

Minutes of a Meeting of the Local Governing Committee of Liskeard School and Community College held in the conference room of the School on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 8:30am.

---

**Present:**

Davina Finch (Chair), Ian Williams, Alex Lingard (Headteacher), Jenny Brown, Mark Graham, Helen Arnold, Sue Brownlow, David Young and Mark Wigley

**Absent:**

Katie Conway, Trudi Hocking, Dereen Carnegie-Rance and Ian Goldsworthy

**In Attendance:** Dan Buckley (SMART CEO) until 9:10 am, Richard Newton-Chance (Chair SMART Board) until 9:40 am and Paul Taylor (Business Manager) from 9:40am

1. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Procedure for evacuating the building**

The Chair outlined the procedure for evacuating the building.

3. **Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest – verbal**

None

4. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Katie Conway and Dereen Carnegie-Rance due to work commitments and from Trudi Hocking due to her recovering from an operation. The Chair explained that Annette Lee-Julian had resigned for health reasons and that the vacancy would be advertised in the next Head's letter and on the school website. It was noted that Ian Goldsworthy was absent.

5. **To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting subject to an addition to item 3 on page 6 noting that governors had been advised that cash payments would be accepted by the school if the value was more than £5 and an addition to item 7 on page 3 noting that the middle leaders and pastoral team had expressed concern about changing the school uniform.

6. **Matters Arising**

The SMART CEO talked about the 5 Year MAT Strategic Plan. He said that it was written in April 2017 and is reviewed annually. It was noted that the plan is not on the SMART website. He said that the RSC has made it clear what the priorities for development are and that SMART's priorities are the same. He said these priorities form the basis of the MAT Strategic Plan. The SMART CEO said that one of these priorities is leadership. For the RSC, he said this relates to recruiting CEO's and Headteachers as one school per week in the South West fails OFSTED so new leaders are constantly needed. He said the SMART focus in terms of leadership is an understanding that leadership is critical at every level if outstanding schools are to be the result. He said there is a common leadership structure across the MAT and a focus on developing in-house leaders. The SMART CEO said that another priority is alignment. He said the SMART day was an example of this where both primary and secondary schools became connected in an attempt to find a common language. He said that the SMART day was a huge success although he acknowledges that certain

aspects of the day, such as encouraging greater participation from support staff, could be improved. He said that the RSC priority in terms of alignment is related to ensuring that collaboration across schools in a MAT represents a “good package” for the students in that area.

The SMART CEO said that these fundamental priorities are unlikely to change. He said that the Strategic Plan also talks about expansion of the MAT but SMART has no control over this. **A governor asked if the RSC is still operating its givers and takers policy.** The SMART CEO said that the visit to Dobwalls Primary School by the RSC was very successful in terms of the rapid change that took place as a result of that visit. He said that this impressed the RSC so there is possibly capacity to expand the MAT in terms of new primary schools joining. However, he said this is not the case with the secondary schools in the MAT as the RSC is results led and the results are not good enough in the schools across the MAT to enable expansion to include other secondary schools. The SMART CEO said that governance structures are of concern at a national level in terms of their effectiveness.

He said that he attended a meeting on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018 with the RSC and other CEOs and the latter suggested peer reviews instead of EA as well as trying to encourage the RSC to hand out exemplars of good practice.

In terms of the current Strategic Plan, the SMART CEO said that discussions are currently taking place for the first annual review of the document on which governors are welcome to comment. He said that the plan contains a one page summary of the focus points for SMART from which individual schools chose their foci to produce their SIPs.

**A governor said that in terms of pupil premium students, his comment that LSCC is good relative to the other schools in the MAT is noted but the school is still not serving these students as well as it should and this is an area which must be a focus.** The SMART CEO said that it is important to understand best practice across schools in this respect in order to grow and learn as a MAT. **A governor challenged the SMART CEO to explain if there is capacity across the MAT to offer A level languages if LSCC is unable to offer the courses.** The Headteacher said this is a possibility but that if it takes place, it determines the whole A level timetable. He said the preferred option would be to recruit students from Looe School into the 6<sup>th</sup> form to increase numbers so that Languages could possibly then be offered at LSCC. The SMART CEO said it is important to understand what we do well as a MAT and to share that practice. **A governor commented that LSCC is not necessarily offering a broad enough curriculum in this rural community and challenged the SMART CEO as to whether the MAT can help to offer a curriculum that more suits some of the learners.** The SMART CEO said that it depends on the MAT’s capacity and that if it is widely believed across the MAT that the curriculum needs to be broadened, balanced and more relevant, this needs to be a priority in the Strategic Plan.

At this point in the meeting, the SMART CEO left the meeting and did not return.

The SMART Board Chair explained that SMART is a family of schools serving a definable community and its purpose is as a school improvement mechanism and to do things better than could be done alone in three broad areas: educationally, financially and developmentally. In terms of educationally, he said that the focus is on learning and keeping on learning. He said that it is very important that this learning is evidence based to ascertain what works and why. He said the issues must be confronted and worked on collectively. In addition, to enable learning to be continuous, he said that it is important to give the people the training and development they need and give this training and understanding the time to be developed. In terms of financially, he explained that the MAT cannot set a deficit budget so they have to manage what exists so that it works but the focus must be educationally as opposed to financially efficient. He said that a key element of this is to look at which functions can be centralised but also to look at premises issues to improve the environment for learners. He said that the MAT cannot bid for large funds under the capital programme although there will be a bidding process into a centralised pot. In terms of developmentally, he explained that the schools run collectively as a MAT. He said there is a need to understand staffs’ needs and how they can be developed in their professional capacity through

collaboration. He said that capacity must be developed internally using the leadership ladder so that there is shared understanding and leadership across the MAT.

The SMART Board Chair explained that the SMART Board's core business is teaching and learning and that no MAT can work without schemes of delegation and that the delegation of powers to schools can be taken away by the SMART Board. He said that SMART is a single employer so staffing commitments and the redundancy process is a shared responsibility although recruitment is done at a local level. He said there is more work to be done in terms of the HR policy. He said that there is a need for good intelligence to operate which necessitates much better feedback from individual schools than the Board is currently getting in order to ascertain the issues that need addressing. He said this can be achieved through the Heads' Forum and through LGC minutes containing a section on matters that they want to bring to Trust Board's attention.

He explained that there is more emphasis by the RSC on effective governance which focuses on vision and ethos so that governors hold schools to account, oversee finance and work effectively with the Trust Board. He explained that the RSC want to see fewer MATs at a national level but in order to achieve this, he said that he believes that expansion must not take place at any cost. He said that his personal aim was to achieve better connectivity in the MAT and that he would like to see joint multi-functional appointments and good use of simple and dependable IT systems in the MAT. He concluded by saying that SMART is a family of schools that have chosen to come together and develop organically without losing their individual scale. **A governor challenged the Chair of the SMART Board to explain how dissemination of the information to the Trust Board will take place.** He said that it needs to be done quickly and as a shared responsibility within the leadership team.

At this point in the meeting, the SMART Board Chair left the meeting and did not return.

In terms of school uniform, the Headteacher said that he had not undertaken further consultation with parents and students regarding changing the school uniform. He said that he was considering changing the PE kit to a more modern design and material. He said that he had contacted the existing suppliers of the PE kit but was not impressed with their new offer in terms of quality or price. He said that he has contacted an online supplier – A Game – who will provide a new PE kit of a good quality and value for money. He said that purchases have to be made online although there could be a uniform shop in school selling the items too. He said that A Game only deliver on a fortnightly basis so students may be without an item for a short period of time if they lose an item of PE kit. **A governor challenged the Headteacher to ask the existing supplier to match the A Game offer.** He said that he has and the poorer quality, higher priced kit is all they can offer. **A governor asked if the PTA could be responsible for selling the PE kit in school.** It was noted that this is a possibility. **A governor asked if the existing company would refuse to supply the school ties if the PE kit business is taken from them.** The Headteacher said that he did not know. He said that the school could continue to use the existing kit and although he is very keen on using A Game, he is a little concerned that the main business is done online. However, he said that A Game would come into school for the Year 7 parents to buy the kit for the first time. It was proposed by Mark Graham and seconded by Helen Arnold that the decision of changing the PE kit be delegated to the Headteacher. All governors voted in favour of this proposal.

#### 7. **Finance Report**

The Business Manager said that the predicted overspend has been reduced to £70,000 which includes a 2% allowance into support staff salaries and a 1% allowance into teaching staff salaries. He explained that the funding income for SEND students does not equate to the expenditure. It was acknowledged that there are some staffing costs included in that budget line which should not be included but notwithstanding this, he said there is still a budget deficit in this area. As a result, the Business Manager said that the staffing structure of the TA's is being looked at. **A governor said that LSCC is well respected for its provision in terms of SEND and challenged the Headteacher to explain how the high standards will be maintained if spending on TA hours are reduced.** The Headteacher said that the Assistant Headteacher is confident that he could deal with a restructure of the TAs. It was noted that a meeting of the Pay Committee would take place later today to

discuss this matter further. **A governor challenged the decision to authorise the Pay Committee to consider this matter without all governors being present. He said that it is a very important issue as it deals with the school's inclusive system for which it is renowned and relates to some of the most vulnerable students and therefore, all governors should be included in this decision making process.** It was agreed that the Pay Committee would meet to receive information relating to the matter and that an extra ordinary meeting of the LGC would be called if further discussion and decisions were needed regarding this matter.

**A governor challenged the Headteacher to explain why the SMART Financial Scheme of Delegation did not include any role for the LGC in financial decision making. She said that for strategic matters such as setting the budget, agreeing redundancy programmes or large capital decisions, these fundamentally affect the resourcing of teaching and learning in the school and therefore must involve the LGC in approving the proposals even if final sign-off sits with the MAT Board.** The Headteacher said this comment should be referred to the company secretary.

8. **Premises**

The Business Manager explained that there has been no progress in terms of the all-weather pitch and resurfacing of the tennis courts although he is becoming involved in looking at a community funding stream. He said that, in addition to this funding stream, the school may need to raise funds independently. It was agreed that he would communicate with the PTA in this respect. He said that the roof is leaking very badly in the dance and drama studio which has been caused by the installation of the solar panels. He said that, at times, this means that the studio cannot be used until the floor is dried. He explained that Cornwall Council is liaising with the PFI team to rectify this situation. However, he said that he does not consider this is the way forward as the contractor who installed the solar panels and Cornwall Council as the owner of the solar panel array are the responsible parties. However, he acknowledged that if the works were done as a PFI scheme, this would be the quickest solution. **A governor challenged the Business Manager to brief the Cornwall Councillor and the Portfolio Holder and ask them to take it on as a Cornwall Council issue.** He said he would do this. **A governor asked how the leaking roof is impacting on students' ability to use the facility.** The Business Manager said that the facility cannot be used fully, some display work has been ruined and the resultant water on the floor is damaging the surface. It was agreed that the impact is a major one and that any remedial works should not impact on the school's future PFI funding. **A governor challenged the Business Manager to explain if temporary repairs had been undertaken.** The Business Manager said that he would ask the site manager to look into this course of action. The Business Manager also said that there are plans to expand the ARB into a section of the library. He said that these works will be undertaken at the same time as the PFI works and there are no cost implications to the school.

9. **Health and Safety**

The Business Manager said there have been no incidents of significance and that there has not been a meeting recently of the Health and Safety Committee. It was noted that these committee meetings are not yet calendared, but will agree some dates as soon as possible. The Business Manager said there had been a wellness machine in school for a week which had been well used.

10. **Confirm Date and Time of Next Meetings**

The date of the next LGC will be on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018 in the conference room at LSCC commencing at 11:45am.

---

The meeting finished at 11:30am.

<b>ACTION SUMMARY</b>	
Refer comment to Company Secretary that SMART Financial Scheme of Delegation did not include any role for the LGC in financial decision making.	SB
Communicate with the PTA regarding funding for re surfacing tennis courts	PT
Brief the Cornwall Councillor and the Portfolio Holder regarding the leaking roof in the dance and drama studio and ask them to take it on as a Cornwall Council issue	PT
Ask the site manager to look into temporary repairs to the roof of the dance and drama studio	PT