



ACES ACADEMIES TRUST

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting held on Tuesday 27 April 2021, 5.15 pm, via Zoom

Present:	Brian Message (BM), Chair and Trustee Cliff Fluett (CF), Trustee Gary Weston (GW), Trustee Raj Joshi (RJ), Trustee Dan Lewis (DL), Trustee Rebecca Ryan (RR), Trustee Jefrey Matamba (JM), Trustee James Nicholson (JN), Trustee Andrew Goulding (AEG), CEO
In attendance:	David McMillan (DRM), Finance Director Karen Smith (KS), Chair of Governors – Godmanchester Bridge Academy Richard Laing (RL), Chair of Governors – Cromwell Academy Debbie Warner (DW), Clerk

1.	Chair of Governors reports
	<p>KS provided a verbal account of headlines contained in her report. The school continues with the SDP despite COVID. LGB has continued to stay in touch with the Headteacher throughout the pandemic and this has been documented. KS raised the issue of a growing community and admissions to GBA with a likely need for an additional class in reception in 2022. The CEO supports the notion children who live nearby should be able attend GBA but there may be a need to direct them to GCA who are not yet full. KS raised concern that residents could be faced with a situation where siblings could be sent to different schools. KS added that the LGB is looking to appoint a further parent governor.</p> <p>RL provided a summary of the headlines contained in his report. He felt there is a disconnect between the LGB and school due to pandemic although they were trying to overcome this with regular Zoom contact with the Headteacher. Like, GBA, RL is also looking to appoint one, possibly two, parent governors. He was pleased to report that the last set of data was more encouraging. Admissions numbers are climbing rapidly. He added that he was encouraged by the last Ofsted monitoring inspection where governors were praised for being well connected with the school.</p> <p>Reports from GCA and HBK were also made available to Trustees. Trustees thanked chair of governors for their detailed report.</p> <p>Challenge/questioning: A Trustee thought that CoGs could play a vital role engaging parents with the Ofsted Parent View, particularly in Cromwell Academy's case as the school has improved significantly since the new Headteacher had been appointed.</p> <p>ACTION: CLERK TO ARRANGE FOR A NUMBER OF TRUSTEES TO ATTEND FURTHER LGB MEETINGS IN THE AUTUMN TERM</p>
2.	Apologies for absence
	Apologies were received and accepted from Ian Phillips and Claire Rose.
3.	Declaration of interests
	No conflicts of interest were declared.
4.	To approve the minutes of the last meeting of 9 February 2021
	The Chair highlighted key points from the last meeting and the associated action points. Trustees approved the minutes of the meeting.
5.	Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda
	The CEO highlighted a potential short-term risk regarding a piece of leased land adjacent to Hinchbrook school containing 2 football pitches and woodland. The lease to the land is coming to an end in August and

Signed:

Date: 20/07/21

	<p>the intention is the hand the land back to the Council. However, the wooded area has been turned into a mountain bike track attracting people to come and use it via a website. The Site Manager has now been receiving lots of reports from residents of antisocial behaviour, including drug taking. The CEO said, that whilst he felt an element of sympathy with the bikers, it cannot be ignored that they are illegally trespassing.</p> <p>Trustees were concerned enough to recommend that the matter needed to be resolved urgently.</p> <p>ACTION: RJ TO ENGAGE WITH POLICE REGARDING THE PIECE OF LAND USED BY BIKERS</p>
6.	CEO's report
	<p>Trustees received the report ahead of the meeting and confirmed they had read the document. The CEO went through the main points contained in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full data reports from the primary schools are included in the report and represent a good picture. • Central Team has appointed a transitional lead. • IT Technician post to be advertised after half term for a September start. • Digital strategy is included in report. • Decision yet to be made on MIS provider. • The CEO referred to the PAG document adopting a new proposal for strategy for growth, notably by the end of December the Trust will have received expressions of interest/identified a secondary school and/or by April 2022, will have moved towards a merger with another MAT. The CEO welcomed thoughts from the Board. • The CEO discussed the progress he had made with primary schools and was attending various meetings with the Headteachers and/or LGB. <p>The CEO detailed the schools identified by PAG. Trustees needs to consider the quick wins in the identified schools.</p> <p>Trustees agreed a strategy of being more generous with geographic scope</p> <p>Refer to pag on quick win ceo at pag to see if they have a view.</p> <p>Should consider hiring pag on a no win no fee backs as the trust will be racking up fees. Engaged for 3 month initially but felt it was good value for money. Done a lot of research and provided good report with lots of options and personal approach is likely to be the best way</p> <p>Trustees favoured the approach for ceo to contact rather than pag</p> <p>Email any further thoughts to ceo.</p> <p><u>Questioning/challenge:</u></p> <p>A Trustee questioned whether it would be advantageous for caretakers to be part of the Trust and not employed by individual schools.</p> <p>The CEO was aware that Headteachers like to have their own caretakers but would work very closely with ACES site team.</p> <p>D Lewis met the meeting at this point</p>
7.	Finance overview
	<p>The FD provided an overview of the Trust's finances:</p> <p>End of year surplus of 40k.</p> <p>Trading accounts total 150k due mainly to Hinchbrook school underspend due to COVID.</p> <p>40k claim from government for FSM.</p> <p>The level of Trust reserves means certain items are unclaimable.</p> <p>There has been no communication regarding the CIF bids which have been applied for.</p> <p>Forecasting end of year £1.6/1.7M unrestricted reserves which is healthy.</p>
8.	AOB
	<p>Top risks to the Trust were discussed.</p>

	<p>RJ remains concerned that previous A&R committed meetings were not conducted well. DRM to meet to discuss this with a in terms of future agendas. The Chair was pleased to acknowledge that this is the case now that that the board has expanded.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the previous meeting where digital poverty was discussed and looked forward to receiving school data for Trust reserves could be used to address digital poverty.</p>
8.	To confirm the date of the next meeting
	Date of next meeting: Tuesday 20 July, 5.15pm

Meeting finished at 7.15pm