

Meeting of the Academy Transformation Trust Board

15 July 2020

12:30 to 15:30

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
Simon Jones	SJ	Trustee
Phil Milligan	PJM	Trustee
Alistair Milne	AM	Trustee
Richard Priestley	RP	Trustee
Dave Trotman	DT	Trustee
Attendees	Initials	Position
Claire Pritchard	CP	Deputy CEO, COO
Peter Wilson	PW	CFO
Sarah Bloomer	SBI	Director of Safeguarding (DoS)
Amy Bills	AB	RED, Primary West
Susan Byles	SB	RED, Secondary East
Vince Green	VG	RED, Secondary West
Steven Vincent	SV	RED, Primary East
Abby Bayford (item 009.2 only)	ABa	Director of the ATT Institute
Andy Gannon	AG	HoCA and Clerk

Apologies

Board members	Initial	Position
Michaela Jackson	MJ	Trustee
Margaret Wilson	MW	Trustee
Attendees	Initial	Position
Debbie Clinton	DC	CEO

Minutes

ITEM	Detail
001	Routine business
001.1	<i>Apologies for absence</i> Apologies were received and accepted from MJ and MW, as well as from the CEO. The meeting was quorate.

001.2	<i>Declarations of interest</i>			
	AM notified Trustees that he became a Trustee of the Kenilworth MAT on 7 July 2020. The HoCA confirmed that the register of interests had already been updated with this information.			
	The COO informed Trustees that she was no longer a Trustee of Plantsbrook Learning Trust.			
001.3	<i>Minutes of the last meeting</i>			
	These were accepted as accurate.			
001.4	<i>Matters arising</i>			
	All matters arising were included in the agenda for this meeting, and the Chair confirmed his intention to cover the blended learning item under Any Other Business.			
001.5	<i>Review of Board and sub-committee effectiveness</i>			
	The HoCA confirmed it was his intention to circulate some open-ended questions for Trustees to reflect upon over the summer holiday period. The Chair asked all Trustees to ensure they took the time to do this important work and committed to ensuring there was space for discussion in the autumn term.			
001.6	Action			
	A01	Respond to questions concerning Board effectiveness when circulated by the HoCA	Trustees	By September 2020
002	Safeguarding			
002.1	The DoS presented the paper previously circulated.			
002.2	Clarification and challenge			
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lead Trustee for safeguarding confirmed he had already asked the DoS to review the developments in policy to ensure that they reflected a clearer position on bullying and peer-on-peer abuse, as well as confirmation that safer recruitment practices were being adhered to. He noted the information about the increased demands of safeguarding activity. 2. The lead Trustee for safeguarding confirmed to Trustees that the field for the appointment of the new safeguarding officer had been strong and that a good appointment had been made. Trustees noted their view that the proposals around safeguarding CSI in 2020-2021 appeared to be robust. 			
003	Strategic considerations			
003.1	<i>Strategic aims and KPIs</i>			
	In the absence of the CEO, the HoCA presented the papers previously circulated. The Chair reminded Trustees that they had expressed a desire to see the aims streamlined and become more focused.			
003.2	Clarification and challenge			
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trustees noted the proposals for 2019-20 and for 2020-2021. They agreed these were appropriate and represented the right direction of travel as well as eliminating many of the difficulties associated with the previous versions. 			

	<p>2. Trustees noted that there was a need to reflect more fully on the proposals in regard to 2021-2024 and suggested it would be helpful to organise a strategic session earlier than the one scheduled for December 2020. They asked the HoCA to arrange this and to ensure there was an opportunity to reflect on the aims, as well as ‘architectural’ elements such as the ATT Institute and the governance structure.</p> <p>3. Trustees asked about the volume of KPIs associated with the aims. The HoCA confirmed it was the intention to bring back to Board a streamlined version of the KPIs for the next meeting and that not all the elements presented in this paper would result in KPIs. The HoCA confirmed it would be for the Board to approve formally the full package of aims and KPIs at their October meeting.</p>			
003.3	Action			
	A02	Convene an extraordinary strategic session before the next Board meeting to consider strategic aims and structural elements	HoCA	By September 2020
004	Performance			
004.1	<i>Covid-19 sub-committee</i>			
	<p>The Chair and Vice Chair presented the actions and notes from the C-19 sub-committee and acknowledged the hard work of the executive in responding to the pandemic.</p> <p>The COO thanked those Trustees on the C-19 sub-committee for their support.</p>			
004.2	Clarification and challenge			
	<p>1. Trustees asked about the provision of laptops for vulnerable students. The Chair confirmed that DfE laptops had been received and distributed to academies but needed some re-imaging to meet safeguarding standards. The COO confirmed that the additional machines arranged for purchase by the Trust had also been delivered.</p> <p>2. Following the discussion at SOC in the morning, Trustees asked for more information about engagement with online learning and plans for catch-up. AB and SB shared documents on screen with Trustees detailing these arrangements and the ways in which engagement has been monitored. They confirmed that all academies had been working hard to increase engagement. The Chair reminded the executive that there would need to be an imaginative use of time during 2020-2021 to ensure ‘catch-up’ is effective.</p> <p>3. Trustees asked how staff wellbeing had been monitored during the pandemic and the COO confirmed the C-19 committee had reviewed weekly sickness absence and staff feedback. She also confirmed the staff survey had revealed positive feedback about how the pandemic had been managed.</p>			
004.3	<i>Ofsted monitoring</i>			
	<p>The Vice Chair summarised the discussions from this morning’s meeting of SOC and confirmed that she had represented Trustees at the recent review meeting with the RSC. She noted that the letter of feedback from the RSC had been circulated to all Trustees.</p>			
004.4	Clarification and challenge			
	<p>1. Trustees suggested there should be a review of the ways in which they are able to pick up potential difficulties early through the analysis of complaints. VG</p>			

	<p>reported that REDs were now fully aware of complaints in a way that they were not previously which was helping to deal with problems before they become serious. The HoCA confirmed it was his intention to review the monitoring of complaints with members of ARC during the summer period and to formalise the process.</p> <p>2. Trustees asked whether we were confident that our action plans were sufficiently ambitious to enable our academies to progress beyond 'Good'. SV suggested the plans would ensure a judgment of 'Good' within the required timeframe but that the ambition for all is to go beyond that. The Vice Chair suggested that the leap from 'Good' to 'Outstanding' is a difficult one, but confirmed her view that that should be our aspiration for all. All Trustees agreed there was a need for greater clarity about the impact of our work 'on the ground' in the monitoring of academy improvement.</p>				
004.5	<p><i>Predicted outcomes</i></p> <p>The Vice Chair confirmed that SOC had scrutinised the detail of the papers presented during their morning meeting and were reassured that the moderation process had been robust. Other Trustees agreed that the process of prediction was more sophisticated than it had been and were pleased that the predictions suggested some improvements this year.</p>				
004.6	<p>Action</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>A03</td> <td>Review Trustee complaints monitoring with ARC</td> <td>HoCA</td> <td>By September 2020</td> </tr> </table>	A03	Review Trustee complaints monitoring with ARC	HoCA	By September 2020
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005	Specific matters				
005.1	<p><i>Academies Financial Handbook</i></p> <p>The HoCA presented the paper previously circulated, which was noted by Trustees.</p>				
005.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees asked for specific confirmation that salary band information would be published by September and the COO confirmed it would. Trustees asked the CFO to explain more about the Schools Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool. The CFO suggested the tool was of limited value because of the lack of true benchmarking information across the sector but confirmed we would use it as required. 				
006	Audit and risk committee				
006.1	<p><i>Minutes of previous meetings</i></p> <p>SJ and PJM presented the minutes previously circulated.</p> <p>They asked the HoCA to ensure that Trustees had an opportunity to comment on the key strategic risks as they perceive them as part of the summer reflection agreed to earlier.</p>				
006.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair questioned whether the issue of cyber security was being reviewed by the committee and the CFO confirmed it is in the internal audit plan for 2020-2021. 				

006.3	<p>Action</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="316 315 1377 412"> <tr> <td data-bbox="316 315 421 412">A04</td> <td data-bbox="421 315 1043 412">Ask Trustees to offer views on key strategic risks over the summer</td> <td data-bbox="1043 315 1195 412">HoCA</td> <td data-bbox="1195 315 1377 412">By September 2020</td> </tr> </table>	A04	Ask Trustees to offer views on key strategic risks over the summer	HoCA	By September 2020
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007	Standards and outcomes committee				
007.1	<p><i>Minutes of previous meetings</i></p> <p>The Vice Chair presented the minutes previously circulated, noting that several key items had already been covered on the agenda and drawing Trustees’ attention to the review of post-16 provision which had been considered in draft at this morning’s meeting.</p>				
008	Finance and resources committee				
008.1	<p><i>Minutes of previous meetings and budget approval</i></p> <p>RP presented the minutes previously circulated, and noted that a more detailed set of KPIs had been considered by the committee in its deliberations about this year’s budget.</p> <p>He drew Trustees’ attention to the budget presentation previously circulated and requested that the budget be formally approved.</p>				
008.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chair asked for clarification around the timescale for the submission of the budget. The CFO confirmed that the ESFA deadline had been moved back to September but that, in common with many other trusts, it remained his intention to submit the budget now. 2. In response to a question, the Chair confirmed he continued to maintain discussions with the CEO and CFO around the use of surplus monies and suggested the picture would become clearer once the full financial impact of the pandemic was known. 3. Trustees asked for confirmation that ICFP was now being applied consistently across all academies. The CFO confirmed this was the case and indicated this now meant we would be able to have a much clearer picture of what needed to be done to enable education budgets to balance. 4. Trustees asked whether Principals were now better monitored and supported financially. The COO confirmed that the process of CSI monitoring in finance and operations this year had meant that problems could be picked up and dealt with in a more timely way. The CFO confirmed that all Principals understood their accountability for academy finance and that it was their responsibility to work together to ensure the budget balanced. RP confirmed the intention of FRC to meet regularly with individual Principals in order to scrutinise this approach. 5. Trustees asked whether the budget included monies to support the digital strategy. The CFO confirmed that an extra £250K had been included. Trustees suggested it was imperative that our focus in the area of ICT now shift from administration and hardware to an effective approach to online learning but asked if there was an approach to dealing with hardware obsolescence as this shift takes place. The CFO confirmed this was built in and the COO suggested a key aim should be to ensure all students have access to the kit they need. Trustees agreed with this approach. 6. Trustees confirmed their view that effective budget setting would be determined in the future by a better analysis of the impact of our staffing within academies. 				

	<p>7. Trustees asked specifically about the budget for ATTFE and the CFO confirmed there was a plan to increase the small surplus that had been generated in 2019-20 in the future, with the leadership being aware that it needs to cover itself.</p>
008.3	<p>Resolution</p> <p>Trustees approved the 2020-2021 budget as presented.</p>
009	Pay and people performance committee
009.1	<p><i>Minutes of previous meetings</i></p> <p>PJM presented the minutes previously circulated, which were noted by Trustees.</p>
	<i>ABa joined the meeting.</i>
009.2	<p><i>ATT Institute</i></p> <p>The DoI presented the paper previously circulated, focusing on the plans for increased collaboration and the development of the Institute's offer in PD and research during 2020-2021.</p>
009.3	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chair expressed his view that enabling the Institute to become an accredited body was an important, and early, objective. He also asked the DoI to ensure that thought is given in the strategic planning for the Institute around how the Institute will support and promote the wider Trust objectives. 2. DT noted the need to ensure as broad a base as possible in the translation of research activity, with a focus on 'teachers as researchers' and 'young people as researchers' necessary to inform our academy improvement work. The DoI agreed that this approach should drive the work of the Institute in this area and DT offered to liaise with her separately. 3. Trustees asked for reassurance that the work of the Institute was not just focused on teaching staff. The COO confirmed that support staff were fully included and the HoCA confirmed that the approach extended also to those in the non-executive line.
	<i>ABa left the meeting.</i>
010	Matters for approval
010.1	<p><i>Governance scheme of delegation 2020-2021</i></p> <p>The HoCA presented the paper previously circulated.</p>
010.2	<p>Clarification and challenge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following the discussion at SOC this morning, Trustees requested that an addition be made to the scheme of delegation to require Trustee involvement in senior appointments (at Principal level and above). 2. Trustees also agreed that the scheme of delegation text should be more explicit about the importance of Member oversight, the personal liability of Trustees as Directors and the role of the executive in complaints and staff discipline matters. 3. Trustees expressed the view that we should ensure appropriate subsidiarity in non-executive decision making and that it would be wise to consider the role of local governance again at the forthcoming strategic discussion.

010.3	Resolution Subject to the amendments in 010.2.1 and 010.2.2 above, Trustees approved the scheme of delegation for 2020-2021.			
010.4	<i>Data protection policy</i> The HoCA presented this draft policy, noting that it had been recommended for approval by ARC.			
010.5	Resolution The data protection policy was approved by Trustees.			
010.6	<i>SEND</i> The HoCA presented this draft policy, noting that it had been recommended for approval by SOC.			
010.7	Resolution The SEND policy was approved by Trustees.			
010.8	<i>Health and safety</i> The HoCA presented this draft policy, noting that it had been recommended for approval by ARC.			
010.9	Resolution The health and safety policy was approved by Trustees.			
010.10	<i>Safeguarding policy</i> The DoS presented this draft policy, noting that it had been revised in line with the requirements of <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020</i> .			
010.11	Resolution The safeguarding policy was approved by Trustees.			
010.12	Action			
	A05	Ensure governance model is considered as part of strategic discussions	HoCA	By September 2020
011	Any other business			
011.1	The Chair sought the view of Trustees, and in particular, of sub-committee chairs, about how the Board should meet in the future, notwithstanding any changes in public health guidance around Covid-19. It was agreed that strategic meetings would work better face-to-face if they could be arranged within public health guidance, while routine business and sub-committee meetings could continue to operate virtually. Trustees asked the HoCA to proceed on this basis for 2020-2021 but to keep arrangements under review.			
011.2	The Chair provided a short update on the blended learning project, noting that a 'project board' consisting of himself and PJM had been asked to support the work of the CEO and the project team moving forward. The Chair suggested that DT might be a helpful addition to the project board and DT agreed he would be willing to do this. The Chair			

	agreed to convey this to the CEO and the project team and to keep other Trustees informed of progress with the project.
	<i>The meeting ended at 15:06.</i>

Date of next business meeting:

21 October 2020
12:30 to 15:30
ATT Head Office, Sutton Coldfield

Action log

A01	Respond to questions concerning Board effectiveness when circulated by the HoCA	Trustees	By September 2020
A02	Convene an extraordinary strategic session before the next Board meeting to consider strategic aims and structural elements	HoCA	By September 2020
A03	Review Trustee complaints monitoring with ARC	HoCA	By September 2020
A04	Ask Trustees to offer views on key strategic risks over the summer	HoCA	By September 2020
A05	Ensure governance model is considered as part of strategic discussions	HoCA	By September 2020