

In Attendance:

Tracy Carson (Clerk), Jackie McHanwell (Chair), Karen Mills, Siobhan O'Neil, Bob Paton, David Pearmain, Rick Portsmouth

1. Procedural Items

Apologies for absence: Alan Hordon

Visitors in attendance: Kate Bradley (NUFC), Barry Morrell, Mark Kennedy

Approval of minutes from previous meeting: the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising: Trustees agreed that all actions had been completed.

2. UWA

BM asked Trustees permission to withdraw the UWA application. BM explained they had taken advice from educational advisors who stated that the minister would not want to proceed with plans in light of the recent Ofsted result. Trustees confirmed that they anticipated this would happen. Trustees gave an enormous thank you to BM and MK for the tremendous amount of work they had undertaken on this project. **Trustees agreed for BM to contact DfE and tell them formally we will withdraw from the project.** BP suggested that we repackage this good idea and ask them what will it take to take this forward. Trustees agreed this was very disappointing but thanked everyone for all their energy and enthusiasm.

3. Post Ofsted

Trustees recognised the need to identify when talking about Members, Trustees and Governors and who is responsible for what. SO pointed out that as a Trust they should expect a report from the Chair at every meeting and went on to outline her report. It was noted that there was a Q&A session for parents taking place on 23rd November at 6 pm regarding Ofsted and it was noted that our complaint was not upheld with Ofsted.

Complaints Procedure – As we have a separate Chair of the Trust we need to have an additional stage 4 to refer these up to the Trust.

TC – To Action

Discussion took place with regard to ensuring Trustees were focussed and rigorous enough to hold GB of both schools to account in a timely way.

4. CEO Recruitment

Trustees recognised the need to get it right and pointed out that they would need to look at different models of CEO and different job descriptions, however Trustees were worried about the time frame. JMc expressed concern about delaying taking forward a search for a CEO, but Trustees need to think about this in terms of the next 5 to 10 years. Discussion took place with regard to recruitment of a CEO and whether one of the Principals could take on the responsibility for period of time. DP pointed out that the Trust must have a Chief Accounting Officer. It was agreed that an interim arrangement was possible but Trustees need to decide what the interim arrangement will be if they are not making a permanent arrangement for September. Discussion took place with regard to what arrangements were in other MATs and it was agreed to look at what the Chief Executive does in other MATs. Trustees recognised that the role is very clear with regard to finance and noted that both Principals were not very experienced as they had not been in their roles very long. DP outlined some options, one of which was to recruit a new part time CEO through Northern Education Consultancy and Recruitment Agency. **Trustees agreed that Northern Education could look at the position**, the first stage would be to undertake an initial exercise and tell us whether they can offer candidates and ask JJ to get more job descriptions before the



December MAT meeting. Trustees requested DP to enquire what would the costs be and is it a reasonable cost? It was agreed to give Northern Education a job description to determine if they can recruit as they may come back and say they are unable to recruit due to the salary offered. Trustees enquired whether JJ could identify the 3 most successful Trusts in country and mark out differences between the various trusts. JJ to look at job descriptions and DP to ask North Education to do the work as long as it is not too expensive and report back to the December meeting.

DP – To Action /TC- To Agenda

Trustees agreed they did not want to pursue the option of joining another MAT but may want to come back to it at some point in the future. Trustees also agreed to leave open the possibility of Principal as interim measure for CEO.

5. MAT Structure

DP explained that when we became an Academy there was a legal requirement to identify Members, however Members did not have a function unless something goes badly wrong with Trust Board. If the Trust Board works properly then it would hold the schools GBs to account. It was noted that DfE advice was there should be at least two layers of accountability. It was noted that the Chair of the Trust undertakes DP's appraisal and there should be documented 1:1s, DP confirmed that he had not had a performance review in his role as Chief Executive.

JMC – To Action

It was noted that the school governors do not look at the risk register which Trustees examine, as it was agreed that we did not want duplication of work i.e. the detail around educational performance discussions. DP confirmed that the latest version has a single sheet which identified key performance indicators in each school.

Trustees referred to the issues in science; it had been underperforming for a considerable period of time, this was a core department that was failing, **what have we done about this as a Trust?** Trustees accepted the counter measure in the risk register but had not challenged it, Trustees had just accepted the school plan for addressing the risk. DP pointed out that Trustees need to use the risk register in future to challenge the schools. It was agreed that the Principals could be invited as observers to the Trust meetings to answer Trustees questions when the risk register is reviewed.

TC – To Action

It was agreed to invite the Principals of both schools to attend to advise Trustees on what they have done to address the top risks.

TC – MAT Agenda

It was noted that there were 2 Clerks of Governors; TC for KS and the MAT and HV for SW. Trustees suggested the need to consider a single clerk as Governance of the Trust.

Discussion took place with regard to accountability and independence. It was noted that SW link governors are allocated an Ofsted area whereas KS governors are linked to a subject. Trustees recognised the need to have consistency across the Trust, with regard to checks and balances. The SW model is much better as it integrates with the school, Trustees therefore agreed look at this again after the governance review.

J. Matthews