



PATHFINDER MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on Thursday 1st February 2018 at 6.30pm at Tang Hall Primary School

Present:

Revd Richard Battersby
Dr Andrew Clarke
Mr John Hattam (Chair)
Mr John Sharpe (*until
8.35pm*)
Mrs Claire Theyers

In attendance:

Mr Stuart Outram – Head of Primary Education
Mrs Cath Precious – Headteacher, Tang Hall Primary School
Mr Glen Duxbury - Finance Director
Mrs Barbara Kybett – Governance Advisor – Clerk

The start of the meeting was delayed until 6.50pm.

ACTION

1. Welcome, Apologies and Consents

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, with a particular welcome to Cath Precious.

Apologies were received, with consent, from Paul Durham and Alison Smith.

2. Declarations of interest

The Chair reported that he had agreed to be a Member of the Star Multi Academy Trust which was being formed by a number of schools in the Tadcaster area. This role was on a voluntary basis. There were no further new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held 21st December 2017, Action Points and Matters Arising (previously distributed)

Both the main and confidential minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

Proposed: Andy Clarke Seconded: Claire Theyers Approved: unanimously

Action Points - Main set

| Action | Agenda Item | Person(s) Responsible | Timescale |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Circulate the date of Diocesan training on the new SIAMS framework | 4 | Clerk | Complete |
| 2. Feedback on draft revised Scheme of Delegation | 7 | All directors | Carried forward |
| 3. Provide information on current complements of LGCs to Chair and EHT | 8 | Clerk | Complete |
| 4. Investigate community schools relationship with SACRE | 9.1 | Alison Smith | Carried |

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|----|--|----|--------------|-----------------|
| | | | | forward |
| 5. | Devise financial returns timetable for LGC use | 15 | Glen Duxbury | Carried forward |

With reference to Action Point 5, Glen reported that he had developed templates to support more accurate budgeting and was working with the SBMs to implement them. This process would be complete by half term with a financial returns timetable in place by then.

Action Points – Confidential set

| Action | Agenda Item | Person(s) Responsible | Timescale |
|---------------|---|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Report back to HT at Clifton Green re: Board's decision | EHT | Complete |

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. **Correspondence Received**

There was no correspondence to report.

5. **Chair's Report**

5.1 Report from AGM held 23rd January 2018

The Chair reported that the Members' AGM had been held on 23rd January which had been attended by the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Whitby and the Dean of the Minster, as well as himself as Chair of the Board and Andrew Daly, as Executive Head of the MAT. The Members' had approved the Annual Accounts and appointed the auditors. They had requested that the following be reported to directors:

- Members were justifiably proud of the Trust schools' outcomes and the support in place for weaker schools
- Members wished to thank all Trust staff who had successfully managed a period of great change and were now to be allowed a year to consolidate
- it appeared that AHS was subsidising the primary schools, a position which was not sustainable in the long term
- good induction and training at local governor level was vital – all governors should be knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of their schools
- robust safeguarding procedures were paramount.

It had been Members' wish that they be represented on the interview panel for new directors. Arrangements were being made to include the Dean on the interview panel.

The Clerk agreed to circulate the minutes of the AGM to directors once they had been approved by Members.

Clerk

5.2 Director Vacancies - update

The Chair reminded directors of the changes which had led to the current Board of seven directors. He reported that Members' had approved an increase to eleven directors, the odd number being a recommendation from the DfE. He noted the provision within the Articles to move to twelve directors.

The Chair reported that following advertisement, five applications had been

received for the four vacancies and he gave further details about the applicants, noting that the CVs submitted were of a high quality. He advised that he would be interviewing with the Dean on 15th February and the Dean would interview with the Executive Head on 23rd February. Appointments would therefore be made on Monday 26th February.

A director queried whether a skills audit had been completed in order for new directors to be appointed on a skills basis. The Chair explained that he had analysed the profiles of current directors and had consequently been able to identify skills gap on the Board. These were specifically HR, legal and governance and compliance which had been highlighted in the original advertisement.

5.3 LGC Chairs' meeting – report from meeting held 17 January 2018

John Sharpe provided a brief verbal report on the recent informal meeting of the LGC chairs, noting that it had been useful and would be repeated in the summer term. He was hopeful that it would create an effective channel of communication between the Board and LGC chairs.

Returning to his report, the Chair provided directors with a summary of the presentation he had given to Members at the AGM, including an overview of the academy landscape both nationally and in the city. Directors were particularly interested in the statistics around the size of MATs, noting that trusts with between six and ten schools represented only 6.6% of trusts, with the majority being smaller.

The Chair proposed that, once the Board was at full strength at the March meeting, the membership of the Board's committees should be reviewed and directors could be allocated link areas, such as safeguarding and health and safety.

Agenda

With reference to the online meeting platform, MinutePad, the Chair proposed that the Board should consider approving it at the March meeting, once feedback from all LGCs had been received. He reported that the system would be provided free of charge to the MAT until September 2019, at which time a cost of around £1800 per annum would be incurred, depending on the number of meetings held. Directors were in general positive about the system, particularly its compliance with the new GDPR, and fed back some issues to the Clerk.

Agenda

6. Progress Summary

Stuart Outram reported that there had been limited progress on the MAT Development Plan since the last meeting which was only four school weeks ago.

7. Finance Update (previously distributed)

Glen Duxbury reported that an in year deficit of £105k was forecast for the MAT Central budget at year end, leaving a cumulative deficit of £86k, and that this deficit would worsen if income continued to be less than expenditure as was forecast. He confirmed that the budget figures did not include income from any further schools, income from bids or SCA funding but that the increase in the National Funding Formula had been accounted for.

The Chair observed that the current structure was not sustainable and, given that it was unlikely that further schools would join in the short term or that external funding would be received, other sources of increased funding would need to be considered. He suggested that this be discussed in the summer term. Directors agreed that the current model was not sustainable but that it was vital to involve chairs of LGCs in communicating this message. Glen advised that he was completing a benchmarking exercise with similar Trusts.

**Agenda
May/
July**

Glen reported that the financial position in the MAT schools was strong overall and highlighted the following:

- the deficit at AHS was no cause for concern and would be eradicated in 2018-19
- income at Heworth Primary was fixed as the school was unable to increase pupil numbers any further; this had consequences for the budget when costs, particularly staffing costs, continued to grow
- the surplus held at New Earswick Primary would be spent but as pupil numbers were increasing, this was not a cause for concern
- St Lawrence's Primary would break even this year, but the outlook for future years was bleak as pupil numbers showed no sign of recovering.

In response to a director's question, Glen confirmed that the total surplus would change as schools spent their funds. He advised that there were no legally restricted reserves and therefore in principle funds could be reallocated.

8. Executive Head's Report (previously distributed)

Directors received the Executive Head's report and Stuart highlighted the following:

- individual headteachers' reports on a good start to the term; Vicky Whittingham had submitted her first report as headteacher of Badger Hill Primary
- the section on the MAT's overall structure including the recruitment drive for directors
- visits to LGC meetings to present the revised Scheme of Delegation
- the recent Standards Committee meeting at which data had been available which compared KS2 outcomes with those of similar schools
- the summary of the excellent KS4 and KS5 results at AHS.

Stuart reported that the data consultant, Anthony Conlin, had attended the Headteachers' Group meeting that morning and had given an excellent presentation on the interpretation of data. Stuart advised that autumn term data from the primary schools had been analysed and that the same process would be repeated in the spring and summer terms. The Chair commented that the Board needed to be informed of where the MAT was adding value. Andy Clarke, as chair of the Standards Committee, explained that the data was benchmarked so that the impact of interventions could be measured. He added that the data analysis documents scrutinised by the Committee could also be used at LGC level to hold SLTs to account. It was noted that the document would generate questions and discussions, not least on how funds should be used to support school improvement. Andy emphasised the importance to the Committee of the data analysis sheets which enabled them to scrutinise real time in-year data.

Returning to the Executive Head's report, Stuart drew attention to the following:

- the risk assessments completed for individual schools
- the work which Margaret Francis was undertaking as external challenge partner for the MAT's primaries, including headteacher performance management
- templates which schools had been asked to complete with their KS1 and KS2 targets and predictions.

The Chair questioned if sufficient ambition was incorporated into the targets being set. Stuart explained that all schools had been given FFT5 targets which were very challenging, and that predictions, based on assessments to date, were expected to be realistic. Cath Precious confirmed that assessment data was robust as it was based largely on testing. The Chair challenged Stuart to confirm that all schools were similarly ambitious for their pupils; Stuart agreed that this was the case and that the scrutiny provided by Margaret Francis would

provide evidence for this assertion. It was noted that the Standards Committee played a key role in verifying schools' predictions and ensuring that these were validated externally. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next Standards Committee meeting.

**Agenda
SC**

Stuart observed that he and Margaret provided a high level of independent scrutiny and also provided triangulation between the headteacher and the Board. A director remarked that the Finance and Resources Committee would benefit from the same level of external scrutiny.

Stuart highlighted the summary paper on school improvement contained in the Executive Head's report, noting the five key areas. He reported that the MAT's priorities had been set at the first meeting of the Standards Committee in the autumn term. The Chair questioned how the Board would receive the appropriate level of detail regarding the ongoing drive to raise standards. Andy advised that progress on the MAT's priorities could be reported to the Board in a succinct format. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next Standards Committee meeting.

**Agenda
SC**

With reference to the GDPR update, Stuart reported that Michelle Bowling was driving this in her role as Operations Manager. Michelle had attended training on GDPR with Dan Furniss from AHS. Glen further reported that the Trust was working with the Ebor Academy Trust with a view to appointing a joint data protection officer.

Finally, Stuart drew attention to the sections in the Executive Head's report covering safeguarding, career pathways, the MAT handbook, finance, and the appointment of a new Estates and Facilities manager, Christopher Warnett.

9. Standards Committee

9.1 Minutes of the meeting held Monday 22nd January 2018 (previously distributed)

Directors received the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 22nd January 2018.

10. Finance and Resources Committee

No meeting held.

11. Scheme of Delegation (previously distributed)

The Chair reminded directors to send any comments to the Clerk. He referred to a comment made at Hempland Primary LGC meeting regarding the number of provisions made in the Scheme for Church schools and emphasised the Trust's legal duty to protect the ethos and values of all schools, whether Church or community.

A director commented that the Scheme was quite elaborate and might be simplified. The Chair responded that it was principally a reference document to be used when issues over roles and responsibilities in governance arose.

It was noted that the Scheme had been developed by Claire Graham-Brown at the Diocese and therefore was legally compliant.

12. MAT Development Plan

Covered under Item 6.

13. Approvals Required

13.1 PMAT Admissions Policy 2019-20

13.2 AHS Admissions Policy 2019-20 and Sixth Form Admissions Policy 2019-20

13.3 Heworth CE Primary School Admissions Policy 2019-20

13.4 St Lawrence's CE Primary School Admissions Policy 2019-20
(all previously distributed)

Directors approved the above Admissions Policies for 2019-20 entry.

Proposed: John Sharpe Seconded: Richard Battersby

Agreed: unanimously

13.5 PMAT Health & Safety Policy (previously distributed)

It was noted that the current headteachers' signatures needed to be added.
With this amendment:

Directors approved the PMAT Health & Safety policy.

Proposed: Andy Clarke Seconded: John Sharpe

Agreed: unanimously

In response to a director's question, Glen confirmed that there were no amendments to the policy which resulted from the Grenfell Tower disaster, as the Trust did not own any buildings over the height threshold.

13.6 Acomb Primary School LGC

Directors ratified the Local Governing Committee of Acomb Primary School.

Proposed: John Sharpe Seconded: Andy Clarke

Agreed: unanimously

14. Applicants' Status Update

The Chair reported that a response had been received from the headteacher at Clifton Green Primary, in which he had raised four points:

- he had suggested a further one to one meeting with Glen to discuss in detail financial issues
- would deciding to join PMAT affect the school's application to change its age range to 0-11 years?
- would deciding to join PMAT affect the LA's agreement to fund major capital works in the school?
- with reference to the SDP, where would the MAT add value?

The headteacher had advised that the Governing Body would meet during the following week to consider the Board's responses and to decide whether to progress the school's application to join the MAT.

A director observed that the MAT would require assurances that the LA would fund the capital works. It was noted however that the school would not be able to join the MAT until autumn 2019, due to capacity at the LA to process academy conversions.

(John Sharpe left the meeting at 8.35pm)

15. Director training and recruitment

The Chair reported that he and the Executive Head had arranged to meet the Executive Principal of the MAT based around South Hunsley School.

Andy Clarke reported that the Standards Committee had received a presentation from Cath Precious on Ofsted data dashboards.

16. Matters for delegation/communication to LGCs

LGCs were asked to provide feedback on MinutePad.

17. AOB

*(Cath Precious left the meeting whilst this item was discussed)
This item is recorded as a confidential minute.*

18. Determination of Confidential Items

It was agreed that the item discussed under AOB would be recorded as a confidential minute.

Directors delegated the determination of any other confidential items to the Chair and the Clerk.

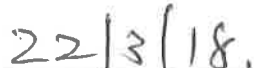
19. Dates of Meetings 2017/18 – all on Thursdays at 6.30pm

- 22nd March 2018 – AHS
- 24th May 2018 at Acomb Primary School (provisional)
- 19th July 2018 tbc

The meeting closed at 8.45pm. .



John Hattam
Chair



Date

**PATHFINDER MAT
ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF THE BOARD ON
THURSDAY 1st FEBRUARY AT 6.30PM**

| Action | Agenda Item | Person(s) Responsible | Timescale |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Feedback on draft revised Scheme of Delegation | 3 | All directors | By next meeting |
| 2. Investigate community schools relationship with SACRE | 3 | Alison Smith | For next meeting |
| 3. Devise financial returns timetable for LGC use | 3 | Glen Duxbury | ASAP |
| 4. Circulate AGM minutes | 5.1 | Clerk | Once approved |

Standing Items:

- Executive Head's report
- Committee minutes
- MAT Development Plan – Action Areas 1 and 2
- Matters to be delegated/communicated to LGCs
- Training

Items for next agenda:

- Allocation of directors to committees and to link roles
- Scheme of Delegation approval
- MinutePad approval

Items for future agendas:

- Discussion on increasing income to secure sustainability of MAT Central

Items for Finance & Resources Committee agenda:

- Provision of financial information to support modelling of staffing structures
- Consideration of post of Chief Operating Officer

Items for Standards Committee agenda

- External validation of predictions for KS1 and KS2 SATS
- Format of reports to the Board

Academy LGC Agendas:

- Review of draft Scheme of Delegation
- Feedback on MinutePad