

Meeting of the Academy Transformation Trust Board

**6 May 2020
12:30 to 14:30**

Venue: MSTEAMS

The 7 principles of public life

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

Board members	Initial	Position
Bernard Dickenson	BD	Chair
Pat Beanland	PB	Vice Chair
Tom Clark	TC	Trustee
Richard Elms	RE	Trustee
Michaela Jackson	MJ	Trustee
Simon Jones	SJ	Trustee
Phil Milligan	PJM	Trustee
Alistair Milne	AM	Trustee
Dave Trotman	DT	Trustee
Margaret Wilson	MW	Trustee
Attendees	Initials	Position
Debbie Clinton (from item 001.2)	DC	CEO
Claire Pritchard (from item 001.3)	CP	Deputy CEO, COO
Peter Wilson (from item 001.3)	PW	CFO
Sarah Bloomer (from item 001.3)	SB	Director of Safeguarding (DoS)
Amy Bills (from item 001.3)	AB	RED, Primary West
Vince Green	VG	RED, Secondary West
Andy Gannon	AG	HoCA and Clerk
Observers	Initials	Position
Richard Priestley	RP	Trustee (designate)
Bethan Owen	BO	Trust Development Partner

Minutes

ITEM	Detail
001	Strategic considerations
001.1	<p><i>Meeting with RSC representatives</i></p> <p>The Chair invited those Trustees who had been present in the morning meeting to offer reflections.</p> <p>Trustees suggested that, while the meeting had offered some helpful additional context to the views of the observers and offered some developmental pointers, the process itself had been deeply disturbing and poorly handled.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all those who had been present for their contributions.</p>

	<p>Those new Trustees who had not been present requested that more information, including the notes of the meeting, be provided to them for context. The HoCA agreed to provide this.</p> <p>Trustees agreed it would be helpful to write to the RSC representatives as a concluding step in the process. The Chair (with the support of the HoCA) agreed to draft a letter to be sent in the next week.</p>
	<i>The CEO joined the meeting</i>
001.2	<p><i>Strategic options</i></p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the DfE has paused all activity in relation to academy rebrokerage due to the Covid-19 pandemic. She also confirmed that the planned meeting with the RSC in relation to SCA and RAV was in the process of being rescheduled.</p> <p>In the light of this, Trustees agreed to revisit all the strategic options presented at the 1 April meeting once the RSC meeting had been held and the future policy approach of the DfE was clearer.</p> <p>Trustees noted the minutes of the 1 April meeting and agreed they were an accurate representation of the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees asked when we could expect the publication of those Ofsted reports in relation to inspections held before the lockdown began, in particular that of MHA. The CEO noted that we have been invited to fact check this report and that we are working on the development of a Post Ofsted Action Plan, but that reports would not be published until Ofsted returned to business as usual. She agreed to share additional notes on the MHA inspection with Trustees in the meantime.</p>
	<i>Other ELT members joined the meeting at this point</i>
001.3	<p><i>ELT workstream planning</i></p> <p>The CEO and HoCA presented the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p>
001.4	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trustees asked specifically about the actions in regard to training and development in regard to high quality leadership. The CEO reminded Trustees of the ATT Institute offer which had been recently published and which would be scrutinised in more detail by the PAPP committee on 20 May. VG confirmed that the development of leadership pathways was already underway. Trustees suggested it was important for Board development to be explicitly included in this work and the HoCA confirmed he would ensure this was the case. 2. Trustees asked about the timescale for reviewing the Post-16 strategy. VG confirmed this would come to SOC in July 2020 following a review by ELT in June 2020. 3. In response to a question about the tracking of progress against measurable outcomes, the CEO said she would be reviewing all aspects of the Annual Delivery Plan for consideration by the Board in October 2020 to ensure that both strategic aims and KPIs more accurately reflected the current position and current priorities.

001.5	Action			
	A01	Provide details of the RSC meeting to new Trustees	HoCA	After this meeting
	A02	Draft and agree a letter to be sent to the RSC representatives	Chair	After this meeting
	A03	Circulate additional notes to Trustees in regard to the MHA post Ofsted action plan	CEO	As available
002	Routine business			
002.1	<p>The Chair welcomed RP and BO as observers to the meeting. He reminded Trustees that BO was responsible for supporting the CEO's performance management process.</p> <p>In the light of the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Chair suggested that item 004.2 be covered first. This was agreed by Trustees.</p>			
002.2	<p><i>Apologies for absence</i></p> <p>There were none. The meeting was quorate.</p>			
002.3	<p><i>Declarations of interest</i></p> <p>There were none.</p>			
002.4	<p><i>Minutes of the last meeting</i></p> <p>These were accepted as accurate.</p>			
002.5	<p><i>Matters arising</i></p> <p>All matters arising had either been completed or were included in the agenda for this meeting.</p>			
004	Performance			
004.1	<p><i>Covid-19 situation – online learning</i></p> <p>The Chair thanked all staff for the professional response to the pandemic and reminded Trustees that this work was being monitored in detail by the weekly meetings of the Covid-19 sub-committee.</p> <p>The Chair outlined the view that we should take the opportunity to reimagine our approach to blended learning and, in particular, to ensure a long-term approach to ensuring high quality online learning for all students and high-quality online development for all staff. This would require investment in a robust, high-quality learning management system across the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees noted that this would require work on the three pillars of curriculum planning and delivery – technology, collaboration and pedagogy – and that there would be resource implications. Trustees also noted that this should be delivered at pace and that a focus on this area would require other priorities to be re-examined.</p> <p>The CEO reassured Trustees that much had been achieved since the pandemic begun and that we would not be 'starting from scratch' in this regard. She suggested much more could be achieved during this academic year.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that the CEO should be commissioned to begin work on this aspect of work immediately and that its progress should be monitored via SOC.</p>			

004.2	Action			
	A04	Begin work to develop an online learning system as part of a holistic approach to curriculum strategy by September, to be monitored via SOC	CEO	After this meeting
003 Safeguarding				
003.1	The DoS presented the paper previously circulated. She noted, in particular, that safeguarding operations were being closely monitored by the Covid-19 sub-committee and that the attendance of vulnerable pupils was increasing. She also noted the significant increase in workload for DSLs across the Trust.			
003.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees asked about the development of reliable safeguarding data. The DoS confirmed that these would be made available via ARC on 20 May and that she was seeking additional resource to ensure that monitoring systems could become more robust in the future. Trustees asked about mental health and bereavement support for staff and the DoS confirmed that HR were offering support and that DSLs were working on developing a Trust-wide approach to this. The lead Trustee for safeguarding asked specifically about relationships with social services and our experience of managing the circumstances of vulnerable pupils. The DoS confirmed that the performance of social services was variable but that DSLs are increasingly able to exert influence. She shared the details of some strategies employed by DSLs to increase the attendance of vulnerable pupils and agreed to provide more case studies to Trustees. 			
003.3	Action			
	A05	Share case studies in regard to vulnerable pupils with Trustees	DoS	As available
004 Performance				
004.3	<p><i>Annual Delivery Plan</i></p> <p>The CEO presented the paper previously circulated and drew Trustees' attention to her intention to review the strategic aims to ensure they were fit for purpose, easily monitorable and reflective of earlier discussions around curriculum and online learning. She confirmed her view that the current situation offered an opportunity to review our strategic planning in both the short and long term.</p>			
004.4	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees expressed the view that the absence of national accountability measures might provide an opportunity for us to determine for ourselves how we might measure and demonstrate accountability to the communities we serve. The CEO confirmed that she was speaking with other Trust leaders about how this approach might be delivered. Trustees suggested that there should be greater coherence between the high-level summary, the detail of the ADP and the self-evaluation framework in order to ensure that a clear picture of progress can be determined, noting, in particular, that many elements of the ADP remain 'red' or 'amber'. The CEO 			

	<p>confirmed it was her intention to ensure this was the case by ‘tweaking’ the approach for 2020-21 and then forming a long-term view in regard to 2021-24.</p> <p>3. Trustees asked specifically about the sector-wide approach to the estimation of grades for this summer’s public examinations. They confirmed their view that we must adopt an absolutely ethical approach to this which truly reflects the effort and progress made by pupils in our academies. VG confirmed this was the approach being taken.</p> <p>4. One Trustee suggested there was a need to produce an interim ADP for 2019-20 which acknowledges the impact of Covid-19 on our strategic priorities, includes the development of the Institute, and removes those elements in the strategic plan which have been overtaken by events.</p>
005	Standards and Outcomes sub-committee
005.1	<p>PB presented the minutes of the most recent meeting, which had been previously circulated. She drew Trustees’ attention to the detailed scrutiny of pupil performance and to the impact of the ECSI process, which would now feature on every SOC agenda.</p> <p>Trustees reiterated their view that pupil outcomes must be at the forefront of our aims and our assessment of Trust performance.</p>
006	Corporate matters
006.1	<p><i>Co-opting of new Trustee</i></p> <p>The HoCA confirmed that Trustees had approved the co-opting of Richard Priestley onto the Board by email and that his appointment would be confirmed now that a satisfactory DBS clearance had been received.</p>
006.2	<p>Resolution</p> <p>Trustees confirmed their approval that Richard Priestley should be co-opted onto the Board.</p>
006.3	<p><i>Sub-committee membership</i></p> <p>The HoCA presented the paper previously circulated, proposing new membership of sub-committees to take immediate effect.</p> <p>Trustees thanked BD and TC for their membership of FRC since the departure of its previous Chair and Vice Chair.</p>
006.4	<p>Resolution</p> <p>Trustees approved the proposals for new sub-committee membership with immediate effect as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOC: PB (Chair), MW (Vice Chair), TC, RE and MJ • ARC: SJ (Chair), PJM (Vice Chair) and DT (as lead Trustee for safeguarding) • FRC: RE, MJ and RP (Chair and Vice Chair to be determined at next meeting) • PAPP: PJM (Chair), AM and BD (Vice Chair to be determined at next meeting)
007	Specific matters
007.1	<p><i>Ofsted monitoring SCA</i></p> <p>VG presented the paper circulated ahead of the meeting and confirmed that more detailed scrutiny had been undertaken in SOC.</p>

007.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees asked VG to clarify what progress had been made in regard to the leadership issues within the academy. VG confirmed that actions were progressing in this regard but that progress was somewhat limited in the current situation. PJM also confirmed that, because of this, the Covid-19 sub-committee was regularly reviewing progress in its meetings.
007.3	<p><i>Ofsted monitoring RAV</i></p> <p>AB presented the report which had been previously circulated and discussed in more detail at SOC. She confirmed that work was ongoing to further refine the action plan and to deliver the objectives that could be delivered in the current situation. She confirmed that leadership changes were underway.</p>
007.4	<p><i>ICP/ICS de-amalgamation</i></p> <p>The COO confirmed that the process for de-amalgamation was paused in the current circumstances but that it would be ready to go once academies re-open. The HoCA proposed that work to de-amalgamate the Local Academy Committees should continue and Trustees agreed this.</p>
007.5	<p><i>Governance action plan</i></p> <p>The HoCA presented the paper previously circulated. Trustees noted the paper and expressed the following views:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to ensure greater clarity of expectation and training when LAC members act on behalf of the Board There is a need for closer audit of the function of LACs and reporting to the Board There is a need for the effectiveness of our local governance arrangements to be reviewed during 2020-21. <p>The HoCA agreed to take these points on board and confirmed the <i>Governance Guide</i> for 2020-21 would be brought to the Board on 15 July.</p>
008	Any other business
008.1	<p>One Trustee noted the need for greater clarity and consistency in regard to the language used to talk about future pupil performance – we must be clear about the difference between projections and predictions. The REDs agreed to ensure this was made clearer in future reporting.</p>
008.2	<p>As this was the first Board meeting conducted fully using MSTEAMS, the Chair invited Trustees to feed back separately to the HoCA on ways in which we might improve the flow of the meeting.</p>
	<i>The meeting ended at 14:33.</i>

Date of next meeting:

15 July 2020
10:00 to 15:30
ATT Head Office, Sutton Coldfield

Action log

A01	Provide details of the RSC meeting to new Trustees	HoCA	After this meeting
A02	Draft and agree a letter to be sent to the RSC representatives	Chair	After this meeting
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A04	Begin work to develop an online learning system as part of a holistic approach to curriculum strategy by September, to be monitored via SOC	CEO	After this meeting
A05	Share case studies in regard to vulnerable pupils with Trustees	DoS	As available