

INSPIRE PARTNERSHIP MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



ACADEMY TRUST MEMBERS' MEETING MINUTES

DATE:

4 May 2021

TIME:

4.30 pm

LOCATION:

Via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

In the Chair:	Mr M Ellerker (ME)	
Members:	Mr R Barraclough (RB) Mrs H Ranson (HR)	Mr J North – Chair of Trustees (JN)
In Attendance:	Mrs S Vickerman (CEO) (SV) Mrs T Fallon (COO) (TF) - part	Mrs T Jackson (CFO) TJ - part
Clerk:	Mrs S Stott (SS)	

ITEM	ACTION
1. ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING	
Mr Mark Ellerker was elected as Chair for this meeting.	
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
Apologies for absence were received from Mr Stuart Tottles.	
3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA	
There were no Declarations of Interest shared in respect of any items on the Agenda.	
4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2021	
The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record and will be signed when face to face meeting re-occur. There were no matters arising, other than Members' agreement that over the next academic year meetings will continue to take place virtually via Microsoft Teams. The May 2022 meeting however, provided the pandemic allows will take place at the Maypole Centre.	
5. CFO REPORT – TRACY JACKSON	
TJ was welcomed to the meeting as the recently appointed CFO to the IPMAT. The Finance Report to Members, May 2021 was shared with Members giving a summary of the IPMAT final 2019-2020 accounts. The CFO confirmed that the summary includes the position of the IPMAT at the end of the financial year 2019/2020 and where we expect to be at the end of this financial year. We felt it would be useful to share the overview as to the financial position of the Trust with Members.	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>TJ explained that the MAT has healthy reserves. The restricted and unrestricted funds as of 31 August 2020 are stated in the report with a cumulative balance of £1,407,361. As at the 31 March 2021 the fixed asset fund for the Trust was £13,472,287 which includes £87,145 in unspent capital grants.</p> <p>The Trust pension deficit stands at £8,592,000 but TJ noted that this is a figure that sits on the accounts but is not an issue, it just has to be recognised. Every Trust in the country has a similar figure on their balance sheets.</p> <p>Restricted and Unrestricted Reserves for each Trust school on 31 August 2021 are also stated on the Finance Report to Members. TJ noted the small increase in the reserves which has been due to the careful management of budgets by SV and TF whilst the previous CFO was absent with illness. This is a good position for the Trust at the end of this financial year.</p> <p>TJ explained that preliminary work is now being completed on next year’s budget, but further work is to be completed before reporting the final position.</p> <p>TF commented that the CFO has completed a great deal of work since starting in March. We are now close to finishing off the budget reviews for each school which will give us a much better than expected position to report. Coding issues as an example are still being unpicked but in a month’s time will be in a much firmer position to report our year end forecast.</p> <p>Q: In terms of the year end – out of the schools listed, do we know of any schools that will finish with a budget deficit A: Not cumulatively at this time. However, when we have finished all the work we may see a slight deficit at the end of the year. Grove Lea Primary who have just converted to the MAT, we will monitor closely as there may be some risk.</p> <p>Q: Is there a plan should a school need a cash injection? Where would the funds come from? A: We still have some further work to complete on the budget reviews. In year deficits are not significant, but there may potentially be concerns with South Hiendley and Grove Lea Primaries. A staff review will be completed, which should resolve any issues. The Trust has flexibility with staff contracts to move staff around schools if needed. A considerable amount of work has already been completed ready for September and it will be a focus going forward.</p> <p>SV explained the circumstances around the change to the role of the HT at South Hiendley and noted that the HT at Grove Lea has now been appointed as executive HT for both schools which will allow some savings on cost. We are now looking at pooling the GAG centrally as we may need to add to the reserves. TF confirmed that the Trust recognises from a strategic point of view that if we have a school with a major issue and not the funds for any necessary work, we need to ensure we are in a position to support the school concerned. We will be exploring potential models further.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>RB noted that in terms of the more vulnerable schools, it is possible they may be stretched with staffing and every child within the Trust deserves equality and agreed the importance of the focus on developing a model of support.</p> <p>Members agreed to accept the Company Accounts for 2019/2020 and commented on the excellent position the Trust are in.</p>	
6. APPOINTMENT OF COMPANY AUDITORS FOR NEXT YEAR	
<p>JN explained that at the last meeting for Members the appointment of new auditors for the Trust was discussed, reminding Members that we are now required to have separate companies for the supply of both Internal and External Auditor services.</p> <p>JN commented that at the last Resources & Audit Committee meeting representatives of each of the auditors appointed attended the meeting and shared an overview of the services they will be offering the Trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Auditors – Clive Owen LLP • Internal Auditors – TIAA <p>TJ noted the huge benefit in using both internal and external auditors who are very embedded in the Academy sector and the two companies appointed are very experienced in Academy finance. We are likely to now received very detailed audit information.</p> <p>TF explained that a programme has now been planned for the internal audits which covers a larger area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Security • Financial Controls • Health & Safety & compliance • Risk Management <p>TF commented that this is a very different approach from our last internal auditors and will give us clear direction and close any gaps in managing risk. It will be a robust process and as a central team we welcome this.</p> <p>Members agreed the appointment of the auditors and offered their thanks to both TJ and TF for the work undertaken.</p>	
7. CEO REPORT	
<p>SV shared her verbal CEO report with Members and noted the written report will be added to the GVO portal following the meeting.</p> <p>Wider opening of schools from the 8 March</p> <p>We have seen a very successful return to school of all our children, albeit we are seeing some boisterous behaviour particularly at break and lunchtimes. School attendance across the MAT is really strong and even better than pre-pandemic.</p>	

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<p>Recovery Plans The Trust has met with all HTs regarding their recovery plans and the use of catch up funding to target pupils on their return. Some of the actions undertaken during the pandemic have been very successful and will continue as we return to normal including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staggered start and finish times • Staggered lunch times • Continue with virtual meetings particularly around Governance although recognising the need for some face to face meetings to continue <p>Some network meetings will also continue virtually, as an example SENDCO network meetings. In this case there will be one face to face meeting and the rest will be virtual. This is reducing the time of meetings which staff are really appreciating.</p> <p>The Monday morning HT meetings undertaken during the pandemic will continue and will be held virtually along with one face to face meeting per term. HTs have found these meetings extremely useful and supportive.</p> <p>All schools are consistently looking at School Improvement and recovery is the main priority on the agenda. We are finding that children are catching up very quickly with the quality teaching we are providing. Guided by our SIP we are working closely with the children who can catch up quickly and then focus on the children who have been identified as needing further intervention.</p> <p>Children who have been in school throughout the pandemic have benefited from being in the smaller classes as they continued to receive high quality teaching. All schools across the MAT have now developed a four term SDP taking us to July 2022 where we hope to have regained the lost ground. CPD has fed into all the above.</p> <p>SV reported that the Trust Aspiring School will close in July as we have now moved into a teaching school hub model. One teaching school for Selby and Wakefield has been established and we are heavily involved whilst it is being led by Delta Academy. SV noted that she sits on the Board of the teaching school.</p> <p>Ofsted Inspections We are expecting Ofsted Inspections will be restarting after the Spring Bank Holidays. Under a revised framework they will be targeting schools who have not been inspected within the five year window and will also target maintained double RI schools, and schools who are currently sitting on an inadequate judgement. No grades will be changed during this process, however if Ofsted has concerns from these pilot inspections, they will bring forward a full inspection to September 2021. Gawthorpe, as a long-standing outstanding school could be inspected within the next 12 months. South Hiendley and Ash Grove Primaries are also in the window.</p> <p>Marketing and PR SV explained that Marketing and PR for the Trust has been a big focus over the last few months. Some of our academy schools now have new “live” websites and the rest will follow over the next two weeks. Work has been undertaken with our HTs</p>	

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<p>looking at our Trust values and aims and schools will also look again at their own values and aims and link closely to the four trust values.</p> <p>SV with the support of the Chair of the Trust and the Central Team has written the first IPMAT Annual Impact Report. A new prospectus is also being currently developed and will hopefully be on the new Trust website at the beginning of June. This will be an important document as schools sitting on RI judgements are being encouraged to join Academy Trusts.</p> <p>Staff Changes SV shared an overview of staff changes across the MAT.</p> <p>Q: How does the change to the Aspire Teaching school affect the income to the Trust? A: There isn't any income any more. We used to receive £40K a year which we invested back into our schools. SV noted she continues to generate income from the external consulting she does. The new model approach is the right thing to do.</p> <p>Q: Are you indicating that we are positioning ourselves as a Trust to receive more schools into it. A: Yes.</p> <p>RB noted that capacity would need to be built into the Central Team. SV agreed and noted that TJ and TF are already asking what resources would be needed in terms of School Improvement. Appointing a SIP should more schools join the Trust is likely to be needed.</p> <p>Margot D'Arcy, who was previously an Ofsted Inspector will be completing Due Diligence visits in seven schools in the next academic year and some of our school Leaders will be shadowing her to gain further experience. A one or two day conference led by Margot D'Arcy is planned.</p> <p>JN noted that a lot of thought has been put into the changes described and believes the model will work very well.</p> <p>JN commented that a copy of the Prospectus and Annual Impact Report will be sent to Members and Trustees when published and whilst not seeing the finalised document, it is looking really good.</p>	
<p>8. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS/TRUSTEES</p>	
<p>JN explained that Karen Partridge (KP) has resigned as a Member and been appointed as a Trustee to replace TJ. KP has a financial background so we feel this appointment will work well. TJ resigned as a Trustee following her appointment as CFO of the MAT.</p> <p>Members agreed the reappointment of JN as a Member of the IPMAT.</p> <p>JN explained the Academy Ambassadors scheme to attendees and noted that he will be approaching the scheme to investigate the possible recruitment of further Members and/or Trustees for the MAT.</p>	

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<p>9. TRUST AUDIT</p>	
<p>JN explained that Trustees along with Governors of each LGB have completed an individual skills audit and this year's results from Trustee has produced some interesting findings. The same audit was completed two years ago, and it is clear that Trustees are feeling more confident and knowledgeable.</p> <p>Areas of weakness identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough knowledge on school catchment areas and the local communities. • Broad base of the teaching of the curriculum • Inspections and oversight • Experience in marketing, media and PR • Financial understanding <p>We are tackling these areas for example, the increased understanding of the catchment areas and the communities in which our schools are based. Visits will be restarted at each of our schools once allowed. Trustees visited Girnhill Infants School before the pandemic, which had been extremely successful, meeting with the HT, members of staff and Governors and learning about the local community. More visits like this will be planned.</p> <p>Two remote meetings have been organised for Trustees, with two HTs attending who will talk about their catchment area. One meeting is planned in June and one in October.</p> <p>Broad and balanced school curriculum training has been undertaken by Trustees and led by Leah Charlesworth. Trustees have a meeting on Ofsted Inspection on the 19 May 2021. Media, Marketing and PR overviews will be shared at future Trustee meetings by SV.</p> <p>JN noted that he is pleased that the Trustee skills audit is finished, and the information can now be shared on how we are addressing the weaknesses identified at the next IPMAT Chairs meeting.</p> <p>The Governance Marque scheme continues to be reviewed at each Chairs Meeting working through two sections at a time. Whilst we may not go down the route of getting the award, it is a very useful tool to discuss with Chairs. RB wished to note his appreciation of this positive and proactive approach.</p> <p>HR asked if there was a possibility of being included in the meetings planned for Trustees enabling her as a new Member, to learn more about the schools within the MAT. Particularly as visiting schools has not been possible due to the pandemic. JN agreed to add her to the list for an invitation to each of the meetings.</p>	<p>JN</p>
<p>10. AOB</p>	
<p>Q: In terms of the steps you are taking to promote the mental health, wellbeing and workload of the central team and SLTs in schools, what is being offered?</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>A: There is a considerable support offered in school but noted that it is a good idea to add this to the Trustee Agenda for future meetings.</p> <p>SV explained that she meets with new HTs every Friday morning, and the feedback has shown that this is really valued and very important that it continues. RB agreed the weekly HT meetings continuing will be of a real benefit. JN noted he also attends the weekly HT meetings and Trustees receive a copy of the minutes, which keeps them up to date with actions.</p>	
11. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS	
<p>28 September 2021 – 4.30pm - virtual 8 February 2022 – 4.30pm - virtual 10 May 2022 – 4.30pm – Maypole Centre</p>	
<p><i>That the next meeting be held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 28 September 2021 at 4.30pm</i></p>	
MEETING CLOSE TIME: 17.40 pm	

Signed below as a true and Correct Record

Signature: *Mark Ellerker*

Print Name: Mark Ellerker

Date: 04.05.2021