



Trust Board Meeting Minutes

27 January 2020, 8.30am
Witley Infant School, Jubilee Hall, Witley

PRESENT:

Primary: Valerie Elliott, St James

Junior: Ann Fraser, The Chandler; Adam Samson (AdS) & **Michael Guest (Chairman)**, Godalming; Richard Catchpole & Ron Downhill, Busbridge Jnr

Infant: Jo Thomas & Katherine Smith, Busbridge; Andrea Simonsson (AS) & Tom Rainer, Farncombe; Victoria Abbott & Elaine Joyce, + vice-chair Moss Lane; Charlie Lewis, Witley Inf

Potential Associate Members: Chris Wilmott & Lisa Seeley, The Wharf Nursery

In attendance: Rachel Dunnage, GLP Clerk; Andrew Smith, GLP Associate Director

Meeting is quorate: 14/21 trustees

Note: Quorum is defined in our AofA as no less than half the number of Trustees subject to a minimum of 2 Trustees.

	Item	ACTION Who & when
	<i>Note: GLP = Godalming Learning Partnership</i>	
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: <i>GLP schools & organisations:</i> Jon O'Connor (CSNet); Richard Thompson & Serena Roberts, St Mary's Inf; Hugh Rawson, The Chandler Jnr; Andrew Stear & Melanie Isherwood, Milford; Kate Turner, Witley Inf; Bev Cook, St James Pri; <i>Partner schools & organisations:</i> Caroline Mallett, Head of School, St Mark & All Saints Pri; Elizabeth Higgins & Mr Dan Torjussen- Procter, St Edmund's Pri; Debi Lawson, Broadwater;	
2.	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Board members to submit completed GLP Trust Declaration of Interests. RD will chase those still outstanding after the meeting Board members declared no interests in agenda items. 	R Dunnage 15 Feb
3.	TRUST DEVELOPMENT PLAN <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2019-2020 Development Plan There has been discussion over how we can better align dates to ensure appropriate governance involvement in the development of this plan. MG believes that the Board will effectively be driving the direction of the plan within 18 months as we transition from working on the Confederation plan. ASm reported the updates to the 2019-2020 Development Plan objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection of co-operative values Not covered. GET Teaching School Direct teacher training Our 7 students are well settled and we know they consider our in-house training sessions to be excellent as they evaluate each session. The Winchester University tutors judge our students to be doing well and have confirmed that they regard our management of the programme as rigorous and effective. Talk for Writing (TfW) 	

	<p>The Talk for Writing programme we have agreed as our joint training focus is forcing us to plan further ahead than we have ever had to before with joint training. We have already set 3 INSET dates for all school training, going into 2021. The programme is going to cost us c£14k over 2 years (costs fall into 3 financial years), a sum that no one school could afford on their own; this is the great strength of the Trust. Our literacy leaders are driving the development of the TFW programme in-between the all school training days which are being led by an exceptional TFW practitioner and trainer.</p> <p>iv. School Support</p> <p>We have employed an educational consultant to conduct a health check of all our schools. The process is proving useful to the individual schools and the reports will be useful to the GLP once they have all been completed and we can analyse the strengths and development needs across the Trust.</p> <p>We are also offering support to 2 schools with senior leaders on long-term sickness. ASm asked members to please ensure that their schools are aware they can contact ASm and AdS whenever they wish to see if the GLP can help in any way. CL expressed his thanks for the speed with which the GLP got involved with providing support to their school. Similarly, Rev AF thanked the GLP; the support has made a real difference to the senior leaders in those schools.</p> <p>v. Recruitment Protocol</p> <p>A recruitment protocol is being drawn up to help us retain our good <i>GET Teaching</i> students, provide good career development for our middle leaders and begin to grow our own teaching students from our Teaching Assistants.</p> <p>vi. Feasibility Study</p> <p>The feasibility study is underway but with no progress yet, largely down to school budget preparation pressures.</p> <p>JT: What is the feasibility study looking at?</p> <p>We are looking into how we can join together to help schools be financially sustainable. We are looking in the first instance at the administration, purchasing and support areas. We are thinking of modelling different structures and processes to see if any could in reality provide either a better or more economical way of working. We do not aim to impose a structure, but rather be able to offer schools ideas to consider if a vacancy/end of contract arises.</p> <p>vii. Updating our presence in the community is underway, currently via newsletters to parents. We will be talking about the importance of our Talk for Writing programme and flagging up that INSET days will not necessarily fall where parents might like to have them. JT agreed that the promotion of TFW is very interesting to her as a parent and if promoted will definitely help parents understand why INSET days aren't tagged on to an obvious holiday.</p>	
4.	<p>LAND AND ASSETS TRANSFER FOR FOUNDATION SCHOOLS</p> <p>A: <i>EJ will pursue the delay with Stone King and ask again for another idea of total costs.</i></p> <p>EJ explained that her queries have fallen on deaf ears. ASm has been told that Stone King are waiting for papers from the Local Authority (LA) Legal Department and has asked Moss Lane to put as much pressure on Surrey as possible. It is apparently just the LA and not the Diocese.</p> <p>EJ to write to the Surrey Legal Department and ask for action to be taken as soon as possible.</p> <p>ASm to forward the StoneKing email to EJ.</p> <p>ASm to write to Surrey Legal team as well on behalf of the GLP.</p> <p>ASm has also heard that there are outstanding issues with the Busbridge Inf caretaker's house. ASm expressed concern that this remains an unknown cost for the Trust which we would very much like to complete within this financial year; it is both a risk and a potential waste of money. KS updated the</p>	<p>E Joyce A Smith 15 Feb</p>

	<p>Board confirming that the LA did issue a new lease for the bungalow just after Christmas.</p> <p><i>Tom Rainer joined the meeting</i></p> <p>RD: <i>Do we know what the eventual cost will be?</i> We do not have a definitive figure. Their estimate was £1500 per school; 2 schools have come in at slightly under this figure; Busbridge Inf is likely to cost around the estimate, but we do need to know what they think Moss Lane will cost us.</p> <p>MG: <i>What are the implications of Moss Lane not putting land and assets into the Trust?</i> We don't know.</p> <p>RD: <i>Does the Trust have to own land and assets?</i> This is also not known. However, the Trust does already hold the land and assets for Milford, Godalming Junior. The Moss Lane Chairman and Headteacher could not immediately see the need to have the school's land and assets in the Trust; they have their new Foundation Instrument of Government and are listed as a Foundation school on the DfE website. They suggested that they need not pursue the transfer if it is to cost the GLP an unnecessary amount of money as their school circumstances are so complicated.</p> <p>ASm will ask Stone King whether or not Moss Lane must have their land and assets held by the Trust to be a Foundation school.</p>	<p>A Smith 15 Feb</p>
5.	<p>FINANCE & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</p> <p>a. Funding plans for 2020-2021 ASm explained that schools still don't know whether the sports premium grant is going to be available in the coming financial year. We have therefore agreed a process for dividing up the cost of the programme if the separately identified grant is not longer sent to schools. The Clerk flagged up our requirement to account for how we have spent our funding on training students. Clerk to send latest financial requirements document to ASm.</p> <p>Each school pays £300 a year to be part of CSNet and we get a fee place at their conference, happening tomorrow? Unfortunately no representatives from the GLP are able to attend; the information about the event was not received from CSNet until too late.</p> <p>b. Trust Bank Account A: <i>ASm to try again with the Cooperative bank because its ethics align best with our values and the future of our children.</i> ASm has gone back to the Co-op bank and has found that it is still not possible to get a free account with them. Lloyds and HSBC are also not able to offer us a free account; neither institutions seemed to really understand our type of organisation as a charitable, limited company, not registered with the Charities Commission. Nat West thinks they can offer us a free community interest account. It requires the mobile numbers of all trustees to log some detail, not to contact them.</p> <p>VA: <i>Why don't we ask other Trusts where they have bank accounts?</i> We will try, but it has been difficult to get contact details from CSNet.</p> <p>The Board asked that ASm ensure an account is set up before the end of this financial year</p> <p>c. Purchase of Trustee Indemnity Insurance A: <i>ASm to ensure the purchase of Trustee Indemnity Insurance as soon as possible.</i> ASm has a form to complete with a private company which we were advised to contact by CSNet. He will complete the form so that the company can then 'do their best' for us. The LA could also be asked to see if they can provide cover for us. EJ got public liability insurance from a broker in Godalming for a very reasonable price.</p>	<p>R Dunnage 15 Feb</p> <p>A Smith 15 Mar</p> <p>R Downhill</p>

	RD will look for the Local Authority indemnity insurance details and send to ASm	15 Feb
6.	<p>TRUST STRATEGIC PLAN</p> <p>The Board reviewed the modified medium term statements. The Steering Group had reconsidered the four statements for GLP medium term goals as requested by the Board. They did not regard economic sustainability as a given in our ever shifting education environment and so would still like to include statement 2. They modified the statements as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will focus on the educational needs of our children when considering applications from potential partners. 2. We will become financially efficient in order to fully fund the GLP development plan expenditure. 3. We will have an embedded bespoke teacher training programme which provides high calibre teachers for our future children. 4. The work of the GLP will be well known and respected within the local community. <p>The Board agreed these statements without further amendment. Clerk will add to our Operational documents.</p>	<p>R Dunnage 15 Feb</p>
7.	<p>MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>a. Financial agreement with Educational Partners. ASm has not had confirmation of the position with St Mark & All Saints, Loseley Fields and St Edmund's. It is possible that Loseley Fields will no longer take part in the Sports programme. The Clerk raised the joint networking that the School Business Manager – and possibly the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator – really appreciate being part of. ASm will consider how this might operate even if involvement in the Sports programme doesn't.</p> <p>b. Constituencies ASm reported that the Headteacher Group has started developing the questions they could add to their parental, staff and pupil surveys for us. Busbridge Jnr issues their surveys in March and so could be a test for us. We also considered sending out our survey separately after we have promoted the work we have completed and what we have planned. The Board preferred the latter approach and agreed that May was the best time of the year to send the survey out. ASm to prepare surveys for issue in May once promotion of the work of the GLP has been communicated to parents and staff. We are also planning how we can set up a GLP School Council with representatives from each individual school's school council.</p> <p>AdS reported that Headteachers have also discussed setting up a GLP event for December 2020 where we can involve c20 children from each school in a performance of songs and readings. AdS is meeting with Charterhouse regarding using their Chapel as a location because it holds c800 as audience and has refreshment facilities. We will need to make a concerted effort to push the organisation of such an event along as it is easy to lose time. Headteachers realise Christmas is a busy time but believe that if schools know date well in advance they will be able to manage attending and can showcase elements they are already working on for their own Christmas performances.</p>	<p>A Smith 15 Mar</p> <p>A Smith 15 May</p>
8.	<p>PARTNERSHIP WIDE POLICIES & PRACTICES</p> <p>a. Complaints ASm explained the serious difficulty that some schools have had with recent parental complaints. Headteachers have had to consider how they can care for their own well-being which is not something that they often do. Complaints take an inordinate amount of time to manage, which then puts Headteachers under pressure in other areas of their jobs. Headteachers are proposing we arrange joint training for Heads and governors so that everyone is completely clear what they are doing with regard to complaints. Our Area Schools Officer is happy to run this training at c£25 per head.</p>	

	<p>HTs would also like the Board to consider the GLP having a common complaints policy, particularly given the government's move to a 2 stage only process. Jane van den Brooke, our Area Schools Officer, has confirmed that schools can keep a 3 stage process, but we should be able to justify why we want to do this. Many of the Board members agreed that a common policy would also help parents who have children in several schools.</p> <p>ASm to confirm arrangements for Complaints training for all GLP schools.</p> <p><i>Richard Catchpole & Katherine Smith left the meeting</i></p> <p>b. Safer Recruitment DBS checks & Single Central Record The Board considered a request from the School Business Managers' network that each GLP school's Governing Body to agree to accept the DBS checks from another GLP school when staff will be working in the same role on a temporary basis. The aim is to facilitate sharing of staff in order to cover short-term vacancies/absences. Each school would continue to conduct their own DBS checks for permanent positions.</p> <p>The Board raised a number of concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the school be assured that it is still meeting its safeguarding requirements? • How frequently do schools renew their DBS checks, does that make a difference? • How would we define a <i>temporary</i> basis? <p>Some Board members were uncomfortable with this idea, others regarded it as simply applying the same principle as we do for supply staff (supply staff have DBS checks every 2 years). RD confirmed that the Local Authority approves of this approach. EJ reminded the Board that staff can pay £13 a year for the update service which allows a new employer to quickly check the DBS status. She proposed running safer recruitment training across the GLP and working out how we can manage this because it will potentially save SBMs time and benefit the children by having our own bank of temporary staff.</p> <p>The Board would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBMs to calculate the comparative costs of conducting a new DBS check, including their administration time, compared to funding the £13 annual update fee. • Headteachers to look at the potential issues regarding different safeguarding practices within each school. 	<p>A Smith 05 Feb</p> <p>A Smith R Dunnage 15 Mar</p>
9.	<p>TRUST ROLES AdS and ASm are developing the Finance Officer role with the current incumbent on the basis that it will become a permanent position and not move around with the Chairmanship of the Headteacher group.</p>	
10.	<p>GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT A: Clerk to include the request for a pool of governors to consider complaints, areas of expertise and ask for additional areas of training. Completed. The Clerk has put together an online skills audit for each school to use. It is based on the latest National Governance Association's skills audit and includes a number of questions related specifically to the GLP and the skills or availability for panels that governors may be able to offer. It will be sent out in the next week once it has been checked by the Associate Director.</p>	
11.	<p>MINUTES OF 06 NOVEMBER 2019 and MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>a. Minutes Members of the Trust Board agreed the minutes of the November 2019 Board meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chairman. TR requested that the draft minutes be sent to schools as soon as possible so they can update their governing bodies on the development of the GLP.</p> <p>b. ACTIONS and matters arising A: ASm will need to report back the definitive position on the difference between Trustee/Director and its implications for tax at our next meeting. ASm explained that he has been unable to get a definitive answer without spending money. He would like to be sure first that he is asking the right questions. Members listed the</p>	

	<p>following questions to which they would like answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact does being a GLP director have on their other directorships? • What are the specific differences between the roles and responsibilities of a director versus a trustee? • What do GLP directors have to do with regard to tax returns? <p>RD explained that we are formally directors because we are a limited company; however the roles of trustee and director are very similar. Only the Headteachers and Chairmen of the Founding schools are trustees as well as directors because to be a trustee you have to have responsibility for land and assets.</p>	
12.	<p>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>TR has a selection of questions from Farncombe's governors. He will discuss them after the meeting with ASm.</p>	
13.	<p>DATE AND TIMES OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <p><i>Note: Our first AGM is required to take place within 18 months of incorporation i.e. before June 2020.</i></p> <p>a. Board @ 8.30am: Wed 17 Jun</p> <p>b. AGM: Wed 17 Jun</p> <p>The Board considered if the timing of the 17 Jun meeting would need to change to make it more accessible to our constituencies but decided that it was in fact easier to keep it as now because more people could attend on their way to work or school. The AGM will be held at 8.30am and be immediately followed by the normal Board meeting.</p> <p>ASm and Clerk will ensure that the event is publicised widely.</p>	<p>A Smith R Dunnage 15 Mar</p>

Meeting closed 10.10am

Chairman's signature: *Michael Quest*

Date: 17.06.2020