

HOLYROOD ACADEMY TRUST

Company Number: 7341523
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

Minutes of a Full Governing Body Meeting Held at Holyrood Academy On Tuesday 17th May 2016 at 5.30pm

PRESENT:

Ann Adams, Martin Brook, Ewan Cameron, Stuart Cochrane, Roger Evans, Jonathan Farey, Ruth Hobbs (from 5.45pm), Pauline Lamond, Dinah Mair, Margaret Mercer, Tina Coles (Company Secretary /Clerk), Paula Gibson (Minutes Secretary)

APOLOGIES: Matt Collins, Mac Davison, Karen Seib

1. WELCOME

AA welcomed all to the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNARY INTERESTS

No pecuniary interests were declared.

3. 1610

TC explained that she was still waiting for the shared use agreements and the lease, and that she had raised her concerns with numerous parties. 1610 have now moved their fitness equipment off-site and have minimised their staffing. The academy has also had concerns raised by members of the public about the lack of community use.

Legal advisors have been involved, but there has been minimal response from SCC, who has said that they are not at liberty to discuss the matter due to commercial sensitivities.

The top sliced dedicated schools grant (DSG) that 1610 receive is now being challenged by other schools – TC explained that only the swimming pool at HA has been upgraded by 1610 and no other facilities have been improved, and she has challenged the fact that DSG monies should not be used on the swimming pool as it is not part of the Academy facilities and students receive no financial benefit from it being next to the site.

Governors were asked to guarantee the community usage of the facilities of 38 hours per week during term time, and 70 hours per week during the school holidays – TC confirmed that this is in line with the current Shared Use Agreement in place which was agreed at the time the contract was put in place. Governors were happy to agree to the continued commitment of usage as per the agreement.

SSDC have indicated that they would wish for HA to take over the letting and running of all the facilities – TC explained that she has advised SSDC we would not take on

the running of the swimming pool in its current state as too much of a reputational risk, but would be prepared to take on the Sports Hall and the ATP.

Governors asked when the lease is due to expire, and it was confirmed as 2019 – SCC has offered a 125 year lease without the Sports Hall and the ATP, which was not acceptable to Governors. Governors asked about the risk involved for HA, and TC explained that SSDC had stated that they were still keen to provide the £50k grant for the ATP.

4. SENCo Role

MB explained that he has approached the current post holder (who based on a 0.68 FTE contact, but is on maternity leave until the end of September), with a view to covering the SENCo role at both HA and Axe Valley (AV). LG has indicated that for her to take on the role she would require an increase in salary.

Governors asked for clarification on the implication for this role, and MC explained that there would be a reduction in teaching commitments yet an increase in accountability, as it would cover approximately twice the number of students. TC explained that her current contract shows her work base as HA. Governors asked if the role was possible across both sites and MC confirmed that this was possible but would require additional commitment.

Governors discussed 2 options – an increase in salary which would also cover travelling costs or covering travelling expenses via claims procedures. A discussion was held regarding implications for future scenarios.

It was noted that the Trust would gain for the joint role as it would allow for common procedures and consistency across both schools. MB reported that the AV SENCo is no longer is post. Should LG not take on the role there are no implications for HA but there would be for AV. Governors then asked if AV Governors were supportive of this suggestion, and MB confirmed that they were and that they were being supported by Devon CC and the Jurassic Coast Teaching Alliance.

Governors agreed that she should act up into the role for a period of time, to see if the arrangement would work and then make necessary adjustments as required. Should LG wish to take on the role, then travel expenses will be covered via the normal travel expenses procedures.

All agreed that any futures cases of across site working would be considered on a case by case basis.

5. Vector Learning Trust (VLT)

Documents had been circulated prior to the meeting.

AA explained about the reason for the naming of the Vector Learning Trust
AA explained a detailed application has been completed and submitted to the DfE, which will then be sent to the new Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), Rebecca

Clark. The Head teachers Board and the RSC will then consider all applications. The VLT will be represented at this meeting by our DfE representative, which is likely to be in early June. From 1st September the VLT will be a single institution and AV will join later.

Susan Philips from the DfE has contacted the Academy and suggested that the VLT become a sponsor MAT – AA spoke of the possibility of sponsoring a local primary school.

AV Governing Body are happy to be sponsored by the MAT – TC explained that there is an additional financial benefit of approx. £80-£100K in sponsoring AV, although it was noted that Devon CC are not keen on this option. AV could still join as non-sponsored Academy but would only receive a £25K start up grant.

AV will now go ahead with the consultation with parents on conversion to Academy status and a meeting is to be held on Monday 23rd May. MB has informed the AV Governing Body that this would not be takeover but a partnership. AV will submit an application for conversion to Academy status as soon as the consultation and due-diligence work has been completed, which should be in approximately 5 months.

AA explained that she had been in discussions with two other local primary schools, one of which is unlikely to proceed further but that positive discussions continue with the second school. No other schools are aware of the MAT application and HA have not approached other schools.

Governors asked about school improvement, and MB explained that this would be at leadership level.

Governance Arrangement and Scheme of Delegation

This had been circulated prior to the meeting – AA explained that this had not yet been shared with AV.

Governors queried the situation with parent governors after the recent “White Paper”, and AA confirmed that this was still acceptable, but that going forward there would be no distinction between categories of Governors. Governors asked AA to confirm that the document ensured that only people with relevant skills would be appointed, and this was confirmed. It was also noted that should VLT be asked to sponsor another school, the Trust would reserve the right regarding Governance arrangements.

There is an expectation that Governors roles be reviewed after 2 terms of office (a term of office would be 4 years).

It was explained that there is the potential to move between the governance structures and also between sponsored schools.

TC explained that the formation of the VLT would mean that the current HA funding agreement will cease and a new funding agreement will commence for VLT with each individual Academy having a supplemental agreement. The current board will

be as a local governance committee, which will adopt new articles and be renamed and a new VLT Board will be set up. A new deed of transfer will take place when a new school joins the VLT.

AA explained that this was an innovative structure which has allowed for capacity to be built in from the beginning of the process. MB reported that building capacity within HA over the past 18 months has allowed us to be pro-active.

It was also confirmed that both the Executive Principal and the Director of Finance have received no financial reward for taking on significant additional responsibilities.

Governors asked if the scheme of delegation was robust enough to withstand a “hostile takeover” of the Trust - both AA and MB felt that this was the case. AA explained that with this structure individual Governors would be unable to unsettle the overall Trust structure. It was confirmed by AA that SCC involvement in the document would be if they had concerns around protocol.

Governors asked about the financial implications of the Trust, and MB explained that using the DfE information there would be little savings made until the Trust had over 3000 students, but that there would be a big benefit in improving the outcome for all students regardless of size.

Governors asked for clarification on the roles of CEO and EP as MB currently carries out both roles –A MAT of any size has to have a named CEO. The role of the CEO is a genuine overseeing of all schools in the Trust.

Governors were happy, in principal, with the Scheme of Delegation as circulated.

Governors then asked about branding and uniform – it was explained that schools would maintain their own identity, and only if a school required rebranding (eg if put into special measures) would this take place. Governors present agreed that they felt it was important within the community to maintain their own identity

Vector Learning Trust – Standardised, Aligned and Autonomy Document

This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was explained that this document was as a result of the visioning day and ensures the ethos of schools maintaining their own identity – this would work across all phases of education. This could be differentiated should schools require additional support. This document would evolve other time as the MAT develops.

Vector Learning Trust – Improvement Plan

This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was explained that the headings are from the National Schools Commissioner paper about what makes a successful MAT. It was agreed that if the Improvement Plan was established now, it should make things easier going forward, although some changes will occur. The individual Academy improvement plans will include the finer detail for each target

Operational Management Structure

This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

This structure allows for clear career progression for schools leaders.

Governors asked for clarification about School Improvement Teams and it was explained that these will sit across schools and will include the CEO, School Improvement Leads and 1 Governor each from AV and HA, both of whom are Ofsted Inspectors. New heads may not be a School Improvement Lead (SIL) and a current SIL or the Executive Principal may well take on that role for a new school.

As per the Scheme of Delegation, the Operational Management Structure is an inclusive document, but is more pertinent to the current situation.

Governance Structure

This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Members have statutory liability (when HA first converted to Academy status, all Governors became members, but these have not been replaced when individuals have left) – now Members will be independent and not linked.

Members are likely to include -

- Amanda Broom, who as a local town councillor has a community background
- Gary Andrews, who has a finance background and was an ex Chair of Governors
- A local priest
- Possibly a town council member from the Axminster area and
- The chair of the board of directors.

Governors queried why there was a church role within the Members – AA explained that there was no requirement for a church member, but should a Church of England school join the VLT the diocese would require a member to be appointed to ensure that the Christian ethos is upheld in that particular school.

It was agreed that the Members would require a background in Finance, Education and Community Links.

Directors (also known as the Board) it is envisaged would meet every half term plus relevant committees. Some directors would be appointed by the Members. The VLT would encompass the Directors, who would also be known as Trustees, as they are also governed by Charitable Trust Law. It was noted that all HA current Governors may not sit at this level.

Local Governance Committees (LGC's) would exist with their own schemes of delegation and terms of reference. All agreed for the need of clear lines of accountability. There will be 3 full board meeting per term plus committee meetings.

The Governance Structure should not require names and TC will amend this.

Action: TC (completed)

Standards and Finance Meetings will be more in-depth and Governors felt that these committees should have the agendas clearly outlined now whilst the Trust was small.

There will be LGC's for each school with responsibility for local arrangements and standards (ie progress and attainment). Local Governance will also have representation on both finance and standards committees.

Governors were concerned about losing the level of detail which enables them to challenge and hold staff to account – it was thought that sub committees will hold this role, and report to the LGC. Directors meetings could then focus on more general items.

The Financial Academies Handbook has a requirement for a Finance Committee, but as finance will be managed by the same financial system this will be reported by the Director of Finance.

TC will speak to established MATS regarding their terms of reference, meeting schedule and agenda items to clarify the in depth discussions that took place between Governors regarding Governance arrangements

Action: TC

Governors agreed that this was an ongoing piece of work that requires additional input after TC's fact finding.

Current Governors will be distributed across the different levels of Governance depending on their individual skills. All agreed that LGC's must be focussed and are required for context but that Directors will hold schools to account. The Members will hold the Directors to account.

Governors were asked to consider where they would like to sit in the new structure.

Vector Learning Trust Logo

TC circulated the proposed new logos and after discussion Governors agreed to logo 2, but with a different font which would be better for people with a visual impairment.

MEETING CLOSED AT 19.50pm

CHAIR:

Approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting;

..... Signed

..... Date

Action	By Whom	By When
Amend Governance Structure to remove names and show the VLT around the Directors	TC	Action Complete 19/05/16

Clarify Terms of Reference, Schedule of Meetings and Agenda Items for Governance structure.	TC	Asap
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