

AGM Minutes: Members and Directors

11 December 2020 8am via Google Meet

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (Executive Head), Mr C Hopkins (CHo) (Chair of Members), Rev S Davis (SD) (Member), Mr D Grewer (DG) (Member), Mr S Rayner (SR) (CECET), Mrs H Bowman (HB) (Chair of Directors), Mr C Bradshaw-Smith (CBS) (Director), Mr P Halifax (PH) (Vice-Chair of Directors), Mrs C Humphries (CH) (Director), Ms S Cole (SCo) (Finance Manager)
Clerk: Mrs A Howard (AH)

RC: Richard Crosse
SM: St Mary's
HP: Howard Primary
AS: Anson School

KPI: Key Performance Indicator
CIF: Condition Improvement Funding
HT: Headteacher

1. **Welcome, Prayer** - CHo welcomed everyone to the meeting and SD led the prayer.
2. **Apologies** - Ms C Shaw (CS) (Member) (appointed SR in letter of proxy to attend AGM), Mrs M Havelock-Crozier (MHC) (Vice-Chair of Directors)
3. **Pecuniary Interest** - Members were asked to check their Pecuniary Interest entries on the TSSMAT website and inform AH of any changes. SR stated his interest as an employee and corporate Member of the Diocesan Board of Education and representative of CECET.
4. **Minutes of the last AGM** - The minutes of the last AGM of 20 December 2019 had already been approved by Members and Directors.
5. **Matters arising** - There were no matters arising.
6. **Directors'/Trustees' Report and Accounts** - The Trustees' and Auditors' reports had been emailed to Members and Directors before the meeting.
PL started by giving his review of a challenging year. 2020 had started with the HT at RC having a serious accident which meant that she was off work for six months and Emma Bowring (EB) was made Acting Head for this period. The Director of Business Operations left TSSMAT early in January so interim arrangements were put in place with MLG Accountants. PL was happy to report that SCo was appointed Finance Manager in March. The financial system and name of the Trust were changed during the year.
Then there was the Covid-19 epidemic which posed serious difficulties in all schools throughout the country. However, PL was very proud of TSSMAT's response to this, he considered that the staff had risen to the challenge and worked extremely hard. TSSMAT was open for Keyworkers' and vulnerable children, seven days a week and during holidays. When the schools were able to reopen on 1st June, TSSMAT opened on this date as staff chose to miss the second week of their holiday to enable children to return to school. There was a very high uptake of pupils and children from other year groups were invited to attend to complete the 'bubbles'. Virtually all the Y6 pupils in the four schools attended and were able to mark their final term in primary school.

With the start of the school year in September, all children were able to attend and the emphasis has been on filling gaps in learning and supplying emotional and educational support, while maintaining levels of educational attainment.

With regards to the data on achievements and performance, these are based on teacher assessments and predicted grades.

Nearly all the KPIs have been achieved, except for those affected by Covid. The CIF bids for work at SM and TH were not successful and TSSMAT has now moved from Entrust to a private company to work on bids for CIF money. Roof work at SM and heating work at TH still need to be carried out. Looking forward, PL reported that IT provision needs to be made more robust, so there are plans to improve the infrastructure. The work on developing middle leadership is going well and the new system of each senior leader working with a group of curriculum champions across the MAT is working very well. Members of staff are working on National Professional Qualifications including NPQH (for Headship). The HT at RC moved to AS in September and Emma Bowring who had been Acting Head was made Headteacher at RC.

With regards to finance, PL stated that finances in small schools are always difficult and TSSMAT was looking to ensure that pupil admissions were as high as possible. AS has a full number of admissions to Reception, but the other schools have lower numbers this year, due to a number of factors including a lower birth rate, expensive housing in the villages and an ageing population. However schools have been showing prospective parents around in a Covid-secure fashion and there have been a few in-year admissions.

Growth of the Trust has been more difficult to address this year, as there has been less networking and fewer opportunities to visit other schools.

PL expressed his pride at the state of the finances: the surplus last year was £164k and this year is £205k, the increase being mainly due to more revenue from the selling of professional services. A reserve of £71k will be used for the improvement of IT provision.

HB stated that, in spite of everything that has happened this year, it has been a very good year. She thanked PL and all the staff in TSSMAT for their hard work during difficult times.

PL asked if there were questions and CHo asked whether, with regard to pupil numbers, PL had looked at longer-term data and demographic trends, as there were many housing developments in the wider area. PL said he would look into this.

SR asked whether pupil admissions were considered as part of the three-year budget forecasts and whether there were difficult times ahead if pupil numbers were low. PL confirmed that budgets are tight, but pupil numbers in the future were always a consideration; however, the situation can change from year to year and in the work on the forward budget modeller there always has to be planning for the worst-case scenario, which affects contracts and spending, but getting the balance right in not making definite decisions until the situation is known.

CH thanked everyone involved in the TSSMAT for a successful year and said that, as a parent of Y6 children who left RC in the summer, he considered that they had had a fantastic last term at school, a nice send-off and it was a rite of passage on their transfer to secondary school.

7. Approval of Trust Annual Report and Accounts for the period 1 September 2019 - 31 August 2020

The Report and Accounts were formally approved by Members and Directors.

PL thanked SCo and staff at MLG Accountants for their help and hard work over the year. MLG had given a great deal of support with the end-of-month accounts and supported SCo in her new role at TSSMAT. PL was very pleased with the Audit report which gave the MAT a clean bill of health with no issues.

CBS expressed his pleasure at the Audit report and said that, although small schools have more financial problems, it was not a case for the MAT of patching up and making do: TSSMAT had achieved a great deal, with a new accounting system giving more control over finances, and was planning an overhaul of the IT system. He considered that the fundamentals of the schools were very good and PL had a right to be proud of the Trust.

8. CEO Remuneration - Confidential Item

9. **Members/Directors eligible for re-appointment** - The terms of office as Members of DG and SD have come to an end but they expressed their willingness to continue for another three years. SD commented that there will be a new Rector coming to the Kings Bromley/Yoxall/Ridwares parish in spring, so he may wish to take up a place as Member/Director. However PL confirmed that there was already a vacancy so a place was available. HB had emailed the new Rector and received a nice reply from him, saying he was looking forward to being involved. CHo welcomed the future arrival of a strong supporter of the parish schools.

10. **Any other business** - There was no further AGM business.

Directors were asked to look at the policies sent out for review; CBS had sent out to Directors the Risk Management Policy for consideration and this will be discussed further at the FAR meeting in January.

CHo on behalf of the Members expressed his gratitude to staff, students and everyone who has helped TSSMAT during an extraordinarily difficult year. He knew that parents considered that schools help to create communities and he thought that TSSMAT schools were indeed the centres of their communities. He thanked HB for all her hard work and support to the MAT during the year, together with the Directors who have contributed to ensuring that TSSMAT is in a good shape to move forward. CHo offered every blessing to all at Christmas, with best wishes for 2021.

HB advised that she was going to send an email to all the staff, thanking them on behalf of the Directors for all their hard work.

Signed.....

Date

Colin Hopkins - Chair of Members