



Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

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Registered in England No 8709542. Registered Office 53, New Street Chelmsford CM1 1AT

## TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**DATE AND TIME:** Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2017 at 1.00pm  
**VENUE:** Chelmsford Diocesan Offices

**MEMBERSHIP:**

JCo	Joan Costello*	Director
JCr	John Crane*	CEO
GF	Gavin Flynn+	Director
CH	Caroline Haynes*	Director, Vice-Chair
PH	Philip Howlett*	Director
BL	Bryan Lester*	Director, Company Secretary, Finance Director
DO	Doris Olulode*	Director
BP	Becky Poynter*	Director
PP	Philip Preston*	Director, Chair
TR	Tim Rose*	Director
ES	Elizabeth Snowden+	Director
TW	Terri Wood+	Director

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

TE	Tim Elbourne*	Director of Education, Chelmsford Diocese
SP	Sharon Porter*	VT Finance Manager
ASP	Alison Syred-Paul*	GRE HT
JW	Jackie Williams*	Academy Improvement Lead
	Jill Haines*	Clerk

\* indicates attendance

+ indicates absence

**VINE TRUST SCHOOLS:**

<b>BUL</b>	<b><i>Bulphan CE Primary School, Bulphan</i></b>
<b>BEL</b>	<b><i>Belchamp St Paul CE Primary School</i></b>
<b>GRE</b>	<b>Great Clacton CE Junior School, Clacton</b>
<b>HOW</b>	<b>Howbridge CE Junior School, Witham</b>
<b>JCO</b>	<b>St James CE Primary School, Colchester</b>
<b>LAT</b>	<b>Latchingdon CE Primary School, Latchingdon</b>
<b>MBG</b>	<b>St Margaret's, Bowers Gifford</b>
<b>MIS</b>	<b>Mistley Norman CE Primary School, Manningtree</b>
<b>RID</b>	<b><i>Ridgewell CE Primary School</i></b>
<b>ORS</b>	<b>Orsett CE Primary School</b>
<b>ROL</b>	<b>Rolph CE Primary School, Thorpe le Soken</b>
<b>SAA</b>	<b>St Andrews CE Primary School, Weeley</b>
<b>SJH</b>	<b>St James CE Primary School, Harlow</b>
<b>SMI</b>	<b>Southminster CE Primary School</b>
<b>STC</b>	<b>St Cedd's CE Primary School, Bradwell</b>

72/17 **WELCOME AND PRAYER**

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and the Chair introduced the newly appointed Director, Dr Philip Howlett, to the Board.

73/17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Gavin Flynn, Elizabeth Snowden and Terri Wood.

75/17 **NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

- i. BEL School Hall.
- ii. SIAMS inspections.

76/17 **DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS/CONFLICT OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no new Business Interests to declare.

77/17 **BOARD MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

- i. There were no new appointments/resignations to note.
- ii. As previously reported Phil Preston will not be seeking a further term of office from September 2017. The Board was informed that the process is underway for members to appoint a new Trustee to bring the Board to full capacity. A proposal has been made to CDET to review the requirements for role of Chair of Trustees.

78/17 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18.5.17 were agreed and signed as a true record.

79/17 **MATTERS ARISING**

- i. *and ii item 56/17:*  
Terms of reference for the *Standards & Performance Committee* have been circulated.  
Terms of reference for the *Finance & Audit Committee* are being updated and will be circulated in due course.
- iii. *item 62/17:* a letter to HTs outlining visit rationale to schools, from the Trust, is in process following discussions at the S&P Committee meeting; draft headings have been discussed and recorded at the meeting.
- iv. *item 65/17:* TR/RE to discuss Bible apps/resources.

80/17 **RAG RATED STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-19**

The Strategic Plan had been discussed at the F&A Committee meeting. The CEO and AIL will be collating any commonalities to ensure that outcomes demonstrate a collaborative focus on the strategic aims and purposes. It was noted that the RAG rated strategic aims for 2019 can be demonstrated in some schools but not all.

81/17 **GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT**

- i. The **governance portfolio** has been updated to match the specialised skills of Trustees with the needs of individual schools and aims to facilitate the setting up of *working parties/focus groups* when required.
- ii. A **draft Governance Strategic Framework** written by Mike Simmonds (with CEO notes) had been circulated. The document will continue to be updated; consideration to be given to including the Trust Code of Conduct, KCSiE statutory guidance and professional clerking services.  
A Governance Handbook and GB Annual Planner also in progress.

82/17 **CEO REPORT**

The CEO's Report for Summer 2 had been circulated and the meeting noted the following:

**RSC**

Pippa Bull and Rob Brisco (RSC) will have visited nearly all the Vine academies. A letter of findings will be sent in due course.

**STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE**

**Data Protection Procedures** will change in 2018 which will have a significant impact on the Trust and will result in the need to appoint a Data Protection Officer. Options are being explored with ECC as to how compliance can be secured. Updates to the Educare system are also in hand.

**New Schemes of Delegation** will be in place from September 2017 and have been circulated.

Names of new local governors are currently being collated; some were presented at this meeting the rest will be presented in the Autumn Term. New governors have all undergone an application process, a form, skills audit, references and if necessary an interview.

- Rolph/St Andrew's – Local Board  
Clare Holdaway and Chris Townsend governors
- St Osyth and Mistley Norman – Local Governing Bodies meeting together  
Claire Epsom was approved as Chair from September following the resignation of John McAleavy.
- Great Clacton - Local Governing Body  
New Staff Governor, Lisa Kirk, was approved.  
Rev Mark Mulryne and Catherine Mann (PCC) - terms finish February 2018. The Board agreed to renew their current terms for a further 4 years and Rev Mark will remain as Chair for a further year.
- St James Colchester - Local Governing Body
- Howbridge - Local Governing Body  
Matthew Lawson and Brian Kingston (selection process under way)
- St James Harlow - Local Governing Body
- Latchingdon - Local Governing Body
- St Cedds/Southminster – Local Board  
Misha Roughley (selection process under way)
- St Margaret's/Bulphan/Orsett - Local Board
- Ridgewell - Local Governing Body
- Belchamp St Paul - Local Governing Body

## FINANCE

- i. To date no grant requests have been received.
- ii. The **Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust Consultation on Proposal to Re-organise the Academy Finance Roles** had been circulated and is open for comment.

## CONVERTERS

Orsett CE Primary School **ORS** joined the Vine on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

Bulphan CE Primary School **BUL**, Ridgewell CE Primary School **RID** and Belchamp St Paul CE Primary School **BEL** have a scheduled conversion date of 1.8.17.

Two Village Primary School **TWO**, Ramsey, has proposed a conversion date of 1.2.18. In view of TWO being a PFI school there was a strong discussion about the costs that might subsequently be involved with conversion; however, it was noted that the RSC will cover any reasonable costs. *THE F&A Committee proposed a recommendation that the Trust should write to the RSC to propose that when taking responsibility for PFI schools any additional costs will be met by appropriate funding from the RSC.*

## OPERATIONS

Ofsted are conducting inspections of MATs, over a two week period, during which they will want to talk with Directors.

- ❖ **Action Point 1:** CH and RP will attend the national training in London, with the CEO, on 7.12.17.

**Pre-School Provision** is being planned at three Vine academies: Mistley Norman (MIS), St Margaret's (MBG) and St James Colchester (JCO). Applications have been submitted and are due for approval at the HT Board on 20.7.17. There was a robust discussion about a plan of action if any of the applications are rejected which would necessitate a decision whether to continue with the planned opening, without permission or incur significant financial and reputational damage and operational difficulty involving redundancies.

- ❖ **Action Point 2:** Directors agreed that it will be crucial to obtain approval for all 3 proposals

and it would be prudent to communicate all concerns to Tim Coulson in order that families can be re-assured that their pre-school provision will be protected.

## **ISSUES FOR THE BOARD**

The following matters were tabled due to the time constraints:

- i. New Schemes of Delegation allow a space for a Director to sit on LGBs. However, as the Trust grows it would not be sustainable to have a Director as a governor. After discussion it was agreed that the role of Director is to provide support and represent the Trust although Directors can attend meetings as a full member.

**The meeting was in agreement that it would not be sustainable for a VTB member to sit on LBs.**

- ii. The **Ofsted report for HOW (7/8.6.17)** was circulated with *RI* outcomes and *good* (Personal Development and Welfare).
- iii. The **Vine Review for STO (7.6.17)** was circulated and concluded that *St Osyth has made significant progress from their last Ofsted. It identified their performance as currently requiring improvement and gave clear guidance as what needed to be improved to be good at their next inspection. This has allowed the school to draw a line under their last inspection report and re-focus the drive on getting to good.*

Most schools have undergone SIAMS inspections. The CEO thanked Directors and Trustees for their support for the schools in the Vine family.

- iv. The **HMI report for SMI** demonstrated significant progress and results demonstrate significant KS1 improvement. KS2 results are not yet as positive but improved results are predicted for next year.

### **83/17 VISITS TO SCHOOLS BY DIRECTORS**

TR reported on a good and positive visit to GRE where a good Christian ethos was clearly identified in the school.

### **84/17 COMPANY SECRETARY REPORT**

BL informed the meeting:

- i. GRE outcome – ICO decision following submission of Data Protection Breach report – no further action required
- ii. There are no fraudulent/maladministration matters to report.
- iii. There is no further action to report regarding SIF projects as the Trust has now received the full allocation.

### **85/17 POLICIES**

The following policies were presented for approval and recommendation to schools:

- i. Child Protection Policy
- ii. Lone Working Policy (for feedback from schools)
- iii. Academy Improvement Policy

### **86/17 TO CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

TR reported that the F&A Committee had discussed how to reflect the Vine values and culture alongside the principles of effective finance management to ensure a fruitful partnership as the Trust grows. The following matters were recommended to the Board:

1. Strategic Plan review meeting

2. Change Management Programme
3. Colleague Engagement Survey
4. Communication to the RSC regarding financial responsibility for PFI schools to the Vine
5. F-003V Capital and Reserves Policy v2.0
6. F-004V Gifts and Hospitality Policy v2.0
7. F-005V Investment Management Policy (VPOL-005)
8. F-006 Accounting Policy v2.0
9. F-007V Value for Money Policy (VPOL-007)
10. Modification to Financial Regulations – Prepayment and Accrual threshold increased to £5k with some exceptions from September 17
11. Recommendation that annual Fire Risk Assessments in academies are undertaken by 'specialist' 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers
12. Initial Budget 1718 – GRE v4.1
13. Initial Budget 1718 – HOW v1.7
14. Initial Budget 1718 – JCO v1.1
15. Initial Budget 1718 – LAT v1
16. Initial Budget 1718 – MBG v1.2
17. Initial Budget 1718 – MIS v1.2
18. Initial Budget 1718 – ROL v1
19. Initial Budget 1718 – SAA v1.0
20. Initial Budget 1718 – SJH 24/5/17
21. Initial Budget 1718 – SMI v1.0
22. Initial Budget 1718 – STC v1.0
23. Initial Budget 1718 – STO v2.0
24. Modification to Financial Regulations – Prepayment and Accrual threshold increased to £5,000 with some exceptions
25. It was agreed that contracts over one year must be delegated to BL (FD) for approval.
26. The engagement of SBM Services for additional financial support in all Vine academies to become optional from Sep 17 but the Board retains the discretion to direct schools if they feel it is necessary – delegated to CEO/COO

**AFTER CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION ALL RECOMMENDATIONS WERE APPROVED BY THE BOARD.**

**87/17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- i. Sue Baldwin, newly appointed RSC, will be in post from September 2017. A half-day conference is planned with leaders of all church led MATs to discuss strategic alliances.
- ii. BEL was a matter for discussion following information regarding indemnity costs in excess of £400,000 regarding the school hall (which is used by the community).
  - ❖ **Action Point 3:** In view of an anticipated conversion date of 1.8.17 it was agreed that options will be explored to achieve the best outcome as soon as possible (FD/CEO).
- iii. SIAMS All Church of England dioceses and the Methodist Church use the Church of England Education Office's framework for setting out the expectations for conduct and evaluation. The SIAMS process is currently under review following the CE Vision for Education and PP extended an opportunity to the Board to comment for the purpose of strengthening Christian education.
- iv. All Trust Headteachers will be invited to join the Trust Board for a Tea Party after the meetings on 22.9.17.

**BOARD MEETING DATES:**

**2017/18**

**Autumn 1**

22<sup>nd</sup> September **followed by a Tea Party**

**Autumn 2**                    1<sup>st</sup> December  
**Spring 1**                    9<sup>th</sup> February  
**Spring 2**                    16<sup>th</sup> March  
**Summer 1**                   11<sup>th</sup> May  
**Summer 2**                   13<sup>th</sup> July

**2018/19**

**Autumn 1**                    21<sup>st</sup> September

**CLOSING PRAYER**

The meeting closed at 2.45pm with a prayer of thanks for the blessings received during the last academic year and everyone involved with the Vine family of schools to be refreshed during the summer break for the year ahead.

<b>SUMMARY OF DECISIONS</b>	
82/17	The meeting agreed that it would not be sustainable for a VTB member to sit on LBs.

<b>ACTION POINT</b>	<b>SUMMARY OF ACTION RAISED AT THIS MEETING</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>DUE</b>
<b>1.</b>	National training (7.12.17) (CEO/CH/RP)	CEO	Autumn
<b>2.</b>	Communication with Tim Coulson (pre-school provision)	JCr	July 2
<b>3.</b>	BEL School Hall: exploration of options	BL	July 2