



never give up.

Trustee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 20th September 2017
6pm-8pm

ACE Schools Plymouth, Bretonside

Trustees:

Dr Tim Searle	Chair
Mr Peter McDonnell	Vice Chair
Mr Alastair Wright	Vice Chair Elect
Mrs Annette Benny	Trustee
Mrs Sarah Gillett	Trustee, CEO & Head Teacher of ACE Schools Plymouth
Mrs Joan Watkins	Trustee & Chair of Governors ACE Schools Plymouth
Mrs Sue Bickle	Trustee & Chair of Governors Courtlands

In Attendance

Mr Paul Turner	Director of Finance ACE MAT
Mr Chris Humphries	Director of School Performance ACE MAT
Mr Paul Winterton	Director of School Improvement ACE MAT
Mrs Cheryl Reuben	Clerk

Signed: _____

Date: _____

1. **Chairman's introduction**
The Chair welcomed the Board. He reflected on the purpose of the Board and reminded those present of the service it works on behalf of and what it offers the young people it serves.
2. **Apologies**
None.
3. **Verbal declarations of interest**
Annette advised that she now works across the New Devon and South Devon & Torbay Clinical Board.
4. **Approve minutes of the previous meeting**
Approved
5. **Matters & Actions arising from previous meeting**
None.
6. **CEO Update**
The CEO update documents were circulated to the Board
 1. Promotional Video- the Board viewed the draft version of the promotional video from LGF. There are some edits to be made however, on the whole that Board agreed that they were impressed with the video.
 2. Inset day- SG covered the content of the inset day presentation which she gave on the first day of the new academic year. This was a whole Trust meeting with staff from all bases and schools within the Trust in attendance. The focus was on the achievements of the Trust in the last academic year and those which are being aimed for this year.

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7. **Review of Governance**
PW advised that there were some tweaks in the Financial/Governance handbooks. One of which is the encouragement for trusts to set up an Audit/Finance Committee. The Committee would review the financial reports/audits/Risk register and feed back to the full Board for their approval. It was suggested that the Committee met 6x per academic year and Full Board Meetings 6x per academic year.

The Board agreed to the appointment of a Finance & Audit Committee.

The MAT Executive Team would put together a work plan to be presented at the next Board meeting.

The working party to review governance will comprise of PW, PT, AW & AB. The aim will be for them to meet from December onwards however, this will be detailed in the work plan.

SG reminded the Board that the Pay Committee for ACE Schools Plymouth were due to meet in October.

PT clarified the amendments contained within the handbooks surrounding Governance and Clarity in respect of the finance meetings.

Action 1: Declarations of Interest to be updated.

8. **Update from the Director of Finance.**
PT summarised the financial reports for ACE School Plymouth.
The Board accepted the content of the reports.

<Commercially sensitive information has been removed>

The Board accepted the content of the reports.

9. **Courtland's Business Plan**
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The Board accepted the Business plan, subject to PT's comments above.

10. **Internal Audit**
PT provided the Board with some context regarding the decision to undertake an internal audit and why Francis Clark were appointed to do this.

Questions:

JW: Why was an internal audit undertaken rather than a peer review?

PT: It is unlikely that we would be able to source a qualified peer who would undertake this level of work. If they did, there would still be a cost associated with this. The formal internal audit carries much more gravitas and will stand us in good stead for the annual audit.

The Board thanked the finance team for their continued efforts and praised the fact that the items highlighted to be addressed were very minimal.

11. **Risk Register**
PT summarised the Risk Register and suggested that if the Board had any other areas for the Trust to review, this should be submitted to PT for inclusion from January 2018.

Questions:

AB: How often is the Risk Register updated?

PT: The work detailed within the register is being carried out consistently however, the updating of the register itself is not that frequent. This will be addressed with the formation of the Finance & Audit Committee and will be a standing item.

12. **Pay Policies**
CH advised the Board that the previous policies, whilst written as MAT policies following ACE's conversion, were one so on the basis of an empty MAT. This Policy is the first which will combine aspects of the ACE Schools Plymouth and Courtland's Policies.

CH summarised the context of the proposed policies.

Questions:

AB: How will feedback to the proposed changes be received?

CH: If agreed by the Board, there will be a period of consultation.

The Board agreed for the drafted Teachers Pay Policy to be put to staff for consultation

The Board discussed the proposed options regarding the teachers' pay uplift.

Due to the fact that SG, CH & PW would be affected by the outcome of the Board's decision, they declared that they were only in a position to present the information and could give no comment or indication to influence the Board's decision.

CH & PW were not entitled to vote in their capacity as attendees.

SG was did not vote as this would be a conflict of interest.

TS sought advice from the PT as the Director of Finance. His recommendation was to consider option 3.

The remaining vote carrying Board Members (TS/AB/SB/PM/AW & JW) voted and agreed to proceed with Option 3 .

PT advised the Board that this would only effect those subject to Teacher's Pay & Condition. This will not affect NJC staff.

13. **LGB Reports**

The Board acknowledged receipt of the reports from the LGBs for ACE Schools Plymouth and Courtlands.

TS enquired as to whether the concern raised regarding the class sizes and staff/student ratios had now been resolved? SB advised that this was all in hand. Staff had started the academic year feeling rather dispirited but the Head Teacher was working through this with staff.

SB read the Board the content of a thank you card from a parent praising the work of the Courtlands staff.

14. **Elect Chair & Vice Chair.**

SG proposed the roles of Chair & Vice Chair remained with TS & PM respectively. This was seconded by AW, AB, SB & JW.

TS will serve as Chair for a further 12 months.

PM will serve as Vice Chair for a further 12 months.

15. AOB.

(Items should be generally lodged with the clerk at least 48 hours before the meeting).

JW advised that following the amendment of the ACE Schools Plymouth LGB meetings taking place every other month, JW would only be travelling to Plymouth on the months where the LGB was also taking place. The Board agreed that provision would be made for JW to contribute to the meetings she could not physically attend by way of conference facility.

SB advised that Dene Terry (HLTA, Courtlands) had been proposed as a new LGB member.

The Board ratified this appointment.

16. Reserved Business

Pending Items:

Item	Date Added (meeting date)	Review Date
Terms of Office – length of service		
Policy review		
Trustees meeting dates		
Trustee Work plan		

Dates of Future Meetings:

Wednesday 18 th October 2017	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 15 th November 2017	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 13 th December 2017	18.00-20.00 (AGM)
Wednesday 17 th January 2018	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 21 st February 2018	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 21 st March 2018	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 25 th April 2018	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 23 rd May 2018	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 20 th June 2018	18.00-20.00
Wednesday 18 th July 2018	18.00-20.00

Board of Trustees:

Dr Tim Searle	tim.searle@acemat.uk	Chair
Mr Peter McDonnell	peter.mcdonnell@acemat.uk	Vice Chair
Mr Alastair Wright	alastair.wright@acemat.uk	Vice Chair Elect
Mrs Annette Benny	annette.benny@acemat.uk	Trustee
Mrs Joan Watkins	joan.watkins@acemat.uk	Trustee & Chair of ACE Schools Plymouth LGB
Mrs Sue Bickle	sue.bickle@acemat.uk	Trustee & Chair of Courtlands LGB
Sarah Gillett	sarah.gillett@aceschools.net	CEO of ACE Schools Trust