

## Inaugural Meeting of The Two Counties Trust Board of Members & Board of Trustees

Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 6.30pm at Ashfield School

DV welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made.

April 1<sup>st</sup> conversion achieved.

1. **Present:** Rosie Forrest, Ray Ruszczynski, Shane Pollard, Ian Greenaway, John Maher, Dick Vasey, Gill Haslam, Kevin Hearn, Ruth Wheelhouse, Jonathan Fawcett, Karen Potts, Will Unsworth, Clare Dennis

**Apologies:** Jean Mountain, David Brown, Richard Stones

2. **Acceptance Letters:** made available for all to sign. **Decision made to call middle layer trustees.**

**Register of Business Interests:** these were completed.

Jean Mountain elected as Chair of Members committee.

Chair & Vice Chair of Trustees will be elected at the first meeting of Trustees.

Accountability at Trustee level – 1 – standards / 2 – finance

Each school's LGB will retain its own accountability and fully delegated responsibility. It could be different for sponsored schools. If primary schools join the MAT there will be primary representation and SP will step down.

IG asked about communication between members and LGBs. Meetings will be aligned to governing body meetings. Representation of the 3 LGBs are on each level and will feedback.

DV outlined governance arrangements.

It was proposed that the three headteachers from the founding schools attend the members meetings. This was agreed (carried unanimously).

KP asked if trustees had to declare their governors' role at other schools. DV to check with the solicitor.

3. **Scheme of Delegation:**

Three trustee committees:            Audit & Risk Management  
   Educational Standards  
   Personnel, Pay, Performance & HR

KH explained that risk must be managed across the MAT (finance, H&S, etc). People with skill sets can be drafted in.

IG suggested audit and personnel could be combined and Education remain stand alone.

DV proposed that the 3 committees are held at board meetings to ensure they are quorate.

Board of Trustees have to meet 3 times/year. Initial meeting in September.

Three headteachers will present key performance indicators. KH will feedback finance. Chair & Vice Chair elected.

DV circulated Annex 3 – delegations which re approved by the DfE. This has to be reviewed annually by the trustees. All were asked to take this away to read in preparation for the first meeting.

#### 4. **Two Counties Trust: Future Growth Strategy/Current Situation**

DfE wants us to sponsor other schools. This makes previous plans redundant.

It was felt we should concentrate on our own feeder schools. Initial meetings have been held with the Selston Family and more are planned.

JM was hopeful that progress could be made with interested schools.

Our approach is supportive and collaborative and primary headteachers are more comfortable with this.

JF has had similar discussions. Two out of seven primaries in the Swanwick Cluster are deemed 'good'. Previous conversations are being followed up. Again the primaries like Swanwick's approach.

JM is concerned that we shall be able to close the deals.

DV has outlined plans with his feeder schools. One has decided to join a primary MAT as they felt it was more beneficial for them at this moment. He is working on the other feeders.

RR advised establishing the MAT rather than rushing into anything.

DV has met with Quarrydale who are looking at different options. DV is working with three schools in Derbyshire – Tibshelf, Frederick Gent, Tupton Hall. He will speak to the governors in Frederick Gent and Tupton in early May.

IG urged ensuring that this MAT has the capacity to work with the schools which require improvement.

#### 5. **Sponsored Schools:**

5.1 Somercotes Infant School is a feeder school of Swanwick. Due diligence has been carried out. KH has looked at finance and has asked for detailed information. This was not available. 155 pupils on 3 different sites; massive state of disrepair; 2 classrooms condemned - the school needs to be completely re-built. The school will be in deficit this year. This would represent too much risk for our MAT unless there is significant funding from Derbyshire.

DfE have requested that this be 'put on hold' rather than decline membership now.

5.2 Mapplewells Primary is outstanding and could work with primaries.

IG suggested the MAT could produce a business plan to Derbyshire County Council.

KP thought the MAT approach was sensible and that the risks and rewards had been considered.

**It was unanimously agreed that this be put on hold.**

5.3 Manor Academy – are in special measures re: last year's results/issues with leadership and management. Curriculum is not appropriate, vocational provision not being used.

KH has visited – fairly new school buildings. 1448 capacity but have approximately 50% of students (862). Two years of deficit but have worked to break even. Number on roll is rising. He believes that it can be brought back into the black in 1-2 years. Assets are up-to-date. Little risk is presented. He recommends we agree to explore this further and as part of due diligence spend more time there.

RR asked if the Manor governors could refuse to join our MAT. They could but the DfE would insist they join another MAT.

JM asked about the attitude of Manor's headteacher and governors.

RW asked about Manor's sixth form arrangements. Manor appear to be leading and supporting this for little reward.

IG felt the expertise in the MAT could be beneficial to Manor.

KH said that Manor's philosophy with their primaries fits with ours.

DV said that there are opportunities for members of the SLT to visit Manor.

**It was agreed that more information be gathered so that a decision be made before the next meeting. A plan to support Manor will be drawn up before the end of term.**

6. **Central Services:** KH is working with the three business managers, best practice shared - standard agenda. Schools maintain their autonomy.

Savings made on insurance and services. Catering is next on the agenda. Payroll has gone smoothly.

Items 7&8 given out as documents.

9. **Any Other Business:** The three headteachers outlined how weak leadership can be tackled in sponsored schools.

DV thanked everyone for their attendance.

**Date of next meeting:** 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at 6.30pm