

STAR MAT Board of Trustees'

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 15th December 2020 at 5pm via Google Meet

Present: Clare Thornton-Eckford (Chair), Nick Sheppard, Tom Fielden, Peter Wilson, Richard Coy, Frances Dodd (from item 2.3), Alison Smith, Simon Peacock, Deborah Hastie (from item 2.3)

In attendance:

Ian Yapp (Chief Education Officer, STAR MAT) (from item 3)

Melissa Boyes (Chief Finance Officer, STAR MAT)

Iain Tessier (Clerk, Governance Advisor – STAR MAT)

Lyndsay Greathead (AVEC HR) (for item 2)

Kerry (AVEC HR) (for item 2)

Emma Duffy (AVEC HR) (for item 2)

1.0 Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

1.1 There were no apologies. There were no declarations of interest.

2.0 CEO Recruitment

The proposed recruitment pack had been circulated prior to the meeting. Lyndsay Greathead was invited to speak to Trustees.

2.1 Salary

The interim CEO was being paid at L37. The Board could continue with a spot salary or introduce a range. Ms Greathead confirmed with Trustees that CEO had to be someone with a teaching background and that the post would be full time. It was noted that AVEC and the SRMA had both advised having a full time CEO. The Teachers pay and conditions document indicated that there should not be any overlap between this role and that of the next highest paid individual in a Trust. One of the Headteachers in the Trust had a scale that extended to L39. The Chair noted that benchmarking of similar sized Trusts revealed that CEO salaries ranged from £125k to £140k (Brigshaw, Red Kite and EBOR were mentioned). The question was one of affordability versus market position to attract the right candidate. The Chair proposed a seven point scale starting at L40 (it was noted that STP&C went to L43 – AVEC had produced a tailored extension to this scale to support recruitment of CEOs). In any event, AVEC recommended that the Board commission a report on rationale around executive pay in case the Board were questioned about their strategy at a later date. It was clarified that a spot salary would still require a performance review process for the CEO, in order to evaluate performance. A range would support a PM process better and would allow for greater flexibility in negotiating salary with any candidate.

2.2 Trustees discussed the L40-L46 pay scale proposal; Trustees were invited to lodge their views. Was that affordable? The COO said that she would have to look at the figures more precisely but, speaking frankly, on current projections, no. Schools might have to be asked for greater contributions via the CSF. Could there be crossover of the range with that of the highest paid headteacher? Such practice was not recommended. There was a debate on affordability and potential impact on schools and underlying finances. The Board was also aware though of the need to propose a scale that would be viewed as market competitive. The COO added that all prospective candidates would be aware of the market opportunities, for example, a Trust in close proximity to STAR was recruiting with a salary scale that started at L41. Trustees were conscious of the need to attract the best talent to the role. Further debate followed.

ACTION

Frances Dodd and Deborah Hastie joined the meeting

- 2.3 **Resolved:**
In light of the benchmarking exercise and the need to recruit a candidate of sufficient calibre, the Board agreed that the salary scale for the full time CEO should be L41-L47.
- 2.4 Job Description
Ms Greathead made it clear that that if the CEO was required to have a teaching background then the Board would need to make sure that the STP&C was suitably referenced when reviewing requirements for the role. Executive leadership training could be added to the job spec as essential or willingness to work towards. The Chair wished to add in a requirement for individuals to be able to lead on developing and delivering both ICT and people strategies.
Resolved:
Trustees approved the Job Description as circulated, with the Chair's request to be added in accordingly.
- 2.5 Job Advert and other information
Trustees were satisfied with the content of the advert and the other information to be made available to candidates.
- 2.6 Panel
The Chair did not wish to join the panel and outlined her reasons why.
Resolved:
Trustees agreed that the panel should consist of Tom Fielden, Peter Wilson, Nick Sheppard, Frances Dodd and Alison Smith. The main panel on interview days would consist of three Trustees from this group.
- 2.7 Key dates
These had been identified in the documentation circulated. Prospective applicants would likely want to speak to Trustee so some availability would be required to facilitate this. Similarly, tours or virtual tours of the Trust and its schools might be necessary. A Trustee asked whether interviews and shortlisting would be face-to-face or virtual? Shortlisting could be done virtually but when it came to interviews it would be good to be able to accommodate some in person elements. Any candidate assessments could likely be completed virtually. It all came down to managing the process safely in the current climate. It was agreed that shortlisting would take place on 8th February, with interviews on 23rd and 24th February.
- 2.8 At this stage, Trustees had to be mindful that if the interim CEO were successful in being made permanent, then the Trust would need to start immediate recruitment for a permanent headteacher at Riverside in short order. Trustees debated where the advert should be placed. Local platforms and through Diocese.

Lyndsay Greathead, Emma Duffy and Kerry left the meeting

- 2.9 A Trustee asked whether the Board was still comfortable going through the recruitment process as previously agreed. Should an internal process be reconsidered? The Board needed to factor in the likely cost of this externally advertised process. A brief discussion followed. The Chair was of the view that this matter had been settled, albeit alternative recruitment routes had been put forward and rejected. Several Trustees agreed, adding that a robust, due process had to be followed to ensure credibility. The previous decision on recruitment process would stand.

Ian Yapp joined the meeting

3.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 2nd December 2020

3.1 Resolved:

Trustees agreed that the minutes of the meeting, held on 2nd December 2020, were a true and accurate record of that meeting and the Chair was duly authorised to sign them. This included the Confidential minutes from that meeting.

4.0 Action Points and Matters Arising

4.1 October meeting

Action points had been followed up on or would be dealt with over the Spring Term.

4.2 2nd December meeting

Action points had been followed up.

4.3 A Trustee wished to debate the link Trustee role, both its remit and what to do as follow up to initial meetings. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the January meeting.

5.0 Governance Matters

5.1 Kellington CAT

The Chair reflected on a very successful intervention through the CAT. Governor recruitment had progressed as required. The local governor experience had been good for Trustees to experience what governance was like on the ground in a school. An internal LGB chair had now been identified and would be put in train. The Chair indicated that she would remain as vice chair for a term, pending further discussion of options.

Resolved:

It was agreed that the CAT should be dissolved and that the substantive Kellington LGB should resume its full duties according to the Scheme of Delegation. Peter Wilson and Simon Peacock would no longer act as governors in a temporary capacity.

5.2 Appleton Roebuck

The LGB chair had now resigned. The Headteacher and remaining governors were clear that support was needed and welcomed Trust Board intervention at this stage. There needed to be strong modelling of governance and additional capacity. A strong chair was required. The Chair had approached Richard Coy about chairing the LGB and Mr Coy had indicated his willingness to do so. It was proposed that Mr Coy be joined by Deb Hastie, Peter Wilson and Martyn Sibley as governors on the CAT, alongside current governors on the LGB. It was proposed that Nigel Bellamy should not be taken forward as a potential Trust Appointed governor for the LGB at this time, pending Mr Coy having a further conversation with him and outlining the position of the school and ascertaining Mr Bellamy's ability to offer the necessary skills and challenge. There was interest in the parent governor vacancy. The Chair felt that the CAT needed to be formed as soon as possible. The Clerk outlined what had been agreed previously re: make-up and operation of CATs. The extant LGB would remain in place but with their delegated powers temporarily transferred to the CAT. A careful explanation of the CAT and its remit should be given to all concerned. It was noted that the remaining governors on the Appleton Roebuck LGB were a capable group.

Resolved:

Trustees approved the formation of a CAT for Appleton Roebuck with immediate effect. The membership of the CAT was confirmed as outlined above. Mr Coy would Chair the CAT. The CAT to assume the duties of local governance as defined by the Scheme of Delegation. It was envisaged that the CAT would run until the end of the summer term, with a review of progress at the conclusion of the Spring Term.

5.3 **Resolved:**

Mr Coy would no longer sit as a temporary governor on Sherburn Hungate LGB. Mr Coy to speak to the Headteacher and Chair about that fact.

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RC

- 5.4 The Clerk reminded all governors involved in the CAT or remaining on other LGBs that this governance role should be reflected on Business Interest forms.
- 5.5 Other governance items arising from the December meetings and not yet concluded were postponed to the January meeting.
- 6.0 Catch-up Funding Format**
- 6.1 Trustees noted the circular that the CEO had issued on this.
- 7.0 Contracts Update**
An updated contracts risk register had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- 7.1 Cleaning contract
There were nine submissions of interest and therefore the interview process had been extended to early January to accommodate that fact. Mr Holah was also preparing an in-house cleaning service proposal. There would be a full recommendation at the next meeting.
- 7.2 Payroll
The COO wished to service notice to the current provider EPM. Key issues had been identified. One such issue had resulted in NYCC threatening to call the pension regulator. The submissions for October had not been received as per contract. Due to this and other contract breaches, the COO wanted to push for termination of the contract in April. A procurement process was lined up. The Chair and Mr Fielden were supportive of this motion, in light of the findings they had seen.
Resolved:
Trustees approved giving notice on the payroll contract.
- 8.0 Safeguarding Update**
The interim safeguarding reports for schools, reported at recent LGB meetings, had been circulated prior to the meeting and the contents were noted by Trustees.
- 8.1 There were no comments or questions but the CEO welcomed any comment post meeting.
- 9.0 Policy Review**
Prior to the meeting Trustees had received the following policies for consideration:
- Revised DBS policy
 - Access to Education for Children with Medical Needs (previously approved at LGB level)
 - Managing Allegations Against Staff
- 9.1 **Resolved:**
Trustees approved the policies as circulated. With regards the wording and protocols in the self-declaration section of the DBS policy, future changes were delegated to management for approval.
- 10.0 Items to be Delegated or Communicated to LGBs**
- 10.1 Access to Education for Children with Medical Needs policy.
- 11.0 Any Other Urgent Business**
- 11.1 A Trustees noted that the templates issued by the CEO to promote standardisation of reporting were being well received by headteachers.

DH, RC,
PW, CTE

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Date and Time of the Next Meeting

Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 6.55pm

Action Points from the Meeting	Agenda Item	Person(s) Responsible	Date for Delivery
Speak to Mr Bellamy about suitability to join AR CAT	5.2	RC	Prior to 19 th Jan
Revised Business Interest declarations	5.4	Named Trustees	ASAP