



The Robert Carre Trust

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held in the Conference Room at Carre's Grammar School on **Monday 31 October 2016 at 19.00.**

Present: Andrew Hutton, Robin Baker, Malcolm Robertson, Nick Law (Executive Headteacher), Rachael Hockmeyer, Boyd Gilmore, Leanne Barr and Karen Bradford.

Also present: Geoff Hewett (Chairman CGS LGB), Debbie Hopkins (Chair KSHS LGB), Jo Smith, Jem Green (DFA&R), Sally Lidbury and Debbie Scott (Clerk)

1. **WELCOME** – AH welcomed all to the meeting, particularly LB as the new Trustee and SL in her support capacity for RCT in respect of the primary sector. Around the table introductions were made.

2. **APOLOGIES** - Grahame Killey,

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – KB declared an interest as Chair of Governors at Caythorpe Primary School but it was noted that she had taken no part in discussions or decisions there about the latest approaches seeking to join a MAT.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

It was proposed by RB, seconded by MR and agreed unanimously, that the minutes were a true record and they were signed.

Matters arising:

Withdrawals – KB asked that if future where a Trustee withdrew from a meeting to avoid a conflict of interest, that this be recorded as such, rather than just leaving the meeting. This was agreed.

DS

New Site – In answer to questions, JG confirmed that the project was progressing according to timeline, with a meeting with CPMG (chosen design company) that week and final concept plans by 11 November, or at the latest, well in time for the next Board meeting.

JG

Sleaford Joint Sixth Form – It was noted that a reply from SGA was awaited before any MoU could be progressed. A meeting to be arranged with the Principal and Chair of the Trust.

NL

JG

Budgetary solutions – JG confirmed that his report was still on track to be ready for December as promised.

5. GOVERNANCE

- i. Arrangements for future Finance and Resources Meetings – it was noted that it had proved difficult to arrange meetings to meet the quorum and Trustee majority requirements. It was agreed that the frequency of meetings was correct and the options of breakfast or daytime meetings were to be considered by the Committee. After discussion it was proposed by AH, seconded by RH and agreed unanimously:

- To reduce the quorum to 3 in line with the proposal at item iii below, therefore, for F&R, P&W, Pay and Audit Committees.
- To add LB as a member of F&R, and
- To review non-Trustee committee memberships for September 2017

DS to amend Governance Document.

DS

ii. Adoption of revised Scheme of Delegation (deferred from last meeting).

For clarification under item, regarding appointment of Clerk, it was noted that while technically the Clerk was appointed by the Board and the LGBs, it would be on the recommendation of the EH, to comply with the Trust's HR policies. With that amendment it was proposed by RB, seconded by NL and agreed unanimously that the Scheme be adopted. DS to amend.

DS

iii. Governance Document – to reconsider quorum for P&W and other committees – as above.

iv. Local Governing Body – CGS – It was proposed by AH, seconded by RB and agreed unanimously that Mr Stephen Smithson be appointed as Parent Governor.

v. Local Governing Body – KSHS – The Clerk explained that there had been no legitimate nominations for the position of Staff Governor. It was understood that Lee Rooke was willing to serve again and it was, therefore, proposed by AH, seconded by RH and agreed unanimously, that he be re-appointed for a further term of office.

DS

vi. Skills Audit – unfortunately responses were insufficient for a summary to be presented, all Trustees were asked to complete the forms, if not already done.

All

vii. Appointment of Trust Link Governors

SEND – After discussion, it was proposed by AH, seconded by BG and agreed unanimously, that RH be appointed RCT Link Governor for SEND, with Garry Titmus as Deputy. DS to contact GT.

DS

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Caythorpe Primary School

AH asked that KB remain in the meeting for this item, following her declaration above.

(Discussion redacted).

AH thanked SL for attending.

SL left the meeting.

7. EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

NL added to the above report, explaining that the Trust schools' performance in the Summer exams 2016 had been tremendous, comparing extremely favourable against national Grammar School results, especially noting that in other areas, Grammars frequently took only the top 1% of pupils, e.g. in Barnet, for 1200 pupils passing, only 120 places were available, unlike in Sleaford, and indeed most of Lincolnshire, where there were Grammar places for all pupils who achieved the necessary 11+ score.

RB commended the recent adverts in the Sleaford Town Guide and asked that this be pushed to a wider area. It was noted that the Marketing Working Group was formulating a plan.

8. SIXTH FORM

CGS LGB had put forward the proposal that continuing to run the two schools' Sixth Forms separately was unviable financially and suggested that the two should be merged as soon as possible into one single RCT Sixth Form, which could still work with SGA as a Joint Sixth Form

JS admitted that from KSHS's point of view it was already operating increasingly like a single Sixth Form with class sizes now being standardised across the two schools. NL and JS were also looking at savings through natural staffing reductions. Views of students and their families would need to be taken into account

Trustees acknowledged that more work needed to be done on the operating logistics of one school on two sites, with priority being given to the Sixth Form in the first instance. It was noted that the Sixth Form item on the Action Plan (latest version) was actioned to NL and his team.

It was noted that recent surveys of primary school families had shown that parents were generally keen for co-ed secondary education for their children and research was showing that numbers were falling at all-girl Sixth Forms across the country.

(KB left the meeting at 20.49)

RB volunteered to talk to GH, KB, JS, NL to correlate existing information about the options and implications and prepare a report for consideration.

RB

It was suggested that F&R and NL be asked to look again at the Sixth Form options with a view to bringing to either the next Board Meeting in November or the January meeting.

NL/
F&R

9. RCT VISION – STRATEGY – ETHOS RCT ACTION PLAN AND WORKING GROUP TERMS, MEMBERSHIP AND PROGRESS

- a) Expansion – meeting on 16 November
- b) Marketing – meeting on 2 November. In the meantime GH had been researching other MATs' websites and particular recommended looking at www.wellswaymat.com
- c) Community & Outreach – meeting on 7 November
- d) Central Services – MR circulated notes on progress to date and a second meeting was to be held on 1 November

(KB re-joined the meeting at 20.57)

- e) Due Diligence – has met and drafted up a list, with processes and rankings, will bring a report to next Board meeting.

AH thanked everyone involved for their contributions. It was noted that staff participation had been useful.

Groups

10. FINANCE

JG presented a verbal report highlighting as follows:

Payroll – the new system seemed to be working, with considerable input from JB and TG in particular. JG was monitoring carefully and if all issues were not completely resolved, then he would look to another provider, having given appropriate chance to Selima to improve.

2015-16 Audit – this had been completed earlier in October, final report, with traffic lights, was awaited. Surplus at year end was as predicted across the Trust.

Management Reports – The report for 16/17, with only 1 month's transactions, was relatively meaningless in its variance analysis. LH had worked very hard to get all the detail into the new accounts package to aid reporting in the long run and help the analysis of the trading functions, something that JG was keen to analyse thoroughly throughout 16/17. There were some teething issues but these were being addressed. The next report would contain more narrative to highlight these differences but more importantly there would be narrative to explain areas for concern; that is variances that are not just timing differences. He explained that reports produced by the system were currently set to provide extensive detail but could be re-set to various levels of detail.

Insurance - Both schools within the Robert Carre Trust were part of the Risk Protection Arrangement. Alongside this some miscellaneous cover was required (i.e. overseas trips, mini-bus/van) that was not covered by the RPA. In a further attempt to align the schools and reduce costs, for 2016/2017 this miscellaneous cover has been arranged with Zurich rather than with different insurers.

Auto Enrolment at KSHS - work to enrol staff was underway to meet KSHS's staging date of 1 November 2016, with the declaration date to the Pensions Regulator of 31 March 2017. Carre's auto enrolment had been completed on 30 September 2014.

11. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

In each case SDPs had been recommended by the respective LGBs for approval.

Trustees asked that in future, the statistics provided should be in the same format, e.g. using the same points system, for consistency and the same level of detail. It was noted that sometimes targets were lower in some years simply due to cohort-related issues.

It was proposed by MR, seconded by RH and agreed unanimously, that the CGS SDP be approved.

It was proposed by RB, seconded by RH and agreed unanimously, that the KSHS SDP be approved.

12. EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Category C

- i. **CGS** – recommended by CGS LGB (26 September 2016) and P&W (17 October)
 - a) EV1C CGS Boppard March 2017
 - b) EV1C CGS Battlefields June 2017
 - c) EV3 CGS Boppard March 2017
 - d) EV3 CGS Battlefields June 2017
 - e) EV6 CGS Southern India – Trustees were concerned that there had been issues regarding one of the leaders provided by the company, but were re-assured that CGS staff had overcome any problems arising and the company had been suitably challenged on return.

It was proposed by RH, seconded by AH and agreed unanimously, that the above EV forms be approved

DS/AA

KSHS – recommended by KSHS LGB (29 September 2016) and P&W (17 October)

- a) EV1C KSHS Amsterdam Feb 2017

- b) EV3 KSHS Amsterdam Feb 2017 – concerns were expressed about the intense level of detail. It was noted that the EV Co-ordinator was working towards consistency with trip organisers across the Trust.

.It was proposed by RH, seconded by AH and agreed unanimously, that the above EV forms be approved

13. POLICIES

- a) Admissions Policies 2018 – CGS, KSHS and Sixth Form. NL explained that the policies had been amended to follow the Government ruling that PP pupils should be prioritised under the oversubscription rules, although it was not clear how this would actually happen. So far LCC had been unable to advise. The Sixth Form policy would now cover both schools. RB questioned the references to Sixth Form Director at CGS and Head of Sixth Form at CGS and was assured they were equivalent. Trustees debated the prioritisation by sibling. (Post meeting note – changes were not possible at this stage as the policies were currently going through consultation and would come back to the LGBs and Board for adoption in the New Year.)
- b) Reviewed Polices for adoption as RCT Policies see GVO Policies under development.
- i. RCT Pay Policy – NL explained that previous comments had bene taken into account.

It was proposed by RB, seconded by NL and agreed unanimously, that the Pay Policy be adopted.

DS

- ii. RCT Critical Incident Management Plan – referred back to staff by P&W July 2016, recommended by P&W 17 October
- iii. RCT First Aid Policy, recommended by P&W 17 October
- iv. RCT Records Management Policy, recommended by P&W 17 October

It was proposed by RB, seconded by RH and agreed unanimously, that the above polices be adopted, subject to inclusion of detail of location of Bomb Alert Form on KSHS system in the CIM Policy.

DS

14. H&S UPDATES

No further update at present but AH would be visiting school next term.

15. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. Action Plan updates
- ii. Feedback from LGBs and Committees
- iii. Policies as per review cycle
- iv. Data from 11+- early predictions
- v. Annual Accounts

RB raised the issue of the current DfE consultation on the Education Bill which included school funding proposals. It was agreed that lobbying was required and AH would circulate his draft letter to Lord Nash and Justine Greening MP, to be copied to Stephen Phillips MP and Debbie Barnes at LCC. He would welcome any feedback before sending the letters.

AH/All

JS reported that she and NL had spoken to Jo Churchill MP at the recent briefing and JC had agreed to talk to the PM's Private Secretary.

It was noted that individual responses to the consultation would be more powerful than a corporate response. NL to send details of consultation link to DS for distribution

NL/DS/
All

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 21 November 2016 at 19.00, and following dates agreed as per the draft Calendar.

The meeting closed at 21.35