



COPPICE PRIMARY PARTNERSHIP

PUBLIC MINUTES FOR THE 2023/2024 MEETING OF THE TRUST BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th OCTOBER 2023

Trust Board present at the meeting held on Wednesday 6th December 2023 approved these minutes as a true and accurate record, and signed on Governor Hub electronically

PRESENT

Carole Hardy (CH), Chair	John Edgar (JE), Vice Chair
Isabelle Linney-Drouet (LD), Trustee	Carina Cuddington (CC), Trustee
Andrew Maitland (AM), Trustee	Neil McDonald (NM), Trustee
Peggy Murphy (PM), Trustee	Mark Chatley (MC), Trust Leader
Annamaria Potgieter (AP), CFO (Chief Financial Officer)	

IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Lacey, Governance Professional	
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Yellow highlighted text demonstrates challenge / questions to the Trust representatives

PART A – PUBLIC DISCUSSION

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE *(led by Chair)*

1.1 Welcome; CH (Carole Hardy) welcomed all parties to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies; Apologies were received, and accepted, from Andrew Maitland.

1.3 Quorum; The meeting was declared as quorate.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

2.1 Trustees approved the re-election of CH as Chair of Trustees and JE as Vice Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST *(led by Chair)*

3.1 CH gave all parties the opportunity to declare any additional declarations of interest against the agenda to which none were declared.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACTIONS OUTSTANDING

4.1 Approval of Minutes; Both the public and confidential minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place on the 12th July 2023.

Clerk action: AL to mark term 6 minutes as signed on Governor Hub

4.2 Actions Outstanding; Trustees noted the completed actions from previous meetings (recorded in the actions table). Other actions were discussed under specific agenda items,

5. TRUST MATTERS *(led by Trust Leader)*

5.1 Strategic Document

- MC provided Trustees with an overview of the changes that have been made to the strategic document, and asked for questions / comments.
- JE - Growth was referred to in collaboration but considered if it should be a separate strategic aim such as building capacity for growth. ILD suggested that 'collaboration' should be changed to 'growth'
- CC expressed a view that before growth, the priority should be stabilising the existing schools especially in regards to the imminent Ofsted inspection of St Katherine's School, and the recent changes in headship at both Loose and St Katherine's.
- JE – the 'Regions' expect MAT's to be specific in their plans for growth, and at the moment, the Trust is not clear as to what it is trying to achieve, how and by when.
- Consensus was that plans for growing the Trust needed to be clearer - collaboration aim should be amended.

ACTION: MC to amend the strategic document and re-title the section 'Collaboration and Growth' including more detail such as targets and milestones.

5.2 Trust Leaders Termly Report including data pack

- MC advised that since writing his report for Trustees, the external reviews had taken place and as a result, it was necessary to re-order the priorities and focus on English.
- E&C had discussed the assessment outcomes. Two schools (Loose and Coxheath) were broadly in-line with national figures, St Katherine's did very well considering the cohort. There was an overlap in the areas of SEND, PPM and attainment.

JE made an observation that attainment figures for boys, SEND and PPM appeared to be below – Loose had an improvement action for those areas. MC commented that SEND is a common theme, Boys tended to do better in maths but not so well in writing. The consensus was that if schools focused on SEND then that would benefit most pupils who do not achieve national targets.

CH asked if schools are addressing the issues that had been identified as requiring attention – MC 'yes'.

JE asked what information will schools use for assessment? MC informed Trustees that summative data had been applied trust-wide with varying degrees of success. Formative assessment had moved away from marking of pupils work to be a day to day teacher assessment based on what they observed in lessons.

CH asked how will the formative assessment process be rolled out across the schools? MC advised that there would be in-school training delivered through three sessions, which are aimed at developing school plans and to upskill teachers.

- MC advised that there will be three data drops to provide schools with the tools to compare and report on attainment, and to better understand the gaps.

5.3 External Reviews

- MC provided a summary update on the recent external reviews. Loose focused on reading and writing, and PHSE. Nothing unexpected was reported. Coxheath also looked at reading and St Katherine's also looked at writing. CH asked if the Trust continued to use Mary for external reviews – MC confirmed this was so but given she had been involved the last three years then it might be time for a change.

6. FEEDBACK FROM LGB'S AND SCHOOL SPECIFIC MATTERS

6.1 Feedback from LGB's:

- Loose Primary School: JE provided feedback on new approach to governor monitoring, which is taking a project based approach on topics of: assessment, curriculum, CPD, SEND and personal development. HT has developed a project plan for each. Will provide update in T2.

JE asked why the process to approve and confirm the booking for the Yr6 trip seemed to be unnecessarily complicated as both HT and he had agreed and signed off? MC explained the delay was due to meeting the requirement of the trust finance policy in relation to paying deposits where no income had been

received from parents to cover such. AP confirmed the amount in question was £3.5k so not a small amount, and was waiting on paperwork. JE to feedback to HT.

LPS governors asked for clarification on the process for communicating policy changes to staff, and obtaining confirmation that they were aware of such? CH commented that it was an expectation that employers would need to demonstrate that staff had been informed. AP advised that the new HR system will provide the facility to upload policies and seek staff acknowledgement that they were aware of the update.

6.2 – 6.4 Confidential minutes

7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

7.1 Trustees noted the 2022/23 KPI out-turn figures.

7.2 JE / PM asked why there were no clear growth targets as this would link to the strategic plan.

ACTION: MC to amend to reflect growth targets.

8. POLICIES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

8.1 Trustees reviewed the amendment policies and approved subject to the following amendments:

- **Pay and Reward:** Amend 'trust / school' to 'we' and the process for those on UPS to be amended so that pay recommendations are considered by the three Headteachers as a panel and any appeals are heard by MC. **(MC)**
- **Finance:** Trustees considered an amendment to the requirement for using a framework agreement, and agreed to increase the thresholds in para 123 to £50,000 and £100,000 respectively. **(AP)**
- **Behaviour:** Trustees (PM / JE) questioned the proposed process and expectations for staff retraining restraining pupils. MC to re-word point 2 and remove points 3 and 4 under paragraph K, include an expectation that there will be school / pupil specific plans. **(MC)**
- **Teaching & Learning Intent:** one minor change **(MC)**

ACTION: MC/AP to make agreed updates to the policies. AL to update Governance Privacy Policy on trust website.

- **Careers Guidance:** MC reported that he was still unclear as to what was required for a primary school as the policy was aimed at Years 7 – 11.

ACTION: MC to review requirements and provide update in T2.

9. FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE FEEDBACK - CC provided the update in the absence of AM.

9.1 Management Accounts & Budgets:

- **Management Accounts:** *Confidential minutes*
- **2023/24 Budget:** CC asked Trustees to ratify the changes made to the budget that had been agreed via email. Trustees ratified the revised budget.

9.2 Support Staff Pay: *Confidential minutes*

9.3 Ratification of Leadership Pay Awards: *Confidential minutes*

9.4 Annual Audit Programme: CC advised that F&A discussed the areas for review and agreed the following for audit in 2023/24: Health & Safety, Governance including skills audit and Payroll / HR.

9.5 Premises: *Confidential minutes*

9.6 Annual Audit and Report: AP informed Trustees that the deadline for providing information for the year-end audit was 20th October 2023. There were two additional questionnaires to be completed this year in respect of IT usage and Fraud. AP have provided a draft 'Going Concern' report for Trustees to review before submitting to the Auditors – Trustees approved the report.

ACTION: AP to submit to the auditors.

10. EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE FEEDBACK (E&C)

10.1 Committee Constitution / Communication and links to LGB's:

- CH informed Trustees that a second LGB governor attending E&C would need to be flexible especially if the Trust increased in size as the Committee would become too big.
- CH asked ILD and PM how they facilitated HT's and Governors working together in their schools?
 - ILD said that they organise 'trustee health check days' and times when trustees can drop into schools to look at an aspect of the school as directed by the HT. Whilst recognising Trustees become involved in operational matters, the HT's welcome their involvement and also see it as a way to increase their knowledge of the school.
 - PM said they FAW organise a joint SLT / Governor meeting every 6 weeks to discuss a strategic question or issue.

CH suggested that MC might look at organising possibly two meetings per annum that are open to SLT, governors and trustees to discuss strategic matters.

ACTION: MC to organise strategic events

10.2 Committee highlights:

- CH / ILD and MC summarised the matters discussed at E&C, reporting that a trust-wide priority was training and support for SENCO's particularly at Loose and St Katherine's where staff were relatively new to post.
- Design Technology (DT) curriculum required improvement but the challenge for primary schools was the lack of workshops. ILD had agreed at E&C that Cornwallis School should be able to provide support and that contact should be made. MC reported to Trustees that staff from Cornwallis School had met with Trust staff to explore the opportunity.
- Trustees received the Ofsted report following their inspection at Loose. Trustees asked that their congratulations on the outcome be sent to the HT and staff at Loose.
- Admissions: MC reported that the Trust had missed the deadline for consulting on revised admissions arrangements for Coxheath increasing the PAN from 60 to 90 with effect from 1st September 2024. This was in response to the LA's proposal to increase the capacity from 420 to 630. The LA will treat September 2024 as a 'bulge' year and that consultation on the increase should be to increase the PAN from September 2025.

ACTION: MC to ensure September 2025 admission arrangements for Coxheath are published.

11. GOVERNANCE

11.1 Trustees confirmed ILD re-appointment as a trustee

ACTION: AL to update membership list and GIAS

11.2 Trustees confirmed appointment of SM as an Associate Governor to Coxheath LGB

ACTION: AL to confirm appointment to CN and SM, and update the membership list and GIAS

11.3 St Katherine's IEB – Confidential minutes

11.4 Appointment of Committee chairs: Trustees ratified the appointment of John Edgar as Chair of Education & Curriculum and Andrew Maitland as Chair of Finance & Audit.

11.5 Appointment of LGB Chairs: Trustees agreed to appoint Clare Nurse as Chair of Coxheath LGB, John Edgar as Chair of Loose LGB and Carina Cuddington as Chair of St Katherine's IEB.

11.6 Appointment of School Governor's with responsibility for filtering and monitoring: Trustees noted the Governor appointments for Loose and Coxheath, and that Laura Payne had been tasked with the role for St Katherine's School.

ACTION: CC to inform LP

11.7 Scheme of Delegation (SoD) and Term of Reference (ToR): Trustees agreed to the following amendments,

- Chairs of Education & Curriculum and Finance & Audit Committees are appointed annually by Trustees
- Deletion of the Business Manager role and re-allocation of responsibilities.

ACTION: JE to update SoD and ToR, AL to upload amendment documents to Trust website and Governor hub.

12. SAFEGUARDING AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

12.1 Update on reportable incidents:

- **Coxheath pupil accident:** Trustees noted that the claim submitted by the pupil's parents had been denied by trust insurers and further evidence sought to which a reply remained outstanding. It was noted that the pupil has a right to submit a claim up to their 21st birthday.
- **Loose staff accident:** Trustees noted that the member of staff had returned to work, and there has been no insurance claim submitted.

12.2 HSE Asbestos Audits: MC informed Trustees that HSE were continuing to carry out school audits on the arrangements for managing asbestos. Priority issues identified during the recent H&S and compliance checks:

- Asbestos register not always being signed by contractors most noticeably when quoting for works
- The Coxheath site team had yet to complete their compliance training which included asbestos.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Future meeting arrangements:

ACTION - AL to contact New Line Learning to investigate options for facilitating remote participation in trustee and LGB meetings.

14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

14.1 Trust Leader pay award: *Confidential minutes*

14.2 Trustees confirmed that the following items were also considered confidential: 6.2 and 6.4 Premises matters, 6.3 Governance arrangements, 9.1 and 9.2 Financial matters and 14.1 Trust Leader Pay Award.

15. Meeting close and future dates:

15.1 Next meeting on Wednesday 6th December to be held at Loose Primary School will start at 1600 to be followed by the AGM at 1830.

15.2 Future meetings all commencing at 1730 will be held at Loose Primary School (staffroom) on:

- Wednesday 7th February 2024
- Wednesday 20th March 2024
- Wednesday 22nd May 2024
- Wednesday 10th July 2024

15.3 CH thanked all attendees for their contribution to the meeting. Meeting closed at 2000.

16. Meeting Outcomes: Against the agenda items, what have we achieved against the three core functions:

16.1 Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction?

16.2 Holding the executive leaders to account for educational performance of the schools

16.3 Overseeing the financial performance of the schools ensuring money is well spent?