

Minutes of Directors' Meeting 1 May 2020 9am via Google Meet

Attendees : Mr P Lovern (PL) (Executive Head), 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), Mrs J Smith (JS) (Director).

Also present for Item 6: Mr D Dovydaitis (DD) (MLG Education Services) and Ms S Cole (SCo) (Finance Manager).
Clerk: Mrs A Howard (AH)

RC: Richard Crosse
SM: St Mary's
TH: The Howard

SLT - Senior Leadership Team
CIF: Condition Improvement Funding
ESFA: Education and Skills Funding Agency
FAR: Finance, Audit and Risk
DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead

1. **Welcome, Prayer** - PL welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the prayer.
2. **Apologies** - There were no apologies. AH will update the attendance register.
3. **Pecuniary Interest** - Directors confirmed that there were no changes to pecuniary interest declarations.
4. **Minutes of last meetings** - The minutes of the Members/Directors meeting held on 6.3.20 were agreed as a true copy by Directors. Confidential items were agreed. With regards to actions, some Directors are yet to try the quiz, Christian distinctiveness will be put on the agenda in future, MHC agreed to be the Link Director for Reading, PL has received much information from public bodies on Coronavirus and will send the H&S report on AS to JS. AH will ask Members to confirm that they are happy with the minutes before putting them on the public website.
Actions from the FAR minutes were also discussed; CBS has reviewed the credit card expenses, a video of RC has taken place, the internal assurance report is not at present mandatory.
- 4A. **Trust Name** - Following a discussion between Directors on Wednesday 29 April, it was decided that this should be an extra agenda item to make a decision on a change of name for the MAT. It was agreed that it had been very useful to have an external adviser for the discussion. PL had consulted with the SLT who agreed that it was necessary to change the word 'Small' in the name of the Trust; they did not like the word 'Supportive' and were in favour of 'Staffordshire'. Directors agreed that a change of name was necessary if bigger schools were considering joining the MAT. Many ideas had been put forward to find words reflecting the MAT's ethos and values and Directors agreed that these and many other adjectives, fitting the T, S and S initials, could be used in marketing the MAT to highlight the many values and positive aspects of the Academy. It was proposed that the initials TSSMAT should still be used, the logo retained and that 'Small' should be changed to 'Staffordshire'. Directors voted on this and agreed that the MAT should be renamed 'The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust'.
5. **Covid-19** - PL reported that one site (RC) is still in use for children of key workers and vulnerable children, with staff attending on a rota basis. This will continue until at least the end of the June half-term holiday. CH stressed the importance of giving consistent advice to staff across the four schools on re-opening and PL agreed that it was vital to get timely government advice on re-opening procedures to enable staff to put a plan into action.

Finance - DD and SC joined the Google Meet to present the financial report. *Confidential item*
Budget - DD and SC are working on the budget, using a software package which has not proved easy to use; an alternative might be considered next year. The schools' information is on one data base to save on costs, with four separate school budget sheets then being produced.

Migration to Xero - The change to a new accounting system has gone well and is now in use. SC reported that office staff were finding it easy to use, with no issues so far, and were positive about the new system. PH asked about the deletion of the old system and DD confirmed that, after the next audit when auditors may wish to look back at the previous invoices, notice will be served on the providers of the previous system to come into effect next June.

6. **Staffing** - One application has been received for the post of Headteacher at RC; PL and MHC interviewed Emma Bowring the previous day and she was offered and accepted the position. The present Headteacher at RC will start her new position as Head at AS in September. Staff and parents will be informed by letter next week. Adverts have been placed for three teaching posts in the MAT: permanent posts at AS and SM and a temporary position at SM. Interviews and tasks will take place over Google Meet.
7. **Policy Updates** - The following policies had been sent out to Directors to review: Assessment, Risk Assessment, Science, Smoking & Alcohol, Staff Behaviour, Staff Induction, Sun Safety, Visitors and also CH had updated the Coronavirus Short Term Homeworking Policy in light of the current guidance. The policies were all ratified by Directors. CBS asked for more information on provenance and details of revisions made. PL and HB considered that it would be difficult to give full details of the provenance of long-established policies. CBS agreed that giving full provenance might not always be possible, but JS agreed with CBS that it should be possible to list the revisions and explain why they had been made, saying that the old version should be filed and it was important to ensure that everyone was using the up-to-date version. CH suggested tracking changes. CBS will discuss this further with the Business Manager.
9. **Letter from ESFA** - This letter had been sent out to Directors, who received it and noted the relaxed rules on internal assurance during the present situation.
10. **Premises** - The outcomes of bids for CIF funding are still awaited, with delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
11. **Admissions** - PL presented the Admissions numbers for September. In Reception, AS will have 15 children, TH 8 out of a possible 12 children, RC 5 out of a possible 15 children and SM 14 children. In Nursery, RC will have 11 children and SM 4 children.
12. **Safeguarding** - During the present Covid-19 situation, a DSL is present on duty every day when the school is open. Staff telephone parents on a weekly or fortnightly basis to check on the children's welfare.
13. **Health and Safety** - JS stressed the importance of checking for Legionella in the water system at the closed schools. PL confirmed that this is being done.
14. **Trust Growth** - No further developments.
15. **Any Other Business** - AH will attach documents to the Google Meet so that attendees can find information easily. PL recommended that Directors follow the Twitter accounts set up @TSSMAT and @HowardElford.

Next meeting: PL asked that Directors meet to consider the budget for next year. The meeting will take place via Google Meet on **Monday 11 May, 2-4pm.**

Dates of next meetings –

(Directors' and Members' Meetings at Richard Crosse, starting 8am)

Directors meetings:

Budget meeting Google Meet Monday 11 May, 2-4pm

8am on a Friday

19 June

10 July (with Members)

Members meetings: 8am on a Friday
10 July (with Directors)

LAG meetings: 4pm on a Monday
22 June 4pm at SM

Signed.....
Heather Bowman – Chair of Directors

Date

Item	Action to be taken	Action by whom	Action by when
4A	To rename the TSSMAT The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust	PL	tbc
6	To confirm furloughing arrangements	PL/SCo/CH	31/5/20
8	To discuss policy provenance and tracking of changes	CBS/JB	11/5/20
15	Note date of extra meeting to discuss Budget	All Directors	11/5/20, 2-4pm