



MEETING OF THE TWO COUNTIES TRUST BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monday 5th February 2018

Trustees: Ian Greenaway, Gillian Haslam, Karen Potts (Chair), Roman Ruszczynski, William Unsworth, Ruth Wheelhouse, Sue Coffey, Chris Hallam and Alison Chmiel

Trustees Present: Ian Greenaway, Gillian Haslam, Karen Potts (Chair), Roman Ruszczynski, William Unsworth, Sue Coffey, Chris Hallam and Alison Chmiel.

Member Link: Richard Stones

Also in attendance: Richard Vasey (CEO), Kevin Hearn (CFO), Debbie Duggan (HR) and Julie Wood (Minute taker)

Meeting opened 6.30pm (quorate)

52 **Welcome & Introductions**

The Chair welcomed Alison Chmiel and introductions took place.

a. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Richard Stones and Ruth Wheelhouse (received during the meeting). Gillian Haslam had informed prior to the meeting that she would need to leave early.

b. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

53 **Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2017**

The minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed as a true and accurate record with the highlighted change (should read Member rather than Governor Link).

Financial Benchmarking – KH circulated two financial hand-outs which included comparable data from other MATs (statement of financial activity, funds analysis and balance sheet, fund balances and top slice and service charges) and talked Trustees through the data.

Central Services Team (page 6) – DV said there has been a large amount of change in respect of finance procedures and spoke of his frustration of complaints around the quality of financial reports which governors receive. DV felt a good set of reports have been developed and these needed discussing with both financial personnel in each school and with Headteachers. The issue was about getting staff and Governors to access and understand them.

DV informed will raise this at the next Headteachers meeting where it will be made clear what the systems can produce. Headteachers need to understand the reports so they can explain variances and so on to their governors.

DV explained that there had been considerable training and KH talked through which reports had been sent out already adding that the finance pack will continue to be built up over time.

Discussion followed. IG asked if we have a collective view of all schools. WU replied that the issue is about the articulation of the information. KP asked if statement of requirements from all the schools had been taken at the start of the project. KH replied to explain the system timetable, and key dates and actions.

Signed

Date:

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On behalf of The Two Counties Trust



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AC spoke about the issues she had listened to when she attended Swanwick Hall School LGB. CH questioned the feedback from governors about not having the information and wondered why this had not been raised earlier if governors have not received the financial information they need for this year.

AC suggested there needed to be an assessment of financial maturity of all the schools and what actions are required. IG suggested this could be done through the Audit Committee.

GH left the meeting at 7.30pm.

Strategic discussion

a. TTCT Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting and the update was provided by DV.

b. Scheme of Delegation

The draft Scheme of Delegation had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting.

KP asked if the document had been cross referenced with the Articles of Association. Following discussion, it was agreed that KH would e-mail copies of the Articles of Association to new Trustees.

Dismissal of Governors and appointment of the Headteacher - AC questioned if this should be a Trust decision to which DV responded that he represented the Trust on the panel.

It was agreed that wording could be added in to reflect that under exceptional circumstances the Trust reserves the right to intervene in all areas. DV said he will be taking back the Scheme of Delegation to the Chairs of Governors in April.

CH suggested more formalised arrangements between Governors and Trustees. AC commented that it would be useful to review links with schools as Trustees. DV said a mechanism is required for Trustees to be able to hold LGBs to account.

SC suggested a thorough audit of all the internal communications was required. DV referred to the updates Headteachers receive on all decisions made.

WU/AC questioned if Trustees/Members should be split out on the scheme of delegation document by taking 'member' out and having a separate column as members are not decision makers, they scrutinise what Trustees do.

**Action: DV to revise and take the Scheme of Delegation back to Chairs of Governors.
KH to e-mail Articles of Association to new Trustees.**

c. QA report: Frederick Gent School.

The report had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting. DV said the report was for information and spoke of the positive experience.

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d. Summary strengths and areas for development

The Report had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting. DV informed Trustees this summarises the strengths and weakness of the schools in the Trust. RR reiterated this was an important document which contained key information which Trustees need to know.

e. Latest financial forecast

The financial forecast had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting. KH talked through the data on the two hand-outs (Summary of Latest Forecast vs original Budget – December 2017 and Latest 5 Year Forecast Summary). KH informed Trustees that both sets of data showed a strong financial forecast however one school was of concern. In respect of this deficit – DV and KH highlighted their concerns in respect of resolving the deficit budget. Trustees confirmed that they could not accept a deficit budget and provided KH and DV with the authority to ensure that the school took action to redress the budget concerns with a report to be provided at the next meeting.

f. Training & Development for Trustees

KP spoke about induction for new Trustees. It was agreed to draft up an induction matrix for new Trustees.

DV said he will find out the meeting dates of the LGBs and circulate them to Trustees should they wish to attend an LGB meeting. DV spoke about getting a common self-evaluation for governing bodies.

CH suggested the possibility that Governors could come along to a Trustee meeting as observers

**Action: DD to organise an induction matrix
DV to find out from the LGBs dates of their meetings and circulate them to Trustees
Trustees to inform DV their availability to attend a LGB Meeting.**

Approval and Decision

a. School improvement role

DV informed that whilst this role remains in the structure and school improvement will be resourced and remains a priority, he is questioning the need for a permanent role immediately. Trustees agreed to reconsider this post at their next meeting in April, noting that DV could still appoint for September at that time.

Action: DV to bring back to the next meeting.

b. GDPR Trustee

This information had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting. DD said the Trust is seeking a link Trustee for data protection. CH volunteered.

Decision: Chris Hallam to be link Trustee for data protection issues.

c. Overtime arrangements

This document had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting.



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Decision: Trustees approved the recommendations relating to overtime arrangements across the Trust.

Information only

a. Year 11 mock exam results

The results were tabled at the meeting

Report from the Remuneration Committee

IG provided a report from the last meeting of the Remuneration Committee.

b. HR Report

The Report had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting. DD asked for trustees to determine the arrangement to approve new employment policies.

Decision: Trustees devolved authority to DV/DD to adopt new employment policies on behalf of the Trustees following consultation with Headteachers and unions.

KH raised the issue around the delegated authority document now that he and DV had stepped down as Trustees. AC said she was happy for her name to go on the bank mandate if required.

Meeting closed 9pm.

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