

**ESSA ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

MEETING HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON TUESDAY 13 JUNE 2017 AT 9.30AM

Present: Anwer Patel (Chair), Julia Pilkington, Jordan Turner, Ismail Kala, Paul Davidson, Nic Ford, Neelam Arshad, Patrick Ottley-O'Connor (Interim Principal) and Martin Knowles (Principal Designate).

In attendance: David Mole (Finance Director), and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

Anwer Patel in the Chair

PART 1

1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES

1a) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Andrew Cooper and Michelle Pogson.

1b) Appointment of Chair

Nominations were invited for the position of Chair of the Local Governing Body for the next academic year.

Agreed:

- That Anwer Patel be appointed as Chair for the next academic year.

Nominations were invited for the position of Vice Chair of the Local Governing Body for the next academic year.

Agreed:

- That Nic Ford be appointed as Vice Chair for the next academic year.

1c) Declaration of Interest

No declarations of pecuniary interest or conflict of interest were made in respect of the items to be discussed at the meeting

Governors were requested to complete an annual Register of Business Interest Form.

1d) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Agreed:

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 April 2017 be agreed as a correct record

2. FINANCE AND RISK

2c) Health and Safety Report

The Finance Director reported that a trust-wide Health and Safety Committee had been set up at the start of the spring term. The committee had carried out a review of all the Trust's Health and Safety policies, most of which would be ready for approval by the Trust Board at its meeting in July. The policies had also taken into account feedback from Adele MacGowan, the Trust's advisor on governance.

A Health and Safety audit had been commissioned in May. The audit had made a number of recommendations; the Finance Director reported that all recommendations should be in place by the end of the summer term. Progress towards completion of the recommendations is as follows: the statement of intent had been signed by the CEO; the testing of fixed electrical testing would be carried out over summer; the gate for the storage yard is now locked. A further report on the actions taken would be given to governors at the September meeting. A governor asked for information over the membership of the Health and Safety committee. The Finance Director replied that the committee membership is as follows: Finance Director, Facilities Manager, Head of Science, Head of PE, representative from the Primary Academy and a member of the Social Capital team. A governor expressed a concern over staff with poor English being unable to read instructions and asked for clarification over how many staff this referred to. The Finance Director explained that there was a member of the cleaning staff who has poor English, training has been given and a risk assessment has been carried out. The Interim Principal added that the risk assessment captured where the academy is at historically, he explained that issues were currently being addressed to make sure that staff are able to do their jobs. It was noted that there is also a French catering assistant working at the Academy. The Chair suggested that going forward that staff be given a test on basic literacy and numeracy before being employed. A governor expressed concern that someone had been employed so long at the academy with nothing having been put in place previously. It was explained that appropriate CPD and training have now been carried out.

2d) Risk Register

The Finance Director reported that the risk registers would be reviewed at a meeting on 27 June. The Business Continuity Plan would also be updated at this meeting. The Finance Director explained that there was a need to look at a number of scenarios and planning needed to be carried out around a major incident. Fire evacuation procedures have been reviewed, and in the case of the Primary Academy have been amended. A governor asked how often fire drills were carried out. The Finance Director replied that one was carried out every half term and after each evacuation a

review is carried out and staff and students are asked for their views on it; during the last evacuation drill the Academy had been evacuated in just over three minutes. The Interim Principal explained that the procedures had been sharpened up and said that the academy does not have any malicious setting off of the fire alarm so when the alarm is sounded the students accept that this is a drill. He added that for a future drill some issues might be planted such as hiding someone. A governor asked how long it had been before everyone had been accounted for at the last drill. The Interim Principal replied that it had been around six minutes. There is now a lock-down policy in place, the procedures for which has been gone through with staff.

2a) Budget Monitoring Report

A financial report was presented which showed the budget position as at 30 April as having a net position of £68,000. The reasons for the underspend and overspend were listed in the report. It was explained that the variances in the staffing budget had been due to vacancies or to long-term sicknesses. The overspend for premises and occupancy costs was due to increased costs for gas and electricity. The underspend in the curriculum resources budget would be spent by the year end. A contingency had been created to deal with bids from departments. The underspend on catering reflected the number of school meals taken. The Finance Director explained that in-year savings had been identified and adjustments had been made from the original to the revised budget. Many staff who had left had been replaced on a lower grade. The savings had been re-allocated to CPD, additional resources for the building and a bid pot for the strands.

There was an increase in the proposed work budget of £58,000 to upgrade Food Technology and provide additional classroom spaces. The Finance Director explained that taking into account the contribution from reserves this would leave an underspend of £18,000 at the end of the year assuming that all areas are managed tightly.

An aged creditors and debtors report was also provided with the report to show that the academy is paying its creditors in a timely manner. The Finance Director explained that there had been an issue with electricity invoices which had been paid late because the supplier had not provided the Academy with an invoice. The debtors shown all related to Essa Education Ltd and these would be transferred to the bank account. A governor asked for an explanation over the gas and electricity contract. The Finance Director replied that a new gas and electricity contract has been procured by the Trust, assisted by two of the trustees. The Finance Director explained that it often takes time for invoices to be produced when changing supplier.

2b) 2017/2018 Budget

The Finance Director reported that all schools and academies were facing a shortfall in funding. Staff costs increase year by year, a lot of this being due to incremental drift. Energy costs were also increasing. It was explained that income was not rising in line with inflation. The government was expected to introduce a National Funding Formula from 2018/19 and the budget planning had taken into account government proposals. It was explained that Bolton's local formula was beneficial to Essa Academy as it takes into account additional needs and the deprivation factor. There was no specific guidance available yet on the Pupil Premium under the national formula funding.

The staffing structure had been reviewed for teaching and support staff and it was planned that staff would be appointed to the new structure over time. The Finance Director explained that it was hoped that by the academic year 2019/20 that all staff would be on the new structure so that this would avoid the effect of redundancy. It was explained that 1% had been allowed for inflation for 2018/19 and 2.5% for most other costs. The Finance Director also explained that the 2018/19 budget had assumed a staffing structure somewhere between the two structures.

The contingency budget had allowed for an additional resource to undertake building work to increase the number of lunchtime serveries which would allow a single lunchtime sitting, and also work on the reception entrance area to improve security. This work would include the installation of a set of doors at a cost of £20,000. The Finance Director said that he would like both building work projects to come out of this year's budget, this would mean that this year's budget would be overspend but there would be an underspend the following year. In order to offset the overspend there would be an increased use of reserves this year. The Finance Director explained that £50,000 was required in the contingency budget to cover for unforeseen events and an additional £50,000 to cover the adjustments to the doors to the reception area and the work to the catering facilities. The Finance Director explained that there was currently £155,000 in the contingency budget. The Principal Designate explained that the glass gates in the reception area are a weakness for the school. Locks have now been installed on the parental meeting rooms. He added that floor to ceiling walls would help to create security as would a HD CCTV camera on the reception and the car park. The walls would allow for a holding area to be created in the reception. Staff would have a tap pad to sign in and out of the building and an inventory system, as used in other schools and academies would be introduced.

It was explained that there were currently three lunchtime sittings which has a significant impact on outcomes because of the noise and lessons being split which causes lost learning time. It is proposed that from September there would be one lunch time but this would require six serveries. This would allow 45 minutes for lunch and 20 minutes for social time. This would enable lunchtime clubs to be offered, these could include football, IT, reading and interventions. The Principal Designate explained that these measures would help to disperse the queues and added that this was a cost neutral model.

The Finance Director explained that the budgets for 2019/20 and 2020/21 would be back in a surplus position once the new structure was fully in place. A governor asked why the teaching supply cover budget had increased in 2019/20. It was explained that this was due to the change in the staffing structure; previously there had been a cover teacher but this post has been removed from the structure. It was explained that this is an area which can be looked at again with the possibility of putting a cover supervisor role in place. The Interim Principal explained that a cover supervisor role would be more cost effective. The Principal Designate said that if the right people were in place the academy could look at converting them into teachers through the Schools Direct course.

A governor pointed out that the lunchtime assistants have been removed from the budget and asked whether these posts were still required. The Interim Principal

explained that two of the lunchtime supervisors were looking to retire and said that there would be a need for additional people to serve food at lunchtime. He explained that support staff could be offered the chance of working on the server to boost their income rather than employing someone specifically for this role for one hour per day.

The Interim Principal reported that a Local Authority consultation was taking place around increasing pupil numbers in the borough. It was explained that the academy is oversubscribed this year and there is also a waiting list. The academy would take an additional 20 pupils this year. The money resulting from the additional pupils has not been factored into the budget. He added that there may be an opportunity to increase the Planned Admission Number permanently. It was noted that there would be a minimum of two free schools being established in the town.

2e) Expenditure over £10,000

It was proposed that the kitchen capacity in Food Technology be increased. It was explained that this is the only technology offered at the academy and in addition it helps to contribute to life skills. The proposal was to double the size of the facility and to increase the number of cookers and fridges so that more students are able to study the subject. The planned work had been costed as £33,000. It was explained that this is affordable within the budget now that efficiencies have been found. The Interim Principal explained that it could be demonstrated that the academy has saved money in order to carry out the work.

It was also proposed to close some of the open teaching spaces. This had been requested by staff and students. It was explained that there are three classrooms in one space where the two wings join and the sound presents a problem for teaching and learning. Walls would be erected to create two closed classrooms with one larger space. It was also proposed to create a maths faculty on the lower floor. The cost of creating 13 classroom spaces amounted to £25,000. It was reported that staff were very pleased with these proposals. It was explained that efficiency savings had freed money to enable this work to be carried out.

It was reported that the Apple Macbooks used by the teaching staff were coming towards the end of their working life. The Finance Director explained that quotes would be sought for both purchase and lease costs. The plan was to lease these over three years which builds in the refresh. There was a similar proposal for the I-Pads and I-macs. It was explained that there would be a saving if these are leased when compared to the purchase of I-Pads. It was explained that the cost would be low in the current year and the lease could be built into the future years' ICT budget. The Finance Director explained that these could probably be purchased at the end of the third year.

The Principal Designate said that there had not been a refresh of the devices that the teaching staff use and many of the management systems would not be supported as they became outdated. He reported that he had met with the UK lead for Apple, and explained that this would allow savings to be made and put the academy at the forefront of Apple technology. The Principal Designate advised that the academy needs to re-set regarding technology and how it is approached. He added that

hopefully the academy could be re-positioned back as a world leader. The Interim Principal added that the academy had lost its way with technology and the strategic way had not moved forward. He added that the I-Pads should be used as a tool to aid learning. It was noted that Abdul Chohan no longer works for the Trust but would do some work as a consultant working with IT to find a new way forward of working with Apple nationally.

A governor expressed a concern over the £45,000 which would be spent over three years on a refresh. He asked which parts of the hardware would be redundant. He added that I-macs are very expensive and that a Windows operating system would give a broader experience to students as the majority of businesses use Windows based technology.

The cost of the project would be £118,000 over three years. It was explained that £60,000 is currently spent each year to repair the I-Pads and to buy new ones which is a false economy. The Principal Designate said that the main question is that whether the I-Pads are used to enhance learning. In addition "the world's leading I-Pad school" is a unique selling point for the academy. He added that the academy is due for an Ofsted inspection and also the forecast GCSE results were also at risk. The Principal Designate explained that using Microsoft would dilute the unique selling point. It was explained that Apple is developing an all through package which would enable coding to be offered through both academies and allow students to look at what is behind the "apps". It was explained that the batteries for some of the Macbooks do not charge and there were also a number of issues with the staff devices. It was explained that the current system is that everyone in schools gets an I-Pad, including the cleaners and catering staff, however, not all staff need one. It was noted that members of the Senior Leadership Team need an I-Phone and an I-Mac; they would be able to return their I-Pads. A Windows device is required for the purpose of timetabling. Smartboards in the primary academy are driven through Windows machines. A governor suggested that Mac-Minis could be used instead of the more expensive devices. The Chair pointed out that the culture had previously been to go for the most expensive product. A governor suggested that governors should look at the value provided and the impact on teaching. The Interim Principal explained that technology is a secondary factor why parents choose Essa Academy as a school for their children. A governor asked whether the academy was getting any incentives from Apple. It was explained that they support the academy but that they do not sponsor anyone. The Vice Chair commented that there would be value in having mixed resources to better prepare students. The Interim Principal suggested that the discussion should be continued outside the meeting to look at a blended provision but added that IT was a unique selling point of the academy. He added that the risks of an Ofsted inspection and lower outcomes needed to be taken into account. A governor said that if an Ofsted is a risk then technology is not doing what it had set out to do.

Agreed:

- That the I-Pad refresh be carried out.
- That the Mac-Books be replaced if not working.
- That the Principal Designate and the Vice Chair have a discussion about I-Macs outside the meeting.

A governor suggested that if it is the same cost to lease as it is to buy the MacBook Airs then it would be better to buy them and then sell them at the end of this time to have some future income. The Finance Director said that the academy would continue with refurbishments until a decision has been made on the Mac-Book Airs. It was noted that the Mac-Book Airs were mainly used for planning and are the preferred option for teachers. A governor asked why teachers need both a Mac Book and an I-Pad as this presents an additional cost. The Principal Designate explained that there is a legacy that everyone has had everything; going forward the academy would look at why they are needed and what difference they make. The staff governor explained that staff use I-Pads as a monitoring tool and also to help students. They are also used for data assessment and tracking. A governor questioned whether both were needed as if they were not this could lead to a saving of £400 per person per year. The Finance Director explained that the I-Pads for teaching staff had been replaced 18 months ago and were not yet due for renewal; this would allow time for a review to take place. The Mac Book Airs had been replaced in 2011. A decision had been taken to move from the Progresso system to SIMS as it was thought that Progresso was not fit for purpose. It was noted that the Chair had given this approval to go ahead ready for September.

It was reported that the budget savings had freed up money for the building work, additional noticeboards and wall transfers. Some of this work has now started. The Interim Principal explained that the walls of the classrooms would be used to communicate ethos and students' successes. As the expenditure for this work is over £10,000, approval from governors was requested. The Interim Principal explained that the most important issues were safeguarding and the improvement of teaching and learning.

Agreed:

That the following work be carried out:

- Improvements in the Food Technology areas
- Work to improve the teaching spaces
- I-Pads for the new Year 7 cohort
- Installation of doors in the reception area
- Increase the number of lunchtime serveries.

2f) Sports Centre Pricing

A report was provided to update governors on the charging and discount policy for the sports centre and also a report detailing which clubs and groups are using the clubs and groups. It was explained that the membership of the Sports Centre Committee is the Deputy Principal, Finance Director and a teacher from the primary academy. The committee would review any application for a discount if this came from a group who worked with children in the local area or Essa Academy students. The Interim Principal added that the policy meets fair criteria and helps to meet local needs.

Agreed:

- That the Finance Director circulate the minutes from the Sports Centre Committee to members of the Local Governing Body.

3. HR UPDATE (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.*

4. EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT & STUDENT WELFARE

4a) Principal's Report

The Principal Designate had already started working at Essa Academy for three days per week with teaching and learning being the main focus.

Six staff would be attending training later in the week with Professor John Hattie, a national leader of teaching and learning; this training would include a session with the NQTs and RQTs which would look at assessment and questioning. This would be followed on the following day with a session for all staff. There would also be a non-residential weekend with 45 middle and senior leaders; this would look at vision and values and how to devise a challenging curriculum. The Principal Designate explained that the bar had been raised for Key Stage Two provision and said that he wanted middle leaders to visit primary schools to get a better understanding of the Year 6 pupils who would be attending Essa. He added that high prior attainers at the academy had not been making the required progress. It was noted that there were around 60 high prior attainers admitted to the academy each year and this represented a third of the school. The Principal Designate explained that because of this, outcomes and headline figures should be good he added that for middle and lower prior attainers the focus should be on their progress. He said that he would ask teachers to deliver great lessons. It was explained that some students were falling behind; handwriting was also a concern because of the use of I-Pads. It was noted that 15% of the maths GCSE would be marked on spelling and grammar. Each faculty would have two days as a team off-site to look at the new curriculum specifications to plan the curriculum from Year 7 and to put flight paths in place.

Assessment weeks would be followed by a re-teach week which would allow staff to teach again on the areas where students are falling behind. This would give an opportunity for reflection and challenge, all year groups would have a yearly exam week in the future and all students could be given extension opportunities. Quality Assurance this year had been at a developmental stage, but next year would be made more robust with teachers being judged as highly effective, effective, not yet effective or ineffective.

Achievement & Outcomes

It was explained that there was a challenge with the GCSE exams as the formula for working out the grades would not be released until October. .

Problems in science had occurred with students only having one three hour lesson per week and much science being taught in Year 7. Students now have three lessons per week over four and a half years. The Interim Principal said that he commended staff in trying to manage the legacy issue. The Local Governing Body wished to pass on a formal thank you to staff in appreciation of their efforts in this matter.

Agreed: That the Interim Principal pass on thanks from the Local Governing Body to staff.

A governor asked whether attendance would reach the target of 96%. It was explained that the rising trend was too slow and the monitoring of attendance had not been tight enough. The Interim Principal explained that the gate system was now working much better. Staff are on the gates in the morning, and are able to communicate quickly with staff in school by the use of radios. A bell would be sounded at 8.35am and immediate sanctions for lateness would be given on the same day at either lunchtime or after school. It was explained that this needed to be instant and to take away a student's social time. The Principal Designate explained that clear boundaries, structures and routines would help to improve attendance.

Agreed: That the Principal's report be noted.

4b) Term Dates

The term dates for the academic year 2018/19 fall in line with the Local Authority holiday pattern. It was explained that alternative models had been considered, including having a three week holiday at the Christmas period, however, other Head Teachers had said that they thought that this would lead to the problems going elsewhere. It was explained that both Essa Academy and Essa Primary Academy would fall in line with this pattern. A governor asked whether Eid had been taken into account when setting the pattern. It was explained that this would fall on either 26 or 27 June this year and there would be a full closure of the academies. This had been agreed in conjunction with the unions as Eid is a moveable date.

Agreed: That the term dates for 2018-19 be approved.

5. GOVERNANCE

5a) Schedule of LGB Meetings for the next academic year

It was explained that the Local Governing Board meetings for the following academic year had been set in accordance with assessment periods to enable live data to be reviewed.

Agreed: That the schedule of Local Governing Body meetings for the next year be as follows:

Tuesday 19 September 2017 at 9.30am

Tuesday 14 November 2017 at 9.30am

Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 9.30am

Tuesday 13 March 2018 at 9.30am

Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 9.30am

5b) Governor Visits, Training and Development

The Interim Principal invited all governors to visit the academy as part of their role as a governor. He thanked Julia Pilkington and Nic Ford for carrying out governor monitoring visits, the reports from these visits had been included with the papers for the meeting.

5c) Policies for Approval

A governor pointed out that the IT acceptable use policy was still not on the academy's website. The Interim Principal explained that this policy was due to be uploaded to the website. He added that the administration of medicines policy would also need to be uploaded to the website. The Interim Principal explained that the academy does not currently have a trips and visits policy; this is a policy which the Principal Designate is working on.

The following policies are Trust policies presented to the Local Governing Body for adoption:

Exclusion Policy

Sex and Relationships Policy

Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Intimate Care Policy

The Interim Principal explained that consultation must take place on the Sex and Relationships Policy before it is put into place. He explained that in respect of the Use of Reasonable Force Policy there had not been any staff at the academy trained in restraint; one member of staff is now on this training. It was explained that this training was about de-escalation techniques.

Agreed: That the following Trust policies be adopted for use in the academy:

Exclusion Policy
Use of Reasonable Force Policy
Intimate Care Policy

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Principal Designate requested that Safeguarding be a standing item on future Local Governing Body agendas in order to enable challenge from governors in this area.

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

All staff employed at the academy left the meeting during the continuation of this item.

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

It was agreed that the next meeting take place on 19 September 2017 at 9.30am in the boardroom at Essa Academy.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

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

Minutes Number 3 and 8.

The meeting closed at 12.10pm

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____