



**Venture Multi Academy Trust. Company Number 7535379**  
**Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**16th July 2020, 4pm, held virtually using Zoom**

Trustees present	Philip Robinson (PR) (Chair of Trustees) Harry Hart (HH) Julia Dodson (JD) Ben Jones (BJ) Alan Honeybone (AH)
In attendance	Will Johnson (WJ) (Head of School at Trevithick Learning Academy/ Acting CEO) Sean Powers (SP) CEO Belinda Burton (BB) Wendy Randle (WR) (Clerk)

Item	Minutes	Action
1	<p><b>Apologies, quorum and meeting arrangements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ian Raggett was not present.</li> <li>▪ The meeting was quorate in accordance with the articles.</li> </ul> <p>The board meeting would take place using Zoom due to the impact of Coronavirus on face to face meetings. Confidentiality was raised in terms of virtual meetings; trustees were in rooms on their own for this meeting or using headphones, the code of conduct applied.</p>	
2	<p><b>Declaration of business &amp; pecuniary interests</b></p> <p>There were no further interests to declare than those outlined on the trust website.</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes and matters arising from trustee meetings</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting (16/06/2020) were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting, these will be signed by the chair when a face to face opportunity permits.</p> <p>3.2 – ensure references for the CEO are signed; <i>JL to complete.</i></p> <p>4 – use a Facebook video to communicate SP’s departure and replacement; PR and WJ to liaise; <i>communication completed.</i></p> <p>4 - ensure the members and LGBs receive the same communication; <i>completed it was noted that the LGB had not received these at the same time as parents.</i></p> <p>5- liaise with the TLA LGB Chair to identify a governor to support the Deputy Head appointment process; <i>this process has been completed, the representative from the LGB was unable to attend the interview.</i></p> <p>5 – trustee involved in the Deputy Head appointment process; <i>JD completed this.</i></p> <p>5- identify the need for a ratification meeting and which board would fulfil this responsibility; <i>it was noted this appointment was approved by trustees.</i></p> <p>7 – ensure “Questions for Trustees” is on every LGB agenda; <i>this is on all agendas.</i></p> <p>9 - highlight proposed policy amendments in future policies for approval; <i>noted</i></p> <p>AOB - review the window replacement provider with AH; <i>completed.</i></p>	JL
4	<p><b>CEO/COO reports</b></p> <p>These reports had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p>	
4.1	<p>The CEO report was considered first, it was noted that the majority of the report focussed on the plans for September.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding;</b> the schools will continue with online training for staff for safeguarding.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The schools continue to complete and submit the relevant DfE and Council registrations.</li> <li>▪ Schools continue to be in contact with children who were recognised as vulnerable – it was noted that the number of concerns has reduced due to many vulnerable children now being in school.</li> <li>▪ Social Workers are now in place providing support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staffing;</b> the main change for TLA has been the appointment of Kirstie Hitchens as the Deputy Head at TLA, this appointment process was supported by JD. The roles for the Deputy Head and Assistant Head for September have been outlined for the next academic year.</p> <p>There has been adjustment of staff hours for the nursery staff at St Issey (SIS) for September; SIS are confident of having a full reception year for the following year.</p> <p>The staffing structure for the trust is in place, a copy of this will be put in the Venture MAT Google folder for future reference. The website will also be updated to reflect the structures.</p> <p><b>Standards and curriculum;</b> schools now need to establish some form of meaningful baseline to enable the review of pupil progress over time and to identify gaps in learning. Both schools will complete the Early Years baseline and both schools are early adopters of the Early Years framework. At present all other exams are planned to go ahead, school await further guidance from the government on this.</p> <p>Both schools are ready to deliver on the relationships and sex education (RSE curriculum for September.</p> <p><b>MAT KPIs;</b> the KPIs have been adversely impacted by lockdown; there are no standards to measure, though it was considered that both schools have performed admirably over the last few months.</p> <p>In order for SIS to achieve a good Ofsted grading the school and board need to focus on the quality of governance, ensure standards are not so variable and meet the needs of the high SEN numbers of pupils.</p> <p>For TLA the high level of SEN needs continues, the school plan to reduce spend in these areas through increasing SENCo time and decreasing 1:1 time.</p> <p>School cannot use teacher assessment to create meaningful baselines as children’s positions since lockdown are unknown. The trust acknowledge that some children will be behind, the schools will need to unpick where children are quickly on their return to school. Schools will receive government funds to support pupil catch up, using guidance from EEF along with seeking funding for tutoring for 1:1. The focus for the autumn term will be to identity what catch up is required and then plan to support this.</p> <p><b>Leadership structures</b>  <b>SIS;</b> the key for the head will be to ensure the sustainability of the school over the next 3 years.</p> <p><b>TLA;</b> the school has its first permanent leadership structure in place, the challenge will be to ensure the structures work in the school. <i>Trustee asked</i> what is the deputy head career progression? They would take their NPQH qualification next, after this the next step would be to take on a headship.</p>	WJ
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<p>4.2</p>	<p><b>September reopening;</b> plans have been shared with parents and staff and the local governing bodies. The current plans have been working well so these will be continued to increase the bubble size. Details of the plans and routines to support the bubbles were shared, along with the implications should there be a positive Covid case.</p> <p>The breakfast club at TLA will not be able to run at the beginning, therefore the school start time will be earlier to supporting working parents. SIS will be able to run their breakfast club so school times will remain the same.</p> <p>Teacher clubs will not commence at the start of term though it was hoped these would be introduced in later in the Autumn term.</p> <p>Both schools will be prepared for reopening this side of the summer break, with inset days in the autumn term used to train staff on the new curriculum and to consider the impact of Covid in their local areas.</p> <p><b>Trustee asked</b> what is the protocol for staff moving between bubbles. It was noted that the day to day routines do not change and staff will need to follow social distancing guidelines. This impacts on two members of staff at TLA, details were provided.</p> <p><b>Trustee asked</b> what is the protocol for a positive case noting a child has to self isolate for 7 days with the rest of the class and teacher isolating for 14 days? It was noted that the child will likely have to isolate for 14 days as the teacher will not be in school for this duration.</p> <p>The risk assessment covers the points highlighted, this will be uploaded to the Google drive. There are also individual risk assessments for individual staff dependent on their roles.</p> <p><b>Trustees thanked</b> WJ for the package of support for the children and staff, and congratulated the staff on preparations for next term.</p> <p><b>COO report</b> It was noted that there was an error in the KPIs – this has been corrected in the document on the Google drive.</p> <p>The latest management report will be uploaded at the end of the week to the management reports folder in Google Drive where all previous reports can be found, trustees were reminded that they can contact the trust office if there are any questions if no meeting is imminent. The management reports have been amended following trustee feedback and a review of the KPIs had been included in the report.</p> <p>The trust have prepared three budgets; one for each school and one for the trust. The consolidated version will be uploaded to the ESFA. A 3 year budget plan has been prepared in accordance with the Academies Financial Handbook (AFH), though these are not requested by ESFA this year.</p> <p>The following AFH requirements were reported on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detail on the SLAs opted into were provided, these are existing SLAs. The trust has opted for additional support for PS Financials. The SLA with the county financial team will be reduced going forward.</li> <li>▪ Insurance cover - the trust will remain with Zurich, the renewals are expected soon. The trust will consider the government provision, Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA), next year.</li> </ul>	<p>WJ</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff absence insurance – a higher premium was received for TLA, the trust will consider an alternative provider.</li> <li>▪ Records for internal control reflected no issues to report.</li> <li>▪ Debts over £1k – the trust reported one debt due to just receiving the invoice.</li> <li>▪ There are no disposable assets over £5k.</li> <li>▪ Details of the auditing process were shared with the board.</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Update on plans for September</b> Completed under agenda item 4.</p>	
6 6.1	<p><b>Budget 2020/21</b></p> <p>The Budget for 2020/21 had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the format is similar to the monthly management account reports and that the June management report had been used for projections and carry forward. A big assumption around pay has been made due to the teachers’ pay award not yet being published; it is likely there will be a 3% impact on teaching costs, with some teachers receiving more than others. The trust have applied a 3% increase to all teacher salaries and the budget will be reworked to accommodate this once the final information is received. It was noted that trustees had previously approved a support staff increase of 2.75% from September which was incorporated in the budget.</p> <p>Allowances have been made for performance management; these will be realised during the performance management process in the autumn term.</p> <p>The 3 year projections were noted along with warnings that grants available, pay increases etc are not yet known so the trust have made assumptions for these areas. <b>Trustee stated</b> that the percentages had varied over the years, noting the decline in the Pupil Premium (PP) data for TLA. The PP income is based on the current number of children, yet the GAG funding will increase, therefore the % of costs will reduce which determines this decline.</p> <p>All budgets are as expected; they had been circulated prior to the meeting. TLA – set a budget SIS – reserves used to set the budget Venture – there is small deficit</p> <p>6.2 <b>TLA budget highlights;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase in GAG for TLA</li> <li>▪ PP data used is linked to the January 2020 census data</li> <li>▪ SEN funding – this will be reviewed closely to ensure accuracy</li> <li>▪ ARB – funding is now largely coming through the ESFA with additional top ups coming through the LA for specific children.</li> <li>▪ Consultancy income – this has reduced, it is anticipated this will be approximately 10 days per term. The main loss to the budgets from Covid is the consultancy loss, <b>trustee asked</b> was there any protection for this? No, the funds received are at cost and for work delivered on. The formal secondment linked to SP has remained constant.</li> <li>▪ Trustees were reminded of the savings made on the cleaning contract; the trust have queried the costs, yet noted these were the costs submitted for the tender.</li> </ul> <p>The school are looking at a small overspend in year. The nursery is buoyant and running well; there will be an increase of costs to the nursery for 1 day per week for SENCo time – the nursery contributes to the school in every way. There will be a £6,500 surplus.</p> <p><b>Trustees noted</b> the accuracy of the reports, thanking Jo Long and Belinda Burton for their</p>	

	<p>attention to detail and accuracy. Jo Long thanked Belinda Burton for the role she plays in assurance and the increased protection that is now in place for the trust.</p> <p>School have not had to compromise on their plans for the school in order to set the budget and the budget was set in line with the priorities for TLA moving forward.</p>	
6.3	<p><b>SIS budget</b></p> <p>JL, WJ and the SIS head met to consider the budget; it was noted that the SIS budget is in deficit due to lag funding, yet the school are funded at the right level for the staff they are employing. In September there will be 72/74 children on roll, it was understood that reserves would be used to set this budget. It was hoped that the nursery numbers will increase over the year and therefore clear the nursery deficit.</p> <p>It was noted that previously SIS were not eligible for growth funds, however they will be this year, it was anticipated these funds will be in excess of £20k and will be based on census data. These funds will be used to reinstate the school revenue and will enable the school to hold contingency reserves. <b>Trustee noted</b> the question from SIS LGB re the budget, stating that the level of spend in terms of day to day spend was accurate.</p> <p>It was understood that TLA held reserves yet these should not be used for everyday budgetary requirements for another school in the trust, instead they could be used to support larger projects to support growth such as a new building for the nursery. It was noted that there is a big minimum funding adjustment for SIS, due to the school being protected for many years due to having a falling roll. <b>Trustee asked</b> is there a case for schools supporting one another in MATs? There is support in place and trusts complete due diligence on schools joining trusts to ensure the finances are understood. SIS continue to receive IT and SENCo support; the key is to ensure the long term sustainability of the trust.</p>	
6.4	<p>It was agreed that WJ will address any further financial questions the LGB may have at their next LGB. JL will continue to work with the head at SIS to build his knowledge.</p> <p><b>Venture MAT</b></p> <p>It was noted this was a small central budget. The final page of the Venture MAT planning report highlighted the specific reserves as previously agreed; the next F&amp;GP&amp;Audit meeting will need to consider the reserves earmarked for certain projects. At this point the trust will also consider a high interest bank account for these reserves. It was reported that the 3 year budget plans reflect that reserves were unlikely to reduce.</p> <p><b>Trustees formally</b> ratified the 2020/2021 budget.</p>	<p>WJ</p> <p>JL</p> <p>JL</p>
7	<p><b>Financial Assurances Check</b></p> <p>It was noted that it is an AFH requirement to report on financial assurances checks and this year these need to be uploaded to the DfE – the auditors will also review this information.</p>	
8	<p><b>LGB &amp; Committee minutes</b></p> <p>The below minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>TLA LGB minutes (13/07/2020)</b></li> <li>▪ <b>SIS LGB minutes (10/07/2020)</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Finance &amp; General Purposes &amp; Audit (30/04/2020)</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Self review working party minutes (01/07/2020)</b> – the actions points will be reviewed between JD, PR and WJ. It was agreed that a letter from trustees expressing thanks to all staff and LGB governors will be circulated.</li> </ul>	<p>WJ</p>
9	<p><b>Governance</b></p>	

9.1	<p><b>Governance action plan;</b> this had been created as a result of the board self review meeting. The action plan focusses on 3 achievable objectives; appoint new trustees, marketing of the MAT and review communication with the LGBs. <b>Trustees agreed</b> the main objectives of the action plan; JD to liaise with WJ to progress this.</p>	JD WJ
9.2	<p><b>Board recruitment/ skills audits;</b> the summary of the annual skills audit had been compiled and circulated prior to the meeting, this linked with the action plan which highlighted the need for the board to focus on recruitment of trustees to the board. Skills gaps on the board included marketing, trustees were encouraged to consider any contacts who might wish to join the board. It was also noted that both LGBs need new governors too.</p>	ALL
9.3	<p><b>Clerking arrangements;</b> a proposed job description for a clerk had been circulated prior to the meeting, this was based on the National Governance Association template. The hours and costs for this position were noted; the position would be an employed position. A discussion took place acknowledging that the CEO was new to his role and is keen to work on the vision and governance for the trust, along with priorities going forward which could determine the type of role going forward.</p> <p>Trustee stated that the board had a contingency plan for the first half term of Autumn; the clerk at St Issey. It was noted that there are two internal members of staff who might be interested in the role.</p> <p>Trustee stated that the successes of the trust had been good recruitment which had been key to the development of the trust, agreeing to progress this appointment once a full understanding of the trust needs were understood. It was noted that the board may wish to review their trust governance structure review as part of the work with the CEO.</p>	
9.4	<p><b>Communication with the LGBs;</b> it was felt this had been covered throughout the meeting and in the LGB feedback and minutes, this would form part of the wider discussion moving forwards.</p>	
9.5	<p><b>Governor training log;</b> circulated prior to the meeting, the overview summarised the training completed by trustees. Trustees were reminded that they would be supported in attending training should they wish to do so.</p> <p>It was reported that a discussion had taken place with the vice chair regarding his thoughts re the role of chair going forward. AH stated he has no desire to take on the role of chair going forward. It was agreed that the role of chair and vice chair will be appointed at the start of the next academic year. JD will complete the relevant training with a view to consider the vice chair role in the next academic year.</p>	
10	<p><b>Policies</b> The below policies had been circulated prior to the meeting. <b>Support staff pay policy;</b> the policy reflects the new salary increases referred to. <b>Safer recruitment policy;</b> the policy includes minimal changes to reflect new Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. BJ was asked to take his DBS certificate into school. <b>Trustees approved</b> both policies.</p>	BJ
11	<p><b>Hardware purchase proposal</b> <b>A proposal had been circulated prior to the meeting. TLA wished to use reserves to purchase</b> chromebooks for year 5 &amp; 6 children. Each child would have their own chromebook to bring to and from school. The school had noted the benefits of using IT during lockdown along with high quality work and increased interaction with the teachers, noting the school had used Google platform for home schooling. The pros and cons were considered. The devices were expected to last It was anticipated a minimum of 3 years, there were unknown costs which would be linked to breakages.</p>	

	<p>Three quotes had been provided and shared with the board. It was noted that there would be a further costs of £3k for the cost of storage bags and storage and charging trolley.</p> <p><b>Trustee reflected</b> that secondary schools use technology to complete all home learning, noting this proposal would prepare children for secondary school.</p> <p><b>Trustee expressed</b> a concern with children carrying them home. The school would need to consider this; it was noted that using the devices at home was where the pupils would get the most benefit.</p> <p><b>Trustee asked</b> if the school have considered leasing the devices? For these products it would be a financial lease; the school is not allowed to enter into a financial lease.</p> <p><b>Trustees approved</b> quote for £23,339 for device number 3 with supplier 2, subject to further clarity being sought. PR will liaise with the school re the quotes if needed.</p>	
12	<p><b>Correspondence</b>  <b>Academies financial handbook 2020</b>  <b>Keeping children safe in education 2020</b></p> <p>The above guidance and expectations of trustees had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the guidance will come into place on the 1<sup>st</sup> September.</p>	
13	<p><b>Confirm date and times of future meeting</b></p> <p>Draft dates had been circulated for the Autumn term; it was noted these were subject to the availability of the SIS clerk. Dates for the Spring and Summer term will need to be set with a new clerk.</p>	PR
	<p>The board expressed thanks to SP for his time with the school and trust, when Covid allows we will join together and celebrate properly.</p> <p>The clerk was thanked by the board for her time supporting the board.</p>	
	<p><b>Summary of actions</b></p> <p>3 – sign previous minutes; <i>these will be passed to TLA.</i></p> <p>3.2 – ensure references for the CEO are signed; <i>JL to complete.</i></p> <p>4.1 Staffing structure to be placed in Venture google drive</p> <p>4.1 -risk assessment to uploaded to the Google drive.</p> <p>6.3 – address SIS LGB financial questions at the next LGB</p> <p>6.4 – review reserves earmarked for specific projects at the next F&amp;GP&amp;Audit meeting</p> <p>6.4 – consider high interest bank accounts for the reserves at the next F&amp;GP&amp;Audit meeting</p> <p>8 - letter from trustees expressing thanks to all staff and LGB governors will be circulated.</p> <p>9.1 – liaise with WJ to progress action points on the governance action plan</p> <p>9.2 – consider potential candidates for the role of trustee</p> <p>10 – Take copy of DBS to TLA</p> <p>13 - Agree dates for next term</p>	<p>PR</p> <p>JL</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>JL</p> <p>JL</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>JD</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>BJ</p> <p>PR</p>

**There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 6:50pm**

Signed.....

Dated.....

*Please note these are Draft Minutes until signed by the Chair at the next meeting.*