

BEST Directors' Meeting

7th December 2016, 16:00-17:30

SWA, Block 20, Room 914

Attendees

Peter Little (PL), Lorraine MacDonald (LM), Alan Lee (AL), David Shelvey (DS), Paul Walker (PW), Julie Hollings (JH), Cathy Piotrowski (CP) and Ilona Bond (IB)

Minute taker: Yvonne Humphryes (YH)

Notification of any perceived conflicts of interest: None

Approval of Minutes: Previous minutes approved and signed

Decision: All Directors unanimously voted to keep Peter Little as Chair and Lorraine Macdonald as Vice Chair of the Bedfordshire Schools Trust Board of Directors.

Agenda items:

1. Questions for the Chair of the HR Committee
2. Questions for the Chair of the Performance Committee
3. Questions for the Chair of the Finance Committee
4. Approve audited accounts for 2015/16
5. Principals update
6. Approval of the admission policy
7. Warden project update
8. Due Diligence for St Christopher's academy

Welcome

PL welcomed CP and IB to the Board of Directors.

Questions for the Chair (LM) of the HR Committee

LM confirmed that we do not currently pay for facilities time; this was declined by Directors earlier in the year. However, HR will be reviewing the current trade union agreement and will provide details and options at the next HR Committee meeting scheduled to take place on 1st March 2017.

PW asked about the school staffing structures. LM advised that there is work currently being undertaken to align the structures; going forward the school staffing structures should come to the Directors for review on an annual basis.

SWA, ETA & RBA are currently looking at the option to take their recruitment advertising in-house; HR are currently putting together a series of templates and a guidance sheet to help ensure consistency and accuracy is maintained across the trust.

DS raised a discussion around the line management of BEST Nurseries and Heather Hudson (Managing

Director). **Decision:** AL agreed to line manage BEST Nurseries and Heather Hudson.

LM thanks YH for the clear and concise minutes provided for the HR committee meetings.

Questions for the Chair (CP) of the Performance Committee

When asked CP confirmed that despite the first Performance Committee being a little rushed (20 minutes with each Principal) it was very effective having one to one time with each of the Principals and a good starting point.

The Principals targets for 2016/17 are Key Stage targets to enable their performance to be measured against validated data. Entry and exit, progress and group data is to be monitored by the LGBs, in line with the BEST strategy.

Action: CP asked YH to clearly minute the questions asked during the Performance Committee going forward as evidence of challenge.

Action: AL to send IB the document sent to LGBs.

Questions for the Chair (DS) of the Finance Committee

DS expressed disappointment with the amount of time it took Mazars to prepare and submit the final audited report; Directors received this one day before the meeting.

There was a discussion around the correct level of reserves to enable security whilst allowing sufficient funds for school improvements. DS advised that reserves need to remain at a level that will cover one month of salaries. AL support this, but noted that this isn't the case for many schools.

Approve audited accounts for 2015/16

Decision: All Directors approved the Financial Statements for 2015/16. AL and PL signed the relevant paperwork.

Principals update

It was proposed that the recruitment campaign for the two substantive posts will be advertised Jan-Feb 2017. **Decision:** All Directors approved this decision. **Action:** AL to speak to the relevant Chairs of LGBs. BT to lead the process.

Approval of the Admission Policy

Etonbury PAN is currently set at 150; however, there is an informal agreement with Local Authority (LA) to accept 180. AL advised that he met with the LA (Helen Redding and Victor Wann) earlier in the week and they advised that we'd agreed to take a PAN of over 200 for 2 years. No one within BEST is aware of this agreement and there is no paper trail to confirm the arrangement. The Directors are happy to approve a PAN of 180; to go higher than this would have an impact on school improvement and would therefore only be viable if additional support was provided by the LA. **Action:** AL to feedback the decision to Alex Prior and Ian Kite.

Decision: All Directors approved the admission policy with a revised PAN of 180 for Etonbury.

Warden project Update

BEST are looking to swap some land at the Samuel Whitbread site in exchange for sports facilities; the ground work for the project has been running for several years. PL & DS are currently liaising with an independent

legal firm to finalise the details in the contract.

St Christopher's

Following a meeting with AL and Nafia Baust last month, Pam Jones the Head Teacher and the LGB of St Christopher's Academy (SCA) have agreed that they'd be interested in joining Bedfordshire Schools Trust. AL visited the school last week and was very impressed by their standards, passion and desire; the school achieved a solid 'good' in their February 2016 Ofsted inspection. SCA also have an over-subscribed vibrant nursery. SCA will need financial support for boiler repairs.

Decision: The Directors supported AL's proposal for St Christopher's to join BEST in principle, subject to full due diligence checks.

Next meeting: 25th January 2017

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Jones', is located at the bottom left of the page.