

**Coppice Primary Partnership**  
**Meeting of the Trustee Board**  
 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 at 5.30 pm  
 at Coxheath Primary School

**Present:** Darren Webb, Carole Hardy (chair of Trustee Board), Peggy Murphy, Andrew Maitland, Carina Cuddington

**In attendance:** Andrew Lacey (Trust Business Manager), John Edgar (CoG St Katherine's Primary School)

**Clerk:** Clare Nursey

Agenda item and discussion	Action/decision
<p><b>1 Welcome and any introductions</b>            CH welcomed all to this meeting, particularly John Edgar, CoG at SKPS. All introduced themselves and explained their backgrounds and roles on the TB.</p>	
<p><b>2 Apologies for absence</b>            There were no apologies for absence.</p>	
<p><b>3 Declaration of business interests</b>            PM advised she was Principal of LEAF teaching school (other interests already declared).</p>	
<p><b>4 Minutes of the last meeting (22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019) and any matters arising</b>            4.1 Minutes were signed as an accurate record of discussions (one typo corrected in action point 2).            4.2 Matters arising:            a) Leaders had discussed holding further drop in sessions for parents but had decided to continue with current arrangements, though future sessions would be opened to parents from either school            b) KPIs had been amended and were included in the Strategic document presented tonight. Finance KPIs would be reported on through management accounts. EHT would report progress against other KPIs in his termly report, compiled following receipt of reports from HTs            c) Clerk to circulate information on wellbeing and workload consultation (<i>done 24/7</i>)            d) EHT would liaise with HTs regarding TB learning walks next year (<i>done – see item 14 below</i>)            e) All other matters actioned or on agenda.</p>	
<p><b>5 Executive HT report and recommendations</b>            5.1 EHT's written report had been circulated and he asked trustees to consider in particular the discussion points highlighted.  <i>Leadership matters</i>            5.2 Sponsorship money in respect of SKPS had already been received and this will be put towards the School Improvement Leader's salary this year. The post had been offered on a 1 year fixed term contract and EHT asked trustees to consider whether the post should remain in the longer term. Trustees agreed that retaining the post long term would be an advantage but much depended on the impact the role had trust wide, and the capacity of budgets to afford the cost. Some discussion in annex for trustees.   <i>Staffing matters</i>            5.3 Discussion of support staff appraisal arrangements in annex.   <i>MAT and Governance matters</i>            5.4 Covered at item 10 below.</p>	

<p><i>School improvement/Strategic development</i></p> <p>5.5 Provisional data had been provided for information. EHT advised that CPS results were disappointing, particularly for Reading (10-15% lower than expectations) although Maths was higher than expected reflecting the impact of extra investment in resources (additional teacher). He had met CPS leaders (current and those in post in September) to review the strategic document and it had been agreed that Reading would be a focus next year. LPS attainment outcomes looked strong in all areas and showed the impact of the focus on Maths, especially at expected+, though the Reading progress measure was likely to be lower this year and this argued for a focus on KS2 Reading across the trust. JE advised that the Reading progress measure might also be a concern at SKPS, although it was hoped that this year's results were the last to reflect historic problems with KS1 data.</p> <p>5.5 As the LGB had noted, mobility at CPS was significant but might have been expected to impact equally on all results. Results needed unpicking (mobile/stable) and the Reading curriculum would be reviewed.</p> <p><i>Financial matters</i></p> <p>5.6 Consistency of employee benefits needed to be reviewed with SKPS joining the trust – FAC to discuss at their next meeting. Some discussion in annex for trustees.</p> <p><i>Current threats and areas for development</i></p> <p>5.7 CPS remained vulnerable on results and trustees discussed whether or not additional resources should be put in place – see annex for trustees.</p> <p>5.8 Development of nurture provision (linked with concern with exclusions) had been discussed by CPS LGB. EHT agreed this was a need across the trust, with too much of strategic leaders' time being taken up by vulnerable children at all 3 schools. JE suggested there might also be an issue that staff were not sufficiently experienced or trained to deal with these children, hence problems were referred on to the HT. Trustees agreed it would be an excellent use of money to develop a resource in each school to support vulnerable children and free up leaders' time (PM highly recommended ELSA training, which was well regarded by Ofsted and DfE). EHT would develop a costed plan for the next 2-3 years for inclusion in the strategic document.</p> <p><i>Strategic plan including KPIs</i></p> <p>5.9 Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> the strategic document and KPIs circulated for this meeting.</p>	<p>ACTION - FAC</p> <p>ACTION - EHT</p>
<p><b>6 Feedback from LGBs</b></p> <p>6.1 Latest LGB minutes had yet not been circulated.</p> <p>6.2 PM advised that the latest CPS LGB meeting had been productive and governors had asked her to raise three points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Future mechanism for the LGB and TB to maintain communications</li> <li>2) Need for more nurture provision</li> <li>3) Concern about exclusions</li> </ol> <p>6.3 CH advised that LPS LGB had also discussed point 1 above but had no specific matters to raise with the TB.</p>	
<p><b>7 Future direction of the trust</b></p> <p><i>St Katherine's Primary School</i></p> <p>7.1 EHT confirmed that SKPS's academy order had been issued. The BM at SKPS was currently collating information for the necessary returns etc. A meeting had been held with TUS (although only 1 representative had attended) and TUPE was underway. The possibility of agreeing collective bargaining had been raised by the TUS – the TB would need to consider this at their next meeting.</p> <p>7.2 JE confirmed that SKPS had had a difficult time lately following the flooding. With works over</p>	

<p>summer it was hoped the school might reopen fully in September but Holmesdale School was proving extremely helpful and inclusive and had offered use of 4 rooms next term, which could accommodate a whole year group.</p> <p><i>Informal collaborations</i> 7.3 Nothing to report.</p> <p><i>Partnership and development document</i> 7.4 Wording had been tweaked in light of the RSC’s stipulation about the number of LGB CoGs on the TB, but the document still included a commitment to ensure all LGBs had representation at trust level in some form.</p>	
<p><b>8 Business Matters</b></p> <p><i>Finance and Audit Committee Chair’s report</i></p> <p>8.1 Trustees had received the FAC chair’s written report. CC drew attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Changes to the ESFA Financial Handbook</li> <li>b) Kreston Reeves (auditors) had provided a paper on GAG pooling - the trust may wish to consider this in future</li> <li>c) Internal audit was going to be a hotter issue next year – KR had asked trustees to suggest any specific areas they would like the external auditors to look at (none raised at this meeting)</li> <li>d) Budget plans assumed LPS would continue to subsidise CPS. EHT reminded the meeting that the TB had already agreed that certain staff would remain LPS employees but work at CPS next year. The position would be reviewed for following years in light of October’s census data on the roll at CPS which might impact on budget plans</li> <li>e) Assumptions in the budget plans were explained in the papers circulated; flat pupil funding had been assumed; CC was happy that grants for teacher pay and pensions remained in plans as increases were unaffordable for all schools without some funding. Teacher pay rise of 2.75% had been announced this week – the plans assumed 2% rise next year and 1% in following years but with funding this should be cost neutral</li> <li>f) CC’s internal audit had shown nothing of concern; issues identified were training and knowledge based and she had suggested staff familiarise themselves with policies etc. AL advised that KR had completed 2 days’ preliminary field work for the external audit and no issues had come to light so far</li> <li>g) In reviewing the risk register, the FAC had discussed whether £15k was a sufficient contingency fund once a 3<sup>rd</sup> school joined the trust, and the suggestion was that this be increased to £25k once SKPS joined. The TB <b>AGREED</b> it would be better to future proof arrangements and <b>AGREED</b> that from November the contingency fund should comprise £3000 per form of entry with an aspirational target of £5000 per form of entry in future. The reserves target would remain at 2%, providing reserves of around £160k from November with a contingency of £24k. Trustees agreed with the EHT that this was a sensible amount, bearing in mind that public money should be spent on the children in school.</li> </ul> <p><i>19/20 budgets and 3 year plans</i></p> <p>8.2 AL advised there had been a change to the CPS figures (Yr 1 in year balance - revised plan issued) and that LPS figures had changed again today with confirmation of £19k HNF. He explained that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan reflected cautious assumptions on the CPS roll</li> <li>• Information on other assumptions, eg grants for teacher pay, was included on the paper</li> <li>• Year 1 of the plan included significant investment in ICT and marketing</li> <li>• No funding had yet been included for replacement systems, eg for finance</li> <li>• The trust balance as a whole remained over the agreed 2% reserves limit over the life of the</li> </ul>	<p style="color: red;">ACTION – TB</p> <p style="color: red;">ACTION - TB</p>

<p>plan.</p> <p>8.3 Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> the 19/20 budgets and 3 year plan.</p> <p><i>BFR</i></p> <p>8.4 AL confirmed that now the budgets had been approved he would complete and submit the BFR next week. CC would review the return prior to submission which would be confirmed to trustees by email.</p> <p><i>Budget monitoring data</i></p> <p>8.5 Trustees received monitoring data/management accounts for p/e May and had no questions to ask. AL advised that June's data had been issued today and supported all information given to today's meeting.</p> <p><i>Internal and external audits</i></p> <p>8.6 Covered in 8.1 (f) above.</p> <p><i>Proposal for reorganisation of trust business support</i></p> <p>8.7 EHT advised the proposal had been tweaked slightly – discussion in annex for trustees.</p> <p><i>Trust Business Manager's report</i></p> <p>8. AL drew attention to two items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contracts for cleaning, catering and refuse at both schools had been renewed for 1 year and would be reviewed next year once SKPS had joined the trust. Trustees' agreement had been sought by email (filed with minutes) and the meeting <b>CONFIRMED AGREEMENT</b> at this meeting.</li> <li>2. LPS would buy Empiribox for both schools next year at a cost of £16k which required trustee board approval. Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> this expenditure.</li> </ol>	<p><b>ACTION – CC and AL</b></p>
<p><b>9 Policies and key documents</b></p> <p>9.1 Trustees received the following trust policies/documents:</p> <p><i>Risk Register</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbering/blank boxes needed amendment in some places (AL to check)</li> <li>• P15 – overall risk regarding PAYE/NI to be amended to 1 as the trust has guarded against risk by outsourcing to an experienced provider (nb to keep provider under review as there have been 2 failures on Capita's part so far)</li> <li>• Document to be amended from September to include SKPS</li> <li>• Risk of school Twitter accounts being hacked to be reviewed</li> </ul> <p>9.2 Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> the document and agreed the register should be reviewed again in T2 after SKPS has joined the trust.</p> <p><i>Appraisal policy</i></p> <p><b>Q. Who would carry out the HT appraisals?</b> EHT – the EHT and appropriate CoG or another nominated governor – this would be made explicit in the policy.</p> <p><b>Q. Who would appraise the EHT?</b> EHT - a panel of the TB including the TB chair, together with an external adviser.</p> <p><b>Q. Who would appraise the School Improvement Leader?</b> EHT – the EHT would carry out this appraisal, possibly with the involvement of the TB chair.</p> <p>9.2 Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> the Appraisal policy with the clarification above [<i>revised version circulated 24 July</i>].</p>	<p><b>ACTION - TB</b></p>

9.3 Trustees noted changes to the ESFA Handbook.

## 10 Governance

### *LGB representation at TB level*

10.1 A stipulation in SKPS's academy order was that no more than 2 LGB CoGs could sit on the TB and both LGBs had expressed concern at how communication with the TB could be maintained going forwards. Options discussed had included:

- Rotating membership of the TB with the 3<sup>rd</sup> CoG joining the TB as an associate trustee - this did not provide a long term solution as the trust grew, and would incur expense as the Articles would require amendment regarding the trustee term of office (currently 4 years)
- the establishment of a Chairs' group, perhaps comprising all LGB CoGs, EHT and TB Chair, to meet before TB meetings.

10.2 Trustees discussed another option which was that an existing trustee could sit as an associate governor on any LGB without CoG representation on the TB. This would not require amendment of the Articles as the TB was free to organise academy committees as it chose. Trustees **AGREED** that any GB whose Chair is not a member of the Trust Board should have an attending Trustee to ensure representation at Board level.

### *Appointment of trustee*

10.3 The meeting **AGREED** that John Edgar should be appointed as a trustee immediately subject to member approval and authorisation by the LA due to John currently being an Authority Governor at St Katherine's. Clerk to seek Members' agreement to his immediate appointment. *(nb it had already been agreed that JE would be appointed as a trustee in November once SKPS joined the trust.)*

ACTION –  
Clerk

### *Finance and Audit Committee (FAC)*

10.4 The external auditors (Kreston Reeves) had advised that Members should not sit on this committee in order to maintain distance from decision making, and that the committee should comprise a majority of trustees, with good practice being to have an odd number of committee members to facilitate decision making. In order to enable the committee to receive full delegation of decision making, the TB **AGREED** that the FAC would comprise only 3 trustees next year – CC, AM, and John Edgar whose background in finance would be valuable. CH would write to Steve Knowles (Member) and Alan Chell (local governor) to explain the situation and thank them for their work on the FAC this year.

ACTION –  
CH

### *Loose LGB*

10.5 CH was pleased to report that Emma Eldridge, formerly a governor on the Loose FGB, had agreed to rejoin the LGB. Emma brought strength in education and SEND which would fill the skills gap left by PM's move to CPS LGB. Trustees **APPROVED** Emma's appointment as a co-opted governor on LPS LGB. *(nb as EE's employer, PM declared an interest in this item.)*

### *Attendance at meetings*

10.6 CH had reviewed attendance at LGB meetings over the year. This was good with one exception and trustees **AGREED that attendance of less than 75% was unacceptable.** CH should contact to the governor concerned to express the TB's concern.

ACTION –  
CH

### *Papers for TB meetings*

10.7 Trustees agreed that the volume of papers for meetings should be reduced next year. Three reports were all that was needed – FAC, EHT and TBM/finance (EHT and TBM would liaise before producing their reports). Paper should be circulated 7 days before meetings and any changes to information sent would be reported verbally at meetings.

10.8 CC suggested the trust may want to consider using Governor Hub, Trust governor or KLZ as a means of sending and storing information – options would be reviewed next year.	
<b>11 Safeguarding matters including Health &amp; Safety and Disability matters</b> Nothing urgent to report.	
<b>12 Chair's Actions/ Correspondence and any other business</b> 12.1 Chair had no further actions to report. 12.2 Trustees had all received the ESFA's letter to CEOs dated 19 July, outlining changes and new requirements for governance next year.	
<b>13 Confidentiality &amp; Publication of minutes</b> 13.1 Several items included in confidential annex for trustees. Main minutes to be circulated to LGBs and be publically available once approved at the next meeting. 13.2 EHT report to remain confidential to trustees.	
<b>14 Meeting dates for 19/20</b> Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2019 – 5:30pm (Loose) – <b>learning walk 4.00</b> Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2019 – 5:30pm (Coxheath) – <b>learning walk 4.00</b> Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2020 – 5:30pm (St Katherine's) – <b>learning walk 4.00</b> Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2020 – 5:30pm (Loose Primary School) Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 5:30pm (Coxheath Primary School) Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 – 5:30pm (St Katherine's Primary School)	

Signed.....

Date.....

Para	Action	By whom
5.6	Discuss employee benefits	FAC
5.8	Develop a costed plan for nurture provision	EHT
8.1. c	Suggest items for specific review during external audit	TB
8.1. d	Review position on school subsidies in light of October's census	TB
8.4	Review and submit the BFR	CC/AL
9.2	Review risk register in T2 post SKPS conversion	TB
10.3	Seek Members' agreement to immediate appointment of new trustee	Clerk
10.4	Write to SK and AC re FAC membership next year	CH
10.6	Contact governor re attendance	CH