



MINUTES OF THE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD
ON 17 JULY 2017 FROM 7PM AT WHISSENDINE COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Present: Gareth Williams (Chair), Nicole Topham, Anna Raine, Adrienne Holland, James Saunders, Rob Gooding and David Evans.

In attendance: Graham Kirby (CFO) & Nicola Tyers (Clerk)

1. **Welcome & Introductions.** Mr Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting. Rev'd Saunders and Mrs Raine's applications were approved by Members and appointed by Trustees at the meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence.** Mr Horrigan, Mrs Withers and Mrs Hickey sent their apologies which were accepted.
3. **Declarations of Interest.** Mrs Holland noted an interest due to her daughter being Headteacher at Whissendine CofE.
4. **Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising.** The minutes from the meeting held on 5 June 2017 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by Mr Williams as Chair. There were no matters arising.
5. **Trust Budgets** Due to the Audit committee not being quorate, the budgets for each of the schools having been ratified by each of the LGB's were presented to Trustees for approval.

Mr Williams noted the need to ensure that the Trust gives the schools the freedom to run their own budget and to constantly assess the Trustees role in overseeing the budgets.

ACTION

CHALLENGE

A Trustee questioned whether the announcement from the Government to increase school's funding would influence the

Trustees were made aware that the MOD funding was ceasing which was effecting the St Nicholas's budget.

Mr Kirby confirmed that each of the schools had supply insurance and each had RPA insurance in place.

Trustees voted in favour of ratifying the budgets presented to them and gave Mr Kirby approval to send these to the EFSA.

6. **Central Services Budget.** The Three-Year Budget Plan for 2017_2020 was circulated prior to the meeting.

Trustees were pleased to hear that Mrs Kennard-Kettle's appointment as Executive Support was working well and was helping to reduce Mr Gooding's workload.

Trustees were pleased to hear that the Trust would be collectively buying in the services of an Educational Phycologist.

Trustees voted in favour of approving the Central Services Budget presented to them.

7. **Cottesmore Budget Intention statement.** Further to the meeting on 5 June 2017, Mr Kirby confirmed that he had produced a budget for Cottesmore which was circulated to all Trustees.

Mr Gooding noted the progress made on the Trustee recommendations discussed at the last meeting.

- Negotiation of the school's deficit so that a **realistic recovery plan** can be created and implemented that will not compromise standards and the education for all pupils in **either Cottesmore or RLT schools.** **COMPLETE**

budgets. Mr Williams stated that he would be having discussions about this.

A Trustee questioned the 6½ classes at St Nicholas and Mr Gooding outlined the rationale behind this.

RG

A Trustee questioned whether the surplus belongs to the Trust or whether it belongs to the schools. Mr Gooding confirmed that once 10 schools were in place the Trustees could decide whether to reduce the top slice from 5% or whether the Trust continues to take 5% allowing the Trust find ways of spending the money to benefit the children in the schools. Mr Gooding agreed to discuss this at the next COG meeting.

A Trustee questioned what issues there were with the leadership at Cottesmore and how long they should take to rectify. Mr Gooding outlined this but was pleased to see some improvement since RLT's involvement.

A Trustee questioned whether there would always be the need for a school within Kendrew Barracks.

- The starting point for these negotiations must be that the ESFA reduce the size and scale of the debt so that **no legal or financial liability resides with our Trust**. The deficit is currently **well beyond our current reserves position**. **DONE – see CFO Report**
- A MOU or **legal document** is constructed to **protect** the Rutland Learning Trust from all Cottesmore Millfield Academy debts. An understanding that all debts remain compartmentalised with Cottesmore and will not be a liability of the RLT. **ESFA – negative regarding MOU/ Contract, fairly confident should not be an issue going forward.**
- Full RSC and ESFA written agreement to the terms and conditions of the recovery plan.
- The school constructs a sustainable budget. This will need to take into account staff restructuring costs, redundancy costs (potentially 3), contractual disputes x1 (IT), grievances x1 (PO), leases (IT) and emergency building works (roof, windows and lighting). **DONE – see CFO Report**
- Successful Emergency Strategic School Improvement Funding (£50K) to support NLE, SLE, Leading Teacher deployment in Summer and Autumn Terms. **DONE**
- Additional RSC School Improvement Funds £115K – to ensure the level of school improvement support is sustainable in the longer term. **PROMISED £70K - £110K. £115K REQUESTED**
- Successful CIF Bid (Conditions and Improvement Fund) to address outstanding issues with the school building – roof. Windows/lighting future CIF Bids. **DONE**

RISKS

Redundancies – processes and implications

On-going staffing issues

Leadership of learning

Trustees were made aware that the Trust does not have the skill set to manage a battalion change.

Mr Gooding noted the capability of the current LGB at Cottesmore.

A Trustee questioned the size of the risk around the redundancies and asked for confirmation of this. Trustees requested that this risk is not the responsibility of the Trust.

Trustees formally agreed to proceed in principal subject to the deficit being addressed and any exposure to pre-existing risk prior to the Trust's engagement being the responsibility of the previous administration or it's residuary body.

8. **Data Headlines from across the Trust.** Mr Gooding presented to the Trustees on the data headlines from the schools across the Trust.

Mr Gooding outlined an example of the School Improvement Document (SID) which are used for each of the schools.

9. **RLT Self-Evaluation.** Mr Gooding circulated a document 'The 10 Characteristics of Successful Multi Academy Trusts'.

Trustees discussed the Trust's role with the Rutland Teaching School Alliance. It was suggested that a resolution would be presented to the Trustees at the next meeting as it wasn't currently working in line with the Trust's ethos.

Trustees were pleased to hear that the scrutiny panel had met and complimented the Headteachers at each of the schools and the Chair of the Trust had written to each of them.

Trustees asked to see progress in future rather than just attainment and this would be presented at a future meeting.

A Trustee asked how the individual school retain their autonomy when using the same SID template. Mr Gooding confirmed that each of the Headteachers currently within the Trust can make their SID individual. He noted that he does expect those schools requiring school improvement to stick to the guidelines to ensure the issues in the school are addressed.

Mr Williams outlined how the Trust will be inspected within the next 12-18 months and outlined the need to ensure that there is a framework in place for the scrutiny panel to consider and drive the discussions at the Trust meetings.

10. **Governor Training programme.** Mr Gooding outlined a session on 16 September 2017 (AM) whereby Trustees will present their vision followed by a group sessions with all LGB on the Roles & Responsibilities of Academy Governor. At this session, each governor would be expected to sign up to at least one session.

Mr Gooding also outlined some strategy sessions with Paul and Gill Weston which Trustees were welcomed to attend.

Trustees briefly discussed the integration of the Trustees within the schools and LGBs.

11. **AOB**

- Mr Gooding noted that the Parent Code of Conduct will be going on each of the LGB websites and included within the Home School Agreement.
- Mr Gooding noted an issue whereby Rev Rush had caused a few concerns in some topics that are promoted on his website and on flyers being sent to parents who had raised the issue with some of the Headteachers. It was noted that these issues had not been raised in the school assemblies. It was agreed that his website would be reviewed and the Trust would get some legal advice on how this issue should be addressed. Rev Saunders agreed to review this along with Mr Gooding.
- Mr Gooding was thanked for all his hard work for the Trust. Mr Kirby was thanked for all his hard work on the financial aspects of the Trust.