



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**MINUTES of the second meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust Company duly convened and held at John Mason School on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at 6:00 pm.**

<b>Present:</b>	Cally Batcheldor (CB), Paul Brooks (PB) in the Chair (until 6.57 pm), Jean Challis (JC), Linda Haggarty (LH), Jonathan Hopkins (JH) (in the Chair from 6.57 pm), Alex Mannix (AM), Anne Matthews, (AM), Di Mashiter (DM), Janet Morgan (JM), Christopher Palmer (CP).
<b>In attendance</b>	Valerie Munro (VM), Andrew Wilkinson (AW).
<b>Apologies</b>	Barry Graham (BG), David Ricketts (DR). Chris Davies (CD) had also sent apologies.

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Notice and quorum</b>	
	The Chair reported that due notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum was present. Accordingly the Chair declared the meeting open.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
	As reported above.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Conflicts of interest</b>	
	Each director present had previously declared his or her interest as a member of the Governing Body of the School. There were no updates on interests to report.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Confidential matters</b>	
	There were no matters to report on the agenda that were likely to give rise to the disclosure of confidential information.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Directors' roles</b>	
	PB drew attention to two new prospective Directors, who would be recommended for approval by the Board: Emma Brown (Research	

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	<p>Machines – RM candidate proposed) and Douglas Aitken, a teacher at Abingdon School and parent of a pupil at John Mason School. The Board was reminded that AM and JM had given notice that they would stand down by the end of the summer term.</p> <p>Three other potential candidates from parents of students at the school had been interviewed and the Members were reflecting on the best way to engage with them in support of the school; going forward there would be active consideration of further Director appointments.</p> <p>LH questioned whether as a criteria for directorship, candidates’ children should have been educated within the state system. The Board was of the view that, whilst this was desirable in principle, directors would be recommended for appointment first and foremost on the basis of the particular skills that they could bring to the Board and considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Robin Conway (RC) had stepped down from the former John Mason School GB and the Members now recommended and it was <b>AGREED</b> that he should be appointed as an ex-officio member (Director) for one year.</p> <p>The Board undertook to continue their search for candidates as Directors with HR, IT and financial management expertise.</p>	PB/Clerk
<b>6.</b>	<b>Student Council report</b>	
	<p>DM reported on recent activities of the School Council including:</p> <p>A survey of tutor groups and how to improve lunchtime arrangements; the Time &amp; Money group reviewing the school’s website, wishing to set up a blog on it and further student survey work; concerns about lockers and security – provision being set aside in the budget to improve security.</p> <p>AM added that 3 Student Council members had recently assisted her with interviews.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Minutes 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014</b>	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January were agreed and signed as an accurate record and filed accordingly subject to AM being recorded as “Alex Mannix” in the list of Directors present at the meeting.</p>	PB/Clerk
<b>8.</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
	<p>Minute 7.3 – It was reiterated that the Board sought to identify a Director who would co-ordinate the training of other members.</p>	All

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	<p>PB also urged the Board to read the Ofsted framework and inspection arrangement documents that had recently been circulated.</p> <p>Minute 8.1 – Policy co-ordination, procedure and approval was in hand. The school website would indicate which policies in place were statutory ones and which were not, together with review dates. At present there were some policies on the school website that were not statutory ones and the opportunity would be taken to pare back the number of policies that were needed.</p> <p>At the next meeting of the Board, policy review would be included as an agenda item and the Clerk undertook to circulate the DfE statutory policies document to Directors and Members who requested it.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>AM/CWA Cttee</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Headteacher's report</b>	
	<p>DM presented her report which had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The report was presented in its new format for the first time.</p> <p>DM reminded the Board that the School Development Plan (SDP) was reviewed each term; in effect, the Headteacher's report was now a periodic review of the SDP.</p> <p>Staff changes: it had been a challenging last few months with several leavers and staff sickness.</p> <p>There was a significant emphasis on school uniform and smartness at present and a future initiative concerning staff as "role models" would be promoted.</p> <p>Dominic Bromley was due to leave at Easter and PB undertook to write formally on behalf of the Board to thank him for his work on the Governing Body and for the school.</p> <p>Turning to the three year priorities of the SDP and its objectives DM summarised the lead responsibilities for overseeing these.</p> <p>With respect to Leadership &amp; Management, objective 4 – ensure ICT infrastructure fit for purpose, it was reported that the ICT plan was not progressing as planned and both PB and JH would take this up with the providers and through the strategic group of the committees.</p> <p>In response to a comment concerning the purpose of the English Baccalaureate in the curriculum, it was agreed to include this as an objective alongside Raising Attainment Objective 1 – Achievement &amp; Standards.</p>	<p>PB</p> <p>PB/JH</p> <p>DM</p>

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	<p>The Board discussed the match between the summary review in the Headteacher’s report and the SDP that had been circulated. It was acknowledged that it was the Board’s responsibility to dovetail both reports and the detailed objectives and actions into the Ofsted inspection framework; this would be undertaken through detailed scrutiny by the Board’s committees. Members and Directors were urged to read the HT’s report, SDP and Ofsted framework document circulated shortly before the meeting, and to feedback detailed comments for the next meeting of the Board on the 20<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>It was suggested that the “next steps” column in the new format for the Headteacher’s report should include some specific dates in future.</p>	All
<b>10. Committees</b>		
	<p><b>(1) Committee terms of reference</b></p> <p>The CWA Committee’s proposed terms of reference had been circulated with the agenda. They provided opportunities to alter membership and roles as the work of the Committee and the Board developed.</p> <p>JH circulated a flow diagram for the Members’ and committees’ proposed new structures and explained the rationale, purpose and roles outlined in the diagram (<i>a copy of the diagram and the rationale are attached to the signed minutes</i>). In particular, it was desirable to establish pools of Members/Directors who would undertake specific training and develop expertise for the specialist panel roles. The flow diagram would be considered in detail by the committees at their next meetings, to reflect the committees’ terms of reference and the Board’s approval to the structure would be sought at the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>The agreed committee structure would be under-laid by the policies that the school was required to have in place.</p> <p>The Board was informed that there was some urgency attached to establishing a panel to consider the Headteacher’s decision to permanently exclude a pupil. It was <b>AGREED</b> that the panel would comprise JM, AM and LH and would meet to consider the decision on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March, am – start time to be confirmed.</p> <p>Some Directors commented that the committees, in particular the CWA Committee, had very large agendas and did not allow the time or opportunity for more open reflection and general discussion. With this in mind, it was considered essential to reduce the emphasis on policy discussion and development to release time for networking and broader conversations. This will be achieved by establishing lead governors on key areas of the CWA committee, so that the detailed discussions with</p>	Russell Langdown /Clerk/JM/ AM/LH

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	<p>relevant staff could be undertaken outside of the committee’s meetings. Further discussions would take place in the meantime to rationalise the CWA Committee’s business.</p> <p><b>(2) Minutes</b></p> <p>a) Finance, Premises, Personnel 14<sup>th</sup> January – JH reported that the Committee’s meeting was mainly concerned with “housekeeping” matters, namely that the budget was on track. Attention was drawn to severe financial pressures from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 financial year due to funding based on the January 2014 school census and not actual student numbers from September 2014. AW would make a presentation to the Committee at its next meeting on the current financial situation and other pressures. He undertook to present this to the full Board if requested to do so subsequently.</p> <p>b) Curriculum, Welfare &amp; Achievement 15<sup>th</sup> January – AM had circulated the minutes with the Board’s agenda and reported that the meeting had welcomed Russell Langdown and received an update on the rewards and recognition scheme.</p> <p>c) John Mason Association – A Bingo evening to support “World Challenge” would take place on the 14<sup>th</sup> March and the AGN on the 18<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	AW/All
<b>11. Governor training – new Ofsted frameworks</b>		
	<p>The framework and inspection arrangement documents had been circulated and the Board was reminded (see item 8) of the need to identify a Director who would co-ordinate the training of other members.</p>	All
<b>12. Abingdon Consortium strategy discussions</b>		
	<p><i>(This item was taken preceding items 10 and 11 so as to enable PB to leave the meeting at 6.57 pm and for JH to assume the Chair)</i></p> <p>PB summarised various recent conversations with the Abingdon Consortium, including an offer of support to another local school which would be discussed very shortly by the respective Chairs of Governors.</p> <p>PB also outlined ongoing funding requests to the EFA within the Consortium; these were mainly focused around science and technology development.</p> <p>All governing bodies and executive teams within schools were due to discuss the “vision” for the Consortium.</p> <p>In response to a question, it was reported that not all of the recommendations of the Consortium’s 16-19 review had been fully considered and adopted yet.</p>	

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<b>13.</b>	<b>Policies for approval</b>	
	None were submitted for approval.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	
	There was no correspondence to report.	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	The Board was urged to network with local business partners to seek funding for advertisements and publicity for the forthcoming "West Side Story" performance.	All
<b>16.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 5.30 pm.	All

Minutes drafted by 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 8.55 pm

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