

MINUTES OF THE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD

ON 2 OCTOBER 2017 FROM 7PM AT WHISSENDINE COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Present: Gareth Williams (Chair), Kristi Withers, Nick Horrigan, Anna Raine, James Saunders, Rob Gooding and David Evans.

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

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|  |  | **ACTION** | **CHALLENGE** |
| 1. | **Welcome & Introductions.** Mr Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |  |
| 2. | **Apologies for Absence.** Mrs Topham and Mrs Holland sent their apologies which were accepted. |  |  |
| 3. | **Declarations of Interest.** Mrs Raine declared an interest in any discussions around Empingham CofE due to her employment there. Mr Gooding also declared an interest due to his wife’s employment as the Executive Headteacher at Rutland Primary Partners. |  |  |
| 4. | **Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising.** The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by Mr Williams as Chair.  Mrs Tyers agreed to circulate the minutes for approval by Trustees as soon as they are drafted enabling Trustees to make any comments prior to the next meeting.   * Mr Gooding noted that the RLT training planned had been postponed due to the trainer’s illness. He was pleased to confirm that GDS were currently putting together a training schedule to address RLT’s needs. * Mr Gooding produced the Percentiles Progress Measures for all the schools within the Trust showing the progress made from KS1 to KS2. * At a previous meeting, Mr Gooding was asked whether the SID is personable and bespoke to each school? Mr Gooding outlined the School Improvement Plan which was being rolled out to each of the schools. He showed an example which showed the governor monitoring schedule and what is expected from each governor and how they are able to put this into practice effectively. He confirmed that he had met with each of the Chair of Governors who would take this document back to their schools. | **NT** | Trustees were pleased to receive this information. They asked for and were given information around some of the results which were not in line with the national average. Trustees asked for any areas where the children are not able to access the next phase of their education which Mr Gooding agreed to outline later in the meeting. |
| 5. | **Trustee Appointments.**   * It was proposed and seconded that Mr Williams is elected as Chair for the next academic year. * It was proposed and seconded that Mr Evans is elected as Vice Chair for the forthcoming academic year. * It was agreed that the Scrutiny & Audit committees would retain the same members going forward. * The Trustees agreed to retain Nicola Tyers as Clerk to the Trust who would receive performance management annually in line with the Clerking Competency Framework. |  |  |
| 6. | **RLT Documents.** Mr Gooding outlined the need to adopt and approve the following documents. He outlined any key changes made to these documents:   * RLT Terms of Reference * RLT Scheme of Delegation * RLT Decision Planner   Trustees received copies of these prior to the meeting and unanimously ratified the documents and they were adopted.  It was proposed and unanimously approved that Revd Saunders be allocated the Trust responsibility for Safeguarding.  The Strategic Intent document had been written and would be reviewed by the Scrutiny Panel for approval by the Trust. |  |  |
| 7. | **Exton & Greetham CofE.** Mr Gooding outlined the review carried out at Exton which had highlighted an issue with leadership within the school although this was being addressed by the Local Authority as the school had not joined the Trust and was still a Local Authority school. Mr Gooding confirmed that it was still right for the Trust to move forward with Exton joining the Trust and was fully prepared to address the issues raised by the Local Authority.  Trustees were pleased to hear that a governance review had been carried out and great improvements had been made at the school including how the school looks, improvements in teaching, better use of data. |  | Trustees questioned that the Trust still had the capacity to support Exton alongside Cottesmore and aired caution with taking on a school with leadership issues. |
| 8. | **Cottesmore Millfield Academy (CMA).** Mr Gooding confirmed that RLT had provided support to CMA since Term 5. He confirmed that the school had a battalion change which had been well handled. He was pleased to report that the behaviour problems previously seen had not been seen during the new academic year.  It was noted that the staff had received redundancy papers so morale was currently low. It was confirmed that Phase 1 of the staffing restructure had been put in place. Mr Gooding outlined the process to assess the quality of teaching at the school.  Trustees were informed that the progress of girls and SEN children was very low and were surprised to hear that the battalion change affected the attainment and progress of those children staying at the school rather than those children new to the school.  Mr Gooding was pleased to outline the improvements that can be made at the school with the support of the Trust and the opportunities that this offers to staff within the Trust. Trustees were pleased to hear that Mrs Schofield was working 3 days per week at the school.  Mr Gooding confirmed that a letter had been received from ESFA in response to the Trustee’s non-negotiables which had stated that no repayments would be made within 4-years and the £85k would be repaid by the school in 4 years. Trustees were shown the letter from the EFSA which they felt did not clarify this clearly.  Trustees were asked for their approval to start legal work subject to the School Improvement Grant being received in the sum £110k. The RSC had stated that they would make an upfront payment from the School Improvement Grant of £25k  Following financial advice from Mr Kirby, he had confirmed that there was only a risk to the Trust that they would lose the cost of the legal work.  **Are Trustees prepared to risk the cost of the legal work?**  **Do Trustees believe that the Treasury is likely to honour the remainder of the School Improvement Grant?** Trustees instructed Mr Gooding to ensure that he retains regular contact with the Treasury to reassure them that the Trustees will not approve for Cottesmore to join the Trust if they do not reduce the overall debt to £85k and would maintain this as a regular discussion item on the agenda.  Trustees discussed the consequences of delaying the decision to start the legal work and Mr Williams and Mr Gooding both outlined how although the support was in place between the school and the Trust there was a lack of accountability between them both.  **One trustee did not vote in favour with the decision to move forward with the legal work as he did not feel reassured by the paperwork received from ESFA.**  **The remaining Trustees, although they aired caution at the risk of the legal costs, voted in favour to move forward with the legal work based on the letter dated 12th September 2017 from the ESFA.** |  |  |
| 9. | **OFSTED Updates.** Mr Gooding was pleased to report that St Nicholas had been graded as ‘Good’ following its recent inspection. Trustees were pleased to hear that the Inspector had been very complimentary of the school, the behaviour and the leadership of the school. He outlined the key points from the Ofsted report. |  |  |
| 10. | **Langham Nursery.** Mr Gooding noted that when Langham first became an academy the registration at Companies House was inaccurate. Following a letter from Ofsted asking to speak to the nominated person at the Nursery which was the headteacher at the school.  Mr Gooding recommended that the Trust delegates the responsibility for the strategic and operational, leadership and management of the setting to the Langham LGB. The TOR for the nursery were presented to the Trustees who gave their unanimous approval to submit this document to Ofsted and asked to be updated on this matter. |  |  |
| 11. | **Trustee & Governor Training.** Covered under Matters Arising. |  |  |
| 12. | **Policies.** The following policies were circulated prior to the meeting and ratified by Trustees:  **Safeguarding 2017** – Revd Saunders raised some changes which he recommended were required to the policy to ensure it was clear who had the accountability of safeguarding. He suggested outlined a few further changes which he felt were required and he agreed to work with Mrs Kennard-Kettle on this policy. Amended document to be ready by January 2018.  **Appraisal & Capability Policy –** no changes. Approved**.** |  |  |
| 13. | **AOB:**  Mr Williams outlined the need to review the Mr Gooding’s job description to ensure it is clearly written in his role as a CEO and review the pay structure and suggested that the financial audit committee meet to review this document and to ensure it is sustainable going forward. | **GW/Audit Committee** |  |