

Minutes of the OLICAT Directors Meeting  
23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024



**Attendees:**

Directors: Christopher Donnellan, Ilona Bond, Bill Nelson, Catherine Leong

Central Team: Tony Bishop, Lorraine Cullen, Asha Morjaria, Nathan Wells, Sam Jukes

Clerk: Andrew Waterhouse

Apologies: Joe Burns

Prayer: Tony Bishop

Agenda item	Actions
<p>1. Declaration of pecuniary interest/conflict of interest arising from agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ilona Bond as Chair of BEST</li> <li>• No others declared</li> </ul>	
<p>2. Minutes &amp; Matters arising</p> <p>a. Draft minutes Accepted as a fair record</p> <p>b. Approvals outside committee Noted following items were agreed by Directors outside committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missed pay increments</li> <li>• Pay award in principle</li> </ul> <p>c. St Joseph's and St Gregory's upper primary site update TB shared update and proposal documents for the SJSJG sites. The original plan to revamp the UPS whilst on LPS remains in place and is progressing since BMS moved out in August. Bedford Borough have proposed purchase of LPS, and diocese have approved in principle with funds to be used for UPS redevelopment.</p> <p>IB queried if this was confirmed in writing by the Diocese? TB confirmed it was.</p> <p>BN queried if we had received the rental income? TB confirmed for expediency our bank details had been given to BMS and we have.</p> <p>TB explained the proposal was currently with the local authority who need their business case agreed. We do have some funding held back from SCF for roofing and heating work. BN &amp; CD flagged sustainable options as a priority, and that integrated solar roofs are now available.</p> <p>d. IB noted that Gemma Otter is no longer acting as head at SJSJG, and her appointment is confirmed.</p>	

### 3. Finance

#### a. Finance Report

AM presented the finance report. Format has been updated for clarity, with ongoing revisions to come. Key points noted:

- Ended year with deficit of 851k – better than expected.
- 250k was in accounts as amounts owed – CIF balances etc. Over 6 years have been written back.
- Staffing is 82% of total. This is above average, and we are working to reduce. DFE target value is 75%. If we could hit 78% it would be a good achievement and would affect balance significantly. TB confirmed on heads PDRs first target is staffing at 78%.
- Schools also struggling to resource effectively. Reducing staffing would reduce the deficit but would also give capacity to allocate resources and impact elsewhere.

CD queried if there are things the ones who are managing staffing levels closer to target do that others need to do. LC observed it is an historic mindset where the solution is to throw an adult at things, rather than developing children's learning behaviours which incurs a lot of wastage. Schools that have staffing streamlined and resource targeted have better outcomes.

IB queried looking at secondary curriculum models, especially around 6<sup>th</sup> form, what is viable. LC noted we are going to have to consider alternate delivery models and leveraging technology. NW observed for viability all research indicates average class sizes of 11 at KS5 and we're not near that, but we don't want to narrow so to become non-competitive. BN queried can we compete locally? LC confirmed we believe so if we can look at other options. CD observed we need to look at staff sharing. LC observed this could be a model of facilitators around metacognition and subject knowledge from the screen.

LC observed as delivery models evolve, we can increase access, for example neurodivergent children may be able to access the classroom whilst not being in the classroom.

LC flagged we need to look at transport from SJSJG to STM again to ensure feed and continuity.

AM outlined the curriculum led financial planning model is being used but at STM the system is being gamed by blocking out timetables leading to a significant level of under capacity deployment. The school is overstaffed but resistant to changing this. Whilst we respect their autonomy they need to work with the MAT and restraints placed upon them. TB stated we do not want to end up with redundancies, but if unaddressed this may be the consequence.

LC observed they perhaps need a model to say what it could look like. AM noted the planning tool has showed them where capacity is.

CL queried are we aware of what is needed and provided? We need to understand who is doing what and producing what.

IB observed the issue is changing of mindsets and the school would not see it as gaming but focusing heavily on supporting staff which has built up a level of

**Central team to review.**

expectation. LC noted keeping staff costs under control gives more flexibility and capacity to deal with weaknesses in provision, and if schools aren't under control the DFE will remove their autonomy. TB noted realistically we're talking about one school not getting there, but it's one school spending a lot of money.

AM flagged under procurement we are doing cleaning tender again. Catering in STM is loss making, with no biometrics etc for payment and cannot continue this way. We do have an external provider for some schools but there appears to be no incentivisation i.e. profit share. We will involve school and staff with procurement process.

AM reported the new budgeting system is about to go live. This will allow a more accurate model for next year and earlier in January rather than May/June.

AM referred to Directors to the report and where capital funding is being spent.

AM reported audit work has started. To warn Directors in advance we have flagged a number of items that should have appeared in prior years' management letters, and we expect to see a greater number this year.

- b. Missed increments  
Directors agreed as per paper submitted.

#### 4. Performance

##### a. Key Stage 4

Sam Jukes introduced the KS4 report. Key points to note:

- KS4 data is incomplete as DFE timetables have slipped.
- Prior attainment remains the biggest indicator of future attainment and holds true for our data.
- STM low and mid cohorts have increased, and high prior has halved. 2024 is an academically weaker cohort. TBCS reverses this – increases in mid and higher, and reduction in lower. They are academically stronger than prior.
- Attainment 8 scores. STM at 44.3 is down on last year's 46.9. The challenge for the trust is to determine how much of that is down to a weaker cohort. TBCS is up to 39.4 from 37. Whilst the overall magnitude varies the graph patterns for attainment reflect prior.
- Under English and Maths standards STM is down slightly on 4+ and 5+, No benchmarks yet available, but historically both STM and TBCS are moving closer to the average line.
- Progress looks at value added and is relative whilst attainment is absolute. Overall, at STM is +0.3, and TBCS -0.2 (final figures will vary). So, for STM attainment is down but students are making good progress, whilst for TBCS attainment is up but progress levels similar to prior.
- LC observed Ever6 and SEND data needs to be improved before the next inspection. NW observed a high level of mobility in these groups.
- SJ noted a pattern is indicated – we are better at pushing weaker students, and it's harder to do so with stronger students as there is less headroom.

- NW explained there is a narrative behind all this data. When you remove TBCS outliers (severe attendance/SEMH) the progress data moves to 0. This raises questions on effectiveness or impact of pastoral systems. There are also questions around T&L. Teaching has been criticised as passive, but this came from challenging behaviour. With this now improved teaching needs to follow suit. Specific subjects require further investigation and are of concern: science, computer science, health and social care. Staff turnover is a concern and impacts. The improvement scenario is a complex one.
- NW stated STMs progress is to be congratulated, but issues do remain especially around SEND provision. There are certain subjects impacting data and underperforming.

b. Key Stage 5

SJ introduced the KS5 report. Key points noted:

- No update to original report – DFE data still awaited.
- No validation data to compare against so internal data only.
- First year since 2019 that we will have value added progress measures.
- Covid protections for this cohorts GCSEs – will skew relationship.
- A level measures are complex – splits out academic and vocational.
- TBCS has higher applied general and lower A level take-up than STM.
- STM has a small increase in average point scores, but average grades remain the same. TBCS have an increase of 0.75 in academic and 90% in applied general. This appears to be down to NWs work in restructuring the offering and ensuring people on are the right courses.
- STM grades A and above 13%, C and above 63% and pass 97% are consistent but improved around the mid-point. TBCS have A and above 18%, C and above 64% and pass 99%. This is triple the rate of As and 20% up on Cs. First time in OLICAT and last 5 years of results that schools are in line with each other.
- NW observed we count the improvement at TBCS as a significant win. 2 years ago, we completely redesigned the pathways at TBCS with entry requirements and restrictions – putting students on the right courses. Modelling and assessment allowed them to predict well and support early – looking to carry over to STM.

c. KS2.

Sam Jukes presented the KS2 report. Key points noted:

- We approach a period for which there will be no progress data – Covid.
- For R/W/M 4/10 schools are in line or above for expected at national. 7/10 increased from 2023.
- For higher 2/10 are in line or above, and 6/10 have improved.
- Largest improvements are for those who don't get all 3.
- Reading 8/10 showed increase from 2023.
- Writing is teacher assessed and at expected half inline or above. 3 saw improvements. Half are inline or above for GD, and half saw

<p>GD levels increase. LC noted for moderation they're getting better at moderating and seeing improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maths 4/10 inline or above for expected, and half saw an increase. This is the most challenging area. 2/10 greater depth inline or above national, 6/10 saw an increase.</li> <li>• LC explained as an overall narrative there are number of positives. Reading follows an upward trajectory (with noted outliers), at high standard for boys and girls the gap is less. KS1 standards are in line with national which means we're closing the gap earlier.</li> <li>• LC explained we are looking at boys' attainment, EYS letter formation and reading, year 1 phonics and year 4 multiplication tables.</li> <li>• As a highlight St Mary's who when we started had no children at higher is now in line with STMP.</li> <li>• Tracking of vulnerable groups is a focus and looking at how quality of teaching meets needs of vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• SJR is down in many areas and a lot is due to enormous staff changes.</li> <li>• SJSJG is down in a number of areas, but we are confident in the leadership team and expect rapid movement.</li> <li>• TB observed all have a breadth of curriculum now which is quite a journey from when we started. We believe the structures are in place and its now down to consistency of delivery.</li> </ul>	
<p>5. Trust Plans TB outlined we are now in year 3 of our Trust plan and documents have been shared showing team priorities. These have been informed by an evaluation of year two and are adjusted as we move forward. Finance plan is understandably under full review as Asha is looking at this moving forward.</p>	
<p>6. Chair's Update CD updated on meeting with the Diocese. Diocese are looking for five-year plans from the MATs. The plan remains to bring on board the remaining schools in the north of the diocese.</p> <p>CD noted an out of committee settlement agreed with Directors in relation to sick pay.</p>	
<p>7. Policies Agreed to review out of committee and approve following meeting.</p>	
<p>8. Governance Noted new clerking service in place. 10 of the 11 LACs received. Noted receipt of minutes.</p>	
<p>9. Safeguarding None arising</p>	
<p>10. AOB Directors made aware support staff increment process is out of synch with overall and will be reviewed.</p>	

BN noted the speaking competition at which he judged was outstanding and its participants impressive.