

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

10th October 2018, 5.30 – 7.30pm

Present

Trustees: Alan Cufley (AC), Sara Spivey (SS), Tessa Webber (TW), Lucy Wilby (LW), Lucy Sinnott (LS), Derek Good (DG) Chair, Chris Batstone (CB), Sharon Brueton (SB)

In attendance

Nathan Waites Chief Financial and Operations Officer (NW), Marion Hallsworth (MH) Company Secretary

1. **Apologies:** none - full attendance.

2. **Quoracy:** was confirmed.

Declarations of Interest: Nathan Waites is a governor at Admiral Lord Nelson School. Derek Good's granddaughter is on the waiting list for a place at Solent Junior School. There were no other declarations of interest other than those already registered. NW, MH and all Trustees have completed a 2018-19 Declaration of Interest form.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair 2018-19.

Derek Good was nominated for the role of chair by Alan Cufley and his nomination was seconded by Chris Batstone. DG said he was willing to undertake the role until the end of this term, when his term of office as a Trustee would be ending and he would not be seeking re-appointment.

There were no other nominations and the Board voted unanimously to approve this appointment.

Sharon Brueton was nominated for the role of Vice-Chair by Lucy Wilby and her nomination was seconded by Alan Cufley.

There were no other nominations and the Board voted unanimously to approve this appointment.

4. Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th July 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising: NW did contact PCC to check if planning permission would be needed for any temporary structure in the event of a catastrophe, and received a general reply. NW and Trustees expressed the belief that it was highly unlikely that planning permission would be needed.

5. Strategy update

Trustees discussed two documents produced by PCC: Primary School Placement Strategy 2018-2024 and Secondary School Placement Strategy 2017-2023.

Primary School Placement Strategy 2018-2024

Solent Infant and Solent Junior schools are not on PCC's list of planned feasibility studies.

Page 23 states, "There could be a feasibility study to explore further whether the infant school could expand, but this is likely to include the cost of purchasing land for a capital build project

which would disproportionately increase the cost of the scheme. In summary, there is not any easy solution to expansion in this area and an option would be needed which can deliver for both schools”.

Secondary School Placement Strategy 2017-2023

PCC is keen for Springfield school to expand and has mooted a future rise in the pan to 265. PCC would like to go ahead with a feasibility study.

Such a move would involve Springfield in a far greater expansion than previously experienced. There would need to be an impact study, community consultation and robust due diligence processes for the Trust to contemplate this.

Question: Why did the PCC’s reports not discuss the possibility of Solent’s year 6 moving to the Springfield site?

Answer: There is no cross over between the two documents. However, PCC may be open to the idea of moving Solent’s Year 6 to the Springfield site. LW and SS had raised this possibility at a previous meeting with PCC last term.

Trustees agreed that a move of year 6 to the Springfield site should not disadvantage either school and could only take place if Solent school was expanding.

The Board agreed that the option of expanding Springfield School should be explored via the LGBs with PCC conducting a feasibility study. (Subject to above.)

SS updated Trustees on the CIF bid preparations. Surveyors have visited all three sites and this year’s priorities remain roofs and windows. Next year’s priority area is safeguarding and consideration is being given to arranging an independent feasibility study for entrance security improvements to the Solent schools. This could be combined with obtaining up-to-date information of the cost of new Solent classrooms and both put into the CIF bid.

SS reported on the RSC’s Conference for CEOs that she attended on 8th October. There is no longer a government emphasis on MAT expansion, but highly effective MATs.

Item 8 was taken next.

8. MAT focused Inspections and self- evaluation

There is no standard MAT inspection framework and some Ofsted inspectors have little or no experience of MAT structures. In the light of this Trustees welcomed the copy of the power-point presentation, ‘MAT standards & inspection – prospects for the future?’ given by Matthew Purves on 19th June 2018.

Trustees acknowledged the importance of the following documents:

- MAT Development Programme 2018: Developmental questions for multi-academy trusts July 2018 (DfE)
- MAT Improvement Capacity Framework (SESL)
- MAT ‘Review’ Handbook (Andrew Read - 01/06/18)

ACTION: SS, LW will complete the MAT self-evaluation document for Trustees to review.

6. School accountability outcomes (GCSE, KS2 etc.)

LW led trustees through the End of Year 2017–18 Data Capture reports for Solent Infant and Junior schools. These contain provisional summary data for 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.

Solent Infant School (SIS)

Trustees congratulated SIS on achieving results above the national levels.

Writing was slightly below the national level and this is a priority area of focus.

Question: is information on pupils classified as Disadvantaged reported?

Answer: there is not a statistically significant group of pupils classified as Disadvantaged at SIS. Ofsted inspections would, therefore, look at individual case studies.

Solent Junior School (SJS)

LW reminded Trustees there had been a RAP for Key Stage 2 last year as results had taken a dip. Trustees were pleased to note that this year's results are above the national level in all areas and they congratulated and thanked the Solent staff for the hard work they have put in to achieve this.

Alan Cufley joined the meeting.

Springfield School

Trustees noted the content of the GCSE results report and the fact that all results are currently provisional and un-validated. Attainment in the majority of subjects was strong, although there is some disappointment with the results for History and Modern Foreign Languages.

50% of the cohort attained a strong pass (Grade 5+) in both English and Mathematics.

The Attainment 8 score is 48.3 which is the second highest in the city.

Areas of focus this year are middle/lower ability boys, SEND pupils, and closing the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils.

7. Budget update

Referring to the Provisional Year End Unaudited Actuals (Excluding Capital & depreciation) for the original Budget 2017-18 and the Mid-Year BFRO/Working Budget 2017-18, NW explained the current budgetary position for all three schools and The Trust.

HWB began their audit today and will be in school until next week. Results of the audit will go to the Finance and Audit committee and to Trustees in December. The Annual Report and Financial Statements will be presented at The Trust's Annual General Meeting on 17th December.

Trustees were pleased to note an improvement in the financial situation of The Trust which is in a better place than expected. SIS and SJS also ended the year in a better position than earlier budget for. NW said there had been pressures, particularly at SIS and SJS, with difficult decisions and cost saving exercises. Trustees acknowledged this and thanked Heads of School, governors and finance staff for working hard to achieve this improved position.

NW outlined work done towards accommodating proposed pay increases for teachers and also for anticipated increases in employer pension contributions. Little more can be done on this until the government announces the level of increase and if there will be any grant available to mitigate it.

Income generation is a standing item on the agenda for Solent LGBs and consideration is being given to possible ways of the two Solent schools working more closely together. It was suggested that The Trust's Finance and Audit committee could look at ways of modelling finance allocations to assist in this.

9. Policy approval/ratification

Contingency and Business Continuity Plan 2018-19

This over-arching document examines risks and key priorities across all three sites and acts as an aide memoir for senior staff.

Some Solent staff, whose contact details appear in the document, expressed some concerns about confidentiality and their mobile telephone numbers being listed.

NW assured Trustees that access to the document would be strictly controlled. It will be circulated only those people listed, who should ensure they read the whole document.

Names and contact details will need to be kept up-to-date, whilst the plan as a whole will be reviewed by Trustees annually.

Question: Are individuals' responsibilities listed?

Answer: they are contained in the Emergency Incident Plan which sits alongside the Contingency and Business Continuity Plan.

NW states that this remains a working document and that modelling has identified some amendments that will be needed.

ACTION: NW to make operational modifications and confirm with LW and SS for each site and staff body.

Item 13 was taken next

13. School Nurseries Capital Fund (SNCF)

The letter from Michelle Dyson dated 25/09/18 was discussed at Solent LGB, where governors expressed concern about the proposal, largely due to the level of nursery funding. Trustees concurred with these concerns and concluded it was not the right time for the MAT to apply.

9. Policy approval/ratification (continued)

Admissions Policy

Trustees considered information from PCC's Admissions team and advice given by VWV on whether The Trust can update its Admissions Policy criteria in favour of Trust members e.g. to name Trust schools as feeder schools.

Question: if we do this will the LA still handle any appeals?

Answer: yes.

Any proposed variation of the admissions arrangements must be consulted on for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1st October and 31st January.

ACTION: LW and SS to modify The Trust's Admissions Policy in favour of Trust school admissions and to notify PCC of The Trust's wish to move to consultation

10. Terms of reference of committees

The terms of reference for the Human Resources committee and the Finance and Audit committee were both approved unanimously.

11. Committee reports

Human Resources 24/09/18

Currently Springfield uses the DBS update service whereas the Solent schools do not. The committee recommends that there is a consistent approach to DBS renewal across The Trust and that Solent schools use the update service. The DBS update service recommends a minimum time of 5 years between renewals, but most organisations operate a 3 year renewal.

Acknowledging this as a Safeguarding issue, Trustees unanimously agreed that all schools in The Trust should operate the DBS automatic renewal system on a 3 year cycle.

Trustees also agreed that The Trust will contribute towards the cost of DBS checks for those staff who have not been checked in the last 3 years.

Trustees noted the content of the unsigned Minutes of the Solent schools' LGB meeting 10th July 2018 and of Springfield School's LGB meeting 12th July 2018.

12. Trustee vacancy

Academy Ambassadors have been asked to extend the deadline for applications from 19th October to 1st November. (After meeting note: this has now been done). Academy Ambassadors have put The Trust in contact with three potential candidates and another person has expressed an interest via The Trust's website.

The De Curci Trust Appointment of Trustees process was approved by Trustees.

Trustees' Term of Office

The term of office as Trustee for Alan Cufley and Chris Batstone ends on 1st January 2019.

ACTION: Let MH know if they are willing to stand again as Trustees.

14. AOB

Employee Benefits

PCC has offered to extend an employee benefits platform to all Trust staff for

NW outlined the benefits available. Employees would opt-in if they wished to use the service.

Question: can Trustees use it?

Answer: no, only Trust employees.

After discussion Trustees unanimously agreed for The Trust to purchase access to the platform for £100 +VAT.

Items for the next: meeting (10th December Solent Junior School)

Budgets update (Standing item)

Election of Chair to start January 2019

Appointment of new Safeguarding Trustee

Teachers' Pay Policy

Trustees' and Governors' Allowances policy

ACTION POINT SUMMARY

Action	Person responsible	completed by
Let MH know if they are willing to stand again as Trustees.	AC and CB	5 th November
Complete the MAT self-evaluation document for Trustees to review.	SS and LW	Next meeting
Modify The Trust's Admissions Policy to favour Trust school admissions and notify PCC of The Trust's wish to go to consultation	LW and SS	ASAP
Make operational modifications to the Contingency and Business Continuity Plan and confirm with LW and SS for each site and staff body.	NW	Next meeting

There was no other business and the meeting closed.

Signature of Chair:

Date:

The De Curci Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 10646541. Registered office address: Springfield School Central Road, Drayton, Portsmouth, Hampshire, United Kingdom, PO6 1QY.