



Board Meeting

24.05.2023 – 6pm

MINUTES

Present remotely:

Sue Bailey
Kim Taylor
Billy Mollison
Rebecca Berton
Mark Williams
Anthony Upshall

In attendance:

Genevieve Cowcher
Clerk to Trustees

Apologies:

Julie Perry
Mike Westcott-Rudd

No.	Minutes	Actions
1.	Welcome and apologies Apologies received from MWR and JP. BM, MW and SB are present in person and have collected new badges	KT to let them know if the badges give access to both sites
2.	Declaration of Interests & Approval of Minutes No interests declared Minutes approved	

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3.	<p>Update from Subcommittees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TLW – RB explained the discussions at TLW regarding OFSTED and said that this was the best report for Riverside Meadows in her time there. Clear attendance and behaviour reports were produced. There was a new timetable being developed where enrichment was being included. A strong leadership team in place is very positive and a sample of reduced timetable studies were talked through, and these showed a robust package in place for these students. The overriding priority was explained to OFSTED as getting children into school. We questioned about further feedback and areas to think about, these included how to engage parents more positively. Spring Common produced reports on attendance, behaviour and curriculum, Alex was supporting middle leaders with this and a new assessment system. KT’s report was thorough and reviewed Riverside Meadows in depth including training surrounding protected characteristics and equality. It is worth noting that RB went to OFSTED feedback in person – both heads have a strong working relationship. This is cohesive and came through. RB said there were discussions around celebrating the OFSTED report and the decision had been made to release a small media release on positive feedback. KT commented that it is important to get the press release out from the Trust/school. There was also a letter created to send to parents from both headteachers. She feels it bodes well that they work well together. We need to remember that parents had a restricted time to give feedback to OFSTED and so many parents who wanted to give feedback could not. She feels this is not representative. KT also explained that staff had issues accessing the feedback link. It is important to remember the rapid amount of change that families have had to cope with. This has been included in the letter to parents. • FPP – MW recapped 3 items discussed at the meeting. Good progress has been made to managing our financial budget. Gag pooling is on agenda for later in the meeting, trustees agreed to the proposal as set out in paper. Internal audit tender results of process were presented to the FPP sitting as 	<p>GC to request Price Bailey to join next FPP meeting.</p> <p>KT to send a copy of the letter to parents to other attendees</p>

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	<p>audit committee. The recommendation is to appoint Price Bailey. Following discussion, trustees agreed with proposal subject to BM time to review. This was done and BM confirmed that he approved in addition he offered to act as oversight and quality assurance of the work Price Bailey do. BM explained that this was purely as help not suggesting that the current team are not doing a good enough job. MW and the audit committee recommended to the board that we appoint Price Bailey and thank BM for his offer to review and audit. <i>Recommendation made to the board – all agreed - accepted.</i> MW has suggested that Price Bailey join the next FPP meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Finance Manager Report on Central Funds</p> <p>GC presented a summary of her proposal and some questions posed from FPP. GC said that progress has been made answering questions asked. Reserve pooling is a natural thing. It is a simple idea that is complex to implement. The point is that a range of schools in varying financial states. The point of GAG (general annual grant) pooling is to take this as 'one big pot' and trustees decide how these are allocated to different schools. GC continued that we have several streams of income – some are more difficult to identify whether we should pool or not. There is SEND income, which reflects the needs of the pupils. GC explained that trustees may be less inclined to use this funding. There are other grants such as ESFA funding which cannot be pooled. Capital income can be pooled.</p> <p>GC said that headteachers are keen to take the concept forward as schools can support each other when in need. GC said she had spoken to the external auditor about restricted funding – always assume restricted income is used first. In essence, that is how it is worked here.</p> <p>This would work by creating a budget, based on need and then the Trust will decide how much income can be allocated to individual schools GC said that we may want to do this as it gives more flexibility and would build morale across all schools.</p> <p>Finance committee asked how it looks in 'real life' - an analysis was sent out based on how pooling would have worked if it had been implemented last year. GC has offered to explain how the finances would work individually. GC said she has</p>	GC to conduct 1:1 and information sessions with RB and AU, gathering feedback

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	<p>requested advice from external auditors and whether they would find this pooling acceptable.</p> <p>GC explained that if SEND finance is to be pooled, there may be more procedures needed, such as checking with parents. MW explained that SEND is not to be pooled and SB said that this had been previously agreed in meetings as not an option the board would like to continue with.</p> <p>SB asked whether other committee members needed 1:1 support from GC about this. RB suggested that we ensure that those who are sacrificing some of their income that they gain value.</p> <p>AU and RB would be happy to have a 1:1 discussion and have more information on this topic. RB would like clarity on how robust this process is and what this would mean for individual headteachers.</p> <p>KT said that the concept of pooling is complex and to forget about top slicing and pooling is a 'culture'. She explained that headteachers have expressed interest in this process and a high level of cooperation. KT explained how this process has been taken in the past and felt it was successful.</p> <p>SB expressed that this system should not create more work for the financial team and was wanting some reassurance that the capacity of central team would not need to be increased. GC responded that this process should be simpler as monitoring is the same, but year-end includes a tally and double checks should be made. She anticipates that the process could be more complex to begin with as we come to grips with the process.</p> <p>KT said that an advantage of this system would be that a more projected plan could be made, rather than 1 year ahead, but 3 years and we can allow for emergencies as and when they arise.</p> <p>SB asked whether KT could signpost to examples where this is working successfully – KT said that this is mostly primary schools but that she could.</p>	
5.	<p>Outcome of OFSTED inspection at RMA</p> <p>SB introduced this, explaining everyone should have a copy of the report which shows that the grade had changed from 'good' to 'requires improvement'. SB explained that she and MW attended feedback online and RB attended in person.</p>	<p>KT to continue communication with DfE and amend funding agreement (removing</p>

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	<p>This was an opportunity to demonstrate trustee perspective on the direction that the schools were going. She feels they were consulted. MW and RB agree.</p> <p>SB invited questions. BM had written a letter expressing concern of the movement to Requires Improvement. He felt the report read well and did not reflect the grade. KT feels that the report is a 'then' and 'now' report. There was no 'new thing' and there is lots of opportunity for change as leadership continues to improve. MW said that the grade is the grade that KT and the school itself had expected, and this should be accepted as an accurate report. SB explained that the recommendations are accepted, and KT said that some of these are external – such as local authority areas for development.</p> <p>SB stated that KT is following up on what prompted an early inspection. This was asked and the answer was that the school was registered as a 16+ provision but there were none on roll. This needs to be addressed. KT to contact DFE – an amendment needs to be made to the funding agreement. The decision was made to change to 11–15-year provision.</p> <p>MW asked whether there would be much of a difference needed to the provision if there was an intention to offer post-16. KT explained that there would be a substantial change to the amount of space required and curriculum changes. KT explained that once the new agreement is made, the trustees would need to sign and authorise.</p>	post-16 provision)
6.	<p>Finalise and adopt the scheme of delegation</p> <p>SB recapped the scheme of delegation and recommended that we move forward with the new model as a merged CEO with Executive Head Teacher role.</p> <p>SB explained that an Operations Manager has been appointed. This job role needs to be cross-referenced with the Scheme of Delegation. SB has suggested this is released soon so that it can be embedded for the operations manager.</p>	
7.	<p>Executive Head Report</p>	AU to offer support on

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KT presented her report, explaining that Jon Panther is the new Operations Manager from June 1st 2023 and a new management accountant from 1st September.

KT is happy that there has been confirmation of funding which includes the 3.4% uplift of top up funding - there is still a gap, but this is good news. KT has heard that there are circulated proposals of a 6.5% teachers' pay uplift 2023-24.

KT explained the safeguarding team and processes. There will be a change in the structure. KT explained that there do not need to be too many DSLs as this can cause decision-making issues and cases falling through the cracks. KT said that there is no real clarity of reporting and that her team are working on the quality on the reports. SB commented that the new appointed headteacher could contribute skills and expertise of MyConcern.

KT reported back on her strategic plan showing prior targets as recommended by MW.

She explained that the trust is on track with the intended improvements included in her report. There is an aim to strengthen IT systems to ensure data restoration, as these are short-term. RB said that these can only be restored back to one week before, anything else is lost (this is her understanding). AU offered support on this topic.

SB explained that a document has been distributed to the board regarding logos. She asked whether they are linked to the colour scheme of the school. KT said that the logo would be easy to replicate. KT asked the board to select the logo which will influence the school painting. MW asked whether people can read upside down – KT said that many can.

Logo agreed with alterations suggested by MW

Risk log accepted as accurate

backing up data.

KT to ask Amy to alter the text so it is not upside down.

8.	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS DISCUSSED AND REDACTED	
9.	AOB Email from Clerk about in-person meetings – RB would like to know timings – is this a morning/whole day?	

Meeting ended at 8:30pm

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