



never give up.

Trustee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 21st June 2017
6pm-8pm

ACE Schools Plymouth, Bretonside

Attendance

Trustees

Dr Tim Searle tim.searle@acemat.uk
Mr Peter McDonnell peter.mcdonnell@acemat.uk
Mr Alastair Wright alastair.wright@acemat.uk
Mrs Joan Watkins joan.watkins@acemat.uk
Mrs Sue Bickle sue.bickle@acemat.uk
Sarah Gillett sarah.gillett@aceschools.net

Chair
Vice Chair
Vice Chair Elect
Trustee & Chair of ACE Schools Plymouth LGB
Trustee & Chair of Courtlands LGB
CEO of ACE Schools Trust

In Attendance

Paul Turner paul.turner@aceschools.net CFO
Cheryl Reuben clerk@aceschools.net Clerk

1. **Chairman's introduction.**
TS welcomed the Board. He reflected on the complexity and hard work of all the staff across the Trust.
2. **Apologies.**
Standing apology from Annette Benny.
Accepted.
3. **Verbal declarations of interest.**
None.
4. **Approve minutes of the previous meeting.**
Approved.
5. **Matters & actions arising from previous meeting.**
Action 1: PM & SB IT issues to be reported to Karen Felix.
PM advised his issues were now resolved. SB & JW still reported issues.
Action 2: PT or one of his finance team will attend every other Courtlands LGB meeting to field any questions.
No LGB meetings had taken place since the previous meeting, but a member of the finance team will attend the next meeting.
Action 3: SB and PT will arrange to meet in the next few weeks to ensure SB is clear on the finance reporting.
To be arranged.
Action 4: The Clerk will distribute electronic copies of the existing policies to each member of the Board (except to AB as per item 1) to review prior to the next meeting.
Completed.
6. **Presentation from Teaching Personnel.**
The Board received a presentation from Teaching Personnel.
The Board asked the following questions:
TS: What is the % of specialist SEN staff you offer?
TP: Chloe Gunson specialises in providing SEN staff so all of her clients are looking for this field of teaching.
PM: Who do you consider to be your main competitor?
TP: In Cornwall our main competitor is Concord. However, their market is more mainstream and they only have 1 branch in Truro. Teaching Personnel offer its client CPD and a more desirable rate of pay.
JW: Who funds the CPD?
TP: We deliver in-house training to our own candidates. We also work collaboratively with our client schools and team teach funded by Teaching Personnel. We provide training as and when it is required.
JW: What is meant by a phased approach to the DBS check?
TP: All candidates are registered on the update service. If they arrive with an in date DBS check, this is considered valid until the update service check is processed. We do have a safeguarding/vetting team which runs all of our checks. Our checks are very stringent and more demanding than those required by the schools.
TS: What would be included as part of a bespoke package?
TP: We would be able to offer more flexibility for example, if we know you require a certain number/type of staff, we can employ an additional to assist with your needs. Teaching Personnel's internal structure can be adapted to fit your need i.e. MAPA training.
PT: As part of a preferred supplier agreement, what commitment would you require from ACE?
TP: Only one and that would be to allow Teaching Personnel to have the first opportunity to provide staff. There would be stipulations on the response time from Teaching Personnel depending on the level of need. There are no cancellation charges.
JW: How do we verify the promises you are sitting and making to us now?
TP: We can put you in touch with other clients who can provide testimonials of our quality of work. We don't want to tie you in to working with us if you are unhappy which is why we do not impose cancellation fees etc.
JW: How many staff have you provided to ACE to date?
TP: So far we have supplied around 32 members of staff across the service.
TP: What is the vision for ACE's growth over the next 5 years?
SG: I would like to see a further provisions in Cornwall, Exeter, Devon, Bournemouth, Somerset, Bristol and in to the South East of England.

The Board agreed to consider the proposal from Teaching Personnel to make them the preferred supplier for Teaching staff subject to confirmation that their agreement does not contain an exclusivity clause.

Teaching Personnel left the meeting.

7. **Update from the Head of Finance.**

PT summarised the content of the finance report for ACE Schools Plymouth.

The Board accepted the report and forecast for ACE School Plymouth.

PT summarised the content of the finance report for Courtlands Special School.

SG summarised some of the potential options which may be presented at the next Trust meeting

Questions:

PM: What, if anything could/should have been picked up as part of the due diligence process/ risk assessment/ forecasting?

PT: There was always a £48k deficit forecast. The deficit had temporarily been covered by the additional 6 places however, these are no longer commissioned so alternative action is required.

Any queries pertaining to Courtlands may be directed to SG & PT to be addressed at the next Trust meeting.

The Board accepted the report and forecast for Courtlands.

The Board extended their support & commercial expertise to SB & PT over the upcoming weeks. PT expressed his thanks to Anna Rumsby.

8. **ACE MAT Growth Updates**

PT summarised the growth update report. The DFE have been supportive with of the endeavour to date. ACE have worked closely with Wolverstans & Bishop Flemming on the proposed structure which Tom Briant-Evans has submitted to the DFE for consideration. ACE are presenting to BCG next week. BCG are looking to grow with expansion in to Ivybridge.

Questions:

JW: Who's Governance would the BCG provision fall under?

PT: The plan is to set up a Trading Subsidiary which will be owned by ACE MAT which will supply educational services to the Children in the care of BCG. Governance will lie with the Company Directors. The company will share the same ethos as ACE MAT and may still be inspected by OfSTED.

JW: Why is the intention to set up a subsidiary trading company rather than a free school and who will pay for the services provided?

SG: A free school application takes 3 years to process so is not appropriate for this venture. The cost of the educational services are covered by whichever LA has commissioned the child's place at BCG.

AW: Why have you opted for a Private Limited Guarantee rather than a Shareholder's Agreement?

PT: This is based on the advice from Bishop Flemming on the recharge of VAT and the ability to gift aid back to the Trust.

The Board accepted the recommendations contained within the growth report.

The Board accepts the report from Bishop Flemming.

9. **Travel & Subsistence.**

The Board were provided with a copy of the proposed Travel and Subsistence policy. They were advised that the content was the same as the existing policy which was TUPE'd across from PCC with the exception of Section 5. This has been amended to reflect the opening of new bases outside of the Plymouth area, where existing members of staff are required to be based in order to set up the provision. The changes allow a recompense for additional travel costs incurred from the temporary change of the usual place of work.

The Board accepted the recommendation outlined above and agreed for TS to read, review and sign if happy with the content.

10. **Policy Review June 2017.**

All policies when reviewed, are to be annotated and returned to the Clerk for updating/amending. They will then be checked again by TS for final approval and signing.

TS requested that the front page had reference to the author of the policy as well as who signed it off.

TS requested that the Board were reminded of their responsibility under the Health & Safety Policy:

1.1 Members of school staff, the senior leadership team and the Board of Trustees carry the key responsibilities for assessing, recording and implementing the correct Health & Safety procedures.

1.2 The Board of Trustees will endeavour to provide the safest school environment by ensuring that:

- a) The school fulfils its legal health and safety obligations.
- b) The school health and safety policy is being implemented and is effective.
- c) Risk assessments are carried out regularly either by the relevant authorities and/or school staff depending on the nature of the activity taking place.
- d) The importance of good health and safety practice is promoted throughout school to all staff, pupils, parents, volunteers, contractors and any other visitors.
- e) School premises and equipment are regularly assessed and reviewed in line with health and safety regulations.
- f) There is appropriate budget for the schools health and safety provision.
- g) The importance of good health and safety is communicated to school staff and carefully monitored.
- h) All staff are made aware of any changes to the health and safety arrangements at the school.

11. **Review Length of Service.**

TS reminded the Board that under the Article of Association, Trustees were signed up to the Board for a term of 4 years. The position of Chair is to be reviewed annually and will be included as an item in the September 2017 meeting.

12. **CEO Update.**

SG stated that the only updates were the potential growth in Bournemouth as per Item 8.

That there still continued to be tension with Plymouth LA over the Banding descriptors. SG received an email on Monday 19th June 2017 advising that the descriptors had been 'agreed' and would not be on the agenda for discussion at Schools Forum on 21st June 2017. The matter has been referred back to Sarah Rusby at the EFA as previously directed, for further advice.

The Board agreed to await the EFA's response before formally responding.

The Board agreed for TS to liaise with Judith in the interim, over the difference in approach to that which they had previously discussed.

Action 1: SG/PT will circulate a copy of the email sent to Sarah Rusby.

SG asked for the Board's directive on whether she should attend the SPP meetings whilst the matter remained unresolved?

The Board agreed that SG should attend the SPP meetings and should inform these present of the current issues/situation.

13. **LGB Reports**

The Board acknowledged receipt of the LGB report from ACE Schools Plymouth. The Board acknowledged that Courtlands had not had a full Board meeting since the last Trust meeting and had more pressing issues to attend to prior to this meeting hence there being no report submitted from them on this occasion.

TS and the clerk will work on a new reporting format to try and simplify producing the reports for all LGBs.

14. **AOB.**

*(Items should be generally lodged with the clerk at least **48 hours before the meeting**).*

15. Reserved Business

Pending Items:

Item	Date Added (meeting date)	Review Date
Terms of Office – length of service	15 June 2016	June 2017
Policy review	June 2016	By June 2017
Trustees meeting dates	July 2016	November 2016
Trustee Work plan	October 2016	

Dates of Future Meetings:

Wednesday 19th July 18.00-20.00

Board of Trustees:

Dr Tim Searle tim.searle@acemat.uk
Mr Peter McDonnell peter.mcdonnell@acemat.uk
Mr Alastair Wright alastair.wright@acemat.uk
Mrs Annette Benny annette.benny@acemat.uk
Mrs Joan Watkins joan.watkins@acemat.uk
Mrs Sue Bickle sue.bickle@acemat.uk
Sarah Gillett sarah.gillett@aceschools.net

Chair
Vice Chair
Vice Chair Elect
Trustee
Trustee & Chair of ACE Schools Plymouth LGB
Trustee & Chair of Courtlands LGB
CEO of ACE Schools Trust