



TRUST BOARD PEOPLE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the People Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held on Wednesday 16th October 2024 following the Remuneration Committee meeting at 5.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	In Attendance	Yes/No
Mrs L Lawson	Yes	Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes
Dr J Traverse - Chair	Yes	Ms K Williams, Clerk	Yes
Mr L Hallam	Yes		

- Welcome**
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**
No changes.
- Apologies**
All Trustees were present.
- Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th June 2024**
The minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2024, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record.
- Matters Arising**
M40. Discuss the current measures for HR required by Trustees and consider if changes are needed to track risk factors associated with recruitment and turnover
h) Mr Buckley asked if Trustees have anything specific that they would like to add to the questionnaire. **Trustees suggested they should look at quantifiable data of those leaving on a school by school basis and noted that the Trust is capturing employees' satisfaction on an annual basis with the questionnaire.** Mr Buckley will add the number of staff leaving into the Headteacher report.
*Update: Mr Buckley advised that a concern was raised by the Members that staff turnover was too large. We have on this occasion produced a report and the data suggests that there is no concern. The Chair of the Trust Board's view is that additional data is not needed and we need to be mindful of the workload for staff reporting data and should take a risk based approach instead. **A Trustee asked if we should agree a measure for what triggers a further investigation.** It was suggested that if two larger schools or three of the smaller schools are showing a problem, then there needs to be analysis to see if it requires a deeper dive. Mr Buckley added that we offer an exit interview to all leavers if they request it and we now ask for a reason from a category of why they have left on exit.*

i) It was agreed that Trustees would review the data in the first instance and then look into the deeper details. **A Trustee felt that there should be exit interviews and staff should be asked what three things that would make the school better.** It was agreed that this data would be collected from September. Data can then be compared to national in future.
Update: Complete.

I) A Trustee noted there are complexities involved with exit interviews as they can be resource heavy and the data collected needs to be useful. It was suggested that we need to keep the data consistent and perhaps review biannually. Mr Buckley suggested that we could ask line managers to record a basic reason for leaving.

Update: Mr Buckley advised we are planning a trial and SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) to record basic reasons so not yet in place.

M41. To review the proposed pupil and staff questionnaires and what outcomes are required by Trustees

a) Mr Buckley asked if there are any questions which should be added to the staff questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire will be circulated to Trustees in the first instance and questions will be sent to Mr Buckley by email.

Update: Mr Buckley advised we have not been asked to include any additional questions by Trustees.

M47. Headteacher's Reports – are there any questions to raise on the red areas of the reports. Consider if there are any deep dives required at a future meeting

b) A Trustee asked why there is so much red. Mr Buckley suggested that the Trust tab provides Trust wide data and the spring data shows there is a drop in data for number on roll for Landulph and Dobwalls. It was found after further discussion that there is an issue with the spreadsheet on some devices. It was agreed that a PDF version of this document would be circulated. If there are any further questions on this, Trustees can email Mr Buckley.

Update: Complete.

6. Standing agenda item: Risk Register: Progress on any new or emerging risks and risk monitoring

A document had been circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

a) Mr Buckley advised that he needs to check with the Headteachers why there are still reds on the Risk Register. **A Trustee noted that lots of information has been missed on the Risk Register.** Mr Buckley will investigate.

Action: Mr Buckley

b) Mr Buckley advised that no additional risks have arisen from recent Peer Review processes at Looe.

7. Discuss the impact of HR policies such as the Leave of Absence, Staff Capacity and Disciplinary Policy

a) Mr Buckley advised that we have been aware of the implications of the Leave of Absence policy which has found that staff have been taking leave for reasons that we would not normally grant. We are intending to add an allocation of two half days unpaid which provides flexibility for family events such as nativities etc. We have asked TSLT (Trust Senior Leadership Team) and they have agreed that it is useful to have this level of flexibility but we are not sure about the monetary and operational impact of this change. We will run this for a year and then review to see what the cost is but we feel this should be part of the policy for staff wellbeing.

8. Monitor the overall effectiveness of pupil and staff wellbeing strategies including those relating to the number of days lost to suspension and permanent exclusions

a) Mr Buckley advised that this data is provided in the Headteacher reports and this should be scrutinised by Trustees. He explained that the benchmarks keep changing.

b) Mr Buckley advised that the Governance Professional does pick up errors in permanent exclusion paperwork and ensures that the processes are robust. The Local Authority have been impressed with the standard of care provided by the schools. There is a lack of external support in the local area and there is a high level of need. There are still a high number of suspensions.

c) **A Trustee noted the ratio of suspensions and suggested that these are for longer periods at Looe.** Mr Buckley advised that benchmarks have a year lag and so they don't reflect the national picture. If a school recognises that it needs to permanently exclude, the number of suspensions reduce for that student. Looe is slow to permanently exclude and so they accrue more suspensions whilst we try to keep the students in school.

- d) **A Trustee asked if we are suspending 10% of students which seem very high.** Mr Buckley advised that this is correct. **A Trustee suggested that the key measure is if we are suspending a high capita of the student population.** Mr Buckley suggested that a proportion of students receiving a suspension would be useful as data. Mr Buckley summarised the peaks in suspensions when changing behaviour expectations and reducing disruption in class. Mr Buckley explained that Looe have recently changed their behaviour policy and they have had to take a more robust approach to behaviour as the softer approaches have not proved successful.
- e) **A Trustee asked why have we allowed Looe to take a different approach to managing behaviour to the other secondary schools.** Mr Buckley explained that there is an argument for using harsh implementation for very difficult situations as this can be effective and choosing to use softer measures first is something which we can consider with hindsight.
- f) **A Trustee felt that in some circumstances we need to have a Trust wide approach if we have seen it work in some schools and in this case then remove the autonomy for the schools to choose the approach.** Mr Buckley advised that we now have this type of model in place as staff have bought into this. There are arguments for having experimentation locally and then schools can come to a hybrid model.
- g) **A Trustee suggested that there needs to be a business case for why a school wants to use a different approach.** Mr Buckley advised that the schools have been using different exam boards as they have been chosen on the need of students but we are now ready to align these across the Trust. We are expecting to be aligned much more across the Trust. We have improved our indicators in so many areas but Looe's standards have slipped.
- h) **A Trustee asked how we use the Trust Board to get the larger scale decisions right around Trust wide approaches. A Trustee asked do you think that the Trust Board and the Local Governing Committees are governing sufficiently rigorously.** Mr Buckley advised that we have some data which allows challenge and oversight for governors. We have agreed Trust wide assessment data for primary which allows a level of detail which is easier to challenge. It was noted that Looe students haven't been served well for the last two years. The new data should allow us to see the change in ranking and how much progress children are making more clearly.
9. **Review of safeguarding procedures including an update on the Safeguarding Peer Review model**
- a) Mr Buckley advised that we have had a report from the Local Authority (LA) following complaints made to them. They visited Liskeard last year and as a result of this, we discovered that the LA's method for checking safeguarding was more rigorous so we have adopted their model. Looe is being visited by the LA soon although they have been reassured that there are no issues at the school following a conversation with the Headteacher.
- b) The internal safeguarding system run by Mr Carrington is really robust. We now have an online version of the SCR (Single Central Record). We have also aligned the schools who are all using CPOMS this year. The SCR is running two systems in parallel and both are running well.
10. **Guidance/instructions to LGCs**
- a) Trustees queried if the LGCs cross reference what is being agreed in their schools which is different to the other schools and suggested that this perhaps this needs more scrutiny. The Chair of the Trust Board noted that we are undertaking an External Governance Review and we will wait to see what recommendations come from this.
- b) A Trustee asked how confident governors are in understanding the data provided and are they able to pick out themes. Mr Buckley noted that the IDSR gives a verbal version of the spreadsheet which could be useful for governors if we can recreate this for our own documents. **A Trustee asked how much work this would create.** Mr Buckley is not sure at this point.

- c) **A Trustee noted that it is useful for Headteachers to provide a narrative for their reports.** The Clerk advised that a narrative is provided. Mr Buckley suggested that we need to encourage and have a toolkit for governors to help them to think and challenge deeper. Mr Buckley added that the Governance Reviewer has noted that the GMPs (Governor Monitoring Plans) are the best that she has seen. Mr Buckley explained that we need a route for investigation and we need a level of challenge which is deeper. A Trustee noted the most important question is “why”.

11. **Headteacher’s Reports – consider if any areas need a deeper delve at future meetings**

- a) Mr Buckley noted that red areas are the areas of concern. November is the time that we review indicators and Trustees can suggest changes to the Headteacher Reports. How we provide information for governors to question more deeply would be useful for Trustees to consider along with what tools would enable governors to deep dive. **A Trustee suggested that perhaps providing more data would not be that useful.**
- b) The Clerk suggested that Trustees could direct governors to undertake visits to investigate key areas of the Headteacher Reports as this would allow a better opportunity to discuss thoroughly as meeting agendas are large already. **A Trustee felt that there is a risk in terms of data and we need to have a good solid line of questioning. A Trustee felt that the governance review may provide some insights into this issue and we should wait before looking at more data sets. We need to have more confident questioning from governors.**
- c) It was agreed that we need to discuss the outcome of the Governance Review at the Trust Board meeting.

12. **LGC minutes**

- a) These will be circulated when ready.

13. **Summary Matters for the Trust Board – Agree key points from meeting**

- a) The committee suggested that the Governance Review needs to be a Trust Board meeting agenda item.
- b) There will be a change to the Leave of Absence policy where two half days of unpaid leave will be added to allow staff to take time off for important family events such as nativity plays. This will be reviewed in year to determine the cost to the schools.
- c) There are still high numbers of suspensions in the Trust. The Clerk is providing advice regarding permanent exclusions to ensure the processes remain robust.

14. **Agreements made by email**

- a) None.

15. **Date of next meetings:**

26-02-2025 and 16-06-2025 at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 19.29 pm.