



## Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust

Held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 6.30pm  
at St John's Primary School

# MINUTES of the TRUSTEES MEETING

<u>Trustees</u>	
*	Lee Batson (Chair)
*	Lesley Duffin
*	Brenda Jarvis
*	Gillea Rossetti
*	Sue Sunderland (Vice Chair)
*	Dee Wood
*	James Wood
*	Peter Tidmarsh (CEO)
<u>Observers/Advisers</u>	
*	Elisabeth Nunn (Interim Clerk)

\* indicates attendance

(The meeting started at 6.32pm.)

		<u>ACTION</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies (and reasons for absence)</b> There was an apology for lateness from Ms Wood. There were no declarations.	
<b>2</b>	<b>AOB requests for an end-of-meeting consideration</b> a) Appointment of Headteachers from Wave 2 schools. b) Approval of Wave 2 LGBs. c) Trustee visits to schools. d) Venue for Board meetings. e) Social event.	



		<u>ACTION</u>
<b>3</b>	<b>To approve the Minutes of the meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup> 2018</b> Trustees approved the Minutes of the meeting on 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2018 and these were signed by the Chair. <b>Matters arising</b> a) <u>Agenda item 2</u> : All Trustees had returned their declaration of business interests forms. b) <u>Agenda item 9: Approval of LGB composition and membership</u> : The Clerk offered to prepare a document detailing the LGBs membership and composition and present it at the next meeting for formal approval. c) <u>Agenda item 10</u> : Ms Wood sits on the Finance and Audit Committee.	Clerk to prepare details of LGBs composition/membership
<b>4</b>	<b>To note receipt of HR Committee and Finance and Audit Committee Minutes</b> Trustees noted receipt of the two sets of minutes from the committees.	
<b>5</b>	<b>To receive a briefing from the CEO</b> Mr Tidmarsh gave a PowerPoint and verbal briefing and the following, in particular, was noted: a) <u>Admissions</u> : Admissions continues to be handled by Essex. However, there is an associated additional workload for academies as schools need to send Essex the pupil names from a 'continued interest' list so an offer of a place can be sent out. Mr Tidmarsh reported that this is more work for schools than anticipated. He added that the Trust is looking at buying into the LA's ranking service, although this will be a school-based decision and the cost is not known. He added that longer term, the Trust will look into purchasing its own software to carry out this function.  (Ms Wood arrived at 6.45pm.)  b) <u>Admissions Appeals</u> : Mr Tidmarsh expressed concern about the £165 cost per case which Essex charges for its Admissions Appeals service. This includes the venue, panel and clerking but not the school's case preparation and representation. Mr Tidmarsh reported that as the Trust does not have the relevant expertise to prepare cases and represent the schools at appeals, there is a one-year agreement in place with Jill Thwaites who charges £150 per case to carry out this work. This brings the total for any one appeal to £315. Trustees were disappointed to note the additional costs, but stressed that the appeals process must be transparent and independent. It was agreed that this issue should be placed on the Trust's Risk Register and monitored regularly. Mr Tidmarsh reported that he has advised all schools to avoid appeals as far as possible.	Cost of admissions appeals to be added to Risk Register



	<u>ACTION</u>
<p>c) Policies: The initial MAT policies to be reviewed and adopted are: Pay Complaints Whistleblowing Grievance Sickness Financial Regulations Health and Safety Child Protection Commercial Cards Policy SEND</p> <p>d) <u>Free School Meals (FSM) and Pupil Premium (PP) checking</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that the Trust has to buy into the service for checking which children are FSM or PP. The MAT has a service level agreement with ECC for checking FSM data, but schools can decide whether they use Southend Authority or Essex County Council for Pupil Premium.</p> <p>e) <u>JobScene</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that schools can decide where they advertise teaching jobs although JobScene charges £239 a year for each school despite the CEO trying to negotiate a MAT-wide price. He added that the DfE is to launch a national website for advertising teaching posts and the MAT will be able to make use of that.</p> <p>f) <u>School Meals Service</u>: Bids for the school meals service were received from three companies; the Headteacher group have decided to offer a one-year contract to Jason Walmsley and the Trust is awaiting confirmation. The cost for the school meals service has been built into schools' budgets.</p> <p>g) <u>Pension administration</u>: A discussion was held about the administration of pensions and the current complications facing schools with regards to the processing of starters and leavers forms. Mr Tidmarsh was disappointed to report that ECC payroll is 14 months behind with their processing and so have been unable to carry out these tasks for schools. He also added that they have been very unhelpful. It was noted that the Trust intends to go out to tender next year to appoint one payroll provider as the schools currently do not all use the same one. Trustees noted the burden this has placed on the schools' office staff and thanked them for their hard work and commitment.</p>	



		<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>h) <u>Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reminded Trustees that the first meeting of the JCC, led by Mrs Smith from Essex HR, will be on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018. It was agreed that the Clerk will ask Mrs Smith from Essex HR for the Trade Union Recognition Agreement which will need to be approved by Trustees at their October meeting.</p> <p>i) <u>The Key</u>: It was noted that the Trust has subscribed to The Key at a cost of £8,000 a year. There is a section for MATs regarding compliance covering a range of headings and it is anticipated that schools will focus on one area each half term. As a result, Trustees will be able to monitor which schools are compliant. Mr Tidmarsh agreed to circulate log-in details to all the Trustees.</p> <p>j) <u>Recruitment</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reminded Trustees that there is a Trust-wide strategy to support recruitment and retention. He was pleased to report that the SCITT has 40 trainees for 2018/2019 and that they will have their learning base at Alderton Junior School.</p> <p>k) <u>Communication with stakeholders</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that he will stop his weekly round-up at the end of the summer term and move to a monthly or half termly communications bulletin. Any significant MAT developments will be emailed to schools for inclusion in their parent communications.</p> <p>Trustees asked the following:            Q: We appear to be surprised by the costs sprung on us by admissions appeals and JobScene. Shouldn't we have been warned about costs like these as we employed a consultant to see us through the conversion process?            A: (Mr Tidmarsh) It depends very much on the LA with relation to admissions appeals and also who you are talking to within the organisations such as JobScene. However, I will feed your concerns back to Cranwell Consultancy.</p> <p>A detailed discussion was held about Alderton Junior School which is a Requires Improvement school. The following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Tidmarsh has been supporting the school since March on a weekly basis. He will continue to attend their Governing Body meetings as an observer.</li> <li>• The MAT will support the Acting Head Kirsty Johnson (from September as the substantive Head resigns at the end of the summer term) with finance, personnel and premises matters. This will allow Miss Johnson to concentrate on teaching and learning.</li> <li>• The MAT has employed Elspeth Bonds, a former Headteacher at Theydon Bois Primary, to mentor the school's NQTs on a weekly basis.</li> </ul>	<p>October agenda: Clerk to ask Essex HR for union recognition agreement</p> <p>CEO to circulate The Key log-in details</p>



		<u>ACTION</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Headteacher of Hillhouse Primary, Miss Willcox, will mentor Miss Johnson.</li> <li>The school is the MAT's priority in terms of funding building projects as the fabric of its premises needs improvement.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that the next Trustees meeting will be held at Alderton Junior where the new Acting Head can give a brief presentation on the school.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>To discuss and approve the Policy Matrix</b></p> <p>The Trust's policy matrix had been circulated and was discussed. It was noted that each term, the Trustees will need to decide which three policies they want Headteachers and the LGBs to discuss and approve. After discussion the following was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chairs of the Trust's two committees will determine which policies need to be addressed and in which order.</li> <li>The policies to be reviewed by LGBs at their September meeting and to be approved by the Trustees at their next meeting in October are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints</li> <li>Whistleblowing</li> <li>Grievance</li> <li>Sickness</li> <li>Financial Regulations</li> <li>Health and Safety</li> <li>Child Protection</li> <li>Commercial Cards Policy</li> <li>SEND</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>It was noted that all schools have these policies in place on a local level, but this exercise is to ensure they are corporate MAT-wide policies.</p>	<p>LGB termly agenda item</p> <p>Trust's committee Chairs to determine policies for review</p> <p>Trustees to approve policies at October meeting</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>To approve the Pay Policy</b></p> <p>Trustees approved the Pay Policy.</p>	



		<u>ACTION</u>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>An update on the Data Protection Officer role</b></p> <p>Mr Tidmarsh reported that the CEO of Digital Pathways, Colin Tankard, is the DPO for the Trust. Mr Tankard, who is the Chair of Governors at Epping Upland Primary, has audited every school for GDPR compliance and provided staff training. He is now in the process of setting up appointments to revisit the schools next term. Trustees noted that Mr Tankard has not charged the Trust for his initial services to date; however, moving forward, the DPO role will be on a paid basis and the cost of this has not yet been confirmed.</p> <p>It was noted that each school will need a GDPR champion to ensure the necessary processes are followed.</p> <p>The Chair agreed to write formally to Mr Tankard to thank him for all the work he has undertaken.</p>	<p>LGBs to ensure each school has a GDPR champion in place</p> <p>Rev Batson to write to Mr Tankard</p>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>To discuss the setting up of the MAT's Risk Register</b></p> <p>A template risk register had been previously circulated and was discussed. This organic document is to be reviewed by LGBs at every meeting. It was noted that schools will send their risk registers to Jacquie Slisz in the MAT's Central Staffing team who will collate them for review at each Trustees' meeting.</p> <p>Trustees noted the risk attached to having a very slim central staff in terms of workload and it was agreed that this should be added to the Trust's register. A discussion was also held about including a column regarding mitigation and impact as well as producing an issues log which would be a useful document in the future. Trustees approved the template risk register aware that there are a couple of areas which may not have been included. It was agreed that the Trustees will review the risk register's layout and content at the end of the summer term 2019.</p>	<p>Regular Board meeting agenda item</p> <p>Risk register to include the risk relating to a slim central staff</p> <p>Board agenda item July 2019</p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>To receive an update on the MAT Budget 2018/2019</b></p> <p>Mrs Rossetti, as Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, gave a verbal update on the MAT Budget for 2018/2019. Mrs Freeman had previously circulated a revised spreadsheet after having investigated further the Oak View in-year deficit.</p> <p>Mrs Rossetti reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs Freeman is working with Oak View to review their budget for 2018 /2019. She advises that this school's budget is in fact balanced due to the fact that the income for 10 additional pupils who are joining the school in September 2018 was not included in the first draft submitted to the Finance and Audit Committee.</li> </ul>	



		<u>ACTION</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Trust has a small in-year deficit of £55,000. Trustees stressed that there no schools should have in-year deficits; it was noted that Mr Tidmarsh and Mrs Freeman are visiting these schools to help them address this issue (see Minutes of Finance and Audit Committee from 4<sup>th</sup> July).</li></ul> <p>Trustees thanked Mrs Rossetti for her verbal update and it was agreed that any questions on the Budget should be emailed to Mrs Rossetti who will circulate the responses.</p>	
<b>11</b>	<b>To confirm Haslers as Trust Auditors</b> As detailed in the Finance and Audit Committee Minutes of 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2018, Haslers of Loughton has been chosen as the Trust Auditors following a scrupulous and robust tender process. It was noted that Mrs Freeman has requested Members' approval of this appointment. Trustees confirmed the appointment, recognising that the Members' ratification is required. ** Following the meeting, the Members gave their approval by email.	
<b>12</b>	<b>To discuss and approve the Trust's Associate Membership</b> Mr Tidmarsh explained that he has been working with three other MATs to produce a Memorandum/Service Level Agreement for associate membership of the Trust; this document had been previously circulated.  It was noted that there are three schools who are to become associates of EFSPT: Leverton Primary, Matching Green Primary and Coopersale and Theydon Garnon (subject to Governor approval).  Trustees agreed that the Trust should keep to just three associate members for the next 12 months. There is no time limit for this membership or any expectation that they will join the MAT thereafter. It was also noted that the Trust has no legal responsibility to these associate schools. Trustees noted that associate membership generated an income for the MAT. Mr Tidmarsh stressed that the MAT is not to accept any further associate members unless there are really good reasons to do so.	
<b>13</b>	<b>To discuss the framework of the Trust website</b> Trustees were directed to the Trust's website: <a href="http://efspt.org">efspt.org</a>	



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	<p>Mr Tidmarsh reported that there is no statutory obligation to have a website, but he felt it would be a good recruitment portal. The Trust is working on an internal portal for Trustees and member schools to access. Mr Tidmarsh reported that he has taken advice from The Key to ensure the website is compliant. Mr Tidmarsh reminded Ms Wood and Mr Wood to send him their pen portraits which will be placed on the website.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the website will contain information about each school in terms of the LGB structure, the name of its Chair and a link to each school's own website.</p>	<p>Ms Wood and Mr Wood to send their pen portraits to the CEO</p>																																																																
<b>14</b>	<p><b>To note the meeting schedule for 2018/2019</b></p> <p>Trustees noted the governance planner which had been previously circulated. The dates of Trustee meetings were also agreed:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>Date</u></th> <th><u>Time</u></th> <th><u>Venue</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="4"><b><u>Autumn Term</u></b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018</td> <td>2.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018</td> <td>6.45pm</td> <td>Alderton Junior</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018</td> <td>6.45pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"><b><u>Spring Term</u></b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Annual General Meeting</td> <td>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019</td> <td>4.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019</td> <td>2.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019</td> <td>6.45pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"><b><u>Summer Term</u></b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019</td> <td>2.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019</td> <td>6.45pm</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<b><u>Autumn Term</u></b>				HR Committee	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2018	2.00pm		Finance and Audit Committee	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	7.00pm		Trust Board Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	6.45pm	Alderton Junior	Finance and Audit Committee	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	7.00pm		Trust Board Meeting	Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	6.45pm		<b><u>Spring Term</u></b>				Annual General Meeting	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2019	4.00pm		HR Committee	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	2.00pm		Finance and Audit Committee	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	7.00pm		Trust Board Meeting	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	6.45pm		<b><u>Summer Term</u></b>				HR Committee	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	2.00pm		Finance and Audit Committee	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	7.00pm		Trust Board Meeting	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019	6.45pm		
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		<u>ACTION</u>
15	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>a) <u>To appoint the Headteacher of Wave 2 schools</u>: Trustees approved the appointment of the following Headteachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steve Howe as Headteacher of Chigwell Row Infant School</li><li>• Ann Grisley as Headteacher of Limes Farm Infant School</li><li>• Andre Rall as Headteacher of Theydon Bois Primary School</li><li>• Veronica Wallace as Headteacher of Staples Road Primary School; from September, Jane Harvey</li><li>• Joanne Willcox as Headteacher of Hillhouse Primary School</li><li>• Matthew Woolard as Headteacher of Hereward Primary School</li><li>• Dianne Ryan as Headteacher of Oak View School</li></ul> <p>A general discussion was held about Oak View being positioned within the MAT as a SEN hub; it was noted that Trustees should approach the MAT’s membership as being 14 schools and three specialist units: Oak View, the Teaching School and the SCITT.</p> <p>b) Trustees approved the establishment of Local Governing Bodies for each of the following schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theydon Bois Primary School</li><li>• Hillhouse Primary School</li><li>• Staples Road Primary School</li><li>• Hereward Primary School</li><li>• Oak View School</li><li>• Chigwell Row Infant School</li><li>• Limes Farm Infant School</li></ul> <p>c) <u>Trustee visits</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that he will discuss with Headteachers the best process for Trustee visits to schools; Rev Batson will organise the visits once this discussion has been held. It was agreed that Trustees should not visit Oak View School <i>en masse</i> and the Chair agreed to confirm the mechanism for these personal visits.</p>	<p>CEO to discuss Trustee visits with Headteachers/Chair to organise the visits to member schools Chair to arrange individual Trustee</p>



## Unlocking the Potential of Collaboration

Company No. 11240455

Registered office: Lambourne Primary School, Hoe Lane, Abridge, Essex RM4 1AU

	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
<p>d) <u>Venue for Board meetings</u>: The next meeting in October will be held at Alderton Junior School. Mr Tidmarsh is currently arranging a regular venue for the meetings potentially either at Theydon Bois Primary or St John's Primary.</p> <p>e) Trustees were reminded that there is a social event arranged on Monday July 16<sup>th</sup> at the Queen Victoria, Theydon Bois, 6.30pm for 7.00pm.</p> <p>f) Trustees took this opportunity to thank Mr Tidmarsh for all his hard work in getting the MAT up and running.</p>	visits to Oak View School
The meeting ended at 8.25pm.	