

East Midlands Academy Trust

Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on the 13th of December 2019, 10:00
at Hardingstone Academy, Martins Lane, Hardingstone, NN4 6DJ

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

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome	<p>Present: Kevin Crompton (Chair: Member appointed) Fiona Wheeler (Member appointed) Ayo Salam (Co-opted) Andy Davis (Member appointed) Jon Harris (Co-opted) Stephen Morales (Co-opted)</p> <p>Joshua Coleman (EMAT: CEO) Paul Wheeler (EMAT: Finance & Operations Director)</p> <p>Carole Kirby (Minutes) Monica Juan (EMAT: Head of Governance & Safeguarding from January 2020)</p> <p>Trustees had been given a tour of the school by the Executive Head Teacher, Zoe McIntyre, at 10:00. The meeting commenced at 10:35.</p> <p>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. Introductions were made.</p>	
2. Apologies	<p>Apologies were received and accepted from:</p> <p>Matt Johanson (Member appointed) Leigh Jones (Co-opted)</p>	
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.	

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5. Minutes of the meeting held 20/09/2019	The minutes of the meeting held on the 20 th of September 2019 were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate representation of the meeting. KC signed the minutes.	
6. Actions from the meeting held 20/09/2019	<p>Action from the meeting held on the 20th of September 2019 were reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Add webinar on Financial planning to GovernorHub: CK. Done. ii. Present to TB on financial planning and ICFP: SM. SM reported that he has suggested PW becomes an accredited SRM Advisor (school resource management). SM explained how this initiative works and Trustees were unanimous in their support for PW to take up this opportunity. It was then decided that SM and PW would present together to the FHR & Estates committee and this will be recorded via Skype for other Trustees to view. In the meantime, all Trustees to access the webinar on GovernorHub. iii. Add condensed SoD to GovernorHub: CK. Done. iv. Add PW as DPO to SoD: JC. Done. v. Organise the addition of SG delegations to the SoD: JC. Done. vi. Pass signed minutes to JC or CN for filing: KC. Done. vii. Look into sources of good practice around additional spending (PP, EAL, SEND): JC/GO/KR. JC reported that independent Chairs have been appointed to the forums and they have already made some recommendations. Hounslow are assisting with the Trust's approach to EAL and the expenditure of Year 7 catch up premium is being reviewed. viii. Organise PP training for the TB: JC. Done. ix. Update the Health & Safety Policy and the Accessibility Policy for TB ratification: PW/NS. Done. x. Invite RB to a TB meeting to present on the work of the Audit and Risk committee: PW. Done. RB will present at the next Trust Board meeting. xi. Send completed skills audit to CN by September the 30th: ALL. Done. 	SM & PW to present to FHR & Estates committee and this to be presented on Skype or otherwise recorded.

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	<p>xii. Send link to Home Office guidance on County Lines: KC. CK has added a link to GovernorHub. KC to add anything further that might be useful.</p> <p>xiii. Review SG Policy so that it can be reduced in size: JC to delegate. In progress.</p> <p>xiv. Meet with HR Business Partners to advise on wording of Policies: LJ. Done.</p> <p>xv. Speak with Head Teacher w/r to wording of Behaviour Policy: JC. Done.</p>	
7. Updates from committees	<p>Standards and Performance:</p> <p>The last minutes of the Standards and Performance committee meeting had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting. As LJ had sent apologies for this meeting, JC reported on this update. With regard to overall results across the Trust, Early Years had performed below the national average, KS1 had been slightly above and KS2 slightly below. The next data drop will be in the New Year.</p> <p>AIPs have been in to all of the primary schools. Shepherdswell is currently sitting on an Outstanding Ofsted judgement. The school has been relatively stable with pupils performing above national averages. The DHT left earlier this year and to support the school, the Trust has seconded a staff member from the NIA to work with the school and a Lead AIP is mentoring the Head Teacher. Some working practices have been reviewed to make them more efficient and to ensure staff are concentrating on pupils rather than admin. The staffing is stable and the review of the curriculum has been very successful; this may be rolled out to other schools within the Trust.</p> <p>A Trustee asked how long the Head Teacher has been in post at Shepherdswell. Five years. A discussion followed about offering Head Teachers a new challenge between five and seven years to avoid burn-out and in order to refresh a career. Trustees were aware that this is also part of good succession planning. JC informed the Board that the MLTs across all schools are working with the OLEVI Hub to aid succession planning and a discussion about capacity ensued. JC assured the Trust that the capacity and succession of the Leadership teams is being assessed and strategies are being put into place to support this. Trustees acknowledged that this is one of the advantages of operating as a MAT.</p> <p>PWS is awaiting Ofsted. The school has conducted deep dive reviews of the curriculum which have been very positive. The AIP believes it is a 'Good' school and this is a moderated opinion. The 6th form provision is much improved.</p>	

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	<p>Chairing of this committee: JC reminded the Board that the idea of an independent Chair had been mooted and agreed. JC has now secured a Chair and the person's details will be shared with Trustees for their approval. The new Head of Governance and Safeguarding will work with the Board to review terms of reference for the committee.</p> <p>FHR and Estates: Minutes of the committee meeting held in October had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting. AS went over the salient points from the last committee meeting which had taken place last week. The committee had spent much time reviewing and discussing the financial reports which are now using the ICFP modelling. It was clear that school leaders require some further training on this. JC stated that school leaders will be supported to understand the model and the Trust is having monthly meetings with Head Teachers to review budgets and how the model is working and in order to provide support. The Auditors Report had also been received and the committee noted the main recommendation is to separate the Members from the Trustees; this is in hand. Within the Estates report it was pleasing to see major repairs now taking place at SAA.</p> <p>Audit and Risk: The Audit and Risk committee had met last week. AS reported the main discussion points. There is a requirement for more internal control coming into effect this year. The Trust already uses internal auditors and a Trustee asked if they would write an audit report for the Board. Yes. PW added that he will be meeting with RB (Independent Chair of the committee) to agree further areas for internal scrutiny. RB will also report on the work of the committee over the last year.</p>	<p>Send details of proposed Independent Chair – JC</p> <p>Work with TB to review Terms of reference - MJ</p>
<p>8. Approval of Annual Report and Financial Statements</p> <p>Receive Auditors Management letters</p>	<p>The Annual Report, Finance Statements and Management Letters had been the subject of much discussion within the Audit and Risk and FHR & Estates committee meetings. PW explained that the auditors had been pleased and had explained that the Trust is doing very well when benchmarked against other MATs. Trustees were in agreement that the Report presents a significant improvement. There were no significant findings.</p> <p>PW stated that it is pleasing that the Statutory Accounts and period 12 Accounts align. This means that the monthly management accounts can be relied upon to be accurate and informative. The later addition of the pension statement is standard practice as the pension provider cannot provide the</p>	

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	<p>figures in time for the audit. The Board agreed that that the financial picture is very transparent and welcomed this.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if VAT returns are now being submitted on time. Yes.</p> <p>A Trustee raised the recommendation about ensuring Trustees are not also Members. This was discussed; a plan is in place so that by the end of this academic year the great majority of Members will not also be Trustees.</p> <p>A Trustee commented that the auditors had raised Trustee attendance at committee meetings as something to review. KC reminded all that it is possible to attend meetings via conference call or video link. Trustees also expressed the view that, where it is possible to do so, arranging two meetings on the same day is preferred rather than splitting them across the week. A Trustee also pointed out that Trustees are taken from a wide geographical area and that sometimes the school holiday periods did not align which made it difficult to attend meetings.</p> <p>JC added that Mazars had been very complimentary about the Finance Team and the fact that no high- risk items were found. SM agreed that, in his opinion, the approach taken by the Trust is a robust one. The Board wished to record their thanks to PW and the Finance Team.</p> <p>The Auditors Report and Financial Statements were formally received and unanimously approved by the Board.</p> <p>The Management Letters were duly signed by KC.</p>	
9. CEO Report	<p>The report had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p>There is a confidential minute at this point (CM01).</p> <p>JC asked if there were any further questions. A Trustee asked why the Central Team may be relocating. JC explained that there is an issue at NIA with parking. In addition, staff are working across all schools and the Trust needs to reflect on where the central team should be based. The idea is being explored at present and any ideas or proposals will be shared with the Board. The Board agreed this is an operational matter which only needed to be reported.</p>	
10. Update from forums x4 Safeguarding SEND	<p>Minutes from all forums had been shared with Trustees with the agenda for this meeting. JC invited questions and comments.</p> <p>A Trustee commented that it was good to see a discussion around transgender issue within the SG Forum; it was also good to see a</p>	

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<p>PP Employee</p>	<p>discussion about the use of mobile phones in schools (pupils and visitors). A discussion ensued about the use of social media and inclusion. All Trustees agreed that the forums were working well.</p> <p>A Trustee asked if the Trust had seen any difficulties at any of the schools like those reported in Birmingham recently. No. JC advised that the schools have kept close communication with parents and very few have opted out of the Relationships and Sex education.</p> <p>Trustees requested presentations at Board meetings from specialists in PP, SEND, SG etc to increase their awareness. CK reminded all that e-learning can be accessed through the Learning Link portal on the NGA website and CK had added some materials to GovernorHub for Trustees and signposted to other remote learning such as the webinars from 'Governors for Schools'. JC added that he will ask Simon Webb or Giles Osborne to deliver a presentation which can be accessed remotely so that any knowledge gaps can be identified and addressed.</p>	<p>Ask SW or GO to present to Trustees - JC</p>
<p>11. AOB</p>	<p>Details of a potential new governor at NIA had been circulated with the agenda for this meeting. The Board unanimously approved the appointment of J Musgrove.</p> <p>The Board formally thanked CK for her work and input to governance at the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees thanked JC for the Christmas Hamper gifts.</p>	
<p>12. Dates of next meetings</p>	<p>Dates of meetings to May 2020:</p> <p>Friday 31/01/20 @10:00 Standards & Performance</p> <p>Tuesday 25/02/20 @ 10:00 FHR & Estates</p> <p>Friday 03/04/20 @ 09:30 Audit & Risk</p> <p>Thursday 23/04/20 @ 09:30 Trust Board</p>	<p>Calendar appointments have been sent</p>

Meeting closed at 12:24