

## **BEST Directors' Meeting**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2017, 16:00-18:00

SWA, Block 20, Room 914

### **Attendees**

Lorraine MacDonald (LM), Alan Lee (AL), David Shelvey (DS), Paul Walker (PW), Ilona Bond (IB), Julie Hollings (JH), Cathy Piotrowski (CP), Nafia Baust (NGB) – attended for items 1 & 2 only

### **Apologies**

Peter Little (PL)

**Minute taker:** Lisa Little (LL)

**Notification of any perceived conflicts of interest:** None

**Approval of minutes** – minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 agreed as an accurate record.

### **Agenda items:**

1. Sandye Place Academy
2. New schools
3. Committee meetings
4. Trust Board
5. Celebration of the Year
6. AOB
  - Trade Union Facilities Time
  - Procurement overview

### **Sandye Place**

Introductions made - Cath Bainbridge (Maple Tree Lower School), Sharon Kane (Assistant Principal, Finance & Operations) and Kim McCamley (Executive Principal, Sandye Place & Maple Tree) attended to present their business case.

Kim McCamley (KM) circulated a data pack to the meeting and gave a background history of their schools and leadership. KM and her team outlined their current position and how they saw their schools moving forward.

AL thanked KM and her team for taking the time to meet with the Board and said that the documentation put forward was extremely good quality. AL felt there were two key areas for Directors to consider; security of pupil numbers and site potential. AL also explained that the views of the DfE, Central Beds Council and Regional Schools Commissioner would need to be taken into account.

KM and her team left the meeting.

*CP joined the meeting.*

**Decision:** All agreed that further investigation is required concerning pupil numbers.

**Action:** AL to write to KM to inform her of the Directors decision and advise that the case would be reviewed again in the Autumn term.

### **Actions of last meeting**

Coasting schools criteria – has been circulated to Directors.

Central Services – restructure has moved forward.

Governor Handbook – AL incorporating comments into Handbook. Final version to be issued before e/o term.

## New Schools

### **Lawnside Lower School**

Due diligence completed and circulated to all Directors. Ofsted are visiting Lawnside today and tomorrow – senior leaders recognise that their results are likely to be judged as R/I. Elaine Ashcroft has been Acting Headteacher since February 2017. AL circulated early data for this year. St Christophers Academy have agreed to partner with Lawnside.

DS raised concern re catchment of the new school being built in Biggleswade and sustainability of numbers.

**Decision:** Directors unanimously agreed that Lawnside Lower School join BEST.

### **Pix Brook Academy**

Free Schools are usually built by the DfE but in order to meet the required timescales, BEST are looking to self-deliver Pix Brook Academy in conjunction with the Local Authority. The Free School is due to open in September 2019. This form of delivery has to be formally requested. Central Beds Council (CBC) must also agree to the proposal.

DS advised that a meeting was held today between DfE, CBC and Ben McCarthy (AMR Consult Ltd) re site options. The Project Team met last Friday and reviewed the choices. Ben will put forward our preferred choice out of the two sites suggested. DfE expect a no cost land deal.

**Decision:** all agreed to request the self-delivery of Pix Brook Academy in conjunction with CBC.

### **St Christophers Academy (SCA)**

Directors agreed that SCA join BEST at a previous meeting. During the process of uploading the school's finances, a significant deficit came to light. This matter was discussed at the last Finance Committee meeting and it was agreed that the process should be paused whilst the deficit was resolved. Nafia Baust (NGB) worked with SCA to reduce the deficit and they are now predicting a deficit of £3k for next year and approx. £80k this year – this is due to one off unavoidable costs. NGB advised that several redundancies were required although these were fringe workers not teachers. One teacher left and is not being replaced. Redundancy figures have been included in this year's budget. Redundancies will be complete by e/o August 2017.

DS thought that a recovery plan should be prepared for the next two years. NGB advised that she will be monitoring the budget.

**Decision:** All Directors agreed to proceed with SCA joining BEST.

**Action:** AL to inform Pam Jones, Principal of SCA, that Directors are happy to proceed with a target date of September 2017.

## Committee Meetings

### **HR Committee**

LM briefed the Directors on staffing at Langford Village Academy. Trade Unions will be discussed under AOB.

DS asked whether the redundancy process is complete for the Central Services IT role – AL confirmed that the process has been completed and the staff member finishes e/o August 2017.

### **Finance Committee**

PW asked for an update on growth funding. DS advised that growth funding is agreed by the Schools Forum. The group met in the last couple of weeks to agree the figures. The funding criteria was changed at a previous meeting. If they are working out the figures based on the new criteria, BEST will receive less money. Answer is due this week. DS advised that we are likely to receive some growth funding but the figure is unknown.

DS wished it to be noted that all schools in BEST have prepared a balanced budget. However, there are not a lot of reserves. Discussion followed re raising standards vs reserves.

### **Performance Committee**

Principals are happy with the support provided by Teaching School and Challenge Partners.

**Action:** LM to write to Lyn Rouse to congratulate her and her staff on the recent Ofsted outcome at Langford.

AL advised that two BEST schools have been through Ofsted inspections recently and wished it to be noted that the school improvement and Teaching School work was seen as a strength, and Principals have valued the support they are getting. AL expressed that he is optimistic about the key stage targets.

DS questioned Samuel Whitbread's (SWA) projections. AL advised that the target is for Progress 8 to be positive. Discussion followed concerning SWA's results at e/o KS5 - these were noted to be excellent. ALPs 3, 75-89 percentile.

### **Trust Board**

#### **Chair election**

Peter Little (PL) has stepped down. Ilona Bond (IB) has been proposed as Chair by PL and seconded by AL. No further nominations have been received. Peter will remain as a Member.

**Decision:** unanimous vote for IB to become Chair. IB will also become Member.

**Action:** IB to be confirmed as Member at next Members meeting.

#### **Director changes**

- Lorraine Macdonald - LM resigned as Vice Chair and also from the Board. All Directors gave their thanks to LM for her work with BEST.
- Cathy Piotrowski - CP stood down as a Director on the Board. All Directors gave their thanks to CP for her work with BEST.
- New Directors - Claire Mycock and Anthony Sanderson have been formally interviewed by Directors. Claire was approved as a Director at the last meeting.  
**Decision:** Anthony Sanderson was approved as a Director of BEST.
- Carrie Traill – remains a Director but will be seconded for a further year to SWA Local Governing Body.

#### **Member changes**

LL will remain as a Member of BEST. DS remains a Member by virtue of being the Chair of Bedfordshire East Schools Trust. Carolyn Devereux has agreed to continue as a Member. AL has met with a potential Member, Ian Morfett – AL would like to recommend that he is approved as a Member of BEST. AL is also due to meet with another potential Member at e/o July.

**Action:** LL to organise a Members meeting for September and ensure that Members receive all future agendas and minutes of Directors meetings.

**Action:** LL to email Carolyn a copy of Ian's CV and request interim approval.

Discussion followed concerning Directors appointed by Members and Directors that can appoint Co-opted Directors.

Future changes to the governance of BEST - AL felt that the Board could benefit from another Director with a HR skill set. AL also asked Directors to consider whether Sharon Jeffs should be appointed to the Board.

CP felt that Sharon would be able to present an overview of all schools which would benefit BEST.

**Action:** AL to discuss this possibility with Sharon at meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

**Action:** LL to add Vice Chair Election to the next Directors meeting agenda.

**Action:** LL to make the necessary changes to Companies House within the next 14 days.

### Celebration of the Year

AL thanked the Directors for everything they have done over the last year. It has been a tremendously successful year.

**Action:** LL to circulate bulletin of successes by e/o term.

### AOB

**Trade Union Facilities Time** – LM and PW met with Trade Unions to negotiate the HR policies and rebuild relationships. LM advised Directors that they have been presented with an opportunity for BEST schools to sign up to Trade Union facilities time arrangements. CBC agreed that they would administer it.

Copy of TU agreement was circulated to the meeting. Points in question highlighted. LM outlined the benefits of the proposal.

DS questioned how many staff are members of Trade Unions and whether union support was covered by their membership fee. It was generally felt there are a high number of teachers in Trade Unions and support staff numbers are increasing.

Discussion followed re financial pressures.

**Decision:** All agreed that Principals opinion should be obtained.

**Action:** AL to consult with Principals on the matter.

**Procurement Overview** – paper prepared by Ben McCarthy had been circulated to Directors prior to the meeting for approval.

**Decision:** All Directors agreed the proposals.

Next meeting: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017

J. Bond 20/9/17