

Minutes of Directors' Meeting 9 July 2021 8am via Google Meet

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (CEO and Director), Mrs H Bowman (HB) (Chair of Directors), Mr C Bradshaw-Smith (CBS) (Director), Mrs S Cockayne (SC) (Director), Mr P Halifax (PH) (Vice-Chair of Directors), Mrs M Havelock-Crozier (MHC) (Vice-Chair of Directors), Mrs C Humphries (CH) (Director)

Clerk: Mrs A Howard (AH)

Also present for Items 6 and 7: Mrs J Bowman (JBo) (Data Protection Officer, Business Operations Manager)

Also present up for Items 8, 9 and 10: Ms S Cole (SCo) (Finance Manager)

RC: Richard Crosse

SM: St Mary's

TH: The Howard

AS: Anson School

SIP: School Improvement Plan

SEF: Self-Evaluation Form

CIF: Condition Improvement Funding

ESFA: Education and Skills Funding Agency

1. **Welcome, Prayer** - HB welcomed everyone to the meeting and PL led the Directors in the prayer.
2. **Apologies** - No apologies had been received. AH will update the attendance register.
3. **Pecuniary Interest** - There were no changes to the Pecuniary Interest Register.
4. **Minutes of last meeting** - The minutes of the Members' and Directors' meeting held on 18.6.21 were agreed as a true copy by Directors. The minutes will be signed by HB and Rev Davies when the situation allows.
5. **Covid 19 Update/Arrangements for September** - PL reported that it had been particularly difficult over this term caused by children and staff having to self-isolate due to people testing positive or being informed by Track and Trace of the need to self-isolate. At RC, Care Club and Class 1 had to stay at home to self-isolate. However, the Headteachers have managed the situation well and the MAT has taken a pragmatic approach, not mixing bubbles nor allowing staff to work across schools, which has meant that TSSMAT has had less disruption than other schools in the area. All the staff now deserve a good rest over the holiday and cannot wait to see the end of Covid to be able to get back to a more normal term starting in September.

With PL's imminent retirement, there has been a MAT online Act of Worship for the four schools with a 'This is Your Life' for PL who said it had been a lovely occasion, all the more special as the online event allowed all the schools to be together with PL and his wife. MHC asked if it had been recorded and PL confirmed that it had been.

At RC, due to the retirement of a TA after many years service, an advertisement was placed for a full-time TA and interviews held, but no appointment was made. However, a temporary teacher recruited for the Covid catch-up programme has been offered the position on a temporary 12-month teaching contract, to work on teaching Maths to year groups rather than mixed-age groups. There will be a full complement of staff across the four schools in September.

PL considered that TSSMAT is in a good place, he has been working on the SIPs and SEFs with the Headteachers and feels that the online Performance Management has been working well. He has conducted school reviews at the four schools and found that all the schools were excellent, with a high quality of purposeful teaching and a focus on what the children need to know. PL is happy and proud to leave on a high, knowing that the schools are in a good position, following the vision, values and ethos of the MAT and that the teachers value the support and collaborative approach of the MAT. He considers that the staff and children are amazing and knows that the newly-appointed CEO will take the MAT from strength to strength.

Confidential item

PL stated that the Trust was well-staffed and the carry forward was being spent on Teaching and Learning.

6. **Cyber Security Review** - JBo joined the meeting to present the Board Cyber Security Action Plan. She reported that a very technical report had been received on the Annual Penetration Test, which she had forwarded to Staffs Tech. PHRP had been involved in arranging a scoping exercise and PH offered to assist with the skills audit, to ensure training for everyone in the necessary skills from the Board downwards. Cyber Security priorities were discussed, with Education and the delivery of Teaching and Learning considered the number one priority, ensuring that firewalls are secure and back ups in place. Sensitive and Financial data are also priorities to consider. PH advised that a penetration test will show areas of weakness, but it was important to have contingencies in place in case of breaches, so that access, connectivity and functioning are restored as quickly as possible, with priorities established for the restoration process. There is an ambition to upskill Board members and establish best practice. PH suggested that a sub-committee look into this and CBS, JBo and HB agreed to join PH in this. The Acceptable Use Policy would be reviewed at this meeting. Staffs Tech were still presenting problems, being slow moving and not having the capacity to deal with the work requested. HB agreed that IT provision should be reviewed, but PH advised that it was a matter of costs of different companies.
7. **Policy Updates** - The following policies had been sent out to Directors to review: Handwriting & Presentation, Acceptable Use of IT, Advertising, Bereavement, E Safety, Employee Handbook, Inclusion, Liaison & Transition, Pay.
JBo had received some comments from Directors and there was discussion on whether the wearing of sandals posed a safety risk; it was decided that the wording be amended to 'appropriate footwear'. All policies were ratified by the Directors. Directors also agreed to write off ICT assets listed in the Directors' Shared folder. JBo confirmed that these would be securely destroyed and recycled as appropriate. JBo was thanked for her attendance and reports at the meeting.
8. **Finance - Management Accounts:** SCo presented the Management Accounts for Period 10, up to the end of June. She reported a surplus of £63k, slightly behind budget, and an outturn of £89k. All schools were showing a surplus apart from TH with a slight deficit. There has been an overpayment of the Covid Catch-up funding, but that will be rectified. SCo explained some extra costs in ICT and staffing, but said the MAT was in a good position.
Cash Flow: Cash Flow figures show £204k brought forward and £82k in-year surplus. There is £286k in Reserves and a bank balance of around £510k which is expected to reduce to £479k in July. PH asked whether it was appropriate to show the overpayment from the ESFA in the cash balance and SCo confirmed that she had checked this with the MLG accountants.
Budget 2021-22: With regards to the budget 2021-22, SCo reported that as a teacher had been appointed to fill the TA position, income of £11k had been predicted to cover this. The budget was now showing a surplus of £833 and reserves of £288k for 2021-22. This budget was approved by the Directors.
Confidential item
RAG data: SCo had sent Directors information on the RAG data, comparing the MAT with similar schools. Directors considered that this was useful to consider when looking at the budget each year, but it was not necessary to review this more often.
Card expenses: CBS would be coming into school to review these before the end of the school year.
Outdoor work at AS: SCo informed Directors that 3 quotes had been obtained for the work and recommended that the quote of £10,340 from Prime be accepted. Directors approved this.
9. **Premises** - The CIF bids for work on heating at TH and the roof at SM were unsuccessful. The Trust will appeal the decision on SM which had only just failed (more clarity needed on how the project would be delivered). The decision on TH will not be appealed as it has been decided that the Trust should look at renewable sources for the heating project. CBS will contact someone working in Energy at the DfE to enquire about changes in the department's policy towards renewable heating sources and whether TH could be a pilot school for renewable heating solutions. PH asked about

temporary heating solutions for TH for the coming winter; it is hoped that the recent work on the boiler will enable the heating system to last over winter.

10. **Health and Safety** - SCo had circulated the H&S reports carried out by Elite on three schools, with the inspection on SM still to be done. She reported that there was nothing significant or of concern in the reports.

PL gave his thanks to SCo for her comprehensive reports and all her hard work.

11. **Safeguarding** - *Confidential item*.

MHC, the Board Safeguarding representative, has not been able to visit schools during the Covid epidemic, but will visit in September to look at the MAT records and documentation on safeguarding and will review mid-way through the year, around February. PL informed the Board that the new CEO may consider moving to using an online safeguarding system and MHC agreed that this is a good system to use.

12. **Any Other Business** - Directors had received the dates of meetings planned for the next academic year.

Directors concluded by saying how much they will miss PL; they considered that TSSMAT is in an excellent position and highly thought of within the communities. SC thanked PL for taking on TH and Directors praised him for building a strong team and for being a visionary leader, with principles and direction. PL thanked the Board for their confidence in him and for all their support, challenge and friendship; he considered that he had had a fantastic career and hoped everyone would keep in touch.

Dates of meetings 2021-2022:

Directors

- 17th September 2021 (FAR)
- 15th October 2021
- 19th November 2021
- 17th December 2021 (AGM)
- 18th February 2022
- 4th March 2022 (with Members)
- 13th May 2022
- 17th June 2022 (with Members)
- 8th July 2022

Members

- 17th December 2021 (AGM)
- 4th March 2022
- 17th June 2022

LAG

- 4th October 2021 (RC)
- 7th March 2022 (SM)
- 20th June 2022 (TH)

Signed.....

Date

Heather Bowman - Chair of Directors

| Item | Action to be taken | Action by whom | Action by when |
|------|---|----------------|----------------|
| 9 | Contact person at DfE regarding renewable heating systems | CBS | September 2021 |
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