

**Directors Meeting Minutes
11th March 2016 8am**

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (Executive Head), Mrs H Bowman (HB) (Chair of Directors), Mrs L Brown (LB) (Business Manager), Mrs S Cockayne (SC) (Director), Mr P Halifax (PH) (Vice Chair of Directors), Mrs M Havelock-Crozier (MHC) (Director), Mrs C Humphries (CH) (Director), Mrs J Smith (JS) (Director), Mr G Wood (GW) (Director)

Clerk to Directors: Mrs A Howard (AH)

RC: Richard Crosse

TSSMAT: The Small Schools Multi Academy Trust

SM: St Mary's

HP: Howard Primary

EHT: Executive Headteacher

SIP: School Improvement Plan

PAN: Planned Admission Number

NQT: Newly qualified teacher

LAG: Local Advisory Group

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

ESG: Education Services Grant

1. **Prayer** - PL started the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies** - None
3. **Pecuniary Interest** – PL and LB reported that an electrician and a handyman who had done work in school had also been employed subsequently on personal jobs at home; however market value rates had been paid for this. The Board were uncertain about whether this should be included on the Pecuniary Interest forms so it was agreed that advice should be sought from the auditors.
4. **Minutes of last meeting** -
 - a) **Actions taken:**

Directors' Challenge: PL reported that the Dyslexia Friendly Status assessment had gone very well, with HP attaining full Dyslexia Friendly Status for the first time and SM and RC having their Dyslexia Friendly Status reverified. The assessor was impressed with the uniform approach across TSSMAT and with the quality of displays, interactions between staff and pupils and the lessons; she said the Academy was very close to enhanced status, but portfolios have to be completed for this; this was something to aim for once Mrs Bowring returned from maternity leave. PL also informed Directors that much of the SEN funding has been lost.

It was decided that the values of the TSSMAT should be highlighted in the schools' entrance halls with an emphasis on parents talking in a polite, respectful manner to staff. CH suggested that this issue should be addressed in staff meetings to help staff to deal with this in a fair and robust way, with support and guidance from more experienced staff.

The EHT's office refurbishment will take place during the May holiday.

A new Assistant Head has been appointed and will provide temporary SENCO cover for EB's maternity leave. The SEN adviser will come in on a monthly basis to work with her and EB will also

have keep-in-touch days. LB found the Values Interview process very useful and CH suggested building this into Performance Management as it would ensure a cohesiveness approach across the TSSMAT. PL will include this in the SIP.

Directors' Challenge: Assessment week – item removed

CH has provided a form for reporting allegations against staff and has also produced a form to use to consider teaching standards. Directors agreed to the structure of the LAGs and information with application forms have been sent out to parents.

Directors' Challenge: With regard to the EHT's Performance Management review, HB and JB have completed this with PL. Of the four targets, three (on school performance, leadership of RE and Pupil Premium) have been met and PL has reported on these to Directors' meetings; the target on Assessment has not been met as this is still evolving and further work is needed on this before it is presented to parents. PL did not wish to have a salary review. HB informed Directors that a different model of Performance Management Review is being looked at, with the suggestion that this could take place with a bigger group of Directors and on a more regular basis, perhaps termly, and using CH's Values model. There are two targets for this year, relating to the infrastructure of the MAT, including finances, and to train and support senior leaders, including LB, in leadership and delegation. CH, PL and HB will meet up to add values in to performance management. CH congratulated TSSMAT on the progress made in the structure and planning over such a short time.

b) **Items to carry forward:** HB agreed to assist with the explanations of acronyms in the policies.

c) **Approval and signing of minutes:** These were agreed as a true record and signed.

5. **Safeguarding Update** - All Directors / Governors in academies now need an enhanced DBS check (which TSSMAT Directors have) and LB asked Directors to bring in their DBS confirmation to check no change to name / address details against SCR single the original entries were made. Directors agreed with LB that new staff should be asked for a new DBS check when they are appointed by TSSMAT. All Directors, except MHC and GW who have made their own arrangements, will attend the Safeguarding twilight training on Tuesday 12 April, 4-6pm at RC.
6. **Policies and Procedures –**
 - a) **Charges and Remissions:** LB explained that, with the Pupil Premium being reduced, it may be necessary to ask Pupil Premium parents to part fund music lessons, trips, residential etc where possible from September 16. Directors agreed that this needed looking at and PH suggested that using Pupil Premium funding to pay for music lessons should be limited to one instrument per child. PL asked for a summary of the cost to the TSSMAT if every Pupil Premium child accessed funded tuition lessons (one instrument). Directors discussed again the planned changes to the pricing at Howards Care Club and CH asked whether the Care Club was a separate limited company as that would have financial advantages and could make it more viable and equitable, but PL explained that it was part of the TSSMAT at present. It was suggested that a sub-committee should look into the pricing policy. LB advised the board that the lettings policy was also under review however she was awaiting information from the Youth Club regarding their current arrangement (formerly with SCC, no contract or paperwork available). It was agreed that the Charges and Remissions Policy should be carried forward to the next meeting
 - b) **Capitalisation Policy:** LB referred the Directors to the Capitalisation and Reserves Policy that she had sent prior to the meeting and advised that this would be discussed with auditors. LB reminded the Directors that they had set their capitalisation amount at £2000 pre-conversion and this would be reviewed next year. Directors approved the policy subject to advice from the auditors.
 - c) **Other Policies:** - Directors were asked to look at the Directors' Allowances Policy, an article by NASBM on connected party transactions and reminded about the Risk Management Policy (which includes a Risk Register) that was discussed at the last meeting. The Governance document has

been updated and was formally adopted by Directors. (All these policies are on Office 365: Sites, Governance, Directors Meetings, March 2016, Agenda Item 6. Directors were asked to access Office 365 and also use the school email address). Directors approved the Directors Allowances Policy and acknowledge the ongoing work with the 'Risk Policy'

7. **Finance -**

a) **Budget September 2016:** Directors viewed the 3 year (manual) budget forecast sheet produced by LB in the absence of the PS automated reports, showing the £148,000 carry forward (predicted in July 15) for the coming year. Directors acknowledged the smaller carry forward for the following year and possible deficit for the year after that. PL and LB confirmed that work had already begun on reducing costs to ensure that a deficit situation in future years was avoided. LB confirmed to PH that TSSMAT would use 'accruals' within the accounts. New models are being produced for salary costs to account for changes to NI due to the 'contracted out' pension and also the support staff pay increase which has not yet been approved by unions. LB highlighted the fact that the figures were very basic at present and only to give an indication of the possible future years position. It was noted how important the trading services and pupil numbers are to bring in more revenue. LB pointed out that a 3-year projection of pupil numbers showed the worst-case scenario. RC is likely to be 2 pupils over the PAN of 15 if parents go to appeal. Money is needed to fund an additional classroom at RC to provide a class for each year group; it is important that SM and HP also continue to grow.

b) **Management Accounts:** LB shared a management account report that had been downloaded from PS Financials and Directors viewed the Excel sheet. Directors agreed that the format of the report was very useful and would be adequate for the ongoing termly financial reporting to Directors. LB shared a draft monthly cash flow report that she had produced and again Directors agreed that this would prove useful for future termly financial reports to Directors. PL and LB confirmed that at present there are no problems with the cash flow (bank statements were made available for Directors inspection) however acknowledged that this may not always be the case and weekly monitoring may be required from September 16. LB was thanked for all the work and perseverance with the financial reports .

c) **Pupil Premium income predictions for future years:** LB presented a documents showing the Pupil Premium income projections over the coming year, highlighting the predicted decrease.

d) **Reduction to ESG:** LB reported that there have been further reductions in the Education Services Grant; this has now been reduced from £147 to £88 and again to £77 per pupil for Sept 16.

8. **HR and Staffing -**

a) **Recruitment:** PL confirmed the appointment of the new 'Assistant Head', as noted above in 4a). Two members of staff who have been absent with illness have both returned to work. PL wishes to appoint a NQT for 12 months; this was approved. A TA at Howard will be following the National Forest teaching programme and will be working at Howard. CH considered that the contract documents should be reworded. CH needs the data to complete the teaching and learning standards document, mentioned in 4a); decisions on observation should be justified.

9. **Premises and Health & Safety Update -**

LB informed Directors about the Asbestos Survey and navigated to the reports; training has been booked for the Janitor at HP on this. A quote of £40,000 from the Entrust has been obtained for a new central heating system at HP; however it is not immediately necessary to undertake this work and the figure has been obtained to aid the review of the MAT's Facilities development plan. At SM there is only one gas boiler working and this should be remedied, quotations will be sought over the coming months. PH asked about ground source heating and it was agreed that a sub-committee should meet, perhaps during the summer holidays, to review energy efficiency. A parent/architect has visited RC to look at the possibilities of building over the classroom and will put forward a proposal with a view to applying for SIF funding. A number of hi-viz jackets have been given by Cameron Homes.

10. **Curriculum -**

This has been covered in the above agenda items.

11. Any Other Business -

a) **ICT issues:** The quotations received by Entrust for broadband were considered to be excessive. It has been decided to look at an alternative broadband provider as there is an issue with HP as the school is at a distance from the exchange. PH is looking into the possibility of taking over the fibre connection. It is important that firewalls and data protection systems are in place.

b) **HR SLA:** LB attended an HR Payroll update session and was informed that Entrust was passing this to Capita; this entailed certain restrictions, including being tied in to the deal for 4 years. Quotations are being obtained from other providers and a decision will have to be in time to serve the required 4 months notice. It is likely that the value will fall under PL's delegation limits however quotations will be shared with Directors for information.

c) **Website/Prospectus:** The website company is proving to be very slow in completing the website. Directors viewed the website and considered that it should be up and running as soon as possible, even if certain items e.g. policies and governance documents were not yet completely finalised. GW offered to assist PL with getting as much information as possible on to the website with a launch date planned for the end of April. The Prospectus was also viewed. Directors agreed that PL should send a letter to the website company asking them to complete the work as soon as possible and to check that, in the event of the website company no longer operating, another company could take it over. It was noted that whilst not ideal the old school websites were still active and being used to store policies etc. for public access.

d) **Safeguarding Training:** See Agenda item 5 above.

e) **LAGs Update:** A deadline was set for receipt of applications for the LAG interviews. It was decided that a panel, including a representative from PHRP, will be involved in the decision process. Letters will be sent out shortly to the PTA and community organisations.

f) **Any other business:** HB withdrew from the meeting and LB presented a Statement of Assurance document and supporting document that LB had produced outlining the recommendation to continue to appoint Supporting Change Limited (agreement prior to conversion). LB explained that HB had been removed due to her connection to the Director (also a Board Member). The Directors discussed the benefits that continuing with the arrangement would have to the school (both financial and impact of the work produced) and it was agreed that the appointment should continue.

HB returned to the meeting; she asked Directors to contact the local council to complain about the large pot-hole in Crawley Lane which is a potential danger to parents and children. LB will also use the newsletter to ask parents to contact the council about this.

GW reminded Directors about the KPIs for September and asked them to suggest three KPIs to address Standards/Attainment/Progress, Financial Probity and another issue which could be e.g. Safeguarding, Communication or (Directors suggested) School Happiness. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting and LB will email Directors asking for suggestions. CH agreed that discussion of these will inform strategic planning. GW confirmed that he would be working with LB to produce a data dashboard showing the outcomes of the KPI's for the current year of attendance and staff / pupil (and their families) satisfaction.

f) **Date and time of next meetings:** See dates below.

No meeting in April

Friday 13th May 8-10am

Friday 27th May 3pm – Finance Only (HB, GW, PH, PL and LB)

Friday 10th June 8-10am

Friday 8th July 8-10am

Signed.....

Date

Chair of Directors

Item	Action to be taken	Action by whom	Action by when
4a	Meet to discuss adding values into Performance Management.	PL/CH/HB	12/4/16
4b	Policies: write out acronyms in full, with glossary	HB/LB	13/5/16
5	Bring copy of DBS Clearance.	Directors	13/5/16
	Check no name/address changes to SCR required	LB	End May
5	Attend Safeguarding twilight training	Directors	12/4/16
6a	Form a sub-committee to look at Care Club pricing arrangements	Directors	13/5/16
6b/6c	Look at policies online. (Office 365: Sites, Governance, Directors Meetings, March 2016, Agenda Item 6.)	Directors	13/5/16
8	Consider rewording of contract documents	CH	13/5/16
9	Form a sub-committee to review energy efficiency.	Directors	Summer holidays
11a	Work on resolving broadband issue at HP. Decide on HR Payroll provider.	PH LB/PL/Directors	Ongoing End of April - to serve 4 months notice Discuss quotes 13/5/16
11b	Review website layout.	PL/GW	21/3/16
11d	Send out information and application forms on LAGs to community groups.	LB	Before Easter
11e	Write to council about pot-hole in Crawley Lane.	Directors HB to send works number to LB.	Before Easter
11e	Suggest ideas for KPIs concerning school performance, finance and other areas.	Directors	13/5/16

