

**East Midlands Academy Trust – Trust Board Extraordinary General Meeting**

 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 3.00pm - Meeting to be conducted virtually via Teams

**Third 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
<b>1. Welcome</b>	<p><b>Present:</b>  <b>Kevin Crompton</b> (EMAT: Trustee)  <b>Fiona Wheeler</b> (EMAT: Trustee)  <b>Ayo Salam</b> (EMAT: Trustee)  <b>Andy Davis</b> (EMAT: Trustee)  <b>Stephen Morales</b> (EMAT: Trustee) <i>joined at 15.05pm</i>  <b>David Houghton</b> (EMAT: Trustee)  <b>Asvin Morjaria</b> (EMAT: Trustee) <i>joined at 15.07pm</i>  <b>Leigh Jones</b> (EMAT: Trustee)  <b>Bernard Weiss</b> (EMAT: Trustee)</p> <p><b>Jon Harris</b> (EMAT: Member)</p> <p><b>Joshua Coleman</b> (EMAT: CEO)  <b>Paul Wheeler</b> (EMAT: Finance &amp; Operations Director)  <b>Monica Juan</b> (EMAT: Head of Governance &amp; Safeguarding)- Minutes</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. Members had been invited as part of their regular overseeing of the trust.</p>	
<b>2. Apologies</b>	<b>Joni Ager</b> apologies had been received and were accepted by the board.	
<b>3. Quoracy</b>	The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
<b>4. Declarations of Interest</b>	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda in addition to those already recorded on the annual Register of Interests.	
<b>5. NIA Ofsted – Update</b>	<p><i>KC/JC gave a verbal update to trustees.</i></p> <p>JC and KC updated trustees on the trust position regarding the outcome of the NIA Ofsted inspection and the subsequent complaint submitted by the trust around the factual inaccuracies in the letter to be published.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that Ofsted had not uphold the complaint; the final letter was to be published on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and any further action would have to be formally approved by the board.</p> <p>The Chair reiterated his disappointment with Ofsted actions and its response, as the letter didn't reflect fully the actions taken by the trust to strengthen safeguarding at the NIA previous to the no-notice inspection taking place.</p>	

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	<p><b>In response from a question from a trustee regarding whether the trust had taken legal advice on the best way to respond to Ofsted</b> JC confirmed that Stone King had provided legal support throughout the complain process. They had had some success in the past with similar situations. The complaint process had been followed and escalated to the Regional Director who had written to the trust to confirm that the publication of the document was in the best public interest and only under exceptional circumstances would not be published. They did not consider the current pandemic to fall under exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>JC explained that there were two more steps the trust could take following the process. The first one was to request an internal review of the Ofsted complaint process; however, this would not preclude the publication of the report. If unhappy with the internal review the trust could also request an external one. The second one was to request an injunction to stop publishing the final letter.</p> <p>JC made clear that Ofsted would not share any evidence through a FOI request which would make it extremely hard to dispute any facts deemed inaccurate. The only way to change their judgement was through a section 5 inspection which they would conduct once COVID restrictions were lifted.</p> <p><b>In response from a question from a trustee regarding how the trust could mitigate any reputational risk</b> JC confirmed that, once the letter was published communications would be sent to parents and staff firmly outlining the actions already taken by the school and trust to ensure that safeguarding was effective at the NIA and across the trust. A statement would also be prepared to release to the press if necessary and trustees were reminded to direct any press queries to the PR &amp; Communication Manager. These would be shared with trustees.</p> <p><b>In response from a question from a trustee regarding whether the Ofsted letter would reflect the fact that the trust had submitted a complaint</b> JC responded that it would not reflect any of the actions taken by the trust.</p> <p>JC reassured trustees that NIA students were safe and effective systems had been put in place in the aftermath of the inspection, including training, safeguarding reviews, SCR scrutiny and deployment of staff to mitigate all the issues raised by Ofsted. The same exercise had been conducted across all schools in the trust.</p> <p>In addition, the trust had liaised with the Local Authority to conduct an independent Safeguarding review at NIA at the end of February. This would provide external assurances that the protocols in place were robust and effective enough and would help to demonstrate that some of the Ofsted findings were unfounded.</p>	<p><b>Share communications with trustees.</b></p>

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	<p>JC informed trustees that the RSC might wish to seek further assurances from the trust that safeguarding was effective at the NIA. JC would liaise with KC if and when necessary.</p> <p><i>AD and AS left the meeting at 3.30pm</i></p> <p>Trustees were reassured with the actions taken so far around safeguarding and reiterated their confidence in the executive team managing the situation. They acknowledged that the failures were not systemic but down to individual actions as these had been dealt with decisively. Trustees were fully supportive of the current strategy and wished to convey their regret for the toll it had taken on the team. JC thanked trustees for their support and informed trustees that local governance would be notified during their LAB meeting in the evening. After that, all governance functions would have been informed.</p> <p>Trustees requested to continue to be kept swiftly informed of any developments, including the results of any external reviews so they could fulfil their statutory duties accordingly.</p>	
6. AOB	There were not AOB	
7. Dates of next meetings	<p>Dates of meetings to July 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friday 23rd April 2021 at 10am</li> <li>Friday 16th July 2021 at 10am</li> </ul>	Calendar appointments have been sent

Meeting closed at 15.58pm

Signed by Kevin Crompton, Chair of Trustees

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Date.....

**East Midlands Academy Trust**

Action Log of the Trust Board Extraordinary General Meeting

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 3.00pm. - Meeting conducted virtually.

Item	Action	Owner
1.	Share communications with trustees.	MJ