

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

4th March 2019, 5.30 – 7.50pm

Present

Trustees: Alan Cufley (AC), Sara Spivey (SS), Tessa Webber (TW), Lucy Wilby (LW), Susan Hamilton (SH), Lucy Sinnott (LS), Chris Batstone (CB), Sharon Brueton (SB) Chair, Donna Smith (DS)

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

1. Apologies: none, full attendance.

Donna Smith was welcomed as a new Trustee.

2. Quoracy: was confirmed.

Declarations of Interest: Nathan Waites is a governor at Admiral Lord Nelson School.

There were no other declarations of interest other than those already registered.

AOB It was agreed that an item on DfE guidance on due diligence would be taken at the end of the meeting.

3. Appointment of Chair

The election protocol has been followed and one nomination for the role of Chair for the rest of this academic year was received. Lucy Wilby nominated Sharon Brueton and her nomination was seconded by Tessa Webber. There were no other nominations.

The nomination was put to a vote and all Trustees voted in favour and Sharon was duly elected as Chair of the Board of Trustees for the remainder of this academic year.

Appointment of Vice- Chair

The election protocol has been followed and no nominations for the role of Vice-Chair for the rest of this academic year have been received. There were no nominations at the meeting and it was agreed this would be an item on the agenda of the next Board meeting.

4. Minutes of the last meeting.

The attendance section of the minutes of the meeting held on 10th December 2018 was corrected. Approval of the minutes as a true record was then proposed by LS and seconded by CB and the minutes were signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising.

LS proposed formal ratification of the e-vote on 26 February 2019 regarding the *proposal to* move some funds into an account paying higher interest. This was seconded by AC and the board voted to approve the opening of the account and the minutes without change.

5. Budget monitoring

Trustees examined the latest Management Accounts reports for Solent Infant School, Solent Junior School and Springfield School, along with the Management Accounts guidance.

Management Accounts reports are an agenda item on the monthly team meetings at all three schools and were scrutinised by the Finance and Audit committee on 11th February 2019. Monthly Management Accounts will be put on the Moodle each month for the Chair and Trustees to examine them.

NW is working closely with the schools' finance teams to prepare for the upcoming Budget Forecast Outturn report. Feedback from the recent internal audit will be presented to the next Finance and Audit committee meeting.

Portsmouth City Council has just confirmed the new National Joint Council pay scales.

Q. Do they contain any unexpected changes?

A. No significant changes, merely a few clarifications at the bottom of the pay scale.

Susan Hamilton joined the meeting and introductions were made.

The Trust has so far been unable to place money in an interest earning account as planned as Lloyds Bank has not replied to the Trust's several phone calls and requests.

ACTION: NW to raise an official complaint with Lloyds bank.

6. Update on CIF Bid

The result of the Trust's bid is expected in about six weeks and will be conveyed to Trustees.

7. Policy approval/ratification

Policies:

Admissions Policies for Springfield, Solent Junior and Solent Infant schools 2019-20

The Trust put revised Admissions Policies for Springfield, Solent Junior and Solent Infant schools out for consultation to parents and the local community between 1st October and 31st January 2019. There were no responses to the Solent Schools' consultation.

Responses to the Springfield School consultation were discussed by Trustees. An e-vote was taken on all three Admission policies on 26 February such that schools could publish the policies on their website as required by 28 February.

The Admissions policies for Solent Junior and Solent Infant schools 2019-20 were approved.

The Board decided to leave the Springfield School Admissions policy as it is, making no changes to the 2019-20 policy.

AC proposed formal ratification of the e-vote on 26 February 2019. This proposal was seconded by CB and the board voted to approve the minutes without change.

ACTION: After Easter SB will establish a working group to meet in the summer term to consider the future Springfield School Admissions policy.

ACTION: SB to write a reply to Penny Mordaunt and send it to MH for despatch.

Management of Organisational Change.

This is the policy used by PCC with minor changes: 1.2 'The Head Teacher' to 'The CEO or Head Teacher as appropriate'. 1.6 'Head Teacher and Governing Body' to 'CEO and Trustees'.

AC proposed approval of the **Management of Organisational Change** policy and this was seconded by SS. Trustees approved the **Management of Organisational Change Policy** with a review date of March 2022.

Scheme of Financial Delegation and Scheme of Financial Limits.

Trustees examined the scheme of Financial Delegation and Scheme of Financial Limits for The De Curci Trust, Springfield, Solent Junior and Solent Infant schools. They were scrutinised by the Finance and Audit committee on 11th February and the committee recommended their approval.

LS proposed approval of the **schemes of Financial Delegation and the Schemes of Financial Limits for The De Curci Trust, Springfield, Solent Junior and Solent Infant schools.** This proposal was seconded by CB and they were approved with a review date of March 2020.

The De Curci Trust Scheme of Governance and Scheme of Delegation

Trustees examined the De Curci Trust Scheme of Governance and Scheme of Delegation. There was a discussion around the suitability of the word 'manage' for 'brand/marketing for trust and academies' as shown on page one of the Scheme of Delegation. It was agreed that overall control of brand should rest with The Trust.

ACTION: SS to amend with an appropriate phrase to reflect this.

With this amendment, AC proposed approval of The De Curci Trust Scheme of Delegation and the Scheme of Governance. This proposal was seconded by SS and they were both approved with a review date of March 2020.

Investment Policy

This policy was examined by the Finance and Audit committee on 11th February and the committee recommended its approval.

LS proposed approval of the Investment policy and this proposal was seconded by CB. The Board voted unanimously in favour of approval.

The policy will form part of the De Curci Trust Financial Handbook which is reviewed annually by the Finance and Audit committee.

8. MAT Self-evaluation (Standing item) Section one: Vision, Culture and Ethos.

This rolling review is based on the *DfE Draft MAT Improvement Capacity Framework*.

Trustees spent a long time discussing each part of section one: Vision, Culture and Ethos.

Clarity of Purpose

The vision, culture and ethos of all three schools remain very similar. Trustees discussed whether the public and wider school community knew and understood The Trust's vision and what The Trust should want them to know. Some Trustees felt the current vision statement could be reviewed to make it more succinct.

ACTION: Put The De Curci Trust's image and vision on the agenda for the next Human Resources meeting.

Understanding Needs

The Trust receives regular summary reports on each school's performance, educational outcomes and results. However, understanding of SEND; how Pupil Premium money is spent and what it achieves; work done for pupils termed Disadvantaged remains stronger at LGB level. Trustees discussed ways of improving this knowledge at Trust level and expanding the educational focus, without replicating the work done by LGBs. This might form a topic for De Curci Trust training, or take the form of a briefing/report from Head Teachers on a specific area at each Board meeting.

ACTION: How Pupil premium money is spent across The Trust and how it impacts on the learning of pupils to be on the agenda of the next Board meeting.

Leading a Culture of Improvement

This is at an emergent stage. The Trust is working with Portsmouth University and is involved with projects including Challenge the Gap, a school improvement programme that builds capacity at all levels with the aim of breaking the link between poverty and poor outcomes and a Year 5 to 8 Continuity Project in Mathematics which aims to improve communication between Key Stages 2 and 3, with the overall aim of improving continuity learning by pupils in the four years between Years 5 and 8. Trustees are able to attend LGB meetings to hear reports on projects.

9. Strategy update

No significant developments to report. Feasibility project meetings with PCC for the possible expansion of the Springfield site are due to start this month.

10. Reports from committees

Human Resources

The minutes of the meeting on 04/02/19 were noted. A policy on fertility treatment will go to the next meeting.

Finance and Audit

The minutes of the meeting on 11/02/19 were noted and LS drew attention to the section dealing with monitoring of the Risk Register. In future any part of the Risk register coded red would be reviewed at each committee meeting in addition to the rolling programme of section review.

Summary reports from LGBs

The minutes of the LGB meetings at Solent Schools on 04/12/18 and 05/02/19 were noted, along with the notes sent in by TW to accompany them.

The minutes of the LGB meetings at Springfield School on 12/12/18 and 07/02/19 were noted.

The draft minutes of The De Curci Trust on 17/12/18 were noted.

11. Educational achievement summaries for Solent Infant school, Solent Junior school, and Springfield School

There have been very few changes since the last reports with grades remaining unchanged and positive. Recruitment and retention of teaching staff remains a challenge at Springfield as it does at other secondary schools.

12. Training

The results of the latest skills matrix were examined at the Human Resource committee meeting on 04/02/19. They showed an improvement in knowledge and confidence and the results will be used to inform training.

The next training session will be on Risk Management and Health and Safety statutory compliance.

ACTION: SB will send MH potential dates for the training to place after the Easter holiday (possible 29 April or 13 May)

13. AOB

Trustees noted the new DfE Guidance on Due Diligence

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/due-diligence-in-academies-and-maintained-schools>

Items for the next: meeting (15th July at Springfield School)

Budgets update (Standing item)

Update on opening and interest account

Election of Vice-Chair

CIF Bid update

Future Admissions policy for Springfield School.

MAT Self-evaluation (Standing item) Section 2 People and Partners

How Pupil premium money is spent across The Trust and how it impacts on the learning of pupils

Sara Spivey and Nathan Waites left the meeting.

14. HT CEO pay recommendation

Trustees examined the appraisal report and pay recommendation for Sara Spivey, CEO of The De Curci Trust and Head Teacher of Springfield School. AC confirmed that all objectives had been met and progression to the next pay scale recommended. AC proposed approval of the report and its recommendations and was seconded by CB. The Board voted unanimously to approve the report and its pay recommendations.

ACTION POINT SUMMARY

Action	Person responsible	completed by
Send MH possible dates for training on Risk Management and Health and Safety Statutory Compliance to take place after the Easter half-term.	Sharon Brueton	5 th April
Raise an official complaint with Lloyds bank.	Nathan Waites	Next meeting
Establish a working group to meet in the Summer term to consider the future Springfield School Admissions policy	Sharon Brueton	After Easter Holiday
Write a reply to Penny Mordaunt and send it to MH for despatch.	Sharon Brueton	ASAP
Re- phrase reference to brand/marketing for Trust and Academies on page 1 of the DCT Scheme of Delegation 2019/20	Sara Spivey	ASAP
Put The De Curci Trust's image and vision on the agenda for the next Human resources meeting.	Marion Hallsworth	31 st May
How Pupil premium money is spent across The Trust and how it impacts on the learning of pupils to be on the agenda of the next Board meeting.	Marion Hallsworth	31 st May

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.