



**Ember**  
**Learning Trust**  
Five schools, one aim

## **TRUSTEE MEETING OF THE EMBER LEARNING TRUST**

**held at Hinchley Wood Primary School**

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 8am**

### **Board members:**

FC - Fiona Collins, Headteacher - Hinchley Wood Primary School (HWPS)

AC - Alison Cruthers, Vice Chair of Governors - Thames Ditton Juniors

NF - Nick Fry, Headteacher - Thames Ditton Juniors (TDJ)

MP - Monica Paines, Headteacher - Long Ditton Infants (LDI)

RH - Rebecca Hicks, Headteacher - Thames Ditton Infants (TDI)

DG - David Gumbrell, Headteacher - Long Ditton St Mary's (LDSM)

CS - Colin Stevenson, Chair of Governors - Hinchley Wood Primary School

TG - Tessa Griffiths, Chair of Governors - Thames Ditton Infants

SI - Stephen Ind, Governor - Long Ditton Infants

BF - Barry Fairbank, Chair of Governors - Long Ditton St Mary's

In attendance: CW - Colin Winchester - Company Secretary

KN - Kellie Nolan - Clerk

### **1 Apologies**

KR - Kerry Randle, Area Education Officer (NE) - Surrey County Council (SCC)

MS - Matthew Sossick, Director of Initial Teacher Education - Kingston University

AW - Andy Withers, Co-operative Schools Network

### **2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests**

None.

### **3 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 were agreed as a true record.

## agenda items)

Await response from BH re action from previous meeting.

**Action:** BH

Memorandum of Understanding - To be sent to Kingston University for final signature.

**Action:** CW

School Admissions - FC asked whether all schools had bought back into the Admissions SLA and whether payment was being made locally by each school? All of the Heads present confirmed that their schools had purchased the SLA using their own funds. It was agreed that FC/TG would follow up on the outstanding response from KR (following on from her conversation with Julie Stockdale) on the latest position on admissions.

**Action:** FC/TG

Trust Logo and Website - RH reported that a covering paragraph had been sent to all schools. FC thanked TDIS and it was agreed that all of the schools will post the paragraph on their website.

**Action:** Heads

Placement of Kingston University Students - DG reported that an agreement has still not been reached. DG will continue with talks and data will be sent to all to check its accuracy.

**Action:** DG

Publicity - CW requested that all schools advise him of the names of their trustee governors as it was agreed this would be held over until after the launch at Kingston University.

**Action:** Heads

Sharing information, SBM's - MP reported that the SBM's met on 7<sup>th</sup> March. An income/expenditure comparison report will be distributed after the budgets have been finalised.

**Action:** KN

**5 Confirmation of any other new trustees (including any signing of relevant documents where appropriate)**

CW - None

**6 Report on the launch of the Trust at Kingston** – The Heads agreed unanimously that the launch event was a great success. All present had received very positive feedback from their teams, e.g. "Sir John Jones is a most inspiring speaker". DG extended his thanks on behalf of the ELT to MS at Kingston University, both for the use of the venue and for their contribution towards refreshments. Unfortunately, as a result of a tight timescale a photo opportunity was not possible.

RH suggested that the ELT obtain the mnemonics used at the event to present to staff at a later date. NF informed the group that much of the information used on the day is published in Sir John Jones' book, 'The Magic-Weaving Business'. RH will collate all of the information gathered by the schools for delivery at the first inset.

**Action:** RH

**7 Trust Development Plan Implementation**

FC went through the report identifying the key notes (up-dated in green for 24/4/2017 meeting).

Personal development, behaviour and welfare - FC reported that the Inset on inclusion is scheduled to take place at the start of the Autumn term. The day will open with two key speakers and this will be followed by a number of workshops including Behaviour Support, ELSA and Emotional Literacy Support.

Leadership and Management - **Heads** met with Chris Byrne who has agreed to work with all of the schools on their 'key lines of enquiry'. The format will be a visit to one school per half term. The heads will then collectively write and share a report on each school. All 'key lines of enquiry' will be challenged in a supportive manner.

Teaching and Learning - moderation dates approaching.

Assessment - RH suggested that key staff members e.g. Inclusion Managers must be encouraged to meet to share ideas and best practice. MP agreed and suggested that this initiative should be expanded across the staff teams. FC suggested that this item forms part of the action plan for the next year.

**Action:** Heads

CS reported that the Governing Body Chairs from each school had met to discuss governance and recommended that 'Governance' is also included in the ELT action plan.

**Action:** Heads

BF reported that Ruth Morton visited St Mary's to review the Governing Body and both he and DG considered the visit extremely beneficial given her excellent understanding of governance. FC asked whether Ruth could visit the ELT. DG will arrange.

**Action:** DG

TG recommended that a summary report outlining the actions/impact of the first year of the ELT is prepared. It was agreed that the information would be drawn together at the next Heads' meeting (17<sup>th</sup> May). The information will then be passed to CW who will prepare a summary report to include in the final newsletter of the year.

**Action:** Heads/CW

## **8 Elmbridge Partnership Funds**

NF reported that the funds previously held by HWSS have now been released and are in the ELT bank account. Further allocations are currently on hold until the actual amount owed is finalised. This will be made available once payments including HSLW redundancies have been made by HWSS. NF will contact Nicola Bond and request that the additional funds are transferred to the ELT bank account.

**Action:** NF

TG queried the position regarding Claygate's allocation of funds. NF informed the group that Claygate will receive their portion of funds based on NOR, however they are currently considering becoming a member of ELT. NF recommended that the ELT consider other funding methods going forward as it is highly likely that this is the final year that partnership funding will be made available.

**Action:** All

CW asked whether the ELT are now in a position to consider external funding strategies e.g. lottery funding. DG suggested corporate partner exploration. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

**Action:** CW

## **9 Financial Report**

SI confirmed that partnership funds had been received into the bank account on 30/3/2017 as reported earlier by NF. SI reported that he has started the registration process with HMRC. He is however experiencing some technical issues with the system, but hopes to resolve this matter by the end of the week. The first set of annual accounts should be made available by 30/6/2017 and as such SI asked that all outstanding invoices are paid in advance. CW added that as this is the first year of the ELT, there is no requirement to publish the accounts.

**Action: All**

Rotation of signing of accounts - It was agreed by all present that when the annual accounts are prepared, the balance sheet will be signed by the Treasurer and the currently (at that time) acting Chair.

**Action: All**

## **10 School Admissions**

As previously outlined under the heading 'matters arising' - FC/TG will pursue a response from KR regarding her conversation with Julie Stockdale on the latest position on admissions.

**Action: FC/TG**

## **11 Land and Asset Transfer update**

CW reported that the land and assets for ELT schools are still owned by Surrey County Council. The Solicitor acting on behalf of the ELT has received an e-mail from SCC. The e-mail outlined the fact that SCC has appointed a new member of staff to manage this case. This is an ongoing matter and as such will continue as an agenda item.

**Action: CW**

## **12 Trust Logo and Website**

DG reported that he is waiting on the original logo to check that it doesn't pixelate. A discussion was held surrounding potential ELT webpage options available i.e. standalone, linked to all schools, within each schools own website etc. It was agreed that the cost of a largescale web design project is not feasible at this stage. DG will obtain costs for the design of a basic webpage.

**Action: DG**

## **13 Development of an action plan for Membership Development**

NF recommended that the ELT take action to develop further and suggested that a conversation is held with AW to identify areas available to build upon. CW agreed and suggested that the ELT become a member of the wider Co-op group. CW will contact the South West Counties Co-op and NF will contact AW.

**Action:** CW/NF

DG sought clarification on the current position regarding HW Secondary School's membership of the ELT. CS advised the group that he was meeting with the Chair of HWSS and will raise this during his meeting. NF agreed that he would contact B Bartlett.

**Action:** CS/NF

BF reported that the Chair of Claygate Primary School, L Wells had reported to him that the school is keen to become a member of the ELT.

FC and MP reported that they will be talking to Surrey Governors' Association in the near future about Co-operative Trusts.

RH suggested that a log of interest is held and it was agreed that the Heads would add this as an agenda item on the Heads' agenda and pull the information together.

**Action:** Heads

#### **14 Financial Situation in State Primary Schools**

NF reported that TDJS has sent a letter to parents outlining how non-negotiable costs e.g. increased pension contributions etc. has had a detrimental impact on their budget.

RH reported that she will be presenting TDISs case to parents.

MP and FC are waiting on their budgets to be finalised before agreeing a course of action.

DG reported that he has placed a preliminary paragraph in the school newsletter but may consider sending a letter to all parents when LDSM's budget is finalised.

#### **15 Any Other Business**

None

#### **16 Date and time of the next meeting (Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June at HWPS at 8.00am)**

This was confirmed.

#### **17 Appointment of Chair for next meeting - MP to hand over to FC**

This was confirmed. The meeting ended at 09:20am.