

Peterborough Diocese Education Trust
 Minutes of the Directors Meeting
 Tuesday 21st May 2019 at 6.00pm
 Held at the Business Exchange, Rockingham Road, Kettering, NN16 8JX

Attendees:	Margaret Holman (MH); Duncan Mills (CEO); Cathy Armstrong (CA); Greg Cracknell (GC); Gordon Temple (GT); Peter Cantley (PC) – DDE; Kirstin Howarth (KH); Kevin Binley (KB); Andrew Weatherill (AW); Helen Buckley (HB)
In Attendance:	Mike Cowland (MC); Ruth Walker-Green (RWG); Mike Behnke (Clerk – Syzygy Clerking Services).
Apologies:	None

1. Opening Prayer

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GC led the opening prayer. 	

2. Declarations of pecuniary interest

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None declared. 	

3. Apologies for absence

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	

4. Any Other Business previously declared

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	

5. Approval of Minutes of 19th March 2019

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 65 – Item 10 – Under exclusions amend last bullet point to read: ‘There has been a fixed term exclusion at one of our academies involving a LAC child. This child has 2:1 supervision and PDET is waiting for a decision from the LA about the most appropriate provision’. Page 65 – Item 10 – answer in bold – Insert ‘2017-18’ after DfE releases. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 67 – Committee reports – Governance – last bullet point – amend to read ‘Since the meeting, HB had informed the Chair of a protest from governors at a PDET Academy over completing the PDET forms before serving a further term, requesting this to be raised with the Board. It was agreed that a complete and consistent record of governor proposals and appointments was required for all Academies’. With the above amendments noted, the minutes were approved by the Board and signed by the Chair. 	
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6. Action Log

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This had been amended to reflect the actions carried out. Points to note: <i>Q: Under the action from the previous meeting, regarding officers finding an example of a MAT with an LGB structure which moved to a hub structure, it was stated this would be covered in the Governance report. I couldn't see that and was concerned it had dropped out?</i> <i>A: This was referred to in the verbal report but wasn't minuted. As part of our research we have undertaken a survey on about 10 Trusts. The obvious big one would be E-ACT which has 4 regional Hubs and has almost completely neutered the local government role to an advisory/ambassadorial group. The conclusion drawn is that if you have strong governance Hubs, you can be in danger of ending up with local groups that have a diminished role of very low level activity.</i> 	

7. Matters Arising not on the action log or main agenda

Discussion	Action
<p><i>Q: We mentioned the situation with the governor at a specific academy, is that now resolved?</i> <i>A: No, we need to visit and discuss it, but are waiting for an opportunity to meet with them. I've spoken with the Chair who is comfortable with how we are dealing with it.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Any further news on the Chaplain's post?</i> <i>A: No, we were advised to wait until Bishop John had returned from sabbatical. He is now back, and there is a Member's meeting next week where, as indicated in the Action Log, it will be raised with him.</i></p>	

8. CEO's Report (Including Risk Register)

Discussion	Action
<p>Three papers had been circulated prior to this meeting and were all taken as read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CEO's report The Risk Register Schedule of Work for Director's Meetings 2018-19 (updated) – for information only. <p><u>CEO Report:</u> Additional points to those in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under headship changes, Julie Grey had left Cranford school for 	

personal reasons

- There was a Wellbeing and Assistance programme for staff in operation, all staff were members, and there was a record of numbers accessing the service, whether online or face to face (obviously anonymously), details of which would be circulated to the Board by email after the meeting.

Q: Under recruitment, the risk pertaining to 'insufficient number and quality of staff with correct skills to carry out central team roles', in relation to finance, is there any further elaboration that might be useful?

A: We lost a member of the central team, but have a temporary replacement who is good. However, she is looking for a permanent placement, so we may lose her. We are also considering how we will deal with finance across the whole Trust. It is down as a risk, because we are vulnerable because if we do lose a person, we will have to recruit a replacement quickly. Therefore, it is the vulnerability around that, that we are monitoring.

Q: The key facts shows the central team being aware of 33 teaching post vacancies for September. To what extent does the central team determine the appropriate staffing structure for each school, ensuring that that's implemented and recruited to? Is there a business and HR operation that is defining what the desirable staffing structure is in each?

A: We have just completed the round of budget surgeries where we have sat down with every SBM and HT. We have looked at their 5 year budget forecast and at their staffing structures. From that, we have been able to make recommendations around combining classes and for thinking differently about posts. Primarily we have an advisory role, but where schools have made decisions that we disagree with, we intervene, provide advice and make stronger recommendations. We are aware of all of the vacancies, the staffing and class structures in all of our academies. We look at every vacancy on a weekly basis, and where we have questions about educational implications, we refer to Ruth. At the moment there is a lot of work being carried out with the recruitment of staff as we approach the current resignation deadline. It started with the NQT recruitment; we held a successful campaign in recruiting NQTs. Within the 33 vacancies there are also some leadership posts and we are recruiting for those now, until the end of May. Most of those vacancies are staff moving on for promotions or personal reasons. It has been a busy period, but we appear to be filling all of the vacancies at this stage.

Q: I notice that later on, you mention that next year, schools won't be able to set a deficit budget without permission. Is there a feeling that we need to exercise more control, or are we satisfied with the process?

A: We are already exercising control; the challenge is that we are all aware from the media and other sources, that the pressure on school budgets is growing, due to rising costs in all areas from pension costs to fuel bills. The amount of money per pupil is flatlining. In real terms it is declining and primary pupil numbers are falling. This year, that has started to really impact on our schools, particularly those very small schools. We have considerable reserves; however, we have to be careful not to use all of them. We believe we are taking a sensible approach, which is that schools will need a period of time to adjust. In the coming year some schools will need to be supported as they forecast a deficit budget. It has been agreed that where this occurs a case will need to be made to, and approved by, the B&F Committee.

- RWG added that next year, there would be a need to look at the Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning tool with schools in more detail.

Risk Register:

- This had been covered earlier and changes detailed in the CEOs report.

AP1: DM

9. Key Headlines – Trust-wide Data Analysis (Spring 2)

Discussion	Action
<p>Academy Improvement Summary report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWG provided context, explaining that the Board had had the first part of the report before, with the exception of the Towcester figures which had now been added. • Additional information, pulled from a website, now allowed a comparison of children in good or outstanding schools in Northamptonshire and in PDET. • There were four Ofsted inspections due, one under the old framework (ST Luke’s) which was imminent and three under the new framework (Greens Norton, Mears Ashby and Collingtree). • The new Ofsted handbook has now been published and if a school has 150 children or more, it will have a 2 day Section 8 inspection, rather than a 1 day as previously. Therefore, about a third of PDET schools will have a 2 day Section 8 inspection. • A Section 8 inspection cannot change a judgement: only a Section 5 can do this. An inspection can be converted on the day or Ofsted can return typically within one to two years. • The data tabled was for the Easter period. The caveat was made that the data was only as accurate as the information entered on SIMS by the schools. It was then drawn off by Groupcall. • The Trust wide and Spring averages, compared to Autumn were shown. The Reading Trust wide average (80.1%) was above national. • The Writing average had increased to 76.9% and might go up again, to be in line with national. • Maths was a priority across the Trust and Northamptonshire. This had increased to 74.5% since the Autumn. There had been 27 days of specific maths consultancy provided to schools in since February, as well as 116.5 days of Quality First Teaching (QFT) linked to maths. A further 8 schools had had a PDET brokered consultant that they had bought in. There had also been 8 training sessions, some for subject leaders, and some for teachers across all of the year groups. • It was pointed out that the two data sets received by Directors had slightly different schools in them, so in terms of a true comparison it was necessary to assess the Spring data with that of the same schools included in the Autumn. • RWG agreed to address this for the end of year data report. The ESE Committee had looked at the data in more detail, school by school. • The maths increase could be seen in the table on page 1 relating to academies in line or above the national average. • Pupil Premium (PP) and SEND data could now be looked at in more detail, showing that about a third of the PP children in the Trust were also SEND. • Under gender, nationally as well as locally, girls outperformed boys at the expected standard, but boys outperformed girls at the higher standard. <p>Q: How confident are we that the data we see by this method, would be an indication of SATs?</p> <p>A: As confident as we can be. Because we have standardised our assessment across the Trust, we are happier that this data is based on test performance. We have taken into account some teacher assessments, so if a child has performed badly on the test</p>	<p>AP2: RWG</p>

<p>day, we can look at their standardised score and we can look at the judgement by the teacher to see if there is any discrepancy. We are happier now that it is grounded into the test data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KH gave a view from experience, in her two schools. She commented that she also ran SATs from the end of Year 5, which provided a scaled score. When she compared what the pupils scored on the scaled scores, she was less convinced about the accuracy of maths. Whilst this was based on a small sample (45 children), maths was consistently higher in the data generated here than it was on SATs papers. • She added that she was undertaking some work for the Trust on this area. This might result in just collecting practice SATs data for Year 6 in the Easter term. The research would be evaluated at the end of the year and past performance looked at to see how judgements correlated with actual test performance. <p>Q: Do we have any thoughts around the reasons behind the wider differential between the outcomes for boys and girls at the higher standard and, in addition, where we are going with that, or any examples in the Trust where the reverse is the case?</p> <p>A: This is a national trend. However, we have a larger differential in the Trust, which we cannot fully explain. The matter, and approaches to ensure that the differential is reduced going forward, will continue to be discussed at ESE committee meetings.</p>	
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10. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between PDET and the DBE

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC had sent out a template to all of the MATs across the Diocese that include Church schools. This was amended to a document that was felt more appropriate for PDET. It was recognised that it might look different from the others, as PDET was a MAT set up by the Diocese. • The document had been further reviewed by PC and DM with the current version tabled at the meeting for approval by the Board. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PC highlighted three differences from the DBE template which he felt should be kept in and would benefit the Trust: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Collective Worship</u> – The DBE felt that candidates for HT appointments should be observed leading a collective act of worship. The revised MoU draft stated, that ‘...it will be included if it is possible’. This could be done quickly with a class as opposed to a whole school assembly. It would be insightful as a key part of the SIAMS agenda and in terms of rapport with the children. ▪ <u>Affiliation</u> – The DBE felt that it would be beneficial to embrace non-church schools into the Diocesan family of schools by making aspects of the Diocesan SLA available to them, through affiliation. ▪ <u>Third Referee</u> – The DBE’s stance on this was that it was a desirable characteristic, but not an essential one. What could be gleaned from a third referee could be useful in terms of the candidate’s ability to model the values expected in our schools. If there were two equally matched candidates, having a third reference might be helpful. ○ In response, the CEO felt that the affiliation item was not relevant. A previous discussion with the RSC about a non- 	

<p>church school joining PDET had indicated that this was unlikely to be allowed. It was rejected on the grounds that there were too many church schools looking for MATs for PDET to take on a non-church one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was felt that more could be learned from a whole school assembly / act of worship rather than from a small class or group act of worship, this would enable PDET to look at how the message was put across to a wide range of ages from Reception to Year 6. This was why the amended version of the MoU stated, “where possible.” A key factor would be the number of candidates and would depend on where the whole school act of worship could be fitted into the interview structure for the day. ○ Whilst appointing the best candidate was essential, it was recognised that if there were, for example, five candidates, organising the relevant number of whole school assemblies would be time consuming and difficult. There was, however, Board agreement that consideration of this important element of a PDET HT’s work should be included in some way. ○ With regards to the third reference, it was felt that enough was gleaned from the process to be able to determine whether a candidate was suitable or not for a church school. References were felt in any case to be a backstop. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Accepting the tabled Memorandum of Understanding was put to the vote and approved with 1 vote against and 1 abstention.</u> 	
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11. Policies – Update on process

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There were many policies in existence within the PDET schools, some of which were not required, and it was agreed that there was a need to streamline the process. ● The tabled list showed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Those labelled as Trust policies, but required to be tailored to suit school circumstances. (For example, Safeguarding and Admissions policies that needed to be tailored to the setting, but with their main body agreed with the Trust). ○ Trust policies with no amendments ○ Templates that were quality assured and could be put out to the schools to use. <p><i>Q: Will they be having review dates so not all policies are reviewed at the same time?</i> <i>A: We will look at review dates as part of the process.</i></p>	<p>AP3: HB</p>

12. Committee reports

Discussion	Action
<p><u>ESE Committee (GC):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Much of the content of the meeting in terms of data had been covered earlier. ● NQT Strategy – Support for NQTs was discussed, with a suggestion 	

that a HT could take on overseeing the monitoring of NQT mentors as opposed to a member of the Central Team. It was agreed that the NQT offer required review before September 2019.

- A review was being undertaken of how safeguarding was being monitored and audited. Further clarity was needed in terms of what were statutory issues and which were the other non-statutory desirables. Other Trusts had been investigated by HB/Lesley Pollard (LP) and the best ideas taken on board. PDET Schools would then be given the action plans which were RAGed and easier to monitor.
- Office 365, once established would allow the SCR to be more centrally controlled and monitored.
- The Christian Vision for Education was discussed with DM and RWG now joining PC's meeting with the Diocesan Support Consultants (DSC), to enable them to receive feedback on the termly visits to PDET schools and discuss areas of closer cooperation.
- SIAMS – under the new framework, some non-PDET schools had received the 'excellent' grading. All PDET schools were attending the one day course run by LP on the RE syllabus.

B&F Committee (CA):

- A bulleted report had been previously circulated.
- It was added that schools were under increased financial pressure with the pension increase causing the most problems.
- Out of just over 900 staff, two thirds had now completed GDPR training via either face to face sessions or through the online facility.
- The first GDPR audit was also held at a school, with good results.

Q: Regarding the proposed OJEU tender for IT, this means it is an open tender. Potentially, we could receive a huge amount of proposals with a large amount of time and energy being spent on it process. There are existing frameworks that can be accessed. It is appreciated that some of our existing suppliers may not be on these, but the average cost of an OJEU tender process is about £60,000?

A: We went through an OJEU Tender for our catering contract and we paid the Litmus Partnership to guide us through that. They can do the same for the IT tender if we choose to use them, for about £5-6,000. Our concern about using an existing framework is that none of our suppliers are on these and as soon as we eliminate them, we could be quite vulnerable. We spend £110-120,000 a year on IT support alone. It is a big contract for someone to lose and I think we would be quite vulnerable if we did not include them. I don't think, taking one large provider as an example, that they are interested in working outside of Northamptonshire and have not gone to the effort of being on a framework.

Q; In your finance report, there is one phrase I didn't understand, 'The largest positive variances are down to the balance inherited on conversion'?

A: The school put a budget variance in, because they didn't budget for the income that they are getting when they converted. It isn't new money in, it's a carried forward balance which shows in PSF as income because it has come in this year.

Governance Committee (GT):

- A range of documents had been circulated in relation to governance:
 - Governance Committee summary report to Board
 - Board Remit and Scheme of Delegation
 - Code of Conduct for Directors
 - LGB Composition
 - ToR for the Board of Directors
 - Directors' Role and Responsibilities
- These comprised the LGB composition and a package of documents and processes around the operation of the Board and its Committees.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board were pleased with the proposed structure, together with the elimination of the duplication of work, enabling LGBs to focus on issues that were not covered centrally. The Board also endorsed the new model's clear separation and clarification of what was governance and what was management. 	
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13. Safeguarding Reports

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covered earlier on the agenda. 	

14. Progress against Trust-wide key priorities overview

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM explained that there was a plan that sat beneath the tabled document, which was monitored by each Committee. This document provided the overview performance measures. Those highlighted in blue had been superseded by the Governance review (this being a working document) and could now be taken out. Those colour coded grey were ones that could only be RAG rated in Summer 2, when all the summative data had been received. <p>Q: Will Directors' self-evaluation come out of all of the work we are doing on governance? A: We have commissioned somebody to carry out a review of the Board, possibly in July. It is important to be able to evidence that we have something robust to show against our key priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recruitment issue does bring up the equalities and diversity matter as well for the Board. <p>Q: Will that be a recommendation coming out of the review? A; I think that is likely to be the case.</p>	

15. Any Other Business

Discussion	Action
There was no other business.	

16. Dates of next meetings

Tuesday	23 rd July 2019	18.00	Kettering Business Exchange
Tuesday	24 th September 2019	18.00	Kettering Business Exchange
Tuesday	19 th November 2019	18.00	Kettering Business Exchange

With no further business, the Chair brought the non-confidential meeting to a conclusion at 6.56pm.

Chair Signature for approval of minutes: _____

Date: _____