant – Graham Austin. Because of his previous association with the Trust, he will meet with Sharon Marshall and Nick Grodhunce, Members with original ties to the south hub who do not know him. KK is in conversations with another potential applicant and Steve has approached another lady in the Kingsbridge area to whom an application pack has been sent this week.
KK asked if we are we going to advertise and how we ensure that we meet our diversity and skills criteria.
PDG confirmed that we will go to advertising if the second candidate does not materialise. Diversity is difficult. Gender is most easily resolved but ethnicity diversity is harder to achieve.



KK asked if there is anything else we can do to increase our diversity?
 MS has asked a few people but they have not come back to him. We are conscious of this; PDG and I are trying to address.
 BT asked that the Board considered wider diversity than simply gender and ethnicity.

8.21pm ST joined the meeting

- iii. Letter from Baroness Berridge June 2021 (New Handbook – see link)
- iv. Chairs' Forum Terms of Reference
 - PDG Q1 – Membership: what combination of the Board is to be represented at the Chairs' forum?
 - All agreed: Board Chair and two Trustees.
 - PDG Q2 – Chair: who chairs the forum?
 - All agreed: LGB Chair (suggested Adrian Hines; PDG to approach him).
 - PDG Q3 – Minute taking: is this required?
 - All agreed: Minute taking required.
 - PDG Q4 – Will a member of the Chairs' Forum attend the Board meeting to present the discussion at the previous Forum meeting?
 - All agreed: There is no requirement but should the necessity arise, it will be considered.
- v. Progress on recruiting Trustees
 - Please see ESW359ii above.

ESW360. Policies – for review and approval

#	<u>Policy Name</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Last Updated</u>	<u>Any Changes</u>
i.	Charging and Remissions Policy	SW/JF	July 2020	
ii.	Financial Administration Policy	SW/JF	July 2020	
iii.	Freedom of Information Policy	SW/BT	July 2018	
iv.	Gifts and Expenses Policy	SW/JF	July 2018	
v.	Equality and Objectives Annual Report	SW/KK	March 2020	
vi.	Supporting Pupils' with Medical Conditions Policy	MS/BT	July 2020	No
vii.	Attendance Policy	MS/JS	July 2019	No
viii.	Transgender Policy	TH/KK	New Policy	n/a
ix.	Whistleblowing Policy	MS/LY	July 2019	Yes
x.	First Absence Policy	MS	Amendment to Attendance Policy	n/a

PDG proposed that all are approved.

Board approved the all the Policies unanimously.



ESW361. Items signed on behalf of the Trust and significant matters to be brought to the Board

SW mentioned two contracts: -

- 1) The building contract for UTC refurbishment
- 2) The building contract for the toilet and classroom refurbishment and conversion at Kingsbridge.

PDG confirmed that he has approved both of these and that they were approved by the Finance Committee under delegated authority.

There followed a Part Two discussion.

PDG thanked CB for her service to the Board.

PDG thanked ST for his service to the Board.

PDG closed the Board meeting at 8.35pm.

Next meeting

Board – Thursday 7th October 2021 6.30pm

P. G. Quispe
22.10.21