

Meeting of the Academy Transformation Trust Board

9 October 2019

12:30 to 15:30

Venue: Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

The 7 principles of public life

Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership

Board members	Initial	Position
Bernard Dickenson	BD	Chair
Tom Clark	TC	Trustee
Neil Lucas	NL	Trustee
Phil Milligan	PJM	Trustee
Alistair Milne	AM	Trustee
Dave Trotman	DT	Trustee
Margaret Wilson	MW	Trustee
Attendees	Initials	Position
Debbie Clinton	DC	CEO
Amy Bills	AB	RED, Primary West
Vince Green	VG	RED, Secondary West
Andy Gannon	AG	HoCA and Clerk

Apologies

Board members	Initial	Position
Pat Beanland	PB	Vice Chair
Bernard Cook	BC	Trustee
Simon Jones	SJ	Trustee

Minutes

ITEM	Detail
001	
001.1	<p><i>Confirmation of Chair and Vice Chair for 2019-20</i></p> <p>The HoCA took the Chair and asked for nominations to the position of Chair. DT proposed that BD be Chair. This was seconded by MW and therefore agreed.</p> <p>BD took the Chair at this point and asked for nominations to the position of Vice Chair. PB was proposed by MW. This was seconded by NL and agreed.</p>
001.2	<p><i>Confirmation of sub-committee membership for 2019-20</i></p> <p>AG presented the paper circulated ahead of the meeting and its contents were agreed. In response to concerns about the quoracy of sub-committees Trustees agreed that the HoCA could seek representation from any Trustee at any sub-committee if it enabled meetings to go ahead.</p>
002	Routine business

002.1	<i>Apologies for absence</i>			
	These were received and accepted from PB, BC and SJ. The Chair welcomed AM to his first meeting as a Trustee.			
002.2	<i>Business interest declarations</i>			
	The HoCA reminded Trustees there was a requirement to declare their business interests annually and requested that forms be returned to him by 25 October.			
002.3	<i>Declarations of interest for this meeting</i>			
	There were none.			
002.4	<i>Minutes of the last meeting</i>			
	These were accepted as accurate.			
002.5	<i>Matters arising</i>			
	There were no specific matters arising, although one Trustee asked whether we were confident the Trust's ICT budget was sufficient to meet the needs of our emerging vision. The Chair confirmed there had been a long discussion about this at the FRC meeting which had preceded the Board meeting and that plans were in place to develop a delivery plan which will be fully costed. Trustees then expressed concern that an emerging ICT strategy may pose a risk to a balanced budget. DC suggested this would be easier to quantify once the vision for ICT delivery was completed later this term.			
002.6	Action			
	A01	Return business interest forms to HoCA	Trustees	25 October 2019
003	Safeguarding			
003.1	<i>KCSIE 2019</i>			
	AG presented the paper previously circulated and all Trustees confirmed they had read and understood the full KCSIE guidance.			
	Trustees requested that the short document highlighting changes between this year's and last year's guidance be circulated to all Trustees and AG agreed to do this.			
003.2	<i>Group update</i>			
	DC advised Trustees that Ofsted are currently carrying out a 'front door' inspection in Norfolk focusing on issues of safeguarding and offrolling.			
	She confirmed also that a strong appointment was being made to the Director of Safeguarding (DoS) post and that more formal reporting on safeguarding would come to Trustees once the postholder had started.			
003.3	Action			
	A02	Circulate KCSIE guidance sheet to Trustees	AG	With minutes of this meeting
004	Strategic considerations (DC)			
004.1	<i>Group Vision, strategic aims, KPIs and self-evaluation</i>			

	The Chair suggested that items 004.1, 004.2 and 004.3 be considered together and Trustees agreed. DC presented the papers previously circulated to the Board and emphasised that they were intended to provoke thought and reflection ahead of a more detailed consideration and debate at the strategic session on 6 November.
004.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trustees asked whether feedback ahead of 6 November would be helpful and DC confirmed she would be delighted to receive any. 2. One Trustee suggested that the link between proposed aims 2, 5 and 7 and people development be made more explicit and DC agreed. The Chair suggested that the Trust's activity in developing an 'Institute' was critical here and that that should be a key focus of discussions in November. Trustees responded positively to the notion that the Institute may become a core function of the Trust and noted the need to ensure it was resourced properly. 3. One Trustee suggested that the notions of 'professional capital' and 'network capital' be included in our aspirations for both the Institute and our pupils. 4. One Trustee suggested that, although the Institute proposition is unique to the multi-academy trust sector, there are other sectors where similar ideas are already in development. Trustees agreed to share appropriate contacts with DC as thinking develops. 5. Trustees asked whether there should be a clearer focus on wellbeing within the strategic aims and DC agreed to review with this in mind. 6. Trustees asked what the right timescale for reviewing the SEF might be and DC suggested twice-yearly, which was accepted as broadly right by Trustees. 7. Trustees suggested the most important part of the SEF process would be to ensure that the evidence upon which judgments were made was clear. DC confirmed this would be the focus of ELT activity in populating the template once it was approved.
004.3	<p><i>Proposals for strategy session, 6 November</i></p> <p>AG presented the paper previously circulated and Trustees suggested that, in light of the previous discussion, more time on the day should be given over to the strategy session. AG agreed to reflect this in the planning that would take place.</p>
005	Performance
005.1	<p><i>Performance report 2018-19</i></p> <p>DC presented the papers previously circulated alongside her summative evaluations. Trustees acknowledged the positive progress made in the year and noted the formal scrutiny of individual elements that had taken place within sub-committees.</p>
005.2	<p><i>CEO acclimatisation visits</i></p> <p>DC presented the report which had been circulated ahead of the meeting and emphasised that her role would now focus more on quality assuring the systems put in place to drive improvement across the Trust.</p>
005.3	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trustees asked how they could best use some of the quality assurance mechanisms to directly assure themselves of the effectiveness of this activity. AB

	<p>said that a proposal was being developed to involve Trustees in Full Academy Reviews and that this would be shared after half term.</p> <p>2. Trustees asked whether the CEO was confident that all of the findings from her acclimatisation visits were now reflected within the proposed strategic aims. DC confirmed this was the case.</p>			
005.4	Action			
	A03	Circulate opportunities for Trustees to engage with FARs	AG	By end October 2019
006	Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)			
006.1	In the absence of SJ, AG presented the minutes which had been circulated previously. He focused on the committee's scrutiny of, and decisions around, safeguarding, risk management and the internal audit schedule. Trustees noted the minutes.			
007	Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)			
007.1	NL outlined the focus areas from the meeting that had taken place preceding the Board meeting. He confirmed the positive financial outturn for 2018-19 and the success in reducing capital works liabilities significantly. Trustees noted the update.			
008	Standards and Outcomes Committee (SOC)			
008.1	MW presented a summary of the meeting that had taken place on 2 October. She highlighted the improved documentation and evidence being provided by the REDs team and focused on the committee's concerns about the progress of disadvantaged pupils, the monitoring of attendance and exclusions and the approach to admissions, all of which would be monitored thoroughly by the committee this year. Trustees noted the update.			
008.2	Clarification and challenge			
	<p>1. Trustees asked whether SOC was happy that the pace of improvement was fast enough. MW said there was evidence of this, but that the committee would scrutinise progress thoroughly, especially in regard to disadvantaged pupils, at every meeting. She confirmed the committee was receiving updates about the outcomes of Full Academy Reviews (FARs) and responding to these.</p> <p>2. In response to a question about the difference between primary and secondary performance, MW acknowledged that the picture in secondary is a little more difficult because of changes in the way progress, in particular, is measured. VG confirmed that a validated picture would be available for SOC in January.</p> <p>3. One Trustee asked whether Principals were clearer on in-year admissions arrangements and especially the need to ensure that information about pupils is shared from previous institutions. VG confirmed that work had been undertaken in this regard in Nottinghamshire which was now being shared elsewhere in the Trust. He said he was developing in-year admissions guidance with Principals and agreed to share this with Trustees, via SOC.</p>			
008.3	Action			
	A04	Bring in-year admissions guidance to SOC for scrutiny	VG	December 2019
009	Regional Performance Boards			

009.1	AG gave a verbal update on the meetings which had happened last week and noted in particular the high turnout from LAC Chairs. He said that the meetings had given him much food for thought about how best to ensure that LAC Chairs can come together with purpose and focus also on areas for their development. Trustees noted the update and requested that the work of RPBs be kept under review.		
010	Corporate matters		
010.1	<p><i>Members' meeting</i></p> <p>AG gave a brief verbal update to the Board following the Members' meeting on 2 October, highlighting the desire to scope out a role for Members which would bring meaning to both the scrutiny of Trust Board activity and active engagement with our communities.</p> <p>One Trustee reported that a recent external review of another Trust had questioned whether Members were properly constituted and asked for reassurance that ours were. AG confirmed that we are meeting DfE expectations by having five members, of whom only two are also Trustees.</p> <p>AG also advised Trustees that one Member had indicated his desire to step down but that he had agreed to stay on until we had determined the future role of Members.</p>		
010.2	<p><i>Email communications</i></p> <p>AG presented the paper which had been previously circulated which was noted by Trustees.</p>		
010.3	<p><i>Skills audit and review of Board effectiveness</i></p> <p>AG presented the paper which had been previously circulated. He asked Trustees to return skills audits to him by 25 October and confirmed that he would reflect on both the content of this paper and earlier discussions in determining an approach to the assessment of Board effectiveness that could be considered on 6 November.</p>		
010.4	Action		
	A05	Submit skills audits to AG	Trustees By 25 October 2019
011	Specific additional matters		
011.1	<p><i>CEO performance management process</i></p> <p>The Chair outlined the approach to performance management of the CEO for last year and this, confirming that an experienced and well-regarded external consultant would support the process this year and ensure that evidence was fully triangulated. There would also be an emphasis on ensuring conclusions were developmental for both the Trust and the CEO.</p>		
011.2	<p><i>Sutton Community Academy – progress from Inadequate</i></p> <p>VG presented the papers which had been previously circulated and confirmed that he, along with the CEO and the academy Principal, was meeting with the RSC on 14 October to review progress. He confirmed an upturn in KS4 results this summer, including improved Progress 8 performance and also confirmed that, based upon external assessments, safeguarding was now effective. Trustees noted the report.</p>		
012	Matters for approval		
012.1	<i>Policies</i>		

	AG presented the safeguarding and health and safety policies and explained that these had been previously scrutinised by ARC.
012.2	Resolution Trustees approved the safeguarding and health and safety policies.
012.3	<i>LAC Chairs at SCS, MHA and TFE</i> AG presented the paper which had been previously circulated. Trustees repeated their request that the appointment of LAC Chairs next year should follow a more defined process.
012.4	Resolution Trustees approved the appointment of LAC Chairs at SCA, MHA and TFE.
013	Any other business (all)
013.1	There was none.
	<i>The meeting closed at 14:52</i>

Date of next meeting:

6 November 2019
10:00 to 15:30
ATT Head Office, Sutton Coldfield

Action log

A01	Return business interest forms to HoCA	Trustees	25 October 2019
A02	Circulate KCSIE guidance sheet to Trustees	AG	With minutes of this meeting
A03	Circulate opportunities for Trustees to engage with FARs	AG	By end October 2019
A04	Bring in-year admissions guidance to SOC for scrutiny	VG	December 2019
A05	Submit skills audits to HoCA	Trustees	By 25 October 2019