

**MINUTES**  
**of the meeting of Directors of Teignmouth Learning Trust**  
**Thursday 16 July 2015 at 6.00 pm in the LLC Conference Room.**

**Present:**

Martyn Cox (Chair)	Liz Lyden	Pat Henchie
Alan Lumb (Vice Chair)	Mark Moore	Kathy Saunders
Tony Gray (Principal)	Katy Quinn (Co Sec)	Gill Endacott (Leadership)
Graham Bond	Gaby Willis (Clerk)	Kelly Ray (Leadership)
Vic Millard	Jon Newman (Leadership)	Annabelle Sampson (ML)
Sarah Minty-Dyke	Andrew Flanagan	Scott Deeming (ML)

**Apologies:** Niall Duffy                      Ruth Dennis

**Absences:**

**Action**

MC opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**16.07.01 Apologies for Absence:** RD and ND. MC proposed these be accepted. All AGREED.

**16.07.02 Declaration of Interests:** None.

**16.07.03 Resignation of Director/Vacancy:** Resignation received from RD who goes on to work at the new Studio school in Torquay in September and also GB who becomes Chair of the Harbour Commission. GB said he had fully enjoyed working with the team and that he truly believes TCS to be an outstanding school. MC thanked GB for his service to the Board. MC to write to RD.

**MC**

**16.07.04 Minutes of Previous Directors' Meeting:** MC thanked AL for chairing the previous meeting and asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. All AGREED true account of the meeting.

**16.07.05 Matters Arising:** MC requested any matters arising not covered on the agenda. AL asked about the complaint. APG said Solicitors had advised on a reply which was sent several weeks ago. Student looking at moving to another school in September which we are fully supporting with transition days at the prospective new school.

**16.07.06 Chair's Remarks:** MC commented that there is important and significant information being raised at this meeting. MC has spoken to APG, AL and VM as long serving Board members, and looked at ability to move forward with Board. After discussion and thought MC has decided to step down from September due to new projects that will demand a lot of commitment and prevent him putting in the time needed for this Board. MC commented it is time for new guard to take a lead and move the school forward. Very much enjoyed working with this Board. Will keep in touch and if it is the Board's wish for now will remain as a Member of the Trust. Board expressed deep regret at MC stepping down, LL commented on how well the meetings have been run. APG said the new recommendation for Multi-Academy Trusts is 5 Members so this may be expanded. APG proposed that the resignation be accepted and that MC stays on as a Member of the trust. MM seconded. All AGREED.

**16.07.07 Portfolio Reports:**

**Springboard:** PH thanked KQ and team for preparing the report. Feeling, ethos and learning atmosphere at ML is felt in every class visited. Consistency over 3 years has narrowed enormously, evidence in belief that learning environment should be about learning. PH would like to say that the crisis management of challenging and vulnerable children is very thorough and caring but hugely time consuming and Directors need to reflect the amount of provision to do this as well as we do, is costly in Leadership time. Noted professionalism of last production attended at ML, led by the children. AL referred to developing as one school, thinks it is really good students going to and fro between sites but has been made aware that not all curriculum areas are building those links, there are some gaps and these need to be addressed. Also Chinese visiting students has been successful. AL voiced support of the online report system for Review Days at ML and asked if this can be applied to ER. APG asked JL to comment who said the reality with budgets is prohibitive at the present time. Analysis will be done on the cost of the current system. MM and LL agreed as a parent it would be good to have the Review Day information in advance

to prepare and APG confirmed it is definitely a plan for the future.

**Pathways:** GME spoke in ND's absence. High level of curriculum changes. Need to be aware that teams have a massive amount of work in KS3, 4 and 5. Will have 3 year groups all doing different courses. Also have to look at curriculum for next year and options. Decision to be made as to whether all students will do a language. Options process starts in October. More students are staying on courses and completing them. Need to look at ensuring core aims are properly selected and complete census to get full funding for Sixth Form. 86 students attended Sixth Form induction days last week which was very successful. Lots of higher end students saying they will stay with us.

**Teaching and Learning:** MM spoke in RD's absence. As a Board, Directors should be entirely confident and supportive about work going on. One challenge to flag is encouraging people to move on from being good to outstanding. On picking up in discussions there is a challenge particularly at ER as to the willingness of some staff to undergo frequent observations as dictated by union regulations. Lots of work going on to address this and start looking at this through Personnel and Performance framework. APG supported this comment and said a lot of work is being done on quality assurance. MM is happy there is a system within Ofsted framework and heading in right direction.

**Performance:** MM would appreciate feedback from Board as this is the first time done a full report with JL. Really keen to give something that feels like a manageable performance idea for next year and to try and ensure any priorities from other portfolios. Portfolio Holders to let MM know if there are any priorities. Three things to flag at this stage: 1. Reflecting the real difference in stages of the journey of the 2 sites - Not one school at the moment in terms of stages of the performance journey, driven differently at each site. 2. Progress 8 to be discussed later, MM supports this. 3. For discussion in the future, where we do want to position this school for the future. All aspired to be outstanding and to suit pupils of all abilities. Going forwards those two things aren't necessarily compatible in future. There needs to be thought and choices as to whether we want to be good and outstanding for our pupils, or for Ofsted. MC affirmed some really important issues there that the Board needs to agree in future.

**Progress 8:** JL circulated paper to Directors electronically earlier this week and spoke about this when presented results. Now decision time. Options for and against presented. JL asked Board to consider opting in which would mean we are in a significant minority. Attention drawn to bullet point 3 which is the key reason a lot of schools are not opting in, and graph showing why JL considers it is not a risk. Key thing from JL – nothing official at the moment but rumours are that opt in schools will receive a slightly different RAISE to others. Hope opting in we would get significant difference which would allow us to look at every single benchmark and optimise it. Our aim is the best life chance for every child. Also have to accept if we get Outstanding this brings funding which gives more life chances so we need to balance the greater good. December data would allow us to sit down and maximise opportunities for students and we would be a year ahead of other schools. AL asked if Outstanding is feasible and APG said it was not yet. Four Government benchmarks for next year - Progress 8 which is the floor measurement; Attainment 8, then basics (percentage who get C in English and Maths) and EBACC. Recent Ofsted supports JL's recommendation and confidence we won't go below the floor. AL asked if we opt in can they still assess us on present standard and JL confirmed they will do that as well. SMD thanked JL for the clarity of his information and asked if there were any Leadership views from around the table? JN stated opting in now gets us ahead of the game. It will be the measure for 2016 so we may as well get the data. No Ofsted next year so we have time to do something about it. APG said it has been examined thoroughly and demonstrates a confidence that we have been working towards. MC stated this is a big decision and needs to be formally approved by the Board. If we go below -.5 of a grade it could trigger an Ofsted. MC expressed faith in JL, APG and JN's judgement. MC invited further discussion and with none forthcoming proposed we opt in to Progress 8. SMD seconded. All **AGREED**. MC thanked JL for summarising a complex debate.

JL

**Learning Support:** KS presented the report verbally as a lot of time has been taken up with child protection at ML at the moment which has had to be the priority. GW to circulate report electronically after the meeting. In autumn term staff at ML will be trained for working with children with stammers and speech problems. Weekly

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attendance and safeguarding meetings will be held on Fridays next year. Possibility of looking at gateway across both sites to identify SEN to maximise Ed Psych and CAMHS - ongoing. SEN gap analysis shows SEN children are making good progress and in some cases more progress than non-SEN. Issue identified by SENco and looking at extra support for statemented children. Now have safeguarding file at ML along lines of ER, put together with support from Geoff Warne, which will be placed in the staff room for all to see. Transition has been successful for Year 6s, particularly in the enhanced transition for children who were worried, etc. APG stated we are full in year 7 and he felt that the ML students are most confident as they have been here and already met many of the teachers. SMD said it was not just ML children, transition for all the year 7s has been very successful this year.

**Behaviour and Attendance:** SMD met with KQ at ML to complete report. Agreed totally with what PH said earlier. Rewards day slightly different at ML with level of trip based on merit award achieved. Found the right students were on the right trips, based on net points. KQ commented this is the first year ML has used the net value like ER. Attendance action plan was being put together at time of meeting with a number of initiatives including uniform vouchers for students with 100% attendance. Persistent absentee figures improving at ML. AL asked what boy friendly attendance awards are. A consultation exercise will be done in September with all children and see what some children need to motivate them.

**Financial Resources:** To follow as separate agenda point.

**Human Resources:** GB - Policy review is a heads up when it comes to future meeting in order to get Outstanding Ofsted. Considerable work needed by Board in future so that as far as possible pay be performance related. VM stated it needs to be what we can afford. Noted the new staff evening at beginning of September – Email invitation has been sent. Directors to attend if possible please. Let GW know.

**Physical Resources:** AL updated that work has started on upgrading West Lawn. Report refers to problem with Gas Board which has now been resolved by the Architect where they were trying to charge £11k for removing and replacing some panels. Drew attention to fact there is a potential conflict of interest with a member of staff carrying out work as a contractor/own company. AL, MC, JN and Manda Stone have discussed this and a tendering process was undertaken, as it will be every year. VM stated as well as that paragraph will need to demonstrate some sort of firewall process to display that process has been undertaken properly.

**Community:** No Portfolio Holder.

**Leadership and Management:** No questions.

**Disadvantaged Children:** Scott Deeming was unwell when SMD went to ML but he has since put together a report. Drew attention to Summer 2, reading writing and maths as majority silver, green and dark green are outstanding which show very tiny gaps or in a plus position. Reference made to KS report SEN gap analysis, at back of report the chart shows SEN.

**16.07.08 Finance Committee Report:** VM gave highlights of the last minutes and invited any queries. Board noted that an issue was raised about how we treat capital income vs expenditure and with AF's help an acceptable process has been achieved that the Finance Committee (FC) are happy with. 30.06.04 refers to account summary in portfolio report. VM's view as Chair of FC is the deficit will be a better figure than currently shown. VM invited JN to speak – there is a development process in terms of profiling expenditure and at this stage end of year figure is estimated. Key thing is staffing and unexpected expenditure. FC met before HR Committee but feeling of FC was that we should be budgeting for 1% pay increase to cover needs of pay review board. This is a big decision about how we put in place latest teachers' pay review board. Final document not yet published. Communicated with union reps in school (*JN circulated paper at meeting*). In September need to work quite quickly in HR Committee to create pay policy as this is live from beginning of the month. GB wished to clarify that the FC are not recommending a 1% increase across the board but rather that the Academy can recommend a pot to be available based on how the Board feels it should be spent. This is contained in the budget. MC stated in advance of the policy we can accept the budget, but to tie leaderships hands so tightly, the only way achievable would be to have less staff. VM said the FC is proposing funds are available for pay review and how this is distributed is a different decision. APG said we can set a balanced budget with a 1% sum. LL commented on discussions in HR meeting that if not 1% across the board, must ensure process

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is robust enough to reward performance. MM had picked up concerns within the FC minutes re funding and felt going forward 80% staff costs is more of a concern. JN confirmed this is correct and what we spend on staffing is key, monitored very closely and in September exact staffing costs will be known. GB commented that at HR meetings, APG presents whether or not we can maintain staff level to deliver performance that is required. MM felt if VM is concerned as portfolio holder, Directors need to have a discussion. JN said the process starts in September to look at curriculum. VM voiced a personal dilemma of strategic vs operational - the leadership of school commit to achieving a budget but VM believes the Board's job is to scrutinise this and leadership's job is to provide a way forward and make it happen. Danger of Board tipping too far into operational details compromises position as a Board. VM said MM was right to raise it. Very tough budget this year. Many schools are in the same position. VM – budget production process is a long one. JN spent many months getting to this point. VM suggested providing the top sheet with caveat that as always all the information is available to anyone on the Board. Keep things as simple as possible for decision by Board. VM stated that for the first time this year JN invited accountants in to overview and critique the budget and ways of checking that the voracity of the budget is sound. (*Letter to Board circulated at meeting.*) Francis Clarke are satisfied, with one or two things to draw attention to. 1. Income from ML was understated with timing issue of grants which is good news. 2. Recommendation to reduce curriculum allocations pot - will be a challenge and have ripple effect across all departments. May be if year-end position is stronger we can address this. 3. Assumption that there will be a carry forward. JN reminded the Board that when we became an academy £200k reserve was prudent. It may be that we drop below reserve this year. VM's view as Chair of FC is that the letter supports the budget and should give the Board more reassurance than less. JN would be happy next year to get Francis Clark in again to go through figures to give an external eye. **Next Year's Budget:** VM asked JN to highlight comparatives on staffing. Increased Pension and NI contributions which we have to meet. Significant reduction at ER, temporary contracts have been ended and some staff not replaced. MC felt the level of complexity is suitable. SMD thanked FC for very thorough and transparent figures. VM told board it was AF's suggestion to invite Francis Clark in. AL expressed concern about nil improvement budget. KQ confirmed the furnishing of the new build at ML is included in the funding as it is not an academy condition improvement. It has been recommended to budget £2k per classroom and a number of suggestions have come from the feasibility study which KQ will meet with PH, VM and AL to discuss. These are not essential, more of an "upgrade" option if we wish to spend the money. JN stated as we repair we improve, but we are not proposing to fund additional improvements on top of repair as we have in the past. VM proposed acceptance by the board of the budget for 2016, GB seconded. All **AGREED**. MC thanked AF for his work in bringing this together.

**Astroturf:** This is at planning permission stage (APG) but even with a positive outcome there is no guarantee the Football Foundation will proceed. Discussion about where our share would come from. VM felt we could find the money within all the options.

**16.07.09 Principal's Report:** Great stories on pupil numbers and attendance on both sites. Full intake in Year 7 which most other schools don't have so reflects positive view from local community. Fantastic range of activities taking place. APG was invited to ML to present awards. We are one of few schools still continuing work experience. KQ had all benchmarks in, achievement up 1% from last year. Well above both Devon and National average. KS2 only has 19 Year 6s this year and achieved best ever result. Expecting Ofsted at ML, very excited for them to come and see what has been going on there. MC asked KQ to pass on the Boards thanks to staff at ML for outstanding results. APG awaiting KS4 results. The recent Year 11 had the highest number of statements and was 60% male. GME said KS5 had very positive feedback from students taking exams upstairs in Sixth Form centre. Results are on 13 August for A-Level and 20 August for GCSE. APG invited Directors to attend on GCSE day from 10 am to see the end result of everyone's hard work.

**Multi-Academy Trust:** We set up TLT as a Multi-Academy Trust so are available to new members. (*APG circulated papers on expanding the Trust.*) Other issue is what does this mean for current TLT with 2 member schools. APG feels the future landscape has changed so we need to look at working with other local partners and free up ML to lead the trust. The LLC will cease to exist from April 2016. APG and

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KQ had discussions about free schools and are in touch with Local Authority about sponsoring other schools that need help. APG felt if timeline is set we should be looking at March 2016 for expanded MAT as easier for others to join us than to disband and set up a new one. APG welcomed questions. SMD said this was very exciting but one concern is whether the kids would get lost in it. Appreciate each one having own governing body but would people at the top lose sight of comparing kids at the different schools. APG felt it would only work if there was equal representation with responsibility for education of local children. VM observations – in principle felt this Board supported strategy of APG seeking collaborations, support this route strongly. Second point agree with SMD, strength of what has been achieved with the academy we put together in 2011 is that the leadership has been strong. Have a slight fear of diplomacy needed to bring other schools in to MAT – need to be very wary of watering down ability of leadership to not fall into trap of having a fractured organisation as part of each school trying to get their own way. APG drew attention to a hard copy of a presentation giving characteristics of successful MATs. Hard edges of accountability. One of the first jobs for our new Chair will be to go with APG to meet David Carter. GB asked whether numbers are going to stack up with one secondary school and all the rest primaries and suggested looking at another secondary school. GB voiced strong opposition to a Board of Directors that had representation from all sides. Need small Board with chosen reps who have the expertise to deliver. Also noted that the name Teignmouth Teign Estuary Partnership is already in use. AL said observation of MAT appears to be over governance. What powers would governing bodies of school have? VM agreed with AL saying the thought of a more widespread tangle of levels of responsibility concerns him. How realistic is it? APG it is there. MC commented that these discussions are being had up and down Devon and we need to make a compelling offer to the other schools. At Directors level would potentially have Financial, HR, leadership expertise and reps of 4 head teachers or principals and CEO of the MAT. Once bigger won't have these reps. Local bodies will have powers as delegated by the Directors, but they will ultimately be in the power of decisions. Frees up education people to do that and leave money etc to Directors. MM echoed strong support for this saying it feels like right direction and best practice is healthy between sites. Very helpful document circulated but note of caution reflected by ND in email to Directors dated 15.7.15 about really clear strategy about why we are here. Is it a realistic expectation that we can have this in place by next March. APG stated he has been working with local primaries for a long time. AL and PH were present at a meeting a few weeks ago where it was discussed seriously. LL asked what is actual time frame for making it happen and was informed the conversion process is 3 months max. All schools joining the MAT would have to convert to academy status. There is a timeframe for consulting with staff and parents but no deadline for coming to us or other schools, just as it happens. Primary schools currently get funding towards conversion costs. AL stated that driving improvement is something we need to sell as other schools may be anxious to see how possibility of doing what we did at ML can be brought together. Each school would lose some of its autonomy. VM personal concern of people running the schools. Would have to find reasons other than driving improvement which would deter heads from joining. MC said that AL's assumption is we are doing this to them but MC's question is what could they do for us, and to improve our practice and standards. Changes are coming to governance in who we have to have on the Board. APG felt a mindshift from TCS to TLT was needed. MC suggested it was appropriate to give APG a mandate to carry on these discussions with a view to bringing further papers and advice to the board. LL interested to know benefits that we are giving to everybody to sell ourselves. First meeting of LLC in September APG has been invited to bring a Director along. VM proposed giving APG mandate to carry on, PH seconded. All AGREED. GB wished to clarify, to what point is this mandate? MC stated nothing can move forward until further papers come back to the Board as this will vote to change nature of our existing MAT. MM suggested an interim Board meeting with this as a single item. GW to look at this date avoiding open evenings, etc. GW to put out nominations for Chair to Board asap.

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**16.07.10 Safeguarding Report:** Paperwork distributed for ML and ER. SMD highlighted that children in care has become a greater emphasis and as such the work involved has increased tenfold for the safeguarding team. As a governing body we need to keep an eye on this, just with the children in care not even taking into account the welfare

side. A PEP (Personal Education Plan) is ten pages long requiring a vast amount of information, to be done six monthly and could go to termly. All forms are quality assured so may come back again to be redone. Progress measure in terms of CIC not progressing as well as others.

**16.07.11 Policies for Approval: Mill Lane Mobile Phones** – AS attended safeguarding course and there are lots of changes coming in. Policy at ML in early years has been reviewed by ML leadership with Kelly Ray and Jon Newman. Attention drawn to item 2.2 Staff Use of Mobile Phones. SMD as Director for Safeguarding felt it is good. KQ commented that it will evolve over time. New policy is to be implemented from September. VM asked are there other policies that are different across the sites. Yes, statutory requirement for mobile phone policy for early years. This is about protecting staff as well as children. PH proposed, SMD seconded. All **AGREED.**

**16.07.12 Correspondence to Directors:** Formal complaint received about lack of response to previous email correspondence with a member of staff. Legal advice has been sought. Letter has been sent to parents and nothing has been received in response. MC thanked APG for dealing with this.

**16.07.13 Directors Meeting Dates for 2015/2016:** GW to identify suitable interim date between Oct and Dec meetings. **GW**

**Feedback from Training Courses Attended:** LL attended new governors' course and would recommend this. AL had attended a networking for academy governors evening.

**16.07.14 AOB:** APG voiced sadness that it is MC's last meeting. Personal thanks to MC for support and challenge in just the right measures. Hope MC shares pride in what we have achieved under MC's leadership. VM stated that MC has been an outstanding chair, which was echoed by all present.

There being no other business MC thanked everyone for attending and confirmed the next meeting is on 8 October. Meeting closed at 8.20 pm.