

The Link Academy Trust  
**Board of Trustees/Directors**  
**Minutes: 7 December 2020**  
**T/30/20, 4.00pm**

*The meeting was held online using MS Teams due to the current Government restrictions*

**Trustees/Directors:**

Isabel Cherrett – Chair	Jane Collings	Dominic Course
Nicola Dunford (from item 2)	Mike Fisher	Roy Gillard
Jason Hayward-Jones	Cheryl Mathieson	

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**1. Private Meeting of Non-Executive Directors**

**Remuneration Committee Report**

The Non-Executive Trustees met without officers present to discuss the outcome of the Chief Executive Officer's annual appraisal, Mrs Dunford's Objectives for 2020-21 and the Committee's recommendations relating to the pay review of the Senior Management Team.

**In attendance:** Matt Matthew, Trust Business Manager (TBM)  
Rachel Hill, Clerk to the Trust

**Apologies:** Fiona Walters

**Welcome:** The Chair welcomed the CEO and officers to the meeting.

**Register of Business Interests:** The CEO is a Trustee of South Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust (SDMAT) and also a Trustee for the Bearnes Education Foundation. Mr Roy Gillard is a Director of Labyrinth Accountancy Limited and undertakes company secretarial duties for Stock Props Limited, a dormant property rental business. Mr Dominic Course is a Trustee of South Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust (SDMAT) and Director of Dacors Ltd. Mr Michael Fisher is a Foundation Director of Bailey Partnership LLP, Amethyst Property Ltd, and Adorn Development Ltd, property consultancy and management companies.

**2. 2019-20 Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**2.1 Management Report by the External Audit Service Bishop Fleming LLP**

The Audit Completion Report, KIDD, document is available in the SharePoint folder titled Annual Report and Financial Statements. The report describes the work undertaken and checks made. Pages 18-21 detail the recommendations made. Bishop Fleming reviewed the following key risks:

- Management override
- Revenue Recognition
- Recognition of new schools
- Unauthorised transactions
- Unauthorised borrowing and leases
- Related Parties
- Impact of Covid-19

There are three recommendations for 2019-20:

- **Governance:** Trustees are reminded that they must declare all business interests and potential 'Related Party' conflicts and update their Register whenever changes occur. This is an Amber Recommendation and so is important to improve internal controls.
- **PPN Payments:** this relates to Pre Payments requested by one of the catering contractors and guidance that we must ensure the service has not been double funded. Other MATs are experiencing similar difficulties with the contractor. This is a Green recommendation which would improve internal control.
- **Approval of purchase requisitions:** This is a Green Recommendation related to the importance of segregation of duties.

Recommendations from 2018-19 related to the Declaration of Business Interests and a recurrence of bank transactions for the new financial year which were posted in the previous year. The TBM is working with Bishop Fleming to resolve this. The recommendation relating to duplication on the Fixed Asset Register has been resolved.

## 2.2 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020

The Audit Committee on 11 November 2020 and the F&GP Committee on 27 November 2020 had each considered the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020.

The Board was invited to comment on the document which was available on SharePoint. This included:

- The Trustees' Report
- The Governance Statement
- Chief Executive Officer's Value for Money Report
- Chief Executive Officer's Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance
- The Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities
- The Auditor's Letter of Representation

The TBM confirmed that he would provide Trustees with figures detailing the surplus and outstanding amounts by the end of the Autumn term 2020. The Trust awaited from the SDMAT the actuary's pension valuation relating to the three Moorland schools which was required before the accounts could be finalised.

**Action TBM**

The Board confirmed that subject to receipt of the pension valuation, the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 were true and accurate and **approved** them.

In doing so, the Board **authorised** the Chair and the CEO to sign the statements on behalf of the Trust for submission to the External Auditors for signature and then the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Companies House. In accordance with the Academies Financial Handbook, a copy would also be provided to the Members and posted on the Trust's website.

**Proposed Roy Gillard/Seconded Dominic Course**

## 3. Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting T29/20 held on 12 October 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record. The Chair will sign these minutes when government restrictions allow.

## 4. Matters arising

### 4.1 Item 3 – CEO's Report – Ilsington Primary School Tender Process

The TBM was thanked for providing a summary report of the project with details of the feasibility and planning stages and the tender process. This report also notes the details of the tenders received. The Chair recommended that this template is used for future contracts. The Board asked the TBM to add the Trust's Architect on the report and insert the date the Board of Trustees approved the contract.

**Action TBM**

**It was recommended** that the TBM updates the Project Report until the Ilsington project is completed and confirm with a final report in June 2022, subject to any adverse reports noted against the risks.

**Action TBM**

**It was proposed** that the Board of Trustees accept the tender by Marks Building Services Ltd (MBS) at the quoted price of £231,583.70

**Proposed by Cheryl Mathieson/Seconded by Roy Gillard**

4.2 Item 9 – Terms of Reference for Standards & Curriculum Committee

At the Board's request, the Chair of Trustees had drafted a new Duty 6.4 to set out the key areas that the Committee and Local Board representatives will cover in their discussions. This will need to be dovetailed with the Terms of Reference for the Local Boards. The Chair reminded the CEO that she had requested a document detailing complete local board membership with start and end dates for governors' terms of office. The CEO replied that the ATSIL is compiling this document and that she would ask for it to be circulated to Trustees once completed.

**Action CEO/ATSIL**

JCO advised that there is now a folder holding Local Board work on MS Teams and that it would be beneficial for Trustees to have access to this.

The Board of Trustees **approved** the amended Terms of Reference for the Standards & Curriculum Committee.

4.3 Item 2.1 Local Board Membership

The Chair had written to Sue Roach, Community Governor for Stoke Gabriel and member of the Totnes Local Board to thank her for her contribution to the Trust as a Governor.

5. **Audit Committee**

5.1 Meeting held on 11 November 2020

The Minutes of 11 November 2020 had been filed on SharePoint for Trustees to read. MF thanked the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee for attending the presentation of the draft financial statements by the External Audit Service.

[With reference to item 8 of the minutes, the Chair asked if there was a timetable for Radon checks to be conducted at the remaining 13 schools.](#) The CEO replied that radon traps had been fitted to find out the work that was required.

[The Chair asked officers to ensure that Asbestos Registers, item 8 be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee at an appropriate meeting. Is this something that the Premises Officer will check before visiting schools](#) The CEO replied that updates have been filed on the Asbestos Register. The CEO will be working with Academy Heads in the near future looking at risk management. The TBM added that before any CIF project commences an asbestos check is conducted. The Premises Officer has been checking Asbestos Registers with reports sent to the CEO. The CEO will ask the Premises Officer to ensure procedures are adhered to.

**Action CEO**

The Chair noted in item 4 of the minutes the Church's view that Trustees are those who have a role in the ownership of the Land, while Directors relate to the Company. [The Chair asked how Trustees would like to proceed with this information.](#) Trustees **agreed** to continue the format adopted in December 2019.

**Agreed**

5.2 Constitution and Terms of Reference

The Board of Trustees **approved** the Audit Committee's Constitution and Terms of Reference.

**Approved**

5.3 Internal Audit Service and Audit Programme for 2020-21

Griffin Accountancy has conducted the Autumn review of Governance, Regularity, Risk Management and Insurance. There were no issues to note this year and a recommendation from 2018-19 has been resolved. The TBM advised that a clean audit had been received. The audit had been undertaken remotely.

6. **Finance and General Purposes Committee**

6.1 Meeting held on 27 November 2020

The minutes of 27 November 2020 were noted. The Chair of the F&GP committee reported that the newly appointed Income Generation Officer had made a very positive start in

identifying and securing new sources of income. The Trust is currently in a good financial performance position.

#### 6.2 Pupil Census 2020

The report on intake for 2020-21 and overall pupil numbers by school, with any positive or negative impact on funding, had been discussed at length. Pupil numbers in some schools were a concern, support identified and an action plan has been drawn up.

#### 6.3 Condition Improvement Fund

The following projects will be submitted for CIF funding in 2021-22.

Bearnes – Roof	Diptford – Replacement Devon Lady Classrooms
Drake’s – Mechanical & Electrical	Harbertonford – Roof
Hennock – Roof/Windows and M&E	Ilington – Mechanical & Electrical
Landscape – Mechanical & Electrical	Otterton – possible roof
Stoke Gabriel – possible roof	Widecombe – Mechanical & Electrical
Yeoford – Mechanical & Electrical	

The Board recognised that the most urgent improvements needed to be supported by a higher level of contribution (15 pc) from the Trust and this depended on the level of reserves which a school held. Other projects would have a 10 pc contribution but this did not necessarily mean the bid would not be successful. It was agreed that the TBM would provide the Chair of the F&GP committee with a report detailing suggested CIF contributions by schools.

#### **Action TBM**

The Chair referred to the Totnes Local Board’s (LB) comments about the inadequacy of the Devon Lady classrooms at Diptford, which was noted in the Standards & Curriculum (S&C) minutes and the S&C feedback from LB’s report. The TBM confirmed that he would be submitting another bid for Devon Lady classrooms at Diptford; a 15 pc contribution would be in the region of £800,000. With the possibility that CIF funds may be reduced as Government spending was directed elsewhere, the Board asked that the LB record the impact on learning and teaching which these classrooms have on the education provision, together with health and safety concerns. The Trust’s case would also be strengthened if the views of the local MP could be added to the bid as well as the Chair of the LB.

The Chair reminded LBs that concerns of this nature should always be routed directly through the AH or the TBM so that Trustees could add strength to CIF bids and other opportunities to bid for external capital funding and the LB Chair would be welcome to call the TBM or CEO.

#### **Action Chair of Totnes Local Board**

#### 6.4 Financial Performance 2020-21

The Directors’ Dashboard as at 31 October 2020 had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. Each academy was on track at the end of month 2 and there were no questions from Trustees.

### 7. Standards and Curriculum Committee

#### 7.1 Meeting held on 25 November 2020

The minutes of 25 November 2020, having been filed in SharePoint for Trustees, were noted. [The Chair asked if DC was a Trustee on S&C.](#) DC replied that he was a Trustee member with oversight of Moretonhampstead Primary School.

The Chair of the S&C committee advised that progress has been made with the development of safeguarding training for governors and clerks and training for new clerks and governors. Governor induction packs are being drawn up by the ATSIL.

## 7.2 Feedback from Local Board

The LB Chairs had collated a summary of issues and questions which was discussed at the S&C meeting of 25 November 2020. The Board went through each point in turn to respond to Governors' concerns. The outcome of the discussion is at Appendix 1.

A pro forma will be devised for Local Boards to guide their reports back to each S&C Committee meeting. It will include what is going on, what is going well, what is a challenge and what actions are required.

**Action ASTIL & LB**

## 7.3 Progress of formation of Moorland Schools Local Board

DC confirmed that the inaugural meeting between Newton & Teign and the Moorland Schools would be held on 16 December 2020; he would report back to Trustees on progress. The Board welcomed the integration of the existing and new LB which would provide useful comparative practice for all five schools.

## 7.4 Any other Capacity Issues

The CEO reported slight improvement in both Moretonhampstead and Raleigh pupil numbers.

## 8. Chief Executive Officer's Report

### National, regional and local issues

The CEO's report had been circulated to all Trustees prior to the meeting and is filed in SharePoint. The Chair asked Trustees for any questions.

- Trustees congratulated the AH of Hennock for a productive Ofsted Covid visit on 24 November 2020.
- The CEO noted that Devon pupil attendance is at 90 per cent, with Primaries at 96 per cent. Nationally, attendance figures are at 80 per cent. Many of the Trust's Academies have had improving attendance figures as the term has progressed. Trustees extended their thanks to E/AHs for maintaining pupil attendance during these difficult times.
- Trustees welcomed the Safeguarding Bulletin for November on County Lines.
- Trustees were pleased to see that populating the Local Boards is improving and role descriptions have been clarified for Staff, Community and Parent Governors. How to support LBs with finding new Governors is reported in Appendix 1, item (b).
- Trustees supported (in respect of Drakes and Otterton) flexible solutions being sought to enable the schools to continue in their current structure for as long as is financially viable.
- Christmas Give Back. Trustees thanked Morrisons for their support and the TBM for initiating this for families in need.
- The CEO reiterated that the tenancy of School House at Morchard Bishop was a matter for the Diocese to resolve and not the responsibility of the Trust.

***At this point in the meeting a five minute comfort break was taken and the meeting resumed at 17.35***

## 9. Business Plan 2020-21

Trustees had agreed to keep the headings used in the 2019-2020 Business Plan for 2020-2021. The Chair thanked portfolio holders for working with the CEO to progress these plans and particularly commended the Workforce Strategy which has made great strides forward. The CEO advised that she would make some final alterations and meet with RG and the TBM prior to printing the document out and posting to all Trustees before the end of term.

**Action CEO**

## 10. Safeguarding

The CEO reported that each Academy had completed a Safeguarding Audit. All staff are now Level 2 trained, with Level 3 safeguarding training taking place. The TBM is Level 3 trained. A Safeguarding Action Plan will be put into place next term.

11. **Health and Safety**

The Board thanked the H&S Co-ordinator for her summary report and agreed that she and the Premises Officer should be involved in the next update of the Health & Safety Policy.

The Trust was sourcing an on-line system to enable schools to report routine H&S and maintenance issues. The TBM, H&SC and PO had viewed two demonstrations from compliance software companies and the TBM expected that a final choice would be made by the end of January 2021.

A claim notification had been received by a third party employee against the Trust for personal injury. The claim had been passed to the RPA scheme which will assign a loss adjustor to investigate. The TBM will update the F&GP Committee on progress.

**Action TBM**

12. **Governance**

12.1 **Appointment of new Trustee(s)**

The Board received the Chair's report on the recent recruitment programme to attract candidates with a background in primary education, accountancy and IT. An advertisement had been publicised widely through the academies, Trustees' networks and the Diocese. The Chair, Vice Chair, Chair elect and CEO had interviewed three candidates on 23 November 2020; all had been supported by excellent references. Regrettably, the candidate with a background in primary education had subsequently withdrawn their application as they were unable to give the time needed.

The Board **approved** the appointment of Miss Sarah Cox as a non -Foundation Trustee, for a term of four years from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025.

**Approved**

The Chair had asked Miss Cox to consider joining the Audit committee. DC agreed to mentor Sarah Cox during her induction period.

The Board **approved** the appointment of Mr Paul Waterworth, retired Judge, as a Foundation Trustee, for a term of four years from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025. This appointment is subject to approval by the EDEN.

**Approved**

The Chair had asked Mr Waterworth to consider joining the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Remuneration Committee. RG volunteered to mentor Mr Waterworth during his induction period.

The Chair noted that accountancy and educationalist skills were still required at Trustee level and the recruitment process would continue.

12.2 **Resignation of Foundation Trustee**

Trustees formally noted the resignation of the Chair, Isabel Cherrett, with effect from 31 December 2020 and the appointment of Cheryl Mathieson as Chair from 1 January 2021.

**Noted**

12.3 **Local Board Membership**

The following new Governor appointments were **approved**:

Evelyn (Evie) Edworthy (Widcombe - parent) – Moorland Schools  
 Robert (Rob) Steemson (Widcombe - community) – Moorland Schools  
 Caroline Rolls (Widcombe –staff) – Moorland Schools  
 Suzanne (Sue) Vaughton (Stoke Gabriel – parent) – Totnes  
 Andrew Lee (Tedburn – staff) – Woodleigh  
 Kristina Wright (Yeoford – staff) – Woodleigh  
 Karen Fletcher (Cheriton HLTA) – Woodleigh  
 Jane Wilkinson (Stoke Gabriel – community – Totnes  
 The following re-appointment was **approved**  
 Cat Radford – community governor – Totnes

A formal appointment letter for newly appointed Governors is to be drawn up. This is to be signed and returned by each Governor.

**Action Clerk/Chair/CEO/ATSIL**

JCO noted that Governors should sign the Code of Conduct annually.

**Action Local Clerks**

### 13. **Local Boards**

To receive and note the Notes of recent Local Board meetings:

#### 13.1 Newton & Teign Local Board: Summary notes for S&C meeting.

Trustees noted that a potential new parent-Governor for Bearnas had withdrawn her interest due to bereavement and community Governor for Hennock is no longer in contact. N&T have one parent-Governor for both schools, two teacher-Governors and one co-opted Governor (Jo Carter).

#### 13.2 Totnes Local Board: Meeting 15 October 2020 and summary notes.

Devon Lady classrooms have been discussed under item 6.3 above. The note regarding the change of Academy Heads in bullet point three on page 3 of the summary report was noted. The Chair noted the reference in the Minutes that one of the Governors was producing a first draft Policy for Looked After Children. The input of the Governor concerned was acknowledged but the ATSIL and Chair of the Totnes LB were requested to advise that this was not a Local Board responsibility.

**Action ATSIL/Chair of Totnes Local Board**

#### 13.3 Woodleigh Local Board: Meeting 21 October 2020.

The Board thanked Mrs Carter for her excellent summary and commended the succinct minutes. Trustees noted the disappointing attendance figures for the parents' Teams meeting. The CEO advised that these meetings can be experienced through recordings taken at the time.

JCO noted that future LB summary reports will be to a pro-forma.

#### 13.4 Raleigh Federation: Meeting 20 October 2020. No comments were raised by Trustees.

### 14. **Risk Register**

The Chair advised that the Audit Committee would take on the responsibility for the management of the Risk Register, with DC taking on the oversight to ensure the programme of regular review by officers and committees was maintained. The Chair and DC had discussed the creation of a new risk register, based on the Trust's format, designed for use at academy level and he would work support schools gain some consistency. The CEO advised that she would be working on this with AHs and talking them through the existing template and clarifying the difference between Trust level and School level risk. DC added that this issue had been raised at a Working Party meeting and needs to be formalised.

#### 14.1 To approve the amendments to the following sections:

14.1.1 Infrastructure – Business Unit - reviewed by F&GP on 27 November 2020. TBM to complete this and bring to the next meeting.

**Action TBM**

14.1.2 Governance – reviewed by Trustees on 12 October 2020 and S&C on 25 November 2020. To add in the comments column that risk scores are increased due to Covid and PP and SEND, not because of the Link practice.

14.1.3 ES&A – reviewed by S&C on 25 November 2020. Trustees agreed to changes made.

14.1.4 Safeguarding – this was reviewed by the CEO for S&C. Some new lines have been added and some risk scores increased in line with Covid. The monthly safeguarding focus work has been added and also checks made by HR and Alex Waterman, Safeguarding & SEND Lead. A line has been added about children being at home as a consequence of school closure and the heightened risk of abuse.

- 14.2 To review Q&R 10 and Q&E11 of the Risk Register.  
The risk to the sustainability of the Trust as a result of new schools joining and potentially having a negative impact requires updating by February 2021. It was agreed that the Chair would increase the Probability and Impact scores of the final item on Q&R of the Risk Register.

**Action Chair**

15. **Policies for approval**

The following Policies had been reviewed and updated:

- 15.1 Recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee  
15.1.1 Financial Reserves and Investment Policy. **Approved.**  
15.1.2 Accounting. **Approved.**
- 15.2 Recommended by the Standards & Curriculum Committee  
15.2.1 Collective Worship Community Schools. **Approved.**  
15.2.2 Collective Worship Church Schools. **Approved.**  
15.2.3 Relationships & Sex Education (RSE). **Approved.** The CEO will insert a statement about LGBT issues. **Action CEO.**  
15.2.4 Mobile 'Phones with Screen & Film. **Approved.**  
15.2.5 Visitors & Volunteers. **Approved.**  
15.2.6 Management of Outdoor Educational Visits. **Approved.**  
15.2.7 Behaviour Policy. **Approved.** CEO and AHs to overhaul this policy to include relational matters. This should be completed by Spring 2021. **Action CEO.**
- 15.3 Recommended by the Audit Committee  
15.3.1 Health & Safety Policy. **Approved**
- 15.4 Recommended by the Remuneration Committee  
15.4.1 Lone Working Policy. **Approved.**
- 15.5 Trustee Policies  
15.5.1 Charging & Remissions. Clerk to ask HR Officer for latest child tax credit figure and TBM whether universal credit should be added. Subject to these amendments the policy was **Approved. Action Clerk/TBM**  
15.5.2 Director/Trustee & Governor Allowances. No changes have been made. **Approved.**

16. **Meeting Dates 2020-2021**

The following dates have been agreed for 2020-21; meetings will commence at 4.00 pm, except for the AGM which will start at 6.00 pm.

T 31 08 February 2021

T 32 24 May 2021

T33 12 July 2021

T34 19 July 2021 – AGM

**Farewell**

The Chair of Trustees, Isabel Cherrett, thanked all Trustees for their support during her term of office as Chair. IJC also thanked Matt Matthew and Nicola Dunford for their tireless work for the Trust and wished the Link Academy Trust every success in the future.

Mr Roy Gillard, on behalf of all Trustees, thanked Isabel Cherrett for the work that she had undertaken during her term as Chair. RG hoped that IJC would accept the offer of becoming a Member so that her relationship with the Link Academy Trust could continue. Mr Gillard continued that Isabel's clear thinking and brilliance had provided a foundation from which the Trust could work and that she had put the Link 'on the map'.

Drafted: 23 December 2020

IJC/RH



## Appendix 1

**Questions from Local Boards as follows (in blue) with Trustees' responses (in black):**

- a. **Are Visit Reports read by Trustees? How can the Visit Reports be summarised into a report that the S&C committee can read?**  
All LB minutes and summaries are placed in a SharePoint folder prior to each Board of Trustees meeting and placed on the agenda. The individual school Visit Reports are an aide memoire for those undertaking the visit to allow them to report back to the LB and to have as a reference in an Ofsted Inspection. The Visit Reports should feed the summary for Trustees that each LB submits. Trustees have access to the Visit Reports and use for impending Ofsted visits or if there is a school causing concern.
- b. **How can the Link Trustees support Local Boards with finding governors?**  
The LB could put notices on School Facebook pages and in Parish News. The TBM had converted a Trustees' advertisement into a video to attract new Trustees and could possibly do the same for Governors. It would probably be helpful to combine vacancies across schools plus the skills the LBs are seeking. Sharon Lord can arrange to advertise vacancies for the Church schools and the Diocese will also support recruitment. The Academy Head at Stoke Gabriel has had a good response to her adverts (three Community Governors had come forward) and would be willing to share practice.
- c. **How can the EIT take issues forward within LB reports and feedback to LBs their actions?**  
Through the LB meetings and working groups.
- d. **Sports Premium. For Ofsted, how do Local Boards evidence impact attributed to the Sports Funding?**  
Work with E/AH and PE specialist team- Matt Tanner leads this.
- e. **What is the status of Sports Funding finance? Where is the Sports Funding for the summer term? A definitive answer is required by LBs.**  
The Sports Premium was discussed at length at the Trustees. Currently AHs/TBM/CEO are working with the specialist sports staff to examine how the funds will be spent. With the pause in sports during school closures, the DfE is considering allowing the fund to be carried over into next year as COVID has delayed the spend. The specialist sports team will assist in evidencing the impact of the fund on pupils. Trustees noted that this grant may be at risk through adjustments to Government funding as the country recovers from the pandemic and loss of business. The PE specialist team, delivering CPD, specialist sports, competitive team sports and after school clubs takes £9K of the £16K pot per school. Money that should have been spent in the summer term when the Trust was in lockdown is still available to spend and all E/AHs are being given support to spend very wisely- particularly on equipment (e.g. i-pads) to allow impact to be assessed.
- f. **AHs to provide expected means of verification in 'success criteria' column of ASIP to better evidence impact of actions on priorities.**  
Academy Heads and the ATSIL will action this.
- g. **The Stoke Gabriel Ethos Committee is not active due to lack of interest from parents. Broadhempston will form a committee along the same principles but without the religious aspect.**  
ASTIL and Academy Heads will assist with this.
- h. **The minute pro forma for Totnes needs to be reviewed. At present it still includes Finance as an agenda item.**  
The Chair of the Totnes LB and Clerk will action this.
- i. **Noted that staff wellbeing for Hub Schools should continue to be monitored and in particular Moretonhampstead and Harbertonford. Noted that Hub schools were strategically chosen.**  
Trustees discussed how the Hubs were chosen (e.g. geography, building appropriateness). Staff from all the schools supported the Hubs and Trustees noted measures in place to help staff wellbeing. In the unlikely event of the Trust returning to Hubs, the selected schools will remain Hubs for accessibility reasons and the size and layout of schools and will be staffed by all staff from schools that are using the Hub.
- j. **Totnes LB wished to raise Trustees awareness of the state of temporary classrooms at Diptford. CIF bids have been unsuccessful over several years.**  
This was discussed fully by Trustees and is also minuted in item 6.3 above. Four CIF bids for Diptford have been submitted to date. The EIT and Trustees are exasperated that these have all been unsuccessful. A fourth CIF bid is about to be submitted. The CIF assessor agreed at the last visit how unsuitable the classrooms are but this did not affect the outcome of the bid. Trustees review the level of contribution the school and/or the Trust can make to increase the likelihood of a successful bid but there is absolutely no guarantee to this strategy. There are now more MATs competing for the CIF bids.

Trustees requested the LB to record in detail all incidents and issues with these classrooms in the Academy/school Risk Register which sits below the Trust level Risk Register, for example, water ingress, windows that cannot be opened, insects and mice entering the building etc. Evidence of an H&S nature could help the bid and a letter from the Chair of the LB would be useful.

- k. [It was questioned whether it was good practice to join a couple of classes into other bubbles. NB Moreton. They have had two confirmed cases of Covid and due to joining classes into bubbles they have had to close three classes not two.](#)

These decisions remain at an operational level with regard to staffing and buildings and were taken as a result of a member of staff that had to isolate and teach from home. As a result her class in school had to be supervised and therefore there was a mix of staff across the two classes. The situation was unavoidable.

- l. [Blended learning at Moreton has not taken place seamlessly due to a recent Covid outbreak and pupils being required to remain at home. Could this be due to IT issues?](#)

This matter has been actioned and resolved through technical and CEO/ATSIL support.

- m. [Blended learning needs to be a priority.](#)

All Academies have a Blended Learning action plan on their websites. These are fully accessible to all and the ATSIL monitors them half termly. The action plans include the basic points which need to be achieved during each half term. Support is given to try and ensure all the progress points are achieved.

- n. [Provision of IT needs to be a priority.](#)

There is a clear Trust level Action Plan which is rated termly.

- o. [IT issues. Some staff believe issues are not being addressed. Ensure staff, parents and children can use Steams and its functions effectively.](#)

There are now Blended Learning Action Plans developed for each school. There are instructional videos for staff on ICT in Teams and each staff meeting starts with a 15 minute IT training session. Sixty-one new staff laptops have been issued. The old ones will be cleaned and re-purposed for general use. There are new interactive whiteboards in all classrooms and teaching spaces. The main issue is connectivity which is out of the control of schools such as the Moorland schools. LBs could help to lobby for better broadband in local communities. Some communities in Devon are coming together to get satellite connectivity. The Trustees on the S&C committee agreed to include IT on the agenda for each S&C meeting. The committee will monitor progress of all the action plans. LBs please assist by monitoring the individual school Blended Learning Action Plans.

- p. [The Moorland/N&T hub integration will start in December 2020.](#)

DC advised that the inaugural meeting between Newton & Teign and Moorland Schools will take place on 16 December and he would report back to Trustees following this meeting. Trustees welcomed the integration of N&T and the Moorland schools and thought this would give the new LB great strength.