



**Meeting of the Academy Transformation Trust Board**

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**12.30 to 14.30**

**Venue: Harvest Fields centre B75 5TJ**

**Minutes**

| <b>Board members</b> | <b>Initial</b>  | <b>Position</b>        | <b>Sub Committee</b> |
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| Pat Beanland         | PB              | Chair                  | SOC/RC               |
| Elaine Bonar         | EB              | Trustee                | SOC                  |
| Joanne Dawson        | JD              | Trustee                | FRC                  |
| Tom Clark            | TC              | Vice-Chair             | ARC/SOC              |
| Mark Gill            | MG              | Trustee                | ARC/RC               |
| Alistair Milne       | AM              | Trustee                | ARC/FRC              |
| <b>Attendees</b>     | <b>Initials</b> | <b>Position</b>        |                      |
| Nick Weller          | NW              | CEO                    |                      |
| Mo Chatra            | MC              | Deputy CEO (Finance)   |                      |
| Derek Trimmer        | DT              | Deputy CEO (Education) |                      |
| Bob Crick            | BC              | Clerk                  |                      |
| <b>Apologies</b>     | <b>Initials</b> | <b>Position</b>        |                      |
| Louise Jones         | LJ              | Trustee                | FRC/RC               |

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Detail</b>   |
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| <b>001</b>  | <b>Routine Business</b>   |
| 23/145      | <p><b>001.1 Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>The Clerk opened the meeting and welcomed all present in person and especially Joanne Dawson (JD) (via Teams) for her first meeting. LJ had given her apologies, which were accepted. The meeting was quorate.</p>   |
| 23/146      | <p><b>001.2 Declarations of interest for this meeting</b></p> <p>The Clerk thanked all Trustees for completing their 2023/24 Declaration of Interest forms, now posted on GVO. There were no declarations of interest.</p>  |
| 23/147      | <p><b>001.3 Election of Chair and Vice Chair</b></p> <p>The Clerk thanked both PB and TC for their service as Chair and Vice Chair this past year. It had been a demanding time and the Trustees were grateful for their calm leadership. The Clerk had received no expressions of interest in either offices and PB was content to continue as Chair and TC as Vice Chair.</p> |

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| 23/147 | <p>Proposed by AM and seconded by EB, Trustees agreed unanimously for PB to continue as Chair of Trustees for the Academy Transformation Trust.</p> <p>Proposed by EB and seconded by MG, Trustees agreed unanimously for TC to continue as Vice Chair of Trustees for the Academy Transformation Trust.</p> <p>On resuming the Chair, PB thanked the Clerk for standing in during Amber Fitch's maternity leave. It has been an eventful year, and on behalf of Trustees appreciated BC's humour and professionalism. Amber resumes her role as Clerk on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023.</p>   |
| 23/148 | <p><b>001.4 <i>Nomination of members of the Sub Committees</i></b></p> <p>1. Trustees recognised until they have a full complement on the Full Board, they would struggle to have three members on each committee and thanked TC for standing in the Audit and Risk Committee to make it quorate. After discussion it was agreed that for this year the Sub Committees would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Audit and Risk (ARC) – MG, AM &amp; TC</li> <li>➤ Finance and Resource (FRC) – LJ, AM &amp; JD</li> <li>➤ Standards and Curriculum (SOC) – PB, TC &amp; EB</li> <li>➤ Remunerations (RC) – PB, LJ &amp; MG</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>SOC</b> – PB confirmed that Gavin Hawkins will join the Board, and with his Education pedigree will be part of the SOC.</p> <p>3. <b>Remunerations Appeal Committee</b> It had been agreed at the most recent ARC (item 23/139.1) that the Vice Chair of Trustees will be the standing Chair of the Remunerations Appeal Committee, calling on any Trustee not involved in the original decision to be part of an Appeals Panel. ME will provide a draft terms of reference for consideration by November 2023 (an action from that ARC).</p> <p>4. <b>New Trustees</b> It is recognised that the board would benefit from a Trustee with human resource and legal experience to join the ARC.</p> <p>The Trustees resolved that the following will form part of the respective Committees for 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Audit and Risk (ARC) – MG, AM &amp; TC</li> <li>➤ Finance and Resource (FRC) – LJ, AM &amp; JD</li> <li>➤ Standards and Curriculum (SOC) – PB, TC, EB &amp; GH</li> <li>➤ Remunerations (RC) – PB, LJ &amp; MG</li> </ul> |
| 23/149 | <p><b>001.5 <i>Committee Terms of Reference</i></b></p> <p>Practically all Trustees had approved the Terms of Reference for each Sub Committee in GVO, namely :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Audit and Risk (ARC)</li> <li>➤ Finance and Resource (FRC)</li> <li>➤ Standards and Curriculum (SOC)</li> <li>➤ Remunerations (RC)</li> </ul>   |

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| 23/149<br>cont'd | <p>Each Terms of Reference will be ratified at the respective Sub Committee's next meeting.</p> <p><b>A01: For each Sub Committee to ratify their Terms of Reference at their next meeting. (AF)</b></p>   |
| 23/150           | <p><b>001.6 Appointment of Company Secretary</b></p> <p>After a brief discussion Trustees agreed that Mr Mo Chatra, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Finance) should be appointed the Academy Transformation Trust's Company Secretary.</p> <p>The Trustees resolved that Mr Mo Chatra (DCEO (F)) will be the Company Secretary for the ATT.</p>  |
| 23/151           | <p><b>001.7 Approval of the Scheme of Delegation</b></p> <p>Trustees were content to ratify the most recently published Scheme of Delegation for the Academy Transformation Trust.</p>   |
| 23/152           | <p><b>001.8 Minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting, dated 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, with one minor amendment.</p>   |
| 23/153           | <p><b><i>Matters arising and actions</i></b></p> <p>The following items had been discharged or included in the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A01 – GVO link to 7.2.23 meeting</li> <li>A05 – Report on ARC 13.6.23 meeting</li> <li>A06 – SEF for November Strategy Day (NSD)</li> <li>A07 – DCEO(F) present recovery plan at NSD</li> <li>A08/9 – Pay and Home Visits Policy</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A02 – <b>Terminology – Trust Support/Trust Intervention</b> In the context of safeguarding the terminology used did not reflect where the Trust was in relation to the status of the Academy. There is a responsibility to intervene and support to ensure the Academy is secure. Once this has been achieved the aim is to work towards exceptional practice, which is now referred to as "Secure Plus."</li> <li>2. A03 – <b>Apprentice Levy</b> The ELT are looking at a range of possibilities. Trustees are keen to use the money available for apprenticeship and move to a place where external provision could be in place. All recognised this remains in its infancy and is worthy as a future goal.</li> <li>3. A04 – <b>Rework Aim 3</b> The ELT continue to work on something which is not too restrictive by definition and will be ready for discussion on the Strategy Day on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</li> </ol> |

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| 23/153<br>cont'd | <p>4. A10 – <b>Invite Local Governors to apply to be a Trustee</b> As mentioned in 23/148.2 above, Gavin Hawkins will join the Board. He has been a Chair of LGB and comes with an education background in data analysis and ICT. Wires were crossed with the Recruiting Agency who thought in securing a Trustee no more Trustees were needed. This is now clarified and is not the case, and re-advertisement is now underway.</p> <p>5. A8/9 – <b>Policies</b> It has been a year full of various policies. A new finance policy will be presented to the FRC in November for discussion. Now the bulk have been reviewed, approved or ratified, it would be helpful to standardise which policies should be seen by all Trustees and which relate to the respective Sub Committees.</p> <p><b>A02 – To streamline which policies should be seen by all Trustees and which by the respective members of the Sub Committees. (ME)</b></p> <p>PB thanked all staff and trustees who had committed so much time and effort to updating and reviewing policies this past year. Much has been achieved.</p> |
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| 002    | Strategic considerations  |
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| 23/154 | <p>002.1 - <b>CEO report (incl Governance)</b></p> <p><b>Clarification and challenge</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Finance - Can you confirm the reserves have improved and is it still the intention to reach 4% in the medium to long term?</b> <i>As of today, the previously forecasted end of year reserve of £900k now stands at £1.4m. The Trust is still in the process of closing down for year end (2022/23) and a comprehensive picture as to why the forecast is better, will be provided at the Strategy Day as part of the recovery plan brief. It remains a goal to achieve 4% reserve by 2025/26. There is moderate confidence to reach 2% by the end of 23/24, looking toward 2.7% for 24/25. However, this is tempered with a need to invest in certain areas to maximise impact on the quality of education throughout the Trust. It was very pleasing to see 81% of invoices paid within 30 days. The previous pattern of 60% had needed to improve.</i></li> <li>2. <b>Investments</b> – Trustees supported and approved MC’s proposal to use an instant access account to yield 1.8% interest on surplus accounts.</li> <li>3. <b>Estates/Ravens</b> – The provision of a large marquee at Ravens is a swift solution for the start of this academic year because of identified RAAC. <b>When will OFSTED visit the Academy?</b> <i>We would like to see the impact the marquee will have and how the school operates with it in the coming week. Once satisfied the Academy will be ready for an OFSTED visit.</i></li> <li>4. <b>Growth – Will the Trust go back to the Regional Director in Derby?</b> <i>No, they are more interested in local trusts. There are more immediate areas of need and challenge in the East Midlands and South Lincolnshire, with small under subscribed schools. It will be a subject of discussion within the five-year plan on the Strategy Day.</i></li> </ol> |

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| 23/154<br>cont'd | <p>5. <b>Energy – It is likely the cost of energy will bounce up?</b> <i>Yes, this is regularly monitored as prices can be volatile. There is a time lag in how prices cascade to the customer and at present the Trust has a new three year contract with broker eEnergy (who replaced Ginger from September). There are very competitive wholesale prices at the moment and the Trust will be benchmarking its current energy costs against similar sized MATs to try and identify scope for further efficiencies in terms of usage.</i></p> <p>6. <b>Behaviour and Attendance</b> – While this will be covered in regard to the results later, <b>what is being done to promote positive behaviour and improved attendance?</b> <i>For the past three months there has been a big drive to change the culture, in particular, how does the school day start. Primary Schools who have made changes to the start of the school day with a more taut timetable, have already noticed an impact. Students are attentive in the mornings and there may be too many lessons in the afternoon which might need further refinement. This promotion of a different approach to the school day and shift in student achievement and outlook to learning, will be driven by HQ, through each Principal.</i></p> <p>7. <b>Staff Survey/Attendance</b> Looking through the slides of the staff survey, two questions are poignant. The high proportion of staff who deal with disruptive behaviour and the proportion who would recommend their school. <b>Is Teacher absence more stable?</b> <i>These are very sensitive areas with staff. When considering workload, it is not assessment but disruptive behaviour which is having the biggest impact. While teacher absence has fallen and attendance is more stable, much needs to be done to keep this positive downward trajectory. It remains a fact that stability of teachers for students is vital and the impact of too much supply/stand in staff is felt greatest by the more disadvantaged students.</i></p> <p>8. <b>LGBs</b> – There remains a significant shortage of governors throughout the Trust and ME will be undertaking a recruitment drive once Amber Fitch has returned.</p> |
| 23/155           | <p>002.2 - <b>Safeguarding – point of clarification</b></p> <p>Trustees welcomed the video provided this year <b>but were concerned that it did not give the information to assist with the subsequent on line test.</b> <i>The purpose of the video was to highlight the changes in KCSiE this year only.</i></p>  |

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| <b>003.</b> | <b>Performance education</b>  |
| 23/156      | <p>003.1 – <b>KS2 Results</b></p> <p>Challenge and Clarification</p> <p>1. <b>Fluctuation of Forecast</b> Both Garry Trott and Natalie Deen have provided a much clearer document on performance for this year. <b>EYFS is missing and some figures seemed to have changed since the initial report in July to the most recent summary. It would be helpful to have the data presented in a more consistent format to provide helpful comparisons throughout the year. There are some discrepancies.</b> <i>There is no change in EYFS and these figures will be presented at the next SOC. Sometimes results come in late or are missing, so this does mean fluctuations from the raw data in July. Some students move on, some examinations</i></p> |

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|        | <p>are re-marked or the cohort may have shrunk. ISDR (Inspection Data Summary Report) will assist in providing a more consistent and easier to follow data trail.</p> <p>2. <b>Comparison</b> It is hard to follow the progress comparison data for KS2. <b>The colour coding does not seem consistent with a negative/positive and it is not clear with which year the comparison is being made?</b> <i>The comparison is with the pre COVID 2019 outcomes. (There are some errors in colour coding which will be rectified). While some Academies have not reached national level they have improved on the 2019 position.</i><br/> <b>Is the Trust not disappointed at all in these results?</b> <i>Yes there is disappointment in some, more in KS4 than with KS2. The ongoing battle with attendance for the Year 11s remains a significant challenge. For KS2, Writing did come through higher but the range of words for Reading this year were not common for the students in the social economic groups of many of our Primary Academies.</i></p> <p>3. <b>Ambition – Is there ambition to go beyond average?</b> <i>The bottom line is that English needs to improve overall. The Trust has some people earmarked for a day to work on improving English, Maths and Science, but we may need to improve capacity if the Trust is to make the impact it seeks. It could come through more use of the Institute. Much time is needed to do the granular work. The Trustees are open to the idea of capacity (see Item 23/155.4.1) and the wider discussion relating to balancing reserve growth with impact on education. <b>Could this be shared across another MAT?</b> <i>This is certainly an option to be considered on the Strategy Day. In the meantime, the emphasis is very much on improving the culture and attitude to learning. One of the most evident indicators across ATT has been a breakdown in contract between the parent and school. This needs to be restored.</i></i></p> <p>4. <b>Consistency - What is holding ATT back and what will be different this time?</b> <i>The Trust works with ten different Local Authorities who each have their interpretations of outcomes relating to attendance in the 95%+ group, the 90-95% cohort and those needing specialist support in the 50-90% attendance bracket. What can be done now is to reach out to families while working with the LA to find a consistent approach to improving attendance.</i></p> <p>Trustees observed that it had been a demanding year with the tragic loss of the Director of Primary Education and thanked staff for keeping operations going during this very difficult time.</p> |
| 23/157 | <p>003.2 – <b>Key Stage 4 and 5 Results</b></p> <p>1. <b>Lessons Learned</b> The outcomes for KS4 vary across the Trust. <b>What has been the measure of success for 2022/23?</b> <i>It is evident that direct leadership is fundamental to a change of culture. Icení did much better than expected as both staff and student body are still stabilising. The Trust will work towards a more national approach to leadership and monitor the impact this leadership is having. HQ supporting the Principal where needed, and providing clearer sight lines for where and most importantly how, a school improves. Bolster Principal’s training, cascading that to SLTs also.</i></p>   |

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| 23/157<br>cont'd | <p><b>2. Value Added</b> Conscious of the challenges faced by the Trust where value added might be found, <b>how does the data inform the progress of pupil premium students and those with SEND?</b> <i>There is evidence to show that those who are low achieving on arrival achieve the best value added. The mid achievers not so much and the high achievers the lowest. The details of this will be provided on the Strategy Day.</i></p> <p><b>3. KS5 Results</b> – This will be covered on the Strategy Day in the context of the discussions relating to the future of sixth forms in the Trust.</p> <p><b>4. Executive Summary - What are the three main priorities for this academic year?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>English</b> – <i>Be tougher on the standard of English.</i></li> <li>b. <b>Attendance</b> – <i>Trust wide push to restore strong links with families and a standard approach with the ten Local Authorities.</i></li> <li>c. <b>Culture</b> – <i>Fundamentally improve, build, and embed a sustainable approach to achievement and learning in each Academy led from the top.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>5. Strategy Day</b> In drawing this item to a close it was recognised that this part of the Full Board meeting had been like a Standards and Outcomes Committee meeting in regard to the level of detail. It was necessary to go through this in order to provide an effective framework for the Strategy Day, where the actions arising from today's discussion would form part of the wider debate. The five main themes for the November Strategy Day will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Performance Tables</li> <li>b. Trustee's Self Evaluation</li> <li>c. Financial Recovery Plan (Item 154.1)</li> <li>d. Future of the Sixth Form in the Trust (Item 157.3)</li> <li>e. Five Year Plan and the big moves (Items 153.3, 154.4, 156.3, 157.2)</li> </ul> |
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| <b>004</b> | <b>Performance – Audit and Risk</b>   |
| 23/158     | <p><b>004.1 – ARC meetings 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and 11<sup>th</sup> June 2023.</b> Trustees were content with the minutes of the June meeting and thanked the ARC for their thorough scrutiny of the three internal audit reports earlier this month for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Governance</li> <li>b. Procurement and Tendering</li> <li>c. Key Controls</li> </ul> <p><b>1. Internal Scrutiny Tracker</b> The most significant document to emerge at this meeting was the Internal Scrutiny Tracker. A most effective spreadsheet listing over 42 controls to be monitored as a standing item at each ARC. Trustees' concerns are reflected in the ARC minutes but they were surprised at the volume of controls, especially for Procurement and Tendering. The underlying concern was not just the lack of synergy between each group but a contentment with a silo style of operation and happily reporting all was fine, when it clearly was not.</p> |

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| 23/158<br>cont'd | <p>2. <b>Way Forward</b> It is clear MC &amp; CP have a firm grip on year end 2022/23, a transparent plan on how to progress the controls highlighted in the internal audit, and an internal accountability structure which provides the much-needed single overview drawing all disciplines together. With this in mind it is intended that this financial year 2023/24 internal audit will look at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cyber</li> <li>b. Academy Handbook</li> <li>c. Financial Controls</li> <li>d. External Safeguarding</li> </ol> <p>PB thanked MG, AM and TC for their time and commitment to Audit and Risk and to MC and CP with getting to grips with such a wide portfolio so quickly. Also providing a clear workable plan to deliver the recommendations made in the internal audit reports and operate in a cohesive and strategic way whilst supporting each Academy, their staff, students and families.</p> |
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| <b>005</b> | <b>Matters for approval</b>   |
| 23/159     | <p>005.1 - <b><i>Policies for approval</i></b></p> <p>Trustees approved the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay</li> <li>• Exclusions</li> <li>• Privacy Notices</li> <li>• Whistle Blowing</li> <li>• Trustee and Governor Expenses</li> <li>• Anti Child on Child Abuse</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul> |

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| <b>006</b> | <b>Any other Business</b>   |
| 23/160     | 006.1 – There was no other business but note the agreement on the five areas to be considered at the Strategy Day (Item 23/157.5) |

**Date of the next Board meetings:** 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024