

PICKWICK ACADEMY TRUST
TRUSTEES AND MEMBERS MEETING

HELD AT QUEENS CRESCENT PRIMARY SCHOOL ON 7 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 6.30PM

M I N U T E S

**PRESENT
TRUSTEES**

Fiona Allen (CEO)
Rob Hayday (Chair)
David Powell
David Willis
Sheila Copeman
Andrew Hall
Rob Ward

**IN ATTENDANCE
MEMBERS**

Paul Dimech
Gail Chilcott

OTHERS

Matthew Nightingale HT
Julia Hawkins HT
Gina Cooke HT
Chris Canning HT
Keith Hillman FD

James Passmore PLTSA
Janet Livingstone (clerk)

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair opened the meeting at 6.35pm. Apologies were received from:
Dan Stuchbury (Vice Chair), Paul Vincent, Elspeth Griffiths, Alexandra Bond, Ian Fewtrell, Caroline Harrison CPS

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members and Trustees declared no changes in business interests and no other conflicts of interest with items on the agenda of the Pickwick Academy Trust. *Agenda to be amended to permanently include Trustees.*

ACTION ITEM

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

1. BOARD MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record and accepted by all trustees. The minutes were signed by RH.

2. BOARD MATTERS ARISING

- 2.i AH provided some feedback. During the October half term, a meeting had been held with Chris Cannings and Louise to discuss ownership and the plans going forward regarding Ivy Lane's rights of way and lease agreement. Discussions are ongoing.
2.ii FA had amended the pay policy as discussed.

Chris Cannings joined the meeting at 6.40pm

FINANCE

3. FINANCE UPDATE AND REPORT

KH went through his update. Auditors were currently at CPS for PAT, including 12 months of CPS and 1 month for the other 3 schools.

Project budget costs were not attached – KH will post on Governorhub. There will be monies retained in reserves for the end of August.

ACTION: KH

2017-2018 Budgets – all 4 schools have set budgets and these have been submitted to ESFA. Prior approval had not been sought for Aloeric budget deficit, so awaiting ESFA response.

Reserves Policy – this is in place for all 4 schools to provide 5% at school level and contribution of 2% for PAT.

Central PAT costs – central budget will be insufficient with volume of work required for best practice across all areas. This will be reported on in January meeting.

Financial Plan – aiming for a plan in the New Year. A staffing schedule across the 4 schools was attached for discussion. Leadership as a percentage of income, TA usage, IT structures, state of buildings would all be considered going forward. KH assumed that there would be different operational models in the schools and sharing of information would be paramount.

KH stated that the accounting system went live from 1/9/17 and was working although there had been issues with HCSS. The attention would now shift to producing management information at LGB and Board level.

Financial Procedures Manual – This will be for approval in December.

Internal Assurance – Bishop Fleming had been appointed.

Other – KH thanked all the SBMs for their support and in particular the extra central work done by Emma Preater (QC) and Gail Finch (CPS).

Questions?

RH stated where the PAT was following its first 100 days in existence. He reminded those present that the Board, FA and KH and all been appointed initially for a period of 1 year. Early in 2018 discussions would need to take place regarding replacing KH and FA consideration should be given to the recruitment information and payment involved.

4. Appointment of Auditors

The Board are required to appoint an auditor for 2017-2018. Three companies have been contacted to tender. RH explained that Members and Heads would not need to be involved in this process. Caroline had set up the criteria of requirements for the presentations, which would have to be organised before Christmas.

It was agreed that there would be a panel selected from AH, SC, FA, RH, DP, RW, KH and EP (SBM of Queen's Crescent). **ACTION: KH**

5. Risk Management – Schools and Trust

It is a requirement of the ESFA that all academies have a Risk Management reporting system in place. CPS and QC have undertaken these since conversion to academies, but it will be new for the LGB at A and IL. In addition the Trust itself will need to adopt a broader and more strategic Risk Management reporting system. FA has taken best practice from CPS and QC to compile a schools' and a Trust report as a start. All schools are to identify and manage risks and populate the risk register to report to the Board.

It was proposed that two Trustees are appointed to work with the CEO and FD on completing the Trust's first Risk Management Report. RH and PV (in his absence) were appointed.

ACTION RH to contact PV

FA proposed that the Board agree the Risk Management Reports in principle for the four schools and the Trust Board. This was seconded by DP and unanimously agreed by those present.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

6. Initial Communication Reports

The Local Governing Body (LGB) Chair and Headteacher reports have been designed as a method of communicating information to the CEO, Finance Director and Board, and are a starting point for discussion.

The first LGB Chairs meeting took place last Monday with RH, FA and KH. Their report will include key questions that the Board should be aware of in participating schools.

The Board was asked to note the format of the two reports.

7. Headteacher Reports

The proposal was that Headteacher Reports would be produced three times a year and the same report will be shared with the LGB. The format and style is new to all schools and can be tweaked over time.

The amount of information contained in the reports was discussed and going forward as the Trust expands it was thought likely that possibly the mechanism of using the information would evolve. It was agreed that all 4 schools reports should be visible to each other.

Quality assurance of the reports was discussed and the Chair of the LGB should hold the school to account.

8. Strategic Business Plan Update

The 5-year Business Plan has been updated as stated in the report. Headteachers have written the School Improvement Action Plan. The action plan in the document will be constantly reviewed to ensure progress is being made.

RH proposed that the Trustees approve the updated Business Plan and this was seconded by DP. It was unanimously approved by the Trustees present.

9. Pupil Engagement Update

SC reported that a meeting had been held at Queen's Crescent with the Deputy Heads of the 4 schools to discuss ways of involving the pupils in the PAT. A competition was agreed on, in which the children have to design a logo for PAT the dog. On 17 November there will be a boy and girl winner from each school and the winners will be invited to work with a designer who will produce the logo. SC will bring the winning designs to the Board.

On Tuesday 28 November, the Year 5 and 6 school councillors from the 4 schools are meeting at Queen's Crescent. Each will do a presentation, they will tour the school and feedback from their own school. The teachers will have a working lunch. Looking to the future, there will be tree planting and hopefully PAT topics and class swaps being considered. JP welcomed the move for peer reviews. SC was thanked for taking the lead with pupil engagement.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND BEING A GOOD EMPLOYER

11. Ongoing review of HR Policies

At the Board meeting in September 54 HR policies were ratified for new staff members. It was agreed that these would all be reviewed over the year. Robinson Grace drew up a review timetable and work started in October. In this time 6 policies have been reviewed. FA suggests a Policy Panel with delegated authority to ratify Trust policies. This could be completed through tele-conferencing.

RH proposed that a Policy Panel be set up with delegated authority from the Board to ratify the policies. RW seconded the motion and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

DP volunteered and RH/FA will contact all Trustees on the Hub inviting others to join the panel (there should be 3 Trustees). **ACTION: RH/FA**

Regarding the 6 policies that have been reviewed to date, DP and RH will consider them and report back to the Board at the next meeting. **ACTION: RH/DP**

GOVERNANCE

12. Process for Ratification of existing LGB Members

It was proposed that the Chairs of the LGBs should be contacted and the Trust Board provided with the names of the existing LGB members together with their terms of office. It was decided that at this stage skills audit information would not be required at Board level, but this would sit with the Chairs of the LGB, to be discussed later. DW suggested that Clerks would provide this information.

13. Appointment Process for new Governors

All 4 schools had gaps in their LGBs so it was important to provide a standardised procedure for appointing replacements as soon as possible. Further tweaks would hopefully be completed at the end of the week.

RH proposed that the Board approve in principle the appointment paperwork provided by FA on the understanding the a few tweaks would be needed. RW seconded and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

14. Chairs' Meeting and Governor Handbook

The Governors' Handbook has been updated and the Chairs will need to work closely with their clerks to ensure the Handbook is personalised for each school. The deadline is 28 November in readiness for December Trust Board meeting.

The Code of Practice, Constitution and Scheme of Delegation have also been updated.

AH was concerned about the confusion from many versions of these documents and this was agreed. FA agreed that she would produce a Register of Documents and place it on Governorhub. Older versions would not be removed from their meeting folders. **ACTION FA**

RH proposed that Trustees approve the Governor Handbook, Code of Practice, Constitution and Scheme of Delegation. This was seconded by RH and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

15. Pay Policy

The draft Pay Policy was distributed for consultation to all PAT staff and their Union Representatives on 28 September. At the end of the consultation period no comments were received. There were some financial implications of M6 arrangements at IL. AH enquired whether the budgets had allowed for the rises, KH stated that 1% across the board had been allowed for in the budget, so it won't cover the costs.

RH proposed that the Trustees approve and ratify the Pay Policy 2017-2018. This was seconded by RW and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

DP leaves the meeting at 8.25pm

16. The Management of Complaints to the Trust Policy

The Trust should adopt its own Management of Complaints Policy.

AH proposed that the Trustees approve and ratify the Management of Complaints Policy. This was seconded by RH and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

17. Information Sharing Protocols

It is of the utmost importance that there is a protocol in place for all schools to use as information is shared between Headteachers, LGB and Trust Board. A new data protection regulation will come into effect on 25 May 2018 which will introduce new requirements for how organisations process personal data. Safeguarding arrangements need to be in place.

RH suggested adding in a statement at the beginning of the proposed document.

The Purpose and Aim

“The Trust recognises that in becoming a collective of four founding schools and to enable delivery of the enlarged single organisation’s corporate agenda, sharing of appropriate and relevant information is important in order that Pickwick academy Trust can effectively conduct its business.”

FA proposed that the Trustees approve the Information Sharing Protocols with the additional statement inserted. This was seconded by RH and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

OTHER TRUST DOCUMENTATION FOR APPROVAL

18. Professional Expectations of Staff, Trust Expectations for its Schools, Overarching Special Educational Needs Statement 2017-2018, Expectations of Pupils

These four documents were discussed at the Awayday. FA expects that over the next year, the 4 SENCOs will review their document. Timescales for the discussions were discussed with the Board requiring progress updates on the developments.

FA would like to propose a working group of teachers and support staff to discuss the Staff document – she will talk to Headteachers to discuss this arrangement.

The children can discuss their expectations with the meetings arranged by SC

SENCOs have networked meetings where these discussions can take place **ACTION: FA/SC**

RH proposed that the Trustees approve and ratify these four documents noting the intention to pass ownership to various teams within the Trust moving forward. This was seconded by SC and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

19. Overarching Safeguarding Statement

FA has worked on an overarching statement that expresses the Trust’s commitment to Keeping Children Safe in Education. FA proposes to appoint a Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead to pull together detailed information for the Board. This would be time-consuming initially, and then drop down to a day per term. FA suggests that the 4 Heads decide how to appoint the right member of staff and how payment should be organised. DW highlighted the potential cost involvement.

CC put himself forward for the role and FA will discuss this with all the Heads at their next meeting.

ACTION: FA/Heads

The Safeguarding statement harmonises anomalies at all the schools.

RH proposed that the Trustees approve and ratify the Overarching Safeguarding Statement. This was seconded by RW and all Trustees unanimously agreed.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 5 December 2017 at Corsham Primary School Broadwood Site at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 20.53pm