

Mid Devon Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Minutes of the meeting (held via Microsoft Teams)

Monday, 04 March 2024 at 5 pm

Name	Role/Type of Governor	School	
Max Thomas (Chair)	Chair – Trustee Appointed Governor	Across the LAC	P
Bruce Abbott (BA)	Parent Governor	Yeoford	P
Sam Butler (AHT)	Staff (Academy Head) Governor	Across the LAC	P
Joanna (Biddy) Hooper (JH)	Foundation Governor	Morched Bishop	P
David Pike (DP)	Parent Governor	Cheriton Bishop	Ap
Rebecca (Beki) Richards (RR)	Staff Governor	Across the LAC	P
Tom Woodley (TP)	Parent Governor	Tedburn St Mary	P
Vacancy	Parent Governor	Morched Bishop	
Vacancy	Trustee Appointed Governor	Across the LAC	
Pam Down	Clerk	Mid Devon LAC	P
Charlotte Roe (CR)	Governance Professional	Link Academy Trust	P

Present/Apologies/Absent

		ACTION
1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting . DP had sent his apologies due to childcare – his apologies were accepted .	
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: As logged on the Register of Business Interests - nothing further to add pertaining to this meeting.	
3	APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2024 The P1 Minutes were approved and will be signed by the Chair. They will be forwarded to HR to be uploaded onto the Trust website.	Clerk/Chair
4	MATTERS ARISING (not covered elsewhere in the Agenda) a) Question raised [Minutes 22.01.24, item 6, page 3] re the Wellbeing section of the Tedburn St Mary report (whether staff able to maintain a 17:00 finish) The author had raised this with the AHT who had confirmed that this was usually adhered to (9/10) and staff feel good for it – it is an achievable target. Sometimes staff do continue to work when at home and workload monitoring is ongoing. Workload is shared with an open door policy of the AHT/staff helping each other out – that had been evident to see during the governor’s visit. b) Chair and Clerk to produce a brief profile for each governor about their role [Minutes 22.01.24, item 12, para 2] To be actioned (see 5.3 e) c) Face to face meeting to be considered for May or June [Minutes 22.01.25, item 12, last para] Agreed the 24 June 2024 Mid Devon LAC would be held in person at Morched Bishop Primary School.	Mid Devon LAC 24.06. 2024 in person at Morched Bishop
5	CLERK UPDATE	
5.1	Appointments/nominations a) Vacancies update ▪ Parent Governor at Morched Bishop: In spite of readvertising the	AHT to follow up

	<p>vacancy, the AHT advised there had been no interest. However, he will follow up potential interest raised during the recent Parent Forum meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trustee Appointed Governor: No update. The Clerk reminded everyone to think about anyone active within their community or perhaps any Councillor. Suggestions of any names to be emailed to the Clerk and Chair. The Chair suggested local advertising. CR advised the Trust is also currently looking to appoint Trustees. The AHT referred to specialist governance recruitment websites. CR is working with Inspiring Governance. 	<p>Parent Governor interest at MBS</p> <p>ALL</p>
5.2	<p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prevent – statutory annual training/refresher leading to a Certificate to be emailed to the Clerk. One governor yet to complete. The Certificate gained on completion to be emailed to the Clerk. ▪ DES (Devon Education Services) / Governance Consultancy Team Training: Governors were reminded about the induction course for new governors (already attended by one governor). All governors were encouraged to attend the regular governor update briefing sessions (online) – as detailed in the weekly Governance Alerts. Lots of useful information is shared at the sessions together with detail about new initiatives and how governors are best able to support their schools. 	<p>New Governor Induction session and regular briefings for all governors highlighted and attendance encouraged</p>
5.3	<p>Clerk to the Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues:</p> <p>a) Single Central Record (SCR) – a reminder about the checking procedure for LAC governors. The Clerk suggested governors ensure this is covered annually during one of their visits. Governors will need to discuss beforehand with the AHTs and/or admin staff to ensure a convenient time to factor into diaries.</p> <p>b) Exeter Diocesan Education Network (EDEN) Undertaking form to be completed and returned to the Clerk urgently (just one outstanding). Clerk to hold the forms and send the list to CR.</p> <p>c) Local Governor Skills Audit – survey results. CR reported there were only 15 responses. Next year, she plans to write the survey herself. Governor gaps identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding roles and priorities ▪ Risk Registers ▪ Engagement with stakeholders <p>CR will be working on guidance/training in these areas.</p> <p>d) Mid Devon LAC procedure survey: Governors asked to complete and submit if they have not yet done so. This survey has been produced by CR and is simpler to fill in than the Governor Skills Audit. AHTs, local governors and trustees have all been asked to complete.</p> <p>e) Bio from parent/foundation governors to highlight the role within schools. CR explained the idea is to raise the profile of the governor role. Governors from each school have been invited to prepare a brief bio which will be added to the relevant school website. In addition to raising the profile, it is hoped this will help with succession planning as stakeholders will be able to learn more about the role of the local governors and the LAC. The Chair had raised a similar idea previously – extending this to all governor roles (item 4, b). Governors were asked to draft a brief bio and description of their role and forward to the Clerk to collate. The Clerk will then liaise with Sue Howard, HR about the process for this to be uploaded to each school's website.</p> <p>f) Request for Exclusion Panel volunteers (online training to be provided) CR</p>	<p>Governors to diarise in an annual SCR check</p> <p>Clerk to send Eden Undertaking list to CR</p> <p>CR organising training in gap areas</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>Governors/Chair Clerk to produce bio/governor role info for websites</p>

	<p>explained the Trust wish to put together a Trust Exclusion Panel. It is highly unlikely a permanent exclusion will take place but in such circumstances it would be important to have a trained pool of governors ready to form a team. Training will be available for both governors and clerks. CR thanked MT, JH and BA for volunteering. Further information will follow.</p> <p>g) Request for volunteers to help with SATs processes/invigilating The AHT advised the role would be to ensure the SATs process is completed in the appropriate way, including storage of papers, when they are opened and the signing sheet to evidence procedure has been followed. This is part of the statutory responsibility and external visits to check the process can happen at any point. RR added that, particularly in smaller schools, additional adult help is required for pupils needing readers or extra time. SATs week, Mon-Thurs, begins on 13 May 2024. <i>A Parent Governor asked if he would be considered independent.</i> CR confirmed he would be. The governor had many years of invigilator experience and offered to volunteer at Yeoford Primary on the Wed and/or Thurs. Other governors asked to consider supporting during SATs week and to let the clerk know their availability. Clerk to liaise with AHTs.</p>	<p>MT, JH & BA volunteered for the Exclusion Panel - training to follow (CR to organise)</p> <p>Clerk/governors /AHTs to liaise re SATs support</p>
5.4	<p>Significant changes within the Trust including key personnel CR advised Littleham Primary School, near Exmouth, East Devon, will be joining the Trust on 01.04.2024 which is an exciting development. <i>JH asked how many schools would then be in the Trust.</i> CR stated there would then be nineteen.</p>	
5.5	<p>Parental Engagement The new Governance Handbook states trusts need to show they are obtaining stakeholder opinion: 3 Core Roles – Role 3 - the board has strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders. The board involves parents, schools and communities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement. When Ofsted visit schools, they look into the whole trust. Although there is an annual survey, this is not sufficient. The visit report template provided by CR has been changed slightly to accommodate a more formal collection of evidence together with any outcomes if relevant. Local governors are in a good position within the school and local community to evidence and report on the links, including feedback from parents' evenings/parents' forums/PTAs. The AHT added the school/church/community falls within personal development of children and encapsulates the community element.</p>	
5.6	<p>Risk Registers CR stated governors are the eyes and ears in their local schools supporting the Trustees. Governors were asked to talk to their AHTs re Risk Registers. The AHT explained the Risk Register system encapsulates everything and parts of it are revisited monthly/three-monthly/annually as appropriate. This covers much more than the standard Building, Premises and Fire aspects. Other strands include 'Pupil Numbers' – actions and measures, 'Ofsted' – impact on schools: lower risk if just inspected. CR suggested governors could ask questions about what is included (ie whether finance/succession planning is included within RA and how is it covered). The AHT will ensure the other LAC AHTs are aware Risk Registers need to be shared and discussed with local governors.</p>	<p>LAC AHTs – Risk Registers to be discussed with governors</p>
6	<p>Focus: A detailed analysis of nationally reported data on EYFS, Y1 Phonic check, Y4 multiplication check, KS1 SATS and KS2 SATS, SEND and PPG analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad overview of other groups on their progress and expectations to targets ▪ Progress on the ASIP <p>Reports from each school had been received and circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors were thanked for the time given and effort made in producing the reports. The Chair invited questions or highlights:</p>	

	<p><i>A governor commented she (and the AHT) had been uncertain about exactly what data had been required at this point in the year: was it projected or last year's? JH had noticed that reports varied.</i> CR understood why there had been confusion, the template should have clarified this was based on the December data. CR will discuss further with Andy Keay, Academy Headteacher and Director of Standards and Outcomes, and the Chair of the S&C to confirm data dump dates. Data needed includes end of year/targets/mid-year checks. The AHT confirmed data is reviewed termly at Morchard Bishop and half termly for pupils with SEND. It would be helpful if a future data focus would clarify what specifically needs to be looked at. <i>CR asked the AHT what data information he would believe to be most useful to review with a governor.</i> The AHT felt it more productive to look at progress this year rather than review last year's data which had been and gone. <i>The Chair asked if it would help if AK was invited to one of our LAC meetings.</i> CR suggested this is put on hold for the time being as there are potential changes planned regarding the way data is monitored (with a view to questions being answered more easily). CR will seek clarification with the Chair of S&C but believed the focus would include how children are doing against the targets set. Other points highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was noted that Yeoford is quite far behind in terms of data due to the large number of pupils with SEND. ▪ Tedburn St Mary is still outstanding in quite a few areas <p>A governor had noticed that across the four schools, data was not as strong in writing as in reading or Mathematics. <i>The governor asked if this was the case within the Mid Devon LAC, throughout the Trust or universal.</i> JH believed it was the situation nationally due to a number of factors including difficult within the next three year cycle. During the summer term, targets will be set for next year and principles are being put in place to ensure best practice across the Trust. Morchard Bishop will be working with and supporting other schools in this area.</p>	<p>Data - CR to investigate what specifically needs to be reviewed for the next AHT/governor focus</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>SCHOOL UPDATES</p> <p>Governors to consider and discuss feedback on any issues/successes from their school visits or visit notes completed by the AHT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAN (to include pupils joined/left) • Pupil wellbeing • Staff wellbeing and workload • Attendance • Suspensions and permanent exclusions • Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA • ASIP update • Risk assessments/Accident book • Pre-school update <p>The visit reports had covered quite a bit of the above. The Chair asked if there were any highlights or successes to report:</p> <p><i>Referring in particular to an upcoming TA vacancy, a governor asked what the Trust's plan is for cover from floating staff.</i> The governor believed that a significant benefit of being part of a Trust is that flexibility/transfer of staff would be an important resource when cover was needed. <i>The governor asked the reason why such a resource is not as readily available as hoped: is it due to limited availability and/or floating cover potentially being provided in another Trust school?</i> CR confirmed the Trust does want floating staff but they do get 'snapped up' quickly – often to cover maternity or long term sickness leave. Other governors recognised recruitment (particularly for TAs) is a common struggle for</p>	

	all schools. The AHT commented there had been a small pool of floating teachers but reiterated CR's point about them being quickly used elsewhere on longer term cover. There would be a potentially unnecessary financial implication on budgets if we were to have floating staff employed when not necessarily required. There is support available to assist with recruitment on an individual school basis.	
8	<p>CURRENT YEAR'S FOCUS – Relational Approach</p> <p>The AHT reported no huge change since the previous meeting. The AHT referred to the Trust's anchor document and resources. Some schools have developed the relational approach more than others with some being pilot schools. AHTs use their discretion as to when Relational Approach is implemented although it is an ASIP target for all. Speaking for Morchard Bishop, the AHT stated Relational Approach is constantly reflected upon and reviewed.</p>	
9	<p>STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM TRUSTEES' MEETING</p> <p>a) Response to draft minutes previously circulated (confidential until approved). No questions.</p> <p>b) Feedback on any issues raised from local board Chairs in S&C meeting: The Chair apologised for overlooking attendance at this meeting. He highlighted the following from the S&C minutes, encouraging governors they were making a huge difference: <i>"The Trustees felt that the LAC governors had a greater understanding of their role and were making a significant contribution to governance in the Trust, allowing Trustees to remain more strategic. The Trustees commented on the quality of the LAC Minutes and visit notes giving the Trustees a clear understanding of the schools across the Trust. The Trustees asked for their thanks to be passed onto the LACs."</i></p> <p>CR reported the Trustees had a long discussion about the amount of paperwork to read. The new system of governor reports and feedback to and from S&C meetings has worked well. The Trustees had remarked on the calibre of work, professionalism and understanding of local governors and feel confident they do not need to read every bit of paper. It had been agreed to ask LACs to highlight things they want Trustees to answer. This is the reasoning behind the extra item which will be at the end of every agenda (see 13 i & ii).</p> <p>c) Arrangement for a Mid Devon LAC governor to attend the S&C meeting (if the Chair is unable to attend to organise attendance by another governor). Agreed that should our LAC Chair be unable to attend, he will liaise with the Vice Chair, JH, or any other governor available to attend, in order that each LAC is represented. CR agreed to resend the meeting dates.</p>	Chair/Vice Chair to liaise re attendance at S&C meetings – CR to resend meeting dates
10	<p>NEXT S&C FOCUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision and impact for SEND ▪ Oversight of pupil premium strategies and their impact <p>Governors were reminded this is an opportunity to discuss any queries/get clarification in preparation for the next focus. There were no questions and it was noted that this area is already discussed and reviewed regularly.</p>	
11	<p>FEEDBACK FROM ETHOS COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY GROUPS – SEG Focus: RE</p> <p>The Foundation Governor reported discussion is underway to gather a group of adults to form the Ethos Committee at Morchard Bishop. Several children are attending church regularly and the school and church are in the process of rebuilding the work that had successfully been developing prior to the tragic events. CR commented that all empathised about the terrible time that both the school and church community had been going through. CR asked when the next SIAMS Inspection is expected. The AHT advised 2025/26, adding that RE is one of</p>	The AHT & Foundation Governor to work on forming the Ethos Committee

	<p>the strands in the ASIP. CR reported a Link Academy Trust school in another area had recently had a successful SIAMS Inspection where the team had liked the processes followed. The two AHTs are already working closely.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there was anything else to report from any other schools. Nothing was raised in addition to that mentioned in the visit reports.</p>	
12	<p>EVALUATION OF GOVERNANCE IMPACT - To review performance and value of the meeting – to summarise the effectiveness of the meeting and how this will positively impact on our pupils, staff and Trust.</p> <p>Work on creating governor bios and description about the LAC governor role should raise the profile of governors which may help towards succession planning.</p> <p>Risk Registers explained – governors will discuss and monitor with AHTs.</p> <p>The Chair had previously mentioned the usefulness in occasionally holding a face to face meeting. It was agreed the 24 June 2024 Mid Devon LAC will be held in person at Morchard Bishop Primary.</p>	<p>Chair, Clerk and governors to produce a brief profile about themselves and their role.</p> <p>June Mid Devon LAC to be face-to-face at Morchard Bishop.</p>
13	<p>STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM TRUSTEES' MEETING</p> <p>Summary of questions from governors to be raised at the S&C meeting:</p> <p>i) Questions relating to the data focus: As discussed in item 6 – clarity about exactly what data had been required at this point in the year was sought: <i>was it projected (looking at progress this year) or last year's data analysis?</i> CR will seek clarification but believed the focus would include how children are doing against the targets set. CR will discuss further with Andy Keay, Academy Headteacher and Director of Standards and Outcomes, and the Chair of the S&C to confirm data dump dates and exactly what data information is specifically needed from governors/AHTs when there is another data focus. Governors were advised that Andy Keay would be talking about data at the next S&C and asked if it would be possible for any presentation to be forwarded.</p> <p>ii) Questions relating to anything else: <i>What is the ongoing strategic recruitment plan for the Trust (particularly in view of the general difficulty in recruiting)?</i></p>	<p>Q: Data focus – clarity about exactly what was required sought.</p> <p>Request for AK's data presentation at the next S&C to be forwarded.</p> <p>Q: re the Trust's ongoing strategic recruitment plan</p>

The meeting closed at 5.58 pm

Signed as approved by the Chair, Max Thomas Date: 13 May 2024