

**ESSA ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

MEETING HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON TUESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 5.00PM

Present: Jordan Turner, Nic Ford (Chair), Masud Kala and Martin Knowles (Principal).

In attendance: David Howarth (Finance Director), Andrew Cooper (CEO), Jennie Sidebottom (Assistant Principal) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body).

Nic Ford in the Chair

PART 1

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Paul Davidson, Neelam Arshad and Farook Atcha.

Membership

It was reported that a resignation had been received from Lucy Lees.

The Chair suggested that he could approach other Bolton school staff to see if anyone was interested in becoming a governor. A governor asked what had been done about the parent governor vacancy and asked whether any parents could be encouraged to apply for a vacancy. The Principal replied that a Year 7 PTA was in the process of being set-up and once this had taken place someone from this group could be approached. The Year 8 to 11 parents had previously been targeted but had not been interested. The Principal added that once the school has the parents' email addresses that would provide a further way that they could be approached. It was explained that Chris Read, one of the Trustees had expressed an interest in becoming a governor on the Local Governing Body, however, this was not recommended in the Academies Financial Handbook.

The CEO commented on the attendance of the governors currently on the LGB and advised that this was an issue which needed to be resolved as the academy needed people as governors who will attend meetings. The Clerk agreed to provide a list detailing the attendance statistics of governors.

The Principal asked whether there was a possibility of having a non-teaching member of staff as a governor. The Clerk agreed to check up on this.

The Principal suggested approaching a parent governor from Essa Primary LGB. The CEO advised that the primary academy was having similar issues with non-attendance of some governors.

Vice Chair

The Chair agreed to ask Paul Davidson if he might be interested in being appointed to this position.

Agreed:

- That the appointment of the Vice Chair be deferred to the next meeting.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

2. Finance/Budget Report

Jennie Sidebottom, Vice Principal left the meeting whilst the confidential section of this item was under discussion.

2.1 Draft Business Case for non-teaching restructure (*Confidential item*)

This item was designated as confidential under Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy *thereby excluding the information from that which is to be made available to any interested persons.*

2.2 September Budget Monitoring Report

The Finance Director reported that he had met with Masud Kala to look at the budget monitoring report in detail. It was explained that the staffing budget was showing a favourable variance of £21,600, however, following PMR reviews any pay increases would be backdated to September.

The teaching vacancy had been budgeted for an appointment being made at M5, but an appointment had been made lower down the salary scale.

It was reported that there had not been any supply teachers used in September. The Principal added that in the first half term in 2017 there had been 170 staff supply days compared with only two days this year. The Chair commented that this had been a remarkable improvement.

The report showed a favourable variance of £11,000 for learning resources. It was explained that this had been a pre-payment for this year which had been paid into the following year. The Finance Director explained that the £11,000 saving was not a true figure.

The overall surplus was showing as £30,600 but out of this £21,600 was for staffing costs.

A governor requested an explanation over the charge of £7,400 to cancel a contract. The Finance Director explained that this has now been credited back. It had referred to a vending machine. The invoice had been paid in September and had been credited back in October. There was just one machine left and the £7,400 had been refunded. This would show up in the next monitoring report.

It was explained that the adverse budget against other expenditure, £3,100 related to a pre-payment which had been paid in a previous year and has now been reversed back and will show up in the October accounts.

A governor asked if there had been any update from the audit. The Finance Director explained that it would be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at their meeting on 22 November. The Finance Director explained that two points had been raised by the auditors, one of which referred to the register of interest forms of two of the Directors and the other one was around procurement and purchase orders not being raised before an invoice was received. A governor asked whether this was due to the new EWP system. The Finance Director explained that EWP had been introduced in February and a lot of the issues had related to how things had been done historically in the secondary academy. The Principal added that there had been some concerns from staff around how effective the EWP system was as teachers were having to input the orders themselves and this slows down the process, however, the finance team think that it is an effective system. A discussion took place on whether it was the most efficient use of staff time and it was suggested that the inputting should be done by the finance team. It was also suggested having a centralised stock system which would mean that the main ordering would only need to be done once per year.

A governor asked how often staff were placing orders. It was explained that resources were purchased weekly for science due to the shelf-life of chemicals. It was suggested that the Finance sub-committee could carry out a staff survey on the system. It was explained that if staff did not like using the system someone would have to be appointed to carry out this work. The Principal explained that there might be an opportunity to tie this work into the job description of an administrator.

The Principal agreed that there should be economies of scale which could be done by ordering in bulk at the start of the year. He added that he signs off between 15 and 20 purchase orders on a weekly basis.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted.

3. HR REPORT

This item had been covered under item 2.1.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Agreed:

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 September 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

The Chair reported that the sub-committees had agreed their terms of reference, however, the Finance sub-committee meeting had not been quorate, and they would agree their terms of reference at their next meeting. It was agreed that if this meeting should not be quorate in the future either Nic Ford or Jordan Turner would attend.

The School Effectiveness Committee had arranged that their meetings would fit into the academy's data drop calendar.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**SEND report – Jennie Sidebottom**

It was reported that Gary Whiting had been appointed as SENDco for the primary academy, but it has been negotiated that he would also work for two and a half days per week at Essa Academy. The Vice Principal reported that SEND was an issue and added that access arrangements for Year 11 were not as they should be. There were 156 children on the SEND register and not all these children should be on it. The academy would be moving to using the NASEN four stage model and would be using CAT scores and testing for children in Years 8 to 11. All Year 7 would be reassessed as not transition SEND information had been used.

It was reported that there had been a complaint from a Year 11 parent over deadlines being missed for an EHCP application. The Principal reassured governors that with Mr Whiting having responsibility for SEND and Mrs Sidebottom leading this area strategically change would be made quickly. It was reported that the current SENDco had resigned her position and her contract would be terminated on 31 January this had followed a meeting which had taken place with the Principal and her union representative. It was reported that there was no intention to replace the full-time SENDco as two and a half days support had been bought in from the primary academy. It was noted that Mr Whiting had previously had experience as a SENDco in a secondary school. The CEO added that this had been a strong appointment. There was also an Assistant SENDco in place and the EAL lead also had the SENDco qualification. The Principal explained that there would be a stronger transition from primary to secondary as Mr Whiting was applying for EHCPs in the primary school which would transfer to the secondary academy. The Principal added that once Mr Whiting had been in post for a while longer he would ask him to speak to governors at either the LGB meeting or at the School Effectiveness Committee meeting.

School Improvement Visit report 5 November 2018

A written report from the visit of Ian Lane, External Advisor, on 5 November had been provided with the papers for the meeting. The Principal explained that the last time Mr Lane had visited the academy it had been prior to the Ofsted inspection.

It was explained that both the Ofsted and school self-evaluation judgement agree in that the outcomes indicate gaps; however, it could be said that the academy was now Good. The current attendance rate was 97% which was one of the highest in Bolton. Mr Lane had agreed with the judgement and said that he would support the judgement in saying that Essa Academy is a Good school. It was explained that it would take more time for outcomes to follow as there is always a lag in this area.

The Chair requested that further details be provided on the improved ICT in some areas and questioned whether the issues in ICT and with the infrastructure have been resolved. The Principal reported that the Vice Principal was carrying out snagging all the time to make sure what teachers need is in the classroom. He added that the Head of ICT was being held to account by the CEO and also by the Vice Principal. It was reported that ICT was going well but the bigger picture was not as good. The Principal added that he did not believe that the leadership of this area was good enough yet, but the main priority was to get it right in the classroom first. The Principal invited governors to visit school to look at them in action. It was noted that departments had been allowed to have an input in what items were required and the Business and Computing team had requested Smit Boards.

A governor asked how the academy had managed to improve attendance. The Principal explained that the contracts of the pastoral leaders had been changed and there was now a full-time attendance leader. Over £1,000 worth of fines had been issued this academic year. As students were having a better time and learning more with specialist teachers their attendance had started to improve. The Principal added that the Regional Schools Commissioner had acknowledge the progress. It was also noted that persistent absence had been reduced by 10%.

PMR Sampling

It was reported that once the Principal and the CEO had gone through the PMRs in detail governors would be asked to sample ten of them. The Principal added that there were now multiple layers of checks in the system.

ADP – Draft ADP

The Principal reported that the predicted figures, which were based on FFT20, were aspirational but realistic. The Principal added that there was still a lot of legacy issues and improvement in attainment would take time. The predictions were for 61% 4+ in English and Maths Basics and 41% for the 5+ Basics. The Principal explained that the Progress 8 score in 2016 had been -0.13, which had increased to -0.1 in 2017 and then to +0.1 this year. The forecast for 2019 was +0.3 which would put the academy in the top 20% nationally.

The targets in the ADP had been aligned to areas for improvement from Ofsted.

The Principal explained that the ADP had been RAG rated and it is a standing item at SLT meetings. The Principal said that he would bring the RAG rated ADP to the next meeting to show the progress made.

It was reported that the priorities were displayed in the staff room and faculty bases and would be pushed down from the middle leadership.

Revised Safeguarding Policy summary

The Principal reported that a summary of the revised Safeguarding policy was awaited from the Principal of Essa Primary Academy. The Trust had adopted the Local Authority Safeguarding policy so that the academies have the full support of the Safeguarding Children's Board for Bolton.

The Principal reported that the Local Authority was waiting for updates about the new King's Academy. It was noted that there were for other free school applications which had been submitted all in the BL3 postcode area, the Makkah Academy, Olive Tree free school secondary, and the Keys Federation Academy Trust which catered for 4 to 19-year-olds. This information had been provided by the Local Authority at the Bolton Learning Alliance.

The Principal explained that the Kings Academy would be going ahead, however, the temporary building on the land needs to go for planning permission which means that Essa and the local residents would be consulted. The issues around traffic on Lever Edge Lane and the polarisation of the community would be raised.

It was reported that the Principal of the Kings Academy had been invited to the Bolton secondary Heads meeting, however, they did not attend. The Head teacher group had asked their Chair to attend the meeting to discuss their proposal. It was noted that they have a narrow curriculum with no art, music or drama. As they will be taking 180 children it might mean that some of the children who might not get at place at Essa having to be placed at the King's Academy by the Local Authority even though it would not be their first choice.

The Principal explained that there would be a need for another secondary school in Bolton and it had been agreed that this would be a free school. The government would award £9M for this but as it is statutory Bolton Council would have to find the other £13.1M to fund it which could impact on the funding for the other schools.

The CEO explained that the King's Academy had been given approval at the pre-opening stage. The other three applicants were Wave 13 pre-opening school registrations. One of these schools would fulfil the need for pupil places in the area in 2022 but not all three.

The Principal explained that the King's Academy does not use the national teacher's terms and conditions unlike all the other schools in Bolton. The King's Academy does pay more than the national pay scale; however, their staff were required to work on Saturday mornings.

The Principal added that the best way to deal with the opposition was firstly to get to Good and then to Outstanding. The main USP for Essa is the 20% PPA time which has helped with quality recruitment and retention. The CEO added that research has shown that teachers value the time to do the job.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Finance Director reported that the Health and Safety Committee had met, and an audit had been carried out at the request of the Trust's Audit and Risk Committee. The report highlighted 52 points, of which two were priorities, one was around asbestos in the primary school and the other one was the working at height policy. The Finance Director explained that there was nothing in the audit which presented an immediate danger, but these were areas that needed to be worked through. Some of these were just that the policy had been missing during the audit.

The Principal reported that health and safety was improving. Additional floodlighting had been installed with some of this on the back of the academy for security purposes. Railings have now been fixed as have the low-level floodlights. The Principal explained that a full speaker system had been installed which can be used to play music throughout the school at lesson change-over time. This could also be used in a lock-down situation and announcements could be got out to children when needed.

A governor asked whether the asbestos was now safe and what the cost would be. The Finance Director replied that there had not been any asbestos in Essa Academy but one urgent area in the primary academy and a couple of other areas in the central services building where the surveyor had been unable to gain access.

7. SUB-COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

Masud Kala, Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee reported that the first meeting had not been quorate, however the committee had looked at management accounts and had requested a summary from the Principal. The Chair of the Committee explained that he had previously had a concern over the deficit but following the explanation over how savings were to be made no longer had any concerns.

The Chair reported that the School Effectiveness Committee had agreed terms of reference and had agreed that subject areas would be looked at on a rota with SRE being looked at in the next meeting. The Chair reported that governors had been very concerned about English as this was the biggest area of risk because it is a double-weighted subject. There had also been some concern about high attainers in English. The committee had requested to meet with the head of English at the next meeting. The committee had also noted that SEND was also an area of concern and had requested a short summary on it be provided.

The committee had looked at the Pupil Premium grant and would also look at attainment in much more detail. Having carried out a review of the data drama had been raised as a concern. The next meeting would take place on 22 January after the mock exams had taken place and when some external exam results would become available. The committee reserved the right to call in the head of drama at the next meeting if this was necessary.

A Safeguarding report had also been presented.

The Committee had also looked at how parental attendance at parents' evenings might be increased.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Staffing (confidential item)

This item was designated as confidential under Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy *thereby excluding the information from that which is to be made available to any interested persons.*

9. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS

It was agreed that consent be given to all governors who were absent from the meeting.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:

- That meeting dates for the next academic year be as follows:

Tuesday 5 March at 5.00pm

Tuesday 11 June at 5.00pm

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

Agreed:

That in accordance with Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy the following matters be designated as confidential:

Minute Numbers 2.1 and 8

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____