

## .INSPIRE PARTNERSHIP MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



### ACADEMY TRUST MEMBERS' MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:**

12 May 2020

**TIME:**

4.30 pm

**LOCATION:**

Via Microsoft Teams

#### PRESENT

<b>In the Chair:</b>	Mr S Tottles (ST)	
<b>Members:</b>	Mr M Ellerker (ME) Mr J North (JN) Mr R Barraclough (RB)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mrs S Vickerman (CEO) (SV)	Hayley Hill (HH)
<b>Clerk:</b>	Mrs Susanna Stott (SS)	

This meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams to enable the IPMAT to update the Members on the ongoing situation with Covid-19 and continue with Governance as guided by the NGA.

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b>1. ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING</b> Mr Stuart Tottles was elected as Chair for this meeting.</p>	
<p><b>2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> There were no apologies for absence received.</p>	
<p><b>3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA</b> There were no Declarations of Interest shared in respect of any items on the Agenda.</p>	
<p><b>4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2020</b> The Chair noted the incorrect spelling of his first name in the previous minutes. This has been recorded for future reference by the Clerk.  The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record and a hard copy will be signed when the Covid-19 situation improves to allow face-to-face meetings. These will be filed within the IPMAT Headquarters.</p>	
<p><b>5. CEO'S REPORT - VERBAL</b> SV, CEO of the Trust gave a verbal update to the Members on activities within the Trust further to the last meeting held in November 2019 including an update on the Covid-19 actions undertaken.  SV explained that the situation with regards to Covid-19 is changing on to a day to day basis and as a Trust we are possibly feeling a little overwhelmed with the constant changes in guidelines for schools.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>SV explained that the Trust has undergone three successful Ofsted Inspections during the Spring1 Term.</p> <p>Half Acres Primary was the first and we received the phone call on the first day back in school after the Christmas break. The school had only introduced the new phonics scheme the day before the inspection, the current HT was absent with illness and Rachel Taylor was acting HT. We received excellent feedback from the Inspector including a strong positive message on the delivery of phonics. The HT at Half Acres has now resigned and we have placed an advert for a replacement. The current acting HT has applied for the position and has proved to be highly successful in her acting role.</p> <p>The second inspection was Fitzwilliam Primary and again the HT was sadly unavailable for this Inspection due to illness. She is a strong HT and has since been diagnosed with MS. The Deputy HT, Paul Quarry the Yr6 teacher has stepped up as acting HT. Annabelle Berry, the HT at Towngate Primary Academy and the lead across the Trust in Safeguarding, along with SV and Leah Charlesworth (SIP) were heavily involved in supporting the Inspection. SV commented that under the previous framework this school would have achieved an “Outstanding” result and noted there is no gap between disadvantaged and advantaged pupils. Feedback from the Inspection was excellent, but we were disappointed that this was not reflected within the final report.</p> <p>Ackton Pastures Primary was the third Inspection and we were extremely happy to achieve the “Good” result for this school.</p> <p>ST, acting as Chair noted the outstanding role the Trust has played in supporting the school Ofsted Inspections. JN commented that he had attended each school inspection with the Governors and noted how professional the Governor responses were when answering questions and explained that each Governing Body had been an excellent support to the schools during the Inspection process.</p> <p>SV commented that the HT at Ackton Pastures has left the Trust. The previous Deputy HT who started with the Trust at the beginning of the academic year is now in position as acting HT. She is very strong and working well.</p> <p>SV gave an overview of the Trust activities during Covid-19, explaining that it has been an extremely challenging time for the Trust. We acted very swiftly once the announcement of the lockdown arrived. Home Learning initiatives were introduced quickly using the Seesaw platform. This initiative was particularly led by Katie Lea, Acting HT at Ackton Pastures along with a staff member from Half Acres (Kyle)</p> <p>The LA asked that we make weekly phone calls home to parents. Having identified all our vulnerable families in each school, we now phone these families at least once or twice per week. If we are not getting a response then we organise a home visit. SV noted that the LA are working well with all the schools across the Trust.</p> <p>Through the Trust Insurance we have set up a package of health and well-being support for staff. This has been highly successful and those staff who have accessed the counselling have reported that it has been an excellent support.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>All Trust schools were open over the Easter holidays.</p> <p>SV commented that following the recent Government announcement we will now have to take pupils into school from Nursery, Reception, Yr1 and then Yr6. At this present time, all children will be expected to be back in school before the summer holidays. We clearly have to make this work recognising the importance of keeping our staff and the children safe. We are working with the Local Authority, and we have shared a YouTube programme with all staff which explains how they can protect themselves against the virus. SV explained that individual phone calls with each HT has taken place today to enable us to ensure that social distancing can work. The LA have told the Trust not to worry about all pupils coming back into school as we think Unions may protest against this.</p> <p>We have been recommended a cleaning product by a Governor within the Trust called Zuma. This spray is reported as stopping Covid for 30 days and we have purchased this product for use in schools.</p> <p>Our schools are proceeding with all actions required with all resources being reorganised in the nurseries. All schools will be given a thorough deep clean with an industrial cleaning company. We need to reassure staff and parents. Hand sanitisers, mobile wash units etc have been purchased and will be in place for the readmission of pupils.</p> <p><b>Q: Are you planning to close over the spring bank holidays?</b>  <b>A:</b> Yes, we are. This break will give us the opportunity to get all school thoroughly deep cleaned but also we need to give our staff a rest. RB noted that their schools will also close for the spring half-term.</p> <p><b>Q: Will you use the same staff each week in school or continue to operate a rota system?</b>  <b>A:</b> We are expecting all staff to be back in school unless they are pregnant. But we are also aware that some staff have partners, family members who have to shield and we will need to take this into consideration.</p> <p>RB commented that he had also watched the Youtube video on preparing schools for readmission of pupils and noted it does go into considerable detail and explains that Scientists are almost certain that 3- and 4-year olds are not spreading this virus. SV noted we are making the preparations, but we are not happy about the position we are in. RB agreed, noting that further reassurance is needed before he allows his staff back into school and commented that will have long term effect on the mental health of the children.</p> <p>SV noted no children who regularly spit, or kick will be allowed in school.</p> <p><b>Q: Are any staff refusing to come back to work?</b>  <b>A:</b> No, they are supporting us and are prepared to come back knowing we are doing our best to ensure their total safety.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>RB commented that the tone from the Leadership Teams will be important recognising that staff know we believe this should not be happening, but also that staff understand that everything is being put in place to ensure their safety.</p> <p>SV explained that she will write to all staff again before the half-term, following previous communication sent which was well received. JN commented that he has shared some information received today from the NGA on guidelines for staff safety.</p> <p>SV noted that she has spoken to the LA who have reported that if accepting children back into school highlights problem areas then Yr6 children should be the first to be removed. CEOs of Academies across the District are to meet shortly to discuss the approach. One suggestion is for the transition for Yr6 to secondary school to take place before the summer as secondary schools are empty. However, I expect this proposal will be turned down.</p> <p>JN commented that having been part of all the HT meetings since the beginning of the lockdown it is evidently recognisable that for the HTs being part of the Trust has been very advantageous. The collective support and sharing of good practices and initiatives has been very clearly seen. RB noted that from his own personal experience as an HT being part of a Trust would be of great benefit.</p> <p>SV noted the huge responsibility she has felt during these unprecedented times and has been grateful for the support of Leah Charlesworth (LC) and John North. SV explained that following the recent Resources &amp; Audit Committee it has been agreed that LC will be appointed to work with the Trust on a full-term contract.</p>	
<p><b>6. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS/TRUSTEES</b></p>	
<p>JN explained the current position regarding the need to appoint further Trustees/Members and noted that one recently appointed Trustee whilst stating his commitment has not attended any meetings.</p> <p>Members were asked if they had any recommendations for either Members or Trustees. The Trust requires two Members to join. RB commented that now having meetings via Microsoft Teams is saving so much time that it might be possible to get a better response if the decision is made to host some of the meetings via this system in future.</p> <p>JN discussed the first visit by Trustees to Girnhill Infants School during the Spring Term. Trustees had the opportunity to speak with Staff and Governors, have a tour of the school and see the children working in the classrooms. Trustees found the visit an extremely positive experience. We will be organising one school visit per term once the lockdown is over. ST suggested that Members be invited to visit the school alongside the Trustees, which will help us connect with the schools and Trustees. RB and ME agreed this would be very helpful. SV and JN noted the suggestion and will ensure that Members are included as you would be most welcome.</p> <p>Training for Governors has been well attended and positively received. Unfortunately, further training organised in a number of subject areas has now been postponed due to the current situation.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>JN commented that observations are showing that Governance is working well across the IPMAT.</p>	
<p><b>7. CFO REPORT</b></p> <p>A number of Finance Documents have been shared with Members prior to the meeting: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the period ending 31 August 2019</li> <li>• Accounts submitted to Companies by 31 May 2020</li> </ul> <p>HH discussed in full the information shown in the Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31 August 2019 with attendees, and explained the figures shown in the accounts.</p> <p>The columns across the statement were explained as: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unrestricted funds – funds the Trust has raised through areas such as the teaching schools.</li> <li>• Restricted funds – grants received that have a specific spend criteria eg building work.</li> <li>• Fixed Assets – School buildings and land etc</li> </ul> <p>HH noted the main headline from the Statement of Financial Activities is the net income and expenditure stands at minus £2,076. The net movement of funds of just over £2.5 million is related only to the pension scheme loss. In terms of the pension scheme loss figure, we cannot change this, and whilst it is shown in our accounts, it is a sum we will never have to pay out.</p> <p>The Fixed Assets include buildings and land valuation which we will never be able to sell.</p> <p>The Balance sheet on page 22 of the IPMAT Accounts as at 31 August 2019 was explained to members. The total assets held by the Trust, a figure of £8,522,788 was noted and matches the Statement of Financial Activities</p> <p>It was noted that this is a healthy position for the Trust.</p> <p>HH commented that the IPMAT Accounts have to be submitted to Companies House before 31 May 2020 and reported that the Accounts have already been submitted and are now available to view on the school website.</p> <p><b>Q: Have we got any individual school’s budgets not looking healthy?</b>  <b>A:</b> Yes, we have. Ackton Pastures Primary had an in-year deficit of over £30,000 and also Ash Grove Primary had a deficit of £18,560. Both deficits can be clearly explained, and Ash Grove Primary only converted to the MAT in the December of the Accounts year ending 31 August 2019.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b>Q: Are we saving any operational costs due to schools not running at full capacity?</b> A: Staffing costs are the same along with utility costs, but we are saving on resources. Aside from that however, we will not receive any funding from school fund raising activities such as Summer fairs and wrap around provision. We will have less other income overall.</p> <p><b>Q: Have we received any funding for Covid-19 expenditure?</b> A: The Government has made available £25,000 per school for Covid-19 expenditure. We are recording all expenditure at the moment, as the portal to claim these expenses will not open until the beginning of June.</p>	
<p><b>8. APPOINTMENT OF COMPANY'S AUDITORS FOR NEXT YEAR</b></p> <p>The document detailing the quotation received from Gibson Booths, the Trust's current auditors has been shared with Members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>JN noted the comments made by the Chair of the Resource &amp; Audit Committee at the recent meeting and asked if the Trust should look for further quotations from other auditors for the following year. HH agreed that she will offer the business out to tender.</p> <p>HH noted the difficulty of the timing of the Members meeting to approve the appointment of auditors for the following year. It was suggested and agreed that this meeting moved to 1 February 2021.</p> <p>Members agreed the appointment for Gibson booths for this year.</p>	
<p><b>9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>Members wished to thank Sue Vickerman and all the central team staff for their hard work and support during these difficult times. ST noted his appreciation of the plans undertaken by the central team whilst also recognising the importance you have placed on the welfare of your staff. This work is valued by the Members. JN seconded this.</p>	
<p><b>10. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS</b></p> <p>The dates for the academic year starting in September 2020 have been agreed for Members Meetings and are as below:</p> <p>22 September 2020 1 February 2021 - (Monday)</p> <p><b><i>That the next meeting be held either at The Maypole Centre or via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 22 September 2020</i></b></p>	
<p><b>MEETING CLOSE TIME: 5.50pm</b></p>	

Signature of the Chair: S Tottles

Date: 22.09.2020