RICHARD HUISH TRUST
GOVERNANCE & PEOPLE COMMITTEE MEETING

2nd October at 5:00pm

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members present: Pat Flaherty (Chair)
Jade Renville
Catherine Christie
Victoria Harrison

In attendance: Steve Chattell (CPO)

Clerk: Helen Wells (Governance Specialist)

MINUTES

G&P 24/01 **1. MEETING FORMALITIES** **Action**

1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence
The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies. The meeting was quorate.

G&P 24/02 **1.2 Declaration of interests**
None of the committee members present had declarations to make in relation to items on the agenda.

G&P 24/03 **1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting**
Directors agreed the minutes of the previous meetings were accurate and the Chair consented for his electronic signature to be used to formally sign them off.

G&P 24/04 **1.4 Matters arising**
Directors discussed the matters arising report noting all items as complete.

2. PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE

2.1 People update

G&P 24/05 The CPO presented the full year's people data for 2023/24 which give metrics in relation to the People Strategy for staff absence, staff turnover and staff satisfaction.

G&P 24/06 The sickness target for the trust was set at 3.5% and was met; a very good outcome against a challenging target. Sickness is notably higher at Pyrland School than elsewhere within Huish. Staff absence is a priority for the school to address this year through its Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

Is staff absence a cultural issue?

G&P 24/07 The CPO detailed how he is supporting leaders in managing absence at the school, noting that the precision and rigor of implementation of the processes are critical to improving absence. Key leaders are met with regularly and staff absence is always high up on the agenda. The clarity of expectations around managing next steps for addressing absence is key to helping to change the culture in the longer term.

G&P 24/08 Directors considered the profile of Pyrland School and the journey it is on as it faces having to change to improve behaviour and teacher performance and how this level of change might impact on staff. Directors observed that if the Pyrland data is removed from the overall dataset

Signed:……*Pat Flaherty*……………………………………….. Date:…29th January 2025…………………………

the days lost per FTE is very minor, directors agreed that this is notably different (low) compared to other public sector settings.

G&P 24/09 Directors observed that the range of metrics are reflective of each other for the schools in terms of sickness and satisfaction at different schools.

G&P 24/10 **Are there any trends emerging relating to reasons for why staff are absent?**
The trends are consistently high for absences relating to cough, flu and viral reasons, then headaches and then significant illnesses. Directors queried whether work related stress is higher at schools with higher levels of absence, the CPO clarified that it is higher in those scenarios.

G&P 24/11 Staff turnover had a target of 11% for total turnover for 2023/24, with an outcome of 15%. Directors agreed that the target is ambitious and should remain as such. Work to minimise staff who are leaving is strategic in its approach. The data includes a number who retired over the summer and a number who have long term sickness; the CPO highlighted the HR team are exceptionally good at managing long term sickness.

G&P 24/12 **Why is the absence at Nerrols School higher than at other schools?**
The school has been through a period of significant leadership change. The staff absence figure is anticipated to be significantly lower this year.

G&P 24/13 The staff satisfaction index is based on the two final questions in the staff survey; whether staff would recommend Huish to others as a place to work, and that they enjoy the work they do. An external company is used to undertake the survey giving assurance to staff in terms of impartiality and accuracy of results. Satisfaction figures look to be declining at West Buckland and North Curry and this is being monitored and addressed by the executive team. Directors discussed the possible reasons for the change in satisfaction levels and how this could be addressed.

G&P 24/14 Directors noted that the trust is very supportive and enabling compared to directors experiences of other MATs. Directors reflected that the culture is fundamental to the approaches taken by the executive team.

Directors thanked the CPO for the report.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Board self-evaluation report

G&P 24/15 Directors undertook a self-evaluation exercise over August and September 2024, a report was shared with them as part of the papers summarising their feedback with contextual observations and recommending some actions for them to consider as a result.
Directors discussed various aspects of the report including the approach to succession planning for board members, induction of new board members about strategic planning and how key compliance areas such as safeguarding and SEND remain a high priority for the board to monitor.
ACTION: Re-share the approach to strategic planning with directors. **Clerk**

G&P 24/16 Directors agreed that they are comfortable with the recommendations but that these should be checked against recommendations within the committee's annual report to minimise any duplication.
ACTION: Ensure that the self-evaluation recommendations are brought back for monitoring by the committee at a future date. **Clerk**

3.2 Risk register – item STR06

G&P 24/17 Directors considered the relevancy and accuracy of STR06 on the strategic risk register which is the risk most directly relevant to the committee.

Directors noted it has a low level of risk allocated to it overall and that this is reflective of what they are seeing and experiencing through the committee and as directors. They discussed that it may be beneficial to reflect the challenges around succession planning for board membership within the register for 2024/25.

ACTION: Add to STR06 within the strategic risk register for 2024/25 about succession planning for the trust board. **CPO/ Clerk**

4. COMMITTEE MATTERS AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

4.1 Committee annual report

G&P 24/18 Directors discussed the draft annual report, agreeing that it provides an accurate and concise summary that is reflective of the work of the committee during 2023/24.

ACTION – Cross reference the recommendations from the board's self-evaluation with the recommendations from the annual reports from the committees to ensure there is no duplication for action. **Clerk**

RESOLVED – The committee agreed the annual report.

G&P 24/19

4.2 Skills Audit for 2024-25

Directors discussed the suggestion to enhance the information collected through the annual skills audit to include key individual competencies and a summary overview of qualifications. Directors agreed that this would be a good addition to the skills audit.

RESOLVED: Proposed enhancements to the annual skills audit for directors were agreed.

5. POLICIES AND OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS

G&P 24/20

5.1 Policy review schedule

Directors noted the schedule for 2024/25.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Agenda for next meeting

G&P 24/21 Directors noted the agenda and discussed the process for the forthcoming pay recommendations at the next meeting.

G&P 24/22

6.2 Confidential items

Directors agreed there were no confidential items for the minutes.

G&P 24/23

6.3 Any other business

The LGB at Nerrols recently nominated Wendy Devereux to be appointed as Chair and asked the board to ratify their decision to appoint Oliver Foster-Burnell as Vice Chair.

RESOLVED: Directors approved the appointment of Wendy Devereux as Chair at Nerrols School and ratified the appointment of Oliver Foster-Burnell as Vice Chair.

G&P 24/24

6.4 Dates of future meetings

Directors noted the dates for future meetings.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.15pm

Signed:……*Pat Flaherty*……………………………………….. Date:…29th January 2025…………………………