



Education South West

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday 15 October, 2020

18:30

Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Peter Di Giuseppe (PDG), Matthew Shanks (MS), Jeremy Fothergill (JF), David Potter (DP), Barrie Taylor (BT), Simon Gotch (SG), Kellie Knott (KK), Jenny Sutton (JS)
In attendance: Stuart White (SW), Tracy Hannon
Apologies: Lindsay Yelland (LY), Stephen Tucker (ST),
Notes: Caroline Battong (CB)

ESW277. Apologies

Received from Lindsay Yelland and Steve Tucker. SG arrived at 18:40.

The clerk received nominations for the role of Chair for PDG and for the role of Vice Chair for SG. PDG was elected as Chair and SG as Vice Chair.

ESW278. Declarations of interest & Directors statement

No declarations were made.

ESW279. Minutes of the previous meeting, September 2020 – Part I and 2 attached

Part I and Part 2 of the September minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

ESW280. Matters arising from the previous meeting

Actions to carry forward:

Action: PDG to liaise with KK to discuss the annual board review, particularly the narrative that sits behind the judgements.



Action: MS to create a Safeguarding and SEN report for board supported by KK – carried forward to October board

Safeguarding policy has been included in the policy papers. A safeguarding audit has been created for the whole trust. KK has agreed to carry out safeguarding audits at all schools once safe to do so. Schools will be asked to self-assess in the meantime by November 9th.

18:40 SG joined the meeting

Action: The Pay Policy will need to be resubmitted to board in October 2020 following the publishing of the 2020/21 teaching pay scales and TLR elements

The approval for the Pay Policy was deferred until the Remuneration Committee could meet in October. The Pay Policy will return to board in December.

Action: PDG to share the Risk Register.

PDG thanked DP for feedback on the risk register which will be shared with JF next week. Malcolm Wheatley has shared his thoughts. A meeting will be arranged which DP agreed to be a part of.

ESW281. Trust matters from CEO

- i. MS highlighted the following before inviting questions. Our schools are open, Headteachers continue to run schools and work on school improvement. There are staff absences, but the efforts are fantastic from all parts of the ESW family. We are continuing to focus on our core business of teaching and learning. Staff appointments are still taking place. Year 11 PPE's are taking place.
- ii. DP asked about staff absences? MS confirmed absence was for a variety of reasons. There is a specific issue with women who are in their 28th week of pregnancy who can request to work from home.
- iii. KK asked about the other absence figures and how they compared with normal times. MS talked about the reasons for absences which include very anxious parents and the trust approach to this which is to support children's learning whilst following normal absence procedures for children. Are the part time figures mainly for Annex R (part-time timetables)? MS agreed that was a high figure, but we have nothing to compare with previously.
- iv. JS said looking at the data, the student absence was going down which suggests that the work that leaders are doing is being effective. We recognise the extreme pressures are working under.
- v. MS talked about every school moving to Microsoft Teams. All students have accounts. Seesaw and Tapestry (two web based home learning sites) are also being used at EYFS. We are now more effectively using IT for meetings, lessons and learning.



- vi. MS said Ofsted visit to Teign School earlier this term was helpful. It focussed on what happened since lockdown and the effect on staff, safeguarding and IT. The HMI's were hugely impressed what they saw. Across the Trust we have been delivering laptops and dongles to children and supporting parents to get their internet connections working. We moved to Microsoft Teams incredibly quickly. Rydon had an interim Ofsted inspection earlier this week which TH talked through. There was a greater focus on the curriculum and what needed to be adapted to take account of pupils being away for such a long time? Ofsted did not provide feedback, but it was a very positive day. Ofsted will submit a written report.

Action: Compare part time figures retrospectively MS

ESW282. Report from Director of School Improvement

- i. PDG asked about developing the school risk assessment register. TH confirmed that will be shared at the next board meeting. There will be a loose programme of work for the next half term driven by need. The more risk, the greater the number of visits.
- ii. KK asked how we ensuring that we are meeting the needs of SEND children. TH replied that we have some pockets of excellent practice which will be shared.
- iii. DP asked if her review had produced any surprises – bad or good. TH felt you could see that the pressure on schools had taken away from teaching and learning. Seeing leaders out for the lunch duty for 3 hours was a real concern.
- iv. SG asked how ESW were finding time to fit training in and were there any issues with filling vacancies. As an example of CPD, TH said today we were able to draw on the strengths of one school and how they use CPOMS (software solution for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing and all pastoral issues) and share that with others. There are challenges to delivering CPD with middle leaders and we are looking for opportunities to partner schools. SG said he thought a coordinated plan was an excellent idea.
- v. MS said there was an opportunity to share problems with Teaching Schools so they design things that schools want. There was a desire to bring in more Trust - wide roles as the Director of Maths role had worked very well. MS shared plans for developing further secondment opportunities that the Trust afforded and really focusing on collaborative working at all levels. SG agreed that there were great opportunities for recruitment and retention across the trust by developing trust wide roles from within schools. These would operate alongside their current roles. MS talked about the need to review staffing in Shared Services to build greater resilience.
- vi. DP asked if there is a particular stress point that will make dealing with the issues caused by the pandemic more difficult. What could be done way of providing support to enable teachers to get their capacity back. MS stated that the issue was a lack of staff to carry out the additional duties and teaching and support required of young people. This had been addressed using some of the Covid additional money that the schools had as per the Covid funding document in the papers. The answer to the question is that there is increased stress as a result of Covid but that leaders continue to do all they can to support staff.



- vii. TH is keen to ensure that resources are shared more across the Trust and MS emphasised the importance of tailoring for the child and children in each class. MS talked about how important it was to still deliver online learning with a focus on child participation.

ESW283. Reports from the Trust Business Manager

- i. Review of External Auditors plan
SW confirmed the audit will be done remotely this year with all documentation being on One Drive.
- ii. PDG drew attention to the importance placed on declarations of interest. SW confirmed the ESFA were putting greater emphasis on this area. PDG and JF requested SW to set up a meeting with the audit partner before the December board meeting.

Action: SW to set up a meeting with the partner before the December board meeting.

iii. Financial Update

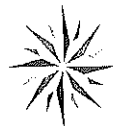
SW informed the meeting about the uncertainty of retaining the state funding we had received for furloughed catering staff. SW had agreed with Francis Clark that ESW can keep the £160,000 received but this has only just been confirmed and was not reflected in the numbers in the report to board. This goes some way to mitigate the loss on the catering account. SW said no variance was being shown because we budgeted on a non Covid world. Community use of Trust facilities has resumed, but not at the same level as before. Going into this year there will be an increase in costs because of the need for more cleaning products, cleaners, more intervention etc. There will also be a high level of maternity leave over the next 12 months which will require cover. We are unlikely to have a surplus because of the increased costs.

SG asked about total reserves. SW confirmed capital reserves were around £1.2million. They are deferred expense for maintenance and replacement of IT infrastructure, sports facilities including all weather playing surfaces, buildings, plant and equipment.

SW talked about the Covid grant funding for one to one tuition, or supply teachers to free up their specialist teachers.

ESW284. Governance

- i. Ambitions Trust Diagnostic
MS talked about the Ambitions Diagnostic which will be a review of the Trust like a MOT. This has been scheduled for November 2020 and will be online.
- ii. Performance and Standards Committee



- a. MS said this was an opportunity to look at teaching and learning and do a deep dive into performance. MS proposed that we bring other educational leaders in to examine teaching and learning. DP asked how this would really drive improvement. MS said we need to get an educator in to deep dive in teaching and learning. DP questioned getting the right level of educational challenge. MS confirmed an external person would sit on the committee, but so could DP.
 - b. JS asked if we had we got an educationalist in mind. MS said he had, but asked directors to share any thoughts they have. All directors were in favour of this approach.
- iii. Chair of Chairs Committee
- a. PDG reminded the meeting that by 31 July 2021 directors could not also be chairs of LGBs. As a result, a proposal to form a Chairs of LGB Group or Forum is being proposed. JF asked what the rationale from the RSC was for this. PDG confirmed the RSC want clear waters between the Members, the Directors and the LGBs. JF was concerned to maintain the connection between the LGBs and the Board. DP reminded the meeting that the board was already aware that it needed to be building more contact between the Board and the schools. SG suggested that the Heads could report direct to board but MS was concerned that this could disempower the LGB.

All agreed to the setup of the Chair of Chairs Committee. JF requested we check the articles to see if we can create a subcommittee.

Action: PDG to check the articles re: creations of subcommittees. [Article 100 (b) allows the Directors to form any other committee, in addition to the LGBs]

iv. Matters arising from LGB's
No matters were raised.

v. Changes to governors
MS talked about completion of declarations and the removal of governors who do not complete declarations. The board agreed to the removal of governors who do not complete declarations.

vi. Members meeting update from Peter Di Giuseppe
PDG said Members agreed that those directors due for renewal in January 2021 can be reappointed on an interim basis until July 2021.

ESW286. Health and Safety Update from Steve Tucker

- i. MS confirmed all of our risk assessments in respect of Covid and the related precautions followed the guidance from DfE. A Part 2 discussion followed.



ESW287. Safeguarding and SEN update

KK asked the board to note there was a specific paragraph that has been added to the governance handbook. Directors and governors have all signed a declaration that they have read the publication Keeping Children Safe in Education.

ESW288. Policies – for review and approval

- i. Safeguarding policy (KK/MS)
MS thanked TH for her work on the Safeguarding policy.
The policy was recommended by KK and approved by board.
- ii. Pay Policy (MS/PDG)
Action noted under Matters arising.
- iii. Prevent (MS/KK)
Recommended by KK and approved by board.
- iv. Accessibility (ZW/MS)
Policy carried forward to December as ST was the assigned director and was absent from the meeting.
- v. Equality and Diversity (TH/KK)
Recommended by KK and approved by board.
- vi. Managing Sickness Absence Policy (SW/LY)
Policy carried forward to December as LY was the assigned director and was absent from the meeting.

For information only

- vii. Whistleblowing Policy
The contact names have been updated.

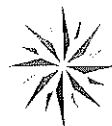
ESW289 Information, Security and Data Protection

- i. PDG asked why the breaches were not reportable? BT said that it was due to the nature and scale.

ESW290 Pupil Numbers

- i. SW clarified the arrows were movement against the last set of figures. SG requested year on year could be useful with the previous figures.
- ii. KK asked if we know if students who leave schools go to other schools in the Trust? MS confirmed we do, but this doesn't show on here.

ESW291. Items signed on behalf of the trust and significant matters to be brought to the Board



PDG asked if we have concluded our lease with College House? MS confirmed it was progressing and was with the lessee's solicitors.

Meeting ended 20:36

Next meeting – Wednesday 9th December 2020

Microsoft Teams

