

Trust Board Minutes

9.30am 21st December 2021, via Zoom

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

Present: Tony Ryles (Frimley Junior AQC Chair), Rebecca Davis (TS AQC Chair), Helen Manning (SFCF AQC Chair), Paul Edwards (Finance Director), Vince Scannella (Director of Education), Alan Poole (Director of Operations), and Kate Thomlinson (Trust Governance Advisor)

Meeting opened 9.30am

1. Standing Items

- Apologies: Becky Young (HR Director)
- No further interests declared.
- No safeguarding issues arising from items on the agenda.
- Minutes from 12th October 2021 approved.
- Matters Arising: None at this time

2. Safeguarding

2.1 Safeguarding Update

PE provided a verbal update on safeguarding issues at Trust Academies. The importance of considering the safeguarding issues arising from the BYOD project at the College was noted.

AP informed the Board of the updated risk reviews that have taken place at each Academy and are published on the relevant websites.

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

Action: *PE/VS to review implications of BYOD strategy and its implications for safeguarding*

2.2 Safeguarding Policies

The Board commented that the three Safeguarding Policies are very different in style and approach; none make reference to TPT. It was noted that while the written policy statements do need to be more consistent across the Trust, Safeguarding in practice is very effective in all three TPT Academies. Developing a coordinated approach to mental health should be made a priority. The Board agreed introducing an external audit process to look at Safeguarding would be beneficial.

Board Action: *The Board approved the Frimley, SFCF and Tomlinscote Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.*

Action: *VS/AP to create a centralised Safeguarding Policy which can be contextualised in each Academy to replace the current policies for the 2022/23 academic year.*

Action: *VS to look at introducing external audit to appraise Safeguarding on a two-year cycle.*

3. Academy Performance and Improvement

3.1 Update from the Academies

VS gave an update on the progress of work in all Academies, particularly what is being done on a Trust-wide basis to reduce the disadvantage gap. Recent Learning Walks at Tomlinscote were very encouraging with both behaviour and focus seeing dramatic improvements since Tomlinscote joined TPT. The ICLT work is having a positive impact on results at both Frimley and Tomlinscote.

The funding rate for 16-19yr-olds has been increased by the ESFA, however students are required to complete 40 more hours of study per year. The funding increase could be as little as 1% once the additional teaching hours are considered. Other funding and grants are being mainstreamed to be included in this rate, further reducing the headline increase.

Board Action: *The Board noted matters arising at Trust Academies.*

4. Trust Strategy

4.1 TPT Strategic Developments

Currently there are no further developments on the Mindenhurst site. TPT has responded to the consultation to change Cross Farm to a single form entry. SJ and AN recently met with a group of five Church Schools (Heads and Chairs) at the invitation of the Diocese and this has helped to raise the profile of TPT. The White Paper expected in March 2022 is expected to increase impetus towards increased academisation.

Board Action: *The Board approved the current growth strategy and planned actions.*

4.2 ITC Core Service Review

PEd set out the plans for the ITC Core Service Review. The issues set out in the paper were discussed in-depth. The potential supply-chain problems were noted. All issues raised are being considered from a Safeguarding point of view.

The Board fully endorsed the approach but also recognised that the core team, as a whole, is under-resourced. Given the growth-strategy, this will need to be addressed in 2022.

Board Action: *The Board approved the ITC Core Service Review report and the measures outlined within.*

Action: *PEd to update Board on progress at 1st February Board.*

5. Financial Management

5.1 Annual Report and Financial Statements

AN shared the complimentary view of the Auditors with the Board and offered his congratulations to the Finance Team.

Board Action: *The Board recommended the Annual Audited Accounts 2020-21 to Members for approval at the AGM, 23rd December, as recommended by ARC.*

Board Action: *The Board approved the Letter of Representations for signature by AN, as recommended by ARC.*

5.2 Going Concern Assessment 2021

The Going Concern Assessment is now a separate document rather than a section in the Annual Report and Accounts.

Board Action: *The Board approved the Going Concern Assessment 2021 for signature by AN as recommended by ARC.*

6. Trust Governance

6.1 Risk Register

AP presented the Summary Risk Register as previously presented at ARC. AP and JS are working on developing a risk appetite across the categories.

Action: *AP to include Safeguarding as a separate category on the Risk Register.*

6.2 New Appointments for 2021-22

SJ thanked RD and HM for their work on recruiting new Councillors.

Board Action: *The Board approved the appointment of Hedvig Moutsatsos Schmidt, Colin Pirie and Matthew Simmonds as new Tomlinscote Councillors.*

Board Action: *The Board approved the appointment of Kathrine Money, Kirstie Van Oerle and Angela Cowdery as new SFCF Councillors.*

6.3 Policy Approval

The Board agreed that the Whistleblowing Policy should include a means of communication with the non-exec.

Board Action: *The Board approved the Whistleblowing Policy v2 subject to the inclusion of contact details of TPT Chair.*

Board Action: *The Board approved the Safer Recruitment Policy v2*

Board Action: *The Board approved the Data Protection Policy v1*

7. People and Operations

7.1 Pay Settlement 2020-21

The negotiations between SFCA and National Joint Council resulted in an increase of 1% to College support staff. This will be awarded to College support staff and Trust Core support staff in January 2022, backdated to September 2021. There may be some additional costs arising from the deletion of lower end scale points but this will be minimal.

Board Action: *The Board approved the 1% increase to College and Trust Core support staff,*

11.30am: PEd, VS, AP left the meeting.

7.2 Confidential Items

The Board discussed two confidential items recorded in Part 2.

8. Calendar

- 9.30am, Tuesday 1 February 2022
- 9.30am, Tuesday 22 March 2022
- 9.30am, Tuesday 3 May 2022
- 9.30am, Tuesday 28 June 2022 with Trust Advisory Forum to follow at 11am

The meeting closed at 11.47am.