

# Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March  
at 16:00

Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
Transforming Futures MAT  
Unit 3 Ensign House, Parkway Court,  
Longbridge Road, Marsh Mills,  
Plymouth PL6 8LR

## **TRUSTEES IN ATTENDANCE:**

Dr Clive Grace (CG) – Chair of the Board of Trustees  
Mrs Carole Burgoyne (CB) – Trustee  
Mr Peter Cubbon (PC) – Trustee  
Dr Karen Deeny (KD) – Trustee  
Mrs Geraldine Herage (GH) – Trustee  
Mr Peter McDonnell (PMD) – Trustee  
Mr Graham Oliver (GO) – Trustee  
Mr Denis Parsons (DP) - Trustee  
Dr Tim Searle (TS) – Trustee  
Mr Tim Thexton (TT) – Trustee

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Gavin Gracie (GG) – CEO  
Ms Josie Medforth (JM) – COO  
Ms Diane Dimond (DD) – CFO  
Mrs Hannah Smart (HS)– Headteacher  
Mr Matt Bindon (MB) – Headteacher  
Mr Lee Earnshaw (LE)– Headteacher  
Mrs Anna Tapley (AT) – Executive Assistant

Minute No.	Agenda Item	Action
1)	<p><b>Welcome, Attendance &amp; Apologies</b></p> <p>CG introduced the meeting.</p> <p>The video call was evidence of meeting attendance in which no apologies were received.</p>	
2)	<p><b>Declaration of Business Interests</b></p> <p>No declarations were received in relation to the items within the agenda.</p>	
3)	<p><b>Consider and agree the minutes from the last Board meeting (25<sup>th</sup> February 2021), Matters Arising &amp; Actions</b></p> <p>The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>There were no further matters arising/actions.</p>	
4)	<p><b>CEO Update Report</b></p> <p>As part of ongoing work to strengthen the Trust's governance processes GG provided a summary of key activities in which he was involved for Trustee's information.</p> <p>Courtlands update – CONFIDENTIAL.</p> <p>GG went on to highlight that he had been liaising with other CEOs promoting the work and services offered by the Trust and that this had led to a partnership working opportunity with Ted Wragg helping to SEN train their staff. MB provided further detail around the trust's provision map detailing the uniqueness of the Trust's offer borne out of the variety of provisions within TFT. Following discussion CB informed that GG/LE were undertaking a piece of work for the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee in relation to staff turnover at Courtlands.</p> <p><b>The Board reviewed and discussed the report and information provided as part of its regular monitoring processes.</b></p>	

<p>5)</p>	<p><b>Central Services Update</b></p> <p>Further to the Trust Board meeting on 25/2/21, GG informed that there had been six points requiring clarification that had been delegated to a trustee’s working party for their consideration. GG summarised the supplementary information provided to the working party in relation to those points highlighting that a comprehensive consultation process had been developed and the service contract was nearing completion. It was noted that due to slight movement in the personnel involved in the transfer group, the pension calculations were requiring adjustment and that this could potentially delay the proposed date of ‘transfer’.</p> <p>Following a question raised, it was clarified that individual 121 meetings with staff had covered the issue of the payroll changeover.</p> <p>CG expressed the Board’s appreciation for all the work taken place to date on progressing the central services project, in particular the leadership taken by GG in seeing the project through to fruition. Thanks to be passed onto all those involved.</p> <p><b>PC/TS moved the recommendation in which the Board approved the Contract subject to the final schedules; and delegated authority for signing the Contract to the Chair of the Trust Board and CEO.</b></p>	<p>GG</p>
<p>6)</p>	<p><b>Education Strategy</b></p> <p>It was noted that a separate Education Strategy Working party had been set up to take the development of the strategy forward for the Trust. AT to send papers considered by the working party to all Trustees via email for their background information.</p> <p>On discussion of the paper, key points were highlighted as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GG highlighted that while the Trust recognises the pupils currently in its care, there were circa 500 children under the responsibility of the Local Authority who have special needs of whom are not placed in schools. As part of the Trust’s constitution, it was imperative that these children are given a voice and helped by Trusts such as TFT to integrate back into society. GG emphasised the need for this issue to be encompassed within TFT’s strategic approach.</li> <li>• GH outlined that following a discussion at Education &amp; Outcomes Committee that the working party would initially focus on the purpose of the strategy, core values underpinning the strategy, enablers/disablers to the trust’s provisions.</li> <li>• HS – Strategy to use language that everyone understands and is right for the Trust’s audience.</li> <li>• MB – Strategy to encapsulate benefit of the academies being part of a MAT. CG added that a recent publication by Sir David Carter referred explicitly to articulating how MATs create educational value for children, staff and families that individual schools could not do alone.</li> </ul>	<p>AT</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PMD – Once developed the Trust will need to consider the best way to disseminate the strategy including a range of media to best promote its work to a variety of stakeholders.</li> <li>• GO – It was noted that the scoping paper provided a comprehensive structure for taking work forward with outcomes made explicit. Further, it would be helpful to explain values i.e., “<i>excellence in all the Trust does</i>” and what “excellence” means to the Trust.</li> <li>• PC – Useful to consider how the schools learn from each other and from a continuous improvement perspective, develop at the same rate.</li> <li>• TS – For strategy ‘to come to life’, buy-in really important from internal stakeholders and therefore involvement of teachers etc in its development to be considered. TT added that clearly articulating the part that individuals play, and difference made helps to connect individuals to the strategy and therefore important.</li> <li>• The need to embrace co-production was discussed. HS explained that staff within the Trust’s provisions carry out very different roles and it would be beneficial to include both teachers and students in developing the strategy. MB expressed that the development of the strategy presented a real opportunity to work collectively with staff across the Trust. A focus on identifying the leavers for the strategy (i.e., retaining exceptional staff as being key to performance) as well as the uniqueness of provisions will determine the common threads while acknowledging that each academy may approach things in different ways.</li> <li>• KD expressed that TFT was about giving its children a voice in society and therefore fundamental for them to have a voice within the strategy.</li> <li>• CB noted that it was important to capture how children thrive and achieve great outcomes at TFT particularly given many children coming into the Trust’s care would not view one of its academies as the best thing for them at the time and so this message very important.</li> <li>• CG – resources to support the production of the strategy to be considered by CG/GH/GG.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Board considered the paper presented and feedback received from discussion at the Education &amp; Outcomes Committee. Further, the above key points arising from the discussion to act as a steer to the Education Strategy Working Group in advance of their meeting scheduled for 30/3/21.</b></p>	
7)	<p><b>Policy Review</b></p> <p>JM introduced the report summarising work undertaken to ensure the Trust was statutorily compliant in line with the requirements as set out by the DfE and within the AFH. This included the development of a policy schedule identifying needs at Trust and School level across the spectrum of its operations and responsibilities.</p> <p>It was noted that the project was now at the second stage of embedding the policy process and monitoring how practice is reflected from the policies in place with future support and challenge of policies by Trustees as part of its regular governance processes. GG added that control measures such as linking</p>	

	<p>trust-wide policies directly onto each school website would mitigate against future risk of duplication or outdated policies in circulation.</p> <p>CG expressed thanks on behalf of the Board for the work undertaken by JM/Annais and Tracey with regard to the policy review.</p> <p>TS/GO moved the recommendation as follows:-  <b>The Board reviewed the content of the Policy Review Report and agreed the proposed way forward in conjunction with the Governance Development Plan. In addition, Chairs of Committees to consider the content of the Policy Review Report and the Policy Schedule at near term future meetings to implement Policy reviews and approvals into their Committee agendas. A further Policy Review Report to be presented to the Board of Trustees in July as part of the overall Governance Development work.</b></p>	<p>CB/GH/GO</p> <p>JM</p>
<p>8)</p>	<p><b>Governance Development</b></p> <p>CG provided an update on work undertaken to date and informed that a final report and completion of the project would be presented to the Board at their July Meeting.</p> <p><b>The Board:-</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Noted progress on the Governance Development Plan</b></li> <li><b>2. Noted that Trustee skills and associated training needs were dealt with under separate cover (item 9/B/25/3/21 refers)</b></li> <li><b>3. Noted that Trust policies were dealt with under separate cover as referenced above (item 7/B/25/3/21 refers)</b></li> <li><b>4. Noted that two additional members with skills and experience in special education and in social research and evaluation had been appointed to the Trust, and that further positive developments in relation to Trust Members have been put in hand.</b></li> <li><b>5. Noted that local governance arrangements were addressed through a separate report (item 10/B/25/3/21 refers below)</b></li> </ol>	
<p>9)</p>	<p><b>Trustee Skills &amp; Training</b></p> <p>KD introduced the report summarising work undertaken. Thanks were expressed to Annais for the huge contribution she had made to the project.</p> <p>Feedback provided by Trustees included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process provided a positive opportunity for personal reflection.</li> <li>• All trustees were happy for the matrix to be made identifiable.</li> <li>• With regard to the recommended improvement actions as detailed within Table 3 and specifically action 7 to <i>“Consider extending a similar audit process to include SLT, the Trust executive team and developing LGAGs”</i> – MB informed that it would be good professional development for both himself and his SLT to be involved. GG agreed that the Trust Exec. Team would benefit and as such timeline for getting Exec. Team and SLTs involved to be determined by July and to report back to Trust Board on how this will relate to the appraisal process etc.</li> <li>• With regard to extending the process to S&amp;CGs, KD highlighted that the NGA had a parallel set of questions for LGBs and therefore the process</li> </ul>	<p>GG/MB/HS/LE/KD</p>

	<p>could be adapted quite easily. GG stated that it would be valuable to feed this work early into the process of recruiting S&amp;CG members and as part of their induction.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the overall picture, and individual and collective strengths of Trustees (Annexe 2 and Annexe 4 referred). In addition, the Board approved the recommendations (Table 3) proposed to address the gaps in skills and experience identified through the recently conducted audit. Finally, they considered the proposals for a longer term, wider application of the skills and experiences audit approach.</b></p>	
10)	<p><b>Support &amp; Challenge Groups</b> On discussion of the paper, trustees further considered the title “Support &amp; Challenge” as a name for the groups, however it was agreed that this would remain but that it could be reviewed further subsequent to the groups being set up. Heads to feed back if the name causes any issues in relation to recruiting individuals etc.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:-</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Support &amp; Challenge Groups (S&amp;CG) based on Annex 1 to the report subject to the check identified in minute 11 below.</b></li> <li><b>2. The recruitment of S&amp;CG members in readiness for the summer term.</b></li> </ol>	
11)	<p><b>ToR for Safeguarding &amp; Wellbeing and Education &amp; Outcomes Committees</b> GG introduced the report highlighting that the Education &amp; Outcomes Committee had made a small change to the respective ToR in which to hold the Committee once per term, three times per annum.</p> <p>It was noted that para. 7.6 in relation to student’s voice should be reflected in the S&amp;CGs ToR. AT to check this point is included.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed that the ToR are adopted for each of the respective sub-committees subject to the amended noted above being made in relation to the Education &amp; Outcomes Committee.</b></p>	AT
12)	<p><b>AOB</b> <b>Papers for Trust Members:</b> Item 9 “Trustee Skills &amp; Training” paper and a copy of the agenda to be emailed with members able to request further items from the agenda if they so wish.</p> <p><b>Trust Board Away Day:</b> Trustees agreed to hold an ‘Away Day’ that would involve an overnight stay. It was noted that one or two trustees could not make this around 22/7/21 and therefore date to be further considered.</p> <p><b>Departure of Interim EA</b> GG informed that Annais had now secured permanent employment and would be leaving the Trust on 1/4/21. It was noted that AT had organised a card and trustees were invited to send any messages for AT to collate. GG/AT to organise a small leaving present.</p>	AT  CG/AT  AT/GG

	The meeting closed at 18:43.	
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Jones', with a horizontal flourish underneath.

Signed:

Date: 27/5/21

Dates of Future Meetings: 27/5/21