



WELLSPRING

ACADEMY TRUST

WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS HELD ON TUESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2013

PRESENT:

M Sanderson	Chair
J Thirkell	CEO
A Chesterton	Director
A Eckford	Directors
J Davis	Director
D Murray	Director
H Otulakowski	Director
D Whitaker	Director

IN ATTENDANCE:

E Morris	Clerk
J Hague	Finance Manager for Wellspring
P Hinchliffe	Audit Partner – Harris & Co

APOLOGIES

13.33 C Booth, J Miccoli and D Murray.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

13.34 None.

MINUTES

13.35 The minutes of the meeting held on 09 July 2013 were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

13.36 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. The Directors noted which items had been addressed and those to be brought to the attention of future Board meetings. No further matters arising.

AUDIT PLAN

13.37 PH, Audit Partner from Harris & Co introduced himself to the Board and presented the Audit Plan that the Board had received with their papers. PH highlighted the key components of the plan and confirmed that Harris & Co had been instructed on a one year audit appointment purely to audit the year end accounts. JH will prepare the first year end accounts and the deadline for submission is 31 December 2013. A further accounts return is due 31 January 2014. PH advised that in relation to land and property valuations, had The Forest Academy converted prior to 31 March 2013 then the Trust would have been able to benefit from arrangements made by EFA who centrally procure land and property. Instead, the Trust arranged their own valuation.

PH highlighted that either our Audit Committee can approve the accounts or the full Trust Board. The Trust needs to meet with Harris & Co in December to sign off the accounts

In relation to business interests, all transactions with Barnsley College need to be disclosed in the accounts. PH asked to see an agreement between the Trust and the College re financial support from the College. JT advised that this has been minuted by the Board. The Trust is to check this and let the auditors see the minute.

FINANCE UPDATE

13.38 JH gave a verbal finance update. She confirmed that the July management accounts had been circulated to the Board and that the August accounts had not been completed yet, but once they are they will be circulated to the Board. The budget surplus from Kendray Primary School on conversion is estimated to be 100K. The CEO to advise the Board on this in her report (see 13.31). There is additional income to the Trust of approximately 19K for the CEO's work at The Forest Academy in the absence of the Head Teacher. This will improve the Trust's cash flow beyond December 2013.

It was noted that the Finance Regulations have been approved by the Board and have been in place since 1st September. They will be reviewed on an annual basis.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

13.39 AE said he had received the audit terms of reference and they looked good in essence. He recommended an audit planning meeting on 17th October with the audit committee members and EM and JH to decide how the committee will run and responsibilities. AE as Chair of the Audit committee recommended that a detailed report from Harris & Co to the Chair of Audit and then the Chair to report back to the Board. AE recommended that he may need to co-op an external audit expert to the committee. The Board agreed with this approach.

The Board considered the Audit Committee terms, and subject to them not referring to sub-committees of the Board but just committees all Directors approved the terms.

RESOLVED 13.39 The Board approved the Audit Committee terms of reference

GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE

13.40 The Board discussed the need for this committee and the general function of it will be to replace any gaps in governance across the Trust. It was anticipated that the committee would meet twice a year initially. The CEO, MS and DW all agreed to be on the Governance & Search committee, Terms of reference to be brought back to the Board to be agreed.

RESOLVED 13.40 **The Governance & Search Committee to comprise of the following members, CEO, MS and DW.**

CEO UPDATE

13.41 The CEO referred to her report which the Board had received and highlighted the following:-

Free School Application

- The Trust is busy with the Free School application and the deadline for final submission to DfE is 10th January 2014. The Board received the project timeline with deadlines that the Trust must meet. The Local Authority is very supportive of the application. The Trust will know after January whether we have been successful.

The Forest Academy

- A number of issues have arisen since the CEO's major commitment at the school since the Head's absence. The Academy did not have any performance management system in place; this has now been arranged through Paragon.
- They were not working to the National Curriculum. This has been addressed and the International Primary Curriculum is in place.
- The staffing structure needs some improvements. There is no senior leadership team, no whole school overview, and no data and planning analysis.
- The CEO has been working on a leadership model in the Head's absence and school targets have been set.
- The CEO has been working alongside Karen Thompson (KT), Interim Head and has been heavily involved in the strategic running and leadership at the Academy since June to 31st August. The costs typically for a head teacher within this time period equate to approximately £6,000 per month
- The Trust has instructed DW and Kate Davis, Principal at Worsborough Common as NLEs to provide a joint school improvement role and to support KT with training, support and leadership. DW is concentrating on behaviour and whole school systems and KD is working on performance management of KT.
- DW explained that they have arranged a Mocksted (a fake Ofsted inspection) to provide the Trust with a baseline assessment, since Ofsted are due imminently.
- Innovation and 21st century learning is a key priority.
- To involve 2 NLEs (DW and KD) is approx. £4,000 per month with a suggested time period of up to March 2014.
- KT has no strategic capacity as she is so involved with operational duties. The CEO suggested that the Trust advertise internally to move a teacher from UPS to leadership pay scale who will be the SENCO.
- A lengthy discussion was had regarding the budget surplus at The Forest Academy and how best to utilise this in the best interests of the academy and to raise standards of teaching and learning.

- Recommendations were made for an educational psychologist (potentially full time and Springwell to manage), Create, Learn and Inspire to deliver 6 professional development days, Open Minds to work with the teachers and parents and the IT facilities to be update, as well as the leadership costs incurred by the CEO's time and NLE school improvement involvement.
- The Board agreed that the generated surplus to be held centrally for leadership interventions, recruitment of an educational psychologist, and other associated costs for staff training and IT as needed. Any balance remaining the Trust will direct The Forest Academy on how it is spent.
- The overriding principle from the discussion was that the Trust needs to intervene in order to improve teaching and support across The Forest Academy and across the Trust where schools are requiring improvement. It is vital that this intervention is made as The Forest Academy is anticipated to be judged at inadequate.

RESOLVED 13.41 The generated surplus from Kendray Primary School to be held centrally at the Trust for all costs associated with whole school improvement at The Forest Academy.

MEMBERS AUTUMN MEETING

13.42 The Members meeting for the Trustees and Directors to attend is on Wednesday 23 October at 5pm. It was agreed that it could be at Springwell Community School if it is available on that evening. General ideas for the format of the evening included an update on The Forest Academy, Free School application, new conversion opportunities and the elements video to be shown.

AOB

13.43 None.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

13.44 Thursday 7th November at 4.00pm, at Springwell Community Special School.

Signed _____ Chair _____

Date _____