

Trust Board Minutes

9.30am 23rd March 2021, via Zoom

Attendees: Andrew Needham (Chair), William Bagnall (Trustee), Maria Dawes (Trustee) Peter Eyre (Trustee), Simon Jarvis (CEO), Andrew Majury (Trustee), Jo Smithson (Trustee)

Present: Rebecca Davis (TS AQC Chair), Paul Edwards (Finance Director), Alan Poole (Director of Operations), Vince Scannella Director of Education), Becky Young (HR Director) and Kate Thomlinson (Trust Executive Assistant)

Meeting opened 9.30am

1. Standing Items

- Apologies: None
- No further interests declared.
- No safeguarding issues arising from items on the agenda.
- Minutes from 2nd March 2021 approved.
- Matters Arising
 - SJ to hold follow up conversations with Principals regarding counselling requirements - **Completed**
 - SJ to organise an extraordinary meeting of Members in February - **Completed**
 - KT to confirm terms of appointment to new AQC members - **Completed**
 - SJ to investigate there is a necessity to inform Charity Commission - **Ongoing**
 - PEd to investigate insurance if costs are incurred – **Ongoing**

2. Safeguarding

PE updated the Board on safeguarding issues at both academies. On site testing has now finished with learners completing testing at home. The counselling provision at Tomlinscote has been increased.

At SFCF there has been an increase in contacts from external agencies with the DSL suggesting this could be due to students having more time in the home. There has been an increase in demand for counselling at the College and although this is usual at this time of year, some of the increase is due to anxieties created by the pandemic and less peer interaction. The Student Association is working with the DSL to improve communication among students. SFCF has a new AQC Safeguarding lead, Justin Slater, starting at the beginning of August 2021.

It was agreed that both SLTs are aware that the Board is supportive of any additional safeguarding resource requests and that no further Board action is necessary at this time.

Board Action: *The Board noted the Safeguarding issues at both Academies*

3. Curriculum Update

VS reported that the reopening of both Academies had gone smoothly. Attention was now focused on TAGs. The main concerns being: establishing a consistent and reliable protocol; deciding on which assessments will be used; the weighting of those assessments; and the actual calculation.

It was agreed that clear communications to parents and learners is key and that staff must be supported as much as possible through the process.

VS reported that expectations have been well managed this year and guidance to teachers has been clear. Tomlinscote have released mock grades with a view to managing expectations and dealing with queries early. SFCF have not released grades as weightings have not been decided and this could result in unrealistic expectations. It was agreed that the differing approaches were sensible given the different circumstances of the Academies.

RD suggested that Tomlinscote parents may not be aware that different assessments will carry different weightings.

Board Action: The Board noted the current developments at both Academies and current grading plans

Action: SJ to raise parent communication re weightings for TAGs with Principals

4. Strategic Developments – Frimley CofE Junior School

Frimley Junior is due to join the Trust on 1st April 2021. SJ briefed the Board on the range of communications around the conversion.

Board Action: The Board unanimously welcomed the news regarding Frimley joining the Trust.

5. Financial Management

5.1 January 2021 Management Accounts

The Funding Statements have not been released by the DfE yet but are expected at the end of the month. The catering contracts are due for renewal but it is unlikely a major review will be possible this year.

Board Action: The Board approved the January 2021 Management Accounts

Action: PEd to update Board before the May meeting should the Funding Statements result in major changes to budget.

Action: PEd to update Board before the May meeting to gain approval to continue with current catering contracts

5.2 Gifts and Hospitality Policy March 2021

Board Action: The Board approved the Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy

6. Trust Governance

Terms of Reference for Trust Board and AQC

It was agreed to make the three key Board responsibilities identified in the Academies Financial Handbook 2020 (1.11) more explicit in the Trust Board ToR. It was agreed to set a two year minimum term for AQC Chairs.

Board Action: The Board approved the Terms of Reference for the Trust Board, subject to the agreed amendments.

Board Action: The Board approved the Terms of Reference for the AQC, subject to the agreed amendments.

7. People and Operations

The SLT pay review will be presented to the Board in June. The pay negotiations for support staff at Tomlinscote (and Frimley Junior) are in consultation stage with Surrey. The national negotiations for College support staff were unexpectedly reopened resulting in a staggered pay rise of 2% from October 2020, a further 0.5% from January 2021 and a further 0.75% from May.

As the decision to backdate the original 2.5% pay settlement from 1 January 2021 to 1 September 2020 resulted in an in-year cost that exceeded the subsequent 2.42% settlement created by the revised staggered pay award, the Board agreed that the final 0.75% element of the pay award would be applied to salary scales on 1 September 2021 rather than 1 May 2021.

Board Action: The Board noted the current status of pay negotiations for Tomlinscote (and Frimley Junior) Support Staff.

Board Action: The Board approved the proposal of not awarding a further 0.75% from May to SFCF Support Staff on the basis agreed above. However, this will be awarded from September 2021.

8. Estates

AP reported that COVID work has been focused on improving ventilation, creating bubble spaces and enabling lateral flow testing. A large amount of work has been identified at all three sites and CIF bids have been submitted. The outcome of these bids is due April but is likely to be delayed. The main work is now to prioritise work with a view to completing work over the summer.

WB and AM agreed to work with AP on the prioritisation, noting that approval for works may have to take place outside of the Trust Board meeting schedule.

Board Action: The Board noted the current status of works across the Trust sites and the necessity for gaining approval for expenditure outside of the meeting cycle.

Action: PEd to arrange Frimley site walk with PE and WB.

9. Calendar

Tuesday 4th May.

Tuesday 22nd June (Trust Advisory Forum)

The meeting closed at 11.25am

Signed: -----

Andrew Needham, Chair of the Board of Trustees