

# **INSPIRE PARTNERSHIP MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**



## **ACADEMY TRUST MEMBERS' MEETING MINUTES**

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>TIME:</b>	<b>LOCATION:</b>
10 May 2022	4.30 pm	Maypole Centre

### **PRESENT**

<b>In the Chair:</b>	Mr S Tottles (ST)	
<b>Members:</b>	Mr R Barraclough (RB) Mr M Benn (MB)	Mr M Ellerker (ME)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mrs S Vickerman (CEO) (SV) Mrs K Stubbs (KS) part	Mr J North – Chair of Trustees (JN) Mrs T Jackson
<b>Clerk:</b>	Mrs S Stott (SS)	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mrs H Ranson (HR)	

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1. ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING</b>	
Mr S Tottles was elected as Chair and welcomed everyone to the first face to face meeting for over two years.	
<b>2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
Apologies for absence were received from Mrs H Ranson.	
<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.	
<b>4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD 8 FEBRUARY 2022</b>	
Mr S Bartram, newly appointed Trustee is based in Wakefield LA not Kirklees LA.	
<b>5. CFO REPORT</b>	
<p>The following documents have been shared with Members for discussion during the meeting and it was noted that these documents had also been uploaded to the Trust website in December 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees' Report &amp; Financial Statements for the period ending 31 August 2021</li> <li>• (already accepted by the Trustees 30 November 2021)</li> <li>• Annual Reports &amp; Financial Statements – 31.08.2021</li> <li>• Management Letter – 31.08.21</li> </ul> <p>The CFO proceeded to share a detailed overview of the accounts explaining that the Trust annual accounts are always drawn up for the financial year ending 31 August. It was noted that considerable work goes into producing this document and comprises of detailed information about the Trust. The CFO reported that these accounts will be filed at Companies House by the end of May, following approval by the Members at this meeting.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>The accounts have taken longer to produce this year, following changes to the Trust external auditors who use different methods to produce the report to our previous auditors. All aspects of producing these accounts have been completed, the accuracy has been checked and is a true reflection of the Trust financial position.</p> <p>The CFO reported that the Trust had a fairly clean audit with just four minor recommendations. The Accounts have been qualified and there are no matters of exceptions.</p> <p><b>Key Balance sheet</b></p> <p>The details included on the key balance sheet of the Accounts was explained in further detail to attendees with the CFO highlighting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted funds comprises of all grant income received.</li> <li>• Unrestricted funds is income raised by the Trust including any funding raising and trip income.</li> <li>• Fixed Assets – Capital income (CIF income lucky to secure a substantial amount over the last year)</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that the Pensions figure is showing an Actuarial gain this year which is unusual. The CFO summarised how and why the pension deficit is reported within the accounts.</p> <p>The Fixed Assets figures have increased due to all capital works and the transfer of a school into the Trust.</p> <p>The CFO explained that the Debtors column is accrued income and we are now researching how we invest the reserves held as cash in the bank. The outstanding creditors figures showing for over 12 months refer to loans that schools have had to contribute as part of any CIF Bids. The payments come out of Trust revenue funding.</p> <p>The CFO confirmed that this is a healthy balance sheet.</p> <p>The CFO stated that the balances for each school are monitored regularly and were further explained in detail. There were no concerns for any school as at 31 August 2021. 3-year forecast reports have been produced and are shared at school and Trust Board levels.</p> <p>The Restricted asset fund was explained as a cumulative figure of all the Trust estates.</p> <p><b>Q: When you talk about the £2million approx. sat in reserves – do we currently invest this?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> At the moment, we invest a small amount. Following approval from the Finance, Audit &amp; Risk Committee the proposal of investing £250k every three months upto a maximum of £1m will now go to the Board for final approval next week. It has been agreed to use the Insignus investment platform following considerable research and due diligence undertaken.</p>	
<p><b>Q: How do you go about setting the budgets with school leaders, having seen that some of the Trust schools are holding considerable reserves?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> There are some healthy reserves currently, agreed. The pandemic has definitely had an impact on capital works not undertaken. PE Grants have also not been used, but there are plans to spend these funds this year. Budget setting starts in February each year, working closely with HTs across the Trust. Benchmarking data has been undertaken to ensure we have a consistent approach across all schools, for staffing as an example.</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b>Q: Do you have a figure within the £2m reserves, which has been ringfenced to spend?</b>  <b>A:</b> Across the capital plan and ICT strategy, we are planning to spend around £400k this year.</p> <p>SV described a further example of Gawthorpe Primary's recent investment in resources for the Read, Write Inc Scheme (RWI). SV remarked that there has been a culture within the Trust to reserve money for a "rainy" day. We are now considering and researching introducing Gag Pooling and Reserve Pooling. The schools who have saved money have managed without extra staff or have not purchased resources, so before we pool these reserves, we feel we need to give them the opportunity to ensure schools have a consistent approach to staffing ratios and resources.</p> <p>Further discussion on the proposed likely spending over this year took place with all attendees. It was agreed that the reserves currently held are too high and the revenue is there to be spent on the children.</p> <p><b>Q: Are the Trust Board of the same mind to use these reserves?</b>  <b>A:</b> Yes. We just need to ensure that the right level of ratio of staffing is in place.</p> <p>RB noted he likes and agrees with the Trust approach to spending the reserves.</p> <p>TJ stated that we are currently reviewing our risk appetite and SV commented that we have appointed a new Estates Manager who is very experienced in school estates and is already producing alternatives solutions that are savings costs. This can only be to the long term benefit of the Trust.</p> <p>Members approved the Financial Accounts ending 31 August 2021.</p>	
<b>6. APPOINTMENT OF COMPANY'S AUDITORS FOR NEXT YEAR</b>	
<p>It was explained that a full tender exercise for both the Internal and External Auditor business was undertaken 18 months ago. The intention was to appoint Auditors for a three year period as it is important to build the relationships with both providers.</p> <p>TJ commented that working with Clive Owen has been extremely thorough, but we are building a great relationship and we have learnt a great deal. I would recommend that we continue with Clive Owen for a further 12 months.</p> <p>Members agreed the continued appointment of the company Auditors for this next year.</p>	
<b>7. CEO REPORT</b>	
<p>Growth Strategy 2020-2023  White Paper Response to the RSC - April 2022  White Paper Summary from NGA April 2022  ICT Strategy Update May 2022  Presentation re ICT Strategy</p> <p>SV explained the above documents were relevant as part of her CEO report and proceeded to share a review of the contents of each document asking for any questions from attendees.</p> <p><b>ICT Strategy Update May 2022</b>  SV shared an overview of the progress undertaken since the last Members meeting where the ICT strategy had been presented. The Chair commented on how quickly the Trust have moved this proposal forward and very much appreciated the work already undertaken.</p>	



ITEM	ACTION
<p>KS shared a presentation on the ICT strategy with a comprehensive summary on how the Trust have approached the ICT strategy following comments from RB at the last meeting. This presentation had been uploaded to the GVO portal and shared with attendees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>KS described the positive and negative aspects of using Chromebooks rather than the original plans of purchasing laptops for each class in all schools within the Trust.</p> <p><b>Q: Would the development of educational apps continue to be accessible if using Chromebooks?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Yes, they would continue to be updated. Microsoft are not the world leaders in educational programmes, but what Google offer is extremely good.</p> <p>The Computing Hub have also recommended the use of Chromebooks. The curriculum for IT we have made the decision to go with, also fits extremely well with using Chromebooks rather than laptops. Another positive reason.</p> <p>SV explained the reason as to why the Trust were originally considering the purchase of laptops, highlighting how much Microsoft Teams had been used during the pandemic.</p> <p>RB noted he is delighted with the decision the Trust has made and commented there is some real scope now for both Trusts to work together more closely. The Chair stated this is really positive in encouraging future schools to join the Trust and shows that there is continued investment ongoing.</p> <p>KS further highlighted the plan for implementation of the ICT strategy also included in the report. Computing network meetings with schools across the Trust will take place shortly where we hope to appoint digital champions for each school. In terms of the Quality of Education and teaching of the IT Curriculum, KS confirmed that it fits well with Rosenshine Principles and the research led curriculum being supported by the Computing Hub.</p> <p>Examples of how children can use the Chrombooks during lessons was part of the presentation with Members commenting on how fantastic it has been to see how this can help support the education of our children. KS agreed and RB commented on how children will get very excited about using the Chromebooks.</p> <p>SV asked that KS research further, the costs of being able to supply every KS2 child with a Chromebook.</p> <p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>SV explained that following a meeting earlier today with Engaging Education who have been responsible for developing the IPMAT websites along with developing our Social Media, they now want to focus on Governance across the Trust. RB agreed to be interviewed and filmed for a piece to be added to the Trust website.</p> <p><b>White paper response to the RSC – April 2022</b></p>	KS
<p>As this document had been shared with attendees prior to the meeting, SV highlighted a number of key areas that the Trust is focussing on.</p> <p>SV described the Girnhill Infants bungalow project for the supply of further provision for SEN, noting we are wanting to support our most vulnerable children. We are now considering whether we should be looking at offering even further provision, with places that could be sold to other schools and the local authority. Looking at this possible expansion, we are</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
<p>considering using the Maypole centre and moving our central offices elsewhere. SV requested the opinions from Members on this proposal.</p> <p>RB noted the biggest headache for any HT, is the capacity to support SEN pupils and feels they would buy into this provision with no question. The Chair noted his only concern is managing expectations, i.e. accessibility and availability of places.</p> <p>Further discussions on this idea took place with all Members supporting the proposal to look at developing this further.</p> <p>SV noted that to move forward with such a proposal would mean having to use some funds from reserves and RB commented the staffing of the unit would incur the most costs. SV stated it is an ambitious plan but looking at the white paper in detail, it is asking for high quality educational outcomes for our children, but with a focus also on our disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Following further summarising of the white paper the following was confirmed as in situ across the IPMAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonics predictions are looking in the high 80s%, with the RWI scheme now introduced into all schools within the Trust.</li> <li>• Each school now has a SENDco.</li> <li>• The newly appointed Deputy HT who will move around the Trust schools as capacity is needed, is also a SENDco.</li> <li>• The Trust has a senior Leader seconded to the White Rose Maths Hub who is leading very strong CPD in Maths across the MAT.</li> <li>• The investment in Chrombooks will support the continued delivery of high quality teaching.</li> <li>• SIP leading on the delivery of CPD across all staffing levels.</li> <li>• Governance in schools. We will know how good it is following the internal audit in this area taking place over the next two weeks.</li> <li>• Financial stability. The MAT now has TJ as CFO in post who is ensuring it is extremely clear where we are all times, relating to financial management and budgets.</li> </ul> <p>RB commented when considering disadvantaged pupils with their experiences generally in life, their aspirations are not high. Would the Trust consider the purchase of a minibus to give children the opportunity for further experiences? This would raise outcomes in itself. RB noted that it is likely that the Trust could get two 17 seater minibus's on a lease basis for approximately £10k per year. Members agreed leasing would be the best option and what an excellent idea. SV and KS agreed to research this suggestion as an option in more detail.</p> <p>Workforce development continues and wellbeing is a priority. KS is carrying out more work on mental health and workload, and training is to be offered to all staff. This training will also be offered to other schools outside the Trust.</p>	SV/KS
<p>SV reported that we will be keeping our School Improvement Partner who is especially good at delivering research based learning. We will be encouraging all our staff to sign up for NPQ Development, particularly as the training continues to be provided free of charge.</p> <p>The Chair commented that reading the response provided by SV prior to the meeting and hearing in more detail the response to the white paper today, it is totally inspiring to see what</p>	

ITEM	ACTION
the Trust are offering. He wished to offer his thanks and gratitude to everyone in delivering such impressive changes.	
<b>8. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS/TRUSTEES</b>	
There are no appointments to report.	
<b>9. LOCAL GOVERNING BOARDS</b>	
<p>The draft Trust Board Audit 2021-2022 has been shared with attendees via the GVO portal prior to the meeting.</p> <p>JN reminded attendees that this document was in a draft format and following a detailed discussion on the document, Members agreed that the document clearly explains the current governance across the MAT. Members were asked to feedback any further comments to JN following this meeting.</p>	
<b>10. AOB</b>	
<p><b>Members Meeting Dates 2022 – 2023 were confirmed during the meeting</b></p> <p>Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 4.30pm at the Maypole Centre          Tuesday 31 January 2023 at 4.30pm via Microsoft Teams          Tuesday 2 May 2023 at 4.30pm at the Maypole Centre</p>	
<p><b><i>That the next meeting be held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 4.30pm at the Maypole Centre</i></b></p>	
<b>MEETING CLOSE TIME: 6.30pm</b>	

Signed below as a true and Correct Record

Signature:

Print Name:

