

DRAFT MINUTES of the **MID-TRENT MAT EXTRA-ORDINARY** Meeting**BOARD OF TRUSTEES and MEMBERS**Wednesday 16th May 4.00pm at St Peter's CE Primary School**PART ONE**

MEMBERS Membership: Non-Voting Chair: Mary Evans (i) CECET: Colin Hopkins (ii) Stephen Butt (iii) David Clay (iv) Jonathan Mayne

TRUST BOARD Membership: Mary Evans, (ME) (*Chair*) Nicki Clay, (NC) (arrived 4.25pm) Julie Alexander, (JA) Paul Hayward, (PH) Mark Blundy, (MB) Angela Mulligan, (AM) Advisor (Chief Finance Officer) : Andrew Nield (AN) Clerk: PRW

ITEMS OF BUSINESS					
1.1	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence		Chair	2	David Clay and Jonathan Mayne sent their apologies which were accepted. Nicki Clay sent her apologies as she would be late joining the meeting due to a school commitment.
2.3	Confidentiality All discussions during this meeting remain confidential to this meeting.		Chair	1	Resolved
6.1	Any other Urgent Business				
1.2	Business of Meeting Scheme of Delegation	All Trustees and Members had received the proposed new Scheme prior to the meeting and improvements had been incorporated.			The New Scheme of Delegation was approved. The document will be placed on both the schools' and the MAT websites.
	"To discuss the questions raised by the MAT Structure Review presentation and to agree Next Steps."			Single item	

Discussion	
	<p>The new Scheme of Delegation is very helpful but it doesn't fully show where the accountability lies at every level of governance. There was a concern raised that the MAT had no leader. Two of the three schools are due an OFSTED inspection. At their last inspection, St Peters were found to be GOOD with some OUTSTANDING features but are worried whether the present governance structure 'is not fit for purpose' and could be detrimental to their inspection judgement.</p> <p>The question was raised about who the Headteachers are accountable to? At present the LGB monitor their performance management but it should be a core function of the Trust Board. It was stated that in some aspects, in the absence of a MAT lead, AN is being expected to lead on issues when he should only be helping to manage.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the need for a CEO appointment. As it was stated, "We can't afford, can't afford not to!" A short discussion about the recent Review conducted by Jane Owens followed.</p> <p>It was agreed that the MAT need an external appointment but many stressed that any person appointed should have the same values and vision that the Trust has. The Trustees were re-assured that it is the Trust Board that makes the appointment.</p> <p>The hierarchy of the MAT's governance levels were explained, beginning with the Members, then the Trustees, followed by the CEO/AO. In many small MAT's of between 2 - 5 schools, they do not employ a CEO but have a named Executive Headteacher. In our MAT all three Headteachers are of equal status and there is no Head of School positions.</p> <p>Thoughts were expressed as to how much of a time commitment would be needed to fulfil the role of our CEO? Suggestions were made and discussed. These ranged from 2 to 4 days a month, with the thought that the workload could initially be quite heavy and the person might need a block of time when starting, following their appointment. It was suggested that it would cost approximately £16,000 (inc. of on-costs) per annum for a CEO to be employed one day a week; this would be on a salary equivalent to two points above the most expensive of the three headteachers.</p> <p>It was stated that the 21 questions should be completed by the Board before any firm decisions are made. The Board must decide whether they want the MAT to grow? If so, the job of the CEO would mean having meetings with the RSC, to agree a way forward with the Trust Board and then beginning the financial implications. i.e. having to have one of our Headteachers out of school supporting the new school.</p> <p>Growth would mean more schools, more children and so more money. But could our MAT collaborate with other MAT's to improve our chances of a 'better financial pulling-power' when negotiating contracts?</p> <p>Who is AN's line manager and who carries out appraisals on him? Officially ME, as chair of the Board. Again this should be the job of a CEO.</p> <p>The academic record of the schools is excellent at the moment but if we are asked to expand the governance will need to be restructured. This has a cost. An amount of £25 000 was mentioned as the monies available to take-on a school in a category. The Board felt this was far too small to pay for the changes needed to cover conversion costs (including the legal costs). It is possible to apply for grants but at present the majority of the approved grants are given to the 'teaching schools'.</p> <p>The question was asked as to, "What has changed since we became a MAT?" The LGB's seem to be almost unchanged. Yet the LGB's only have the powers and responsibilities that the Board delegate to them. Should we consider the idea of having a 'Parental Group' rather than an LGB? This is the case in a neighbouring MAT of</p>

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small schools. However, in this MAT there is one executive headteacher who is a trustee; there are Heads of school in each of the member schools. If so, would this facilitate the strengthening of the Trust Board by voting named Governors to be Trustees?

Individual schools are performing well; there is little chance at present that any of them will be placed in a category by Ofsted due to academic performance; there is also no financial difficulty; there are no safeguarding issues; so the only reason that can blot our MAT is if there is a 'Notice to Improve' concerning its governance.. However, it should be noted that there are numerous small MAT's with the same governance model all over the country.

Many examples of the governance structures in other MAT's were discussed at length. It was agreed that it's about relationships and building on the strengths of individuals. How would the Headteachers feel? Would it be uncomfortable for them not to be on the Board? (This would protect the headteachers' possible conflict of interest as a Trustee) Would it be uncomfortable for the Board, if the Headteachers weren't Trustees? At present, as members of the Trust Board, it was noted that the Headteachers complete a lot of the workload that Trustees should be expected to complete.

It was pointed out that as a Board, we have never asked for any help from the RSC. Can the RSC impose upon us? How do we identify like-minded partner schools? Everyone agreed that we wanted to work with like-minded people who appreciated the journey that the MAT has begun. The national agenda has now changed and no good well-performing school has to convert to an academy.

What is the difference between us being a MAT to when we were 3 separate schools? Has the MAT added value? AS a Trust Board, have we added value?

A skills audit of the Trustees has been completed but the results need to be collated and analysed. We know we have skill gaps on the Board and are attempting to fill them. The Academy Ambassadors have had their contract renewed, so are awaiting their response to our requests, but the timescale may be between 6 to 8 weeks.

It would be quicker to reorganise the structures of the MAT than to appoint a CEO. A suggestion that two of our Members could be co-opted to the Trust Board as an interim solution was voted and agreed. Steven Butt agreed to be elected as a Trustee on a temporary basis for up to three months initially. It was also agreed that NC approach David Clay on the Board's behalf to become a Trustee on a temporary basis for up to three months initially.

The salary of the CEO would need to be top-sliced and may also involve some additional paid administration time.

ACTION POINTS

- 1. The minutes of the meeting with the RSC next week will be circulated to Trustees and Members.**
- 2. Colin will approach two named CEO's (including Michael Osborne-Town) to seek their advice on what our next steps in the process of growing our MAT need to be considered.**
- 3. Mary and Andrew will complete a collation and analysis of the trustees' Skills Audits prior to next week's meeting.**

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	4. Mark will speak to a joint meeting of all three LGB's to explain what discussions have been held at Trust level and how this may affect the role of the local governing bodies in the future.	
6. CONCLUSION OF MEETING		
6.1	Any other Urgent Business	None
6.2	Date of Next Trust Board Meeting	Tuesday 17th July St Peters Hixon 1.00pm - 3.00pm (Friday 6th July is the deadline for ALL papers to be with the Clerk for distribution)

This is a true record of the meeting.

Signed:	Date:
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