



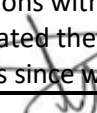
ACES ACADEMIES TRUST

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Extraordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 20th October 2020, 5.15 pm, via Zoom

Present: Brian Message (BM), Chair and Trustee
 Paul Fenney (PF), Trustee
 Cliff Fluet (CF), Trustee
 Gary Weston (GW), Trustee
 Andy Rankine (AR), Trustee
 Bev Curtis (BJC), Trustee
 Ian Phillips (IP), Trustee
 Claire Rose (CR), Trustee
 Rebecca Ryan (RR), Trustee
 Chris Meddle (CM), Trustee
 James Nicholson (JN), Trustee
 Andrew Goulding (AEG), CEO

In attendance: Dave McMillan (DRM), Finance Director
 Debbie Warner (DW), Clerk

1.	Apologies for absence
	Apologies were received and accepted from Raj Joshi.
2.	Declaration of interests
	No conflicts of interest were declared.
3.	Election of Chair/Vice-Chair/Trustees
	<p>Jefrey Matemba and James Nicholson were welcomed to the meeting and were unanimously appointed as Trustees by the Board.</p> <p>Brian Message was re-elected as Chair of the Board for a further year. He informed Trustees that it was his intention to step down at the end of the academic Year.</p> <p>Bev Curtis advised that he also intends to step down as a Trustee and Chair of the HR Committee in December 2020 and has agreed to become a Member of the ACES Board. It is intended that Rebecca Ryan will succeed him as Chair of the HR Committee. It was noted that this will leave a vacancy for a Vice Chair. There was no immediate interest shown at the meeting but the Chair will speak with Trustees outside the meeting and aim to elect a Vice-Chair at the next meeting in December.</p> <p>Paul Fenney is to step down as a Trustee and Chair of the Finance Committee in December 2020. It is intended that James Nicholson will succeed him as Chair of the Finance Committee.</p> <p>Andy Rankine also intends to step down from the Board and as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee in December 2020. It is intended that Raj Joshi will succeed him as Chair of this Committee.</p> <p>Cliff Fluet will also step down as a Trustee at the end of the academic year.</p> <p>The appointments of Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors for each of the Local Governing Bodies were ratified by the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>ACTION: CHAIR TO DISCUSS VICE-CHAIR VACANCY WITH TRUSTEES BEFORE NEXT MEETING</p>
4.	To approve the minutes of the last meeting of 2nd September 2020
	The minutes of the last meeting were deemed to be an accurate account of proceedings and were signed off by the Chair.
5.	CEO Report
	<p>The CEO updated Trustees on his report. He added that the priority at the start of term was to settle in the 2 new Godmanchester Schools and this has gone well.</p> <p>The Chair touched on the continued plans to expand the MAT and stressed the importance of being able to incorporate another secondary school into the MAT.</p> <p>The CEO updated Trustees on recent discussions with the CEO of a small Bedfordshire based MAT. Discussions on the two MATs forging links with a view to a possible merger had gone extremely well but, following their discussions with their RSC, it was disappointing to learn they were recommended to work with a larger trust. They stated they wished to 'sort out their problems' first, before considering their longer-term future. The CEO has since written to the RSC to highlight his disappointment that ACES had not been properly and fairly</p>

Signed: 
 Date: 15/12/20


	<p>considered in the process and that no due diligence had taken place before making the decision to go with another MAT.</p> <p>A discussion followed and Trustees recommended that the CEO contact the RSC to inform them of the Trust's intention to grow and keep ACES on their radar.</p> <p><u>ACTION: CEO TO CONTACT SUE BALDWIN REGARDING MAT DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u></p> <p>Further discussion on feeder primary schools with Trustees enquiring whether the CEO had made contact with any of them. The CEO explained that it had been a conscious decision not to, due to the likely additional workload Headteachers would be under due to COVID-19. He did, however, inform Trustees that it is on his radar and plans to make contact by the end of the year, perhaps by way of a letter enclosed in a Christmas card.</p> <p>The CEO also updated Trustees on the proposed INSET day for teachers in the primary schools. A lot of planning has taken place for the event but the CEO said he was mindful of possible anxieties due to COVID-19. He was still hopeful that it will go ahead.</p> <p>Questioning/challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Trustee stressed the need for a competitive strategy and promote what makes the Trust stand out from other Trusts. The CEO referenced the marketing brochure on the website and welcomed feedback from Trustees. • A Trustee had noticed a lack of ACES branding at the Godmanchester Schools which could represent a missed opportunity to raise awareness of ACES. <p>The CEO advised Trustees that website updates are planned for both school and signage is due to put up in the schools before Christmas.</p>
6.	<p>Proposed Increase PAN for Hinchingsbrooke School</p>
	<p>A proposal had been submitted to the Board by the Headteacher of Hinchingsbrooke School detailing the rationale to increase the school's current PAN from 300 to 350, effective from September 2021. The document provided comparisons, based over the next 5 years, of the financial forecast between the current and proposed PAN increase. The document details the primary reasons for proposing an increasing in PAN: Financial advantages and to meet local demand. The document contained estimated costings of classroom leasing and additional staff. Furthermore, it is likely that Hinchingsbrooke School will revert to a 2-year KS4 curriculum which is the preferred model of Ofsted and is also a cheaper model.</p> <p>Questioning/challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once Teachers have been recruited, does this represent a financial risk in the future? The CEO explained that every year the school receives c. 500 first choice applications. There is no reason why this should decrease in the future. Additionally, the threat of a new nearby free secondary school in Godmanchester has now been withdrawn. • A Trustee noted that there is a large amount of housing in Godmanchester and Brampton and student numbers are likely to continue to grow. • A Trustee questioned whether the installation of portacabins on the school site may detract from the beauty of the school grounds and Hinchingsbrooke House. The CEO advised that portacabins will be leased and are likely to be more attractive than the style that have been previously used in the school. • A Trustee asked, should it be in the best interests of the school, if the PAN could be decreased after making an application to increase the PAN. The CEO advised that academies can set their own PAN annually and do not have to consult about PAN as they would about admissions criteria. They have a duty to inform parents, the LA and the RSC. • A Trustee noted that if it was the school's intention to increase the PAN size, it would be beneficial for feeder primary schools to sit within the ACES MAT. <p>The Board were happy to support the increase to HBK's PAN but require fuller costings, particularly around the new classrooms, any additional toilet provision and they would like to understand the financial and curriculum modelling. Furthermore, the Board will reserve the right to look at it again next year.</p>
7.	<p>To approve SENDA Policy</p>
	<p>The SENDA policy, which was circulated prior to the meeting, had been reviewed by Trustees. Trustees were happy to approve minor amendments to the policy.</p>

Signed:

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8.	AOB
	<p>The Standards & Innovation Committee had had their first meeting of the year on 30/09/20 with another committee meeting taking place on 24/11/20. It was agreed that an update from this Committee will be an agenda point at the next board meeting.</p> <p>Questioning/Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Trustee asked if data and targets can be presented at the next board meeting for comparisons of the schools. <p>Data and targets will be discussed at the next Standards & Innovation Committee meeting with a summary update provided to Trustees at the Board meeting in December.</p> <p><u>ACTION: STANDARDS & INNOVATION UPDATE TO BE PUT ON NEXT TRUSTEES MEETING AGENDA</u></p> <p>Some Trustees were unable to access the CEO report on the OnBoard Platform. The clerk will look into the issue and enquire if a tutorial is available to send to Trustees.</p> <p><u>ACTION: CLERK TO SEND ONBOARD TUTORIAL TO TRUSTEES</u></p>
93	To confirm date of next meeting
	The date of the next meeting is confirmed as 15/12/20.

Meeting finished at 7pm

Signed: 
Date: 15/12/20