East Midlands Academy Trust – Trust Board Meeting

11th December 2020, 10:00am - Meeting to be conducted virtually via Teams

Second meeting of academic year 2020/2021

These minutes reflect the order of the agenda and not necessarily the order in which items were discussed.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome	**Present:** **Kevin Crompton** (EMAT: Trustee) **Fiona Wheeler** (EMAT: Trustee) **Ayo Salam** (EMAT: Trustee) **Andy Davis** (EMAT: Trustee) **Stephen Morales** (EMAT: Trustee) **David Houghton** (EMAT: Trustee) **Asvin Morjaria** (EMAT: Trustee) **Leigh Jones** (EMAT: Trustee) *joined at 11.06am* **Jon Harris** (EMAT: Member) *joined at 11.10am* **Joshua Coleman** (EMAT: CEO) **Paul Wheeler** (EMAT: Finance & Operations Director) **Ruhena Mahmood** (EMAT: Senior Workforce Planning & HRBP) **Joni Ager** (EMAT: PR & Communications Manager) **Daryl Unitt** (EMAT: Head of Shared Services) **Lorna Beard** (EMAT: Lead Academy Improvement Partner) **Giles Osborne** (EMAT: Lead Academy Improvement Partner) **Natalie Packer** (EMAT: SEND Consultant) **Jo Trevenna** (EMAT: NIA HT) *joined only for item 12* **Monica Juan** (EMAT: Head of Governance & Safeguarding)- Minutes **Bernard Weiss** (observer) KC welcomed all and reminded all present that the matters raised within this meeting would remain confidential until the minutes were agreed and signed off.	
2. Apologies	**Matt Johanson** resignation had been received and was accepted by the board.	
3. Quoracy	The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
4. Declarations of Interest	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda in addition to those already recorded on the annual Register of Interests.	
5. Minutes of TB meeting held on 25/09/2020 &	The minutes of the meeting held on the 25/09/2020 were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate representation of the meeting.	

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matters arising not in AL.	KC agreed to physically sign the minutes once lockdown restrictions had been lifted.	
6. Action Log from the meeting held on 25/09/2020	1) Contact Matt Johanson - **DONE** 2) Chairs forum dates - **DONE** 3) Invite trustees to attend Chair/CEO meeting once a month - **DONE** 4) Organise linking of trustees with academies - **ONGOING** 5) Distribute Terms of Reference to Members - **DONE** 6) Write to LABs and ongoing Chairs -**ONGOING** 7) Add Chairs appointment item to all committee agendas - **DONE** 8) Contact potential trustees- **DONE** 9) Organise electronic signatures with IT- **DONE** 10) Investigate how other trusts have engaged with stakeholders during lockdown- **DONE** 11) Add Dealing with allegations of abuse against staff members Policy to next meeting- **DONE** 12) Upload ratified policies to website- **DONE** 13) Update documentation relating to JH role- **DONE**	
7. Updates from • **Standards & Performance** • **FHR & Estates** • **Audit & Risk**	*Committee Chairs gave a verbal update.* **FHRE:** AD reported that all papers and policies presented to the committee had been scrutinised and approved. Some of those papers were to be presented to the board during the current meeting for ratification. Management Accounts papers had been enhanced with the introduction of a clear dashboard offering the highlights of the group at a glance. The trust had accumulated good reserves, the audit report was clear and the positive impact of the ICPF tool implementation had been clearly demonstrated. **A&R:** AM reported that Auditors had been invited to the last committee meeting and had presented both External and Internal Audits. Both documents were very clean and demonstrated that the trust had effective controls in place, an improvement from the previous year was noted. Discussions around the potential risk of new schools joining the organisation had taken place. GDPR had been highlighted as a major risk and trustees had requested regular updates and an action plan to be ready for the next meeting. **S&P:** *JC reported on behalf of LJ.* A baseline DATA exercise had been conducted across all phases of education and the results had highlighted areas of weakness. Primaries presented a decline in EY Phonics, Reading and Maths. Read Write Inc. Phonics training updates had been provided for staff. Secondary had conducted Y7 CAT tests to provide a baseline assessment that would facilitate provision. The results showed a decline in progress and attainment from previous years. KS3/4/5 had conducted mock tests and results would be scrutinised at the next committee meeting. PWS provide and update on GSCE/A Level grades that confirmed the accuracy of their original	

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	predictions. Catch-up funding had been identified and a programme of interventions to allocate the funding was underway. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether exams would take place in the same format during the current year and what effect that might have in the results** JC explained that, although the understanding was that the process might mirror the previous year there had not been any guidelines confirmed by the DfE. This would not be significantly detrimental for PWS and might benefit NIA and KS2 results. Trustees praised PWS integrity during the summer grades assessment process.	
8. CEO Report	*Papers had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.* JC presented the highlights of the paper and took questions from Trustees. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding the NIA Ofsted visit** JC confirmed that, following the latest Section 8 inspection, NIA would be reinspected by Ofsted once physical inspections started again. This would be a full Section 5. SAA and SHEPS were also likely to receive a visit. **In response to a question from a trustee around Assessments and Primary Writing Assessments in Y3, what type of interventions were in place to reach the expected standards and what was the timescale before a positive impact was tangible** JC confirmed that the Read, Write Inc programme had been deployed across all primaries and individual schools also had their own set of interventions. LB clarified that certain schools, like NIA and Castle, had low starting baselines and progress between end of KS1 and KS2 was very strong. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding SHEPS latest visit from Ofsted** JC confirmed that it had been 10 years since the last full inspection had taken place in 2010, producing an Outstanding grade. A Geography deep dive had taken place in February 2020 which had highlighted some areas of concern. This, coupled with the change of Headship, meant that the school was now under Ofsted radar. Appropriate interventions had been put in place to support the new school leadership. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding why Ofsted readiness was a key priority for PWS if their next inspection was not due until 2024** LB explained that PWS had obtained a Good grade in the 2020 inspection and were keen to work towards achieving Outstanding in the following inspection which would take a different set of priorities to support staff. The SEND consultant, Natalie Packer, introduced herself and presented the SEND DATA Dashboard which had been introduced to identify and analyse the SEND patterns across the trust. Next steps would be about developing the dashboard to include progress and attainment for SEND pupils to compare to national DATA.	

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	In response to a question from a trustee regarding the SEND codes in the dashboard NP clarified that they referred to the level of support provided in school. **N** – No SEN; **K** – Pupils receiving SEN support; **E** – Pupils with an EHCP. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding current HR investigations and the timeline to complete them** HM explained that the majority would be completed by the end of 2020. One had gone to appeal, and it would be completed in 2021. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding the breakdown between academic/non-academic NIA staff** HM clarified that the split was 47 teachers and 33 support staff ranging from Teaching Assistants, Higher Level Teaching Assistants, Midday Supervisors, Office staff etc. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding allocation of priorities for monitoring** JC suggested to assign trustees to the different KLOE (Key lines of enquire) in the document for future monitoring. Trustees agreed to receive regular updates on the 4 priorities. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding the work with potential new schools** JC updated trustees around HAT, the Towcester bid and the Coventry schools. • **Towcester**: Although the bid had reached the final stage, ultimately it had been unsuccessful. However, putting the bid together it had proven to be a good exercise for the team. • **HAT**: Still ongoing. Support continued to be around Finance/HR/SI. Meeting to take place with the RSC on 18th December. • **Coventry**: Two schools had shown interest to join EMAT and a meeting to discuss next steps was to be organised shortly. Trustees thanked the CEO for the comprehensive report.	**Prepare KLOE update for next TB meeting.**
9. Finance matters: • **Approval of Annual Report and Financial Statements** • **Receive Auditor's management letter**	*Papers had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.* PW presented the papers to trustees and confirmed that the organisation had robust financial stability despite a significant turbulent year, managing to retain a surplus in the process and deliver very clean audits. PW answered questions from trustees. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether the trust had an Expenses Policy** PW confirmed that the trust had an expenses policy. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding the length of service of the current external auditors** PW clarified that the trust had appointed Mazars trough a tendered process and this had been their second year producing the external audit. MHA had been in post as Internal Auditors for one year. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding the role of the external audit and the separate internal audit** PW explained that the external auditor's	**Send policy to trustees.**

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	role was to complete a statutory audit which produce two opinions. One was a true and fair view which stated that the accounts were as they should be. The second one was a regulatory opinion which stated that the trust was compliant with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook. The role of the Internal Auditor was to look in more depth at the internal controls and risk and produced a programme of works that would link with the risk register. They both reported to the board, not to the executive. **Trustees unanimously approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements and received the Auditor's management letter.**	
10. Update from Forums: **i. GDPR** **ii. Safeguarding** **iii. SEND** **iv. PP** **v. Employees (within CEO report)**	*Papers had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.* **i. GDPR**: PW presented the highlights of the GDPR committee. GDPR had been identified as a high-risk priority in the audit. A report commissioned to EvolveNorth had highlighted several areas of concern and produced a set of recommendations. DU had been appointed as Head of Shared services and was leading on the road to GDPR compliance and some of the recommendations were already being effectively implemented: • Third Party Management • IT Security • BCP/Disaster recovery **In response to a question from a trustee regarding when the trust would be fully GDPR compliant and whether there were enough resources in place to support the journey** DU reported that the intention was to achieve compliance by the end of August 2021, but the journey might take longer, and it would be a continuous programme. There was a need to embed best practice across the organisation first and the trust was committed to achieve this, providing the required resources when needed, including training. **ii. SEND**: NP presented the minutes of the last SEND Forum and gave a summary of the MAT SEND review. The review had used the national framework to identified current weaknesses and strengths and had prepared a road map for the future. The trust had invested heavily in SEND and was committed to become one of the more inclusive MATs in the country. Training had been delivered across the schools, including governance. The trust was starting to explore the commission of trust wide support around speech therapy and educational psychologist support. **In response to a question from a trustee regarding how did EMAT compared with other MATs in the county/country** NP confirmed that EMAT level of commitment was very high in relation to other trusts. The group had made significant steps forward, particularly around putting systems in place and upscaling SENDCOs.	

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	In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether the trust could make quicker progress if more resources were devoted to the issue JC clarified that the SEND journey was very much about a systematic transformation through all the schools which would be achieved through embedding the right culture, ethos, curriculum and good quality of teaching & learning. The journey would take time and could not be achieved with quick fix interventions as the best provision should be delivered through a whole staff approach. *NP left the meeting at 11.30am* *SM left the meeting at 11.36am* iii. **Safeguarding**: This section was discussed in item 12. iv. **PP**: A new chair, Daniel Sobel, had been appointed and would be conducting reviews across all schools. CW had also identified areas to improve and was dealing with these through the LABs S&P meetings. Trustees requested PP to be added to the next agenda as a substantive item. v. **Employees**: HM presented the highlights of the forum. This item had been covered in the CEO report. There were no further questions from trustees.	**PP to be added to next TB agenda.**
11. Policies ratification	*All policies had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.* • Dealing with allegations of abuse against staff members Policy (for information only) • Admissions Policy 2022/2023 (please see summary of changes) **All policies were formally received and ratified by the Board.** **Trustees agreed to continue ratifying electronically other policies if necessary, during the duration of the COVID19 crises.**	**MJ to upload policies to all EMAT websites.**
12. Safeguarding - Ofsted update	***Please see confidential minute***	
13. AOB –	*Hardingstone Nursery Proposal had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting* **Trustees agree in principle for Hardingstone Academy to continue pursuing the nursery proposal.** *KC left the meeting at 12.20pm, AD chaired the meeting from this point.*	

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	DH had participated on the filming of the EMAT Trust awards and wished to thank the schools for their welcoming approach. *BW left the meeting at 12.30pm* **Trustees discussed BW appointment and unanimously agreed to invite him to join the EMAT board as a trustee.**	**MJ to contact BS and start paperwork.**
14. Dates of next meetings	Dates of meetings to July 2021: • Friday 23rd April 2021 at 10am • Friday 16th July 2021 at 10am	**Calendar appointments have been sent**

Meeting closed at 12.38pm

Signed by Kevin Crompton, Chair of Trustees

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Date……

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East Midlands Academy Trust

Action Log of the Trust Board meeting held on 11th December 2020. Meeting conducted virtually.

Item	Action	Owner
1.	**Prepare KLOE update for next TB meeting.**	**LB/GO**
2.	**Send Expenses policy to trustees.**	**MJ**
3.	**PP to be added to next TB agenda.**	**MJ/JC**
4.	**Safeguarding audits report to be added to next TB agenda**	**MJ/JC**
5.	**Share DfE response and press comms with trustees**	**JC**
6.	**Organise BW appointment paperwork**	**MJ**

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