



STAR MAT Board of Trustees

Minutes of the Meeting held Monday 2nd December 2019 at 7.45pm at Rose Cottage TGS

Present: Clare Thornton-Eckford (Chair), Nick Sheppard, Alison Smith, Peter Wilson, Simon Peacock, Richard Coy, Tom Fielden

In attendance:

Martyn Sibley (Chief Education Officer, STAR MAT)

Melissa Boyes (Chief Operating Officer, STAR MAT)

Deborah Hastie (Observer)

Iain Tessier (Clerk, Governance Advisor – STAR MAT)

1.0 Approval of the End of Year Accounts

ACTION

1.1 Resolved:

Trustees formally approved the 2018/19 accounts, as discussed in the FAR meeting and recommended to the Full Board by the committee.

2.0 Any Other Business

2.1 Trustees were happy for the Annual General Oversight Report to Members to be put forward to the AGM.

2.2 Resolved:

Trustees agreed that Deborah Hastie should be put forward as a Trustee to the Members AGM on 16th December.

2.3 Trustees were made aware that an application had been received from Mr Tom Merrill, who was seeking to join the Appleton Roebuck LGB. It was agreed that Mr Sheppard would pick up the one-to-one with this candidate and report back to the Board in due course.

3.0 CEO Recruitment

Trustees had been notified by Mr Sibley that he intended to step down as CEO of the STAR MAT effective August 2020.

Martyn Sibley was invited to leave the meeting

3.1 The COO had spoken to EPM. There was no absolute requirement to advertise externally but to do so was certainly considered best practice due to the seniority of the role. Benchmarking had indicated that a FTE salary of between £85k and £104k was appropriate.

3.2 The Chair believed that the Board needed to be able to consider external candidates. Yes there were some potential quality internal candidates but this type of recruitment had to be opened up as wide as possible so as to secure the best candidate to deliver the Trust's objectives. The Trustees agreed with this assessment.

3.3 A panel was required to take the process forward. There was a discussion about the scope and depth of the external recruitment support required. EPM or AVEC offered a service. AVEC was a

better known provider and another nearby Trust had been positive about the support they had received. There certainly was not the capacity to fully run the process in-house. Three quotes would be gathered, along with an assessment of the support packages on offer and the best fit for their requirements.

3.4 Resolved:

The Trustees agreed that the recruitment panel would consist of Messrs: Sheppard, Thornton-Eckford, Smith, Peacock and Hastie (subject to their approval as a Trustee). Mr Fielden to act as a reserve.

3.5 Trustees debated whether the post should be full or part-time. The question of affordability was raised. This had to be weighed carefully against the need to deliver on the strategic priorities. Several Trustees felt that the post should be advertised as full-time but with a note to indicate that those indicated in a part-time role would be considered. This would ensure the best pool of candidates was delivered. Other Trustees could see the rationale but the Trustees had to have some clarity on their ambition for the role – i.e. how hands operational should it be, what level of direct management was appropriate, was this person to concentrate purely on strategic oversight. The answers to these questions would surely drive whether the post should be full or part-time. The COO was asked for their view and how the CEO role had played out over the past 18 months. It was understood that the thought process was for the delivery of the strategic plan to be driven by senior Trust officers yet to be recruited in several areas. Depending upon when those other roles came on stream would have a bearing on the capacity required of the CEO. The panel would consider the points raised in more detail.

3.6 The discussion moved to the background of the candidate. Several Trustees were clear that the CEO had to be an educator first and foremost. Their specialist knowledge was required to hold school leaders to account and monitor performance etc. A Trustee felt they should question whether that was a necessary driving factor. The case was put forward for having an individual with a business background who could drive the Trust forward through those mechanisms. Trustees welcomed their colleagues challenge but the consensus remained to have an educator in the role. This was particularly imperative, as one Trustee commented, because, unlike other Trusts, the STAR MAT did not have persons fulfilling the functions of primary and secondary education leads.

3.7 Resolved:

Subject to HR advice, the Trustees agreed that the panel should be given the scope to decide on whether to appoint a full-time or part-time CEO. Any appointment should be within the salary range of £85k to £104k FTE.

Melissa Boyes was invited to leave the meeting

3.8 Trustees briefly discussed whether the salary differential between the CEO and COO roles would remain suitable after the recruitment of the new CEO. Trustees were content that the salaries were commensurate with the level of accountability held in each post.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.