

**MINUTES OF THE 127<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
HELD AT ASHCROFT TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY ON  
WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2018 AT 17.30**

**Present:** Dick Whitcutt (DW) - Chair, Angela Entwistle (AEN), Patricia Edmondson (PED), Richard Perry (RJP), Keith Wilson (KWI), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Cristina Carli Nonnato (CCN), Phil Hall (PHA), Mike Smith (MSM), Steven Nash (SNA), Rachel Jarvis (RJA)

**Absent:** Simon Jones (SJO), Tony Bothwell (TBO), Stewart Harris (SH)

**In Attendance:** Conor Hewitt (COH) (Minutes)

**Start Time:** 17:30

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were passed on from Tony Bothwell (TBO), Simon Jones (SJO) and Stewart Harris (SH).

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 08/02/18 were agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

No matters were raised.

**4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

It has been a very busy period at the Academy with the exam season now in full swing. This will be the first year that almost all exams will follow the new 9-1 specification. The Year 11s have impressed with their attitude to revision, 20 students have been given a study passport which allows them the freedom to study at home; however, they have chosen to be in the Academy to revise. The majority of the examination papers so far have been, in our opinion, fair; however, the recent Biology paper was particularly difficult. Our Sixth Form students have also impressed during this busy period.

DMI noted that the departure of the previous IB Coordinator somewhat negatively affected the numbers recruited in the current cohort. The new IB Coordinator Joseph Anson has placed a particular focus on recruiting the correct students to the IB programme and the Academy is looking forward to welcoming a larger IB cohort next year. PED asked whether IB numbers have any effect on A Level numbers. DMI confirmed that this is not the case. RJP added that we are funded for a maximum of 250 students in the Sixth Form but we will continue to take on students if we feel they are positive additions to the Sixth Form community.

The board agreed that the scheduled foreign trips were fine to go ahead. The board also agreed that there was no cause for concern in relation to the accident report.

SNA asked DMI whether social media bullying was an increasingly serious problem. DMI noted that there had been a slight increase in social media issues, with some incidents leading to a fixed-term exclusion; however, all of the issues were dealt with swiftly and internally. DMI attributed the relatively small number of incidents to our strict no phone policy.

**5. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS FOR DISCUSSION (PRESENTATIONS):**

**a. THE ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – D WHITCUTT**

DW prepared this presentation in response to SNA's previous request for more information about the role of the Executive Board. The governance model of the Academy is largely based on the previous ADT model with maximum delegation to the local body.

## **i. TRUSTEES**

DW explained the overall responsibilities of the trustees. Their responsibilities include appointing the Principal and Vice-Principal of the Academy and proposing the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Board. They also have responsibility at overview level for financial scrutiny and the Academy's resourcing, including personnel numbers and the annual salary bill. They are the official custodians of public funds. They must also set their vision of the character, ethos and long-term strategy for the Academy.

DW announced that David Hammond has stepped down from his position of trustee to enjoy a fuller retirement. SH has agreed to replace David Hammond and has been appointed accordingly.

## **ii. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

This is a sub-committee of Trustees. They review the Principal and Vice-Principal's remuneration and performance annually and set the overall parameters for the ATA Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) to determine pay and progression for other staff. As an Academy we are free to set our own pay scales; however, we have made the decision to stick closely to national pay scales.

## **iii. EXECUTIVE BOARD**

According to the DfE and Ofsted, the "local school Governors" are responsible for challenging and supporting the Principal and the leadership group. They are also responsible for understanding and monitoring student achievement as well as endorsing and discussing many aspects of how local education provision is implemented. Ofsted are keen to ensure that the Executive Board challenges the Academy's leadership over the academic achievements of the students.

DW noted that the Executive Board also has a responsibility to engage with stakeholders in the Academy. SNA further questioned DW about the responsibilities of the board. SNA mentioned the forthcoming changes to data protection laws (GDPR) and asked whether or not the Board would have any input in this matter. DMI confirmed that he would be taking the lead on this project and that this matter will be discussed in future meetings. DW added that he thought this was a prime example of the Executive Board's role within the Academy: they oversee major decisions but aren't actively involved in the implementation processes.

## **iv. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The FRC is considered a separate committee from the Executive Board but containing members of the Executive Board and Trustees. Responsibilities for this committee include monitoring revenue funding and expenditure, contracts and the performance of the trading company. It is also the FRC's responsibility to endorse individual pay recommendations for staff other than the Principal and Vice-Principal.

## **v. DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSIONS COMMITTEE**

The Principal has the power to exclude students for fixed-term periods or permanently. However, permanent exclusions must be subject to endorsement at a hearing held by a Discipline and Exclusions Committee at which the excluded student, parents and an observer from the local authority are invited to attend. This committee is formed on an ad-hoc basis of members of the Executive Board.

### **b. ADMISSIONS– D MITCHELL**

Over the past three years, the number of Year 6 students seeking a secondary school place in Wandsworth has increased by 10% each year. As a result, we are now 7 times over-subscribed. Wandsworth have asked each secondary school in the borough to take 5 extra students to help ease the pressure this academic year. Wandsworth are planning to increase capacity at Ark Putney by 2 forms of entry per year -they are not currently over-subscribed.

DMI recently contacted Wandsworth to enquire about the possibility of increasing our Year 7 roll in September 2019 by one form of entry, and every year thereafter through to Year 11. DMI and RJP then met with representatives from Wandsworth to discuss this possibility. We are in a fortunate position because we would be able to re-model space in the Academy to create the classrooms required to accommodate the extra form. The cost of doing this would hopefully be met through the local authority or directly by the DfE. Adding an extra form group per year across a 5 year period, would enhance funding by approximately £150,000 at each annual increase, which, after the five year period, would amount to some £750,000 of additional funding per year to help to offset some of the expected future deficit. This would also help to maximise the numbers in the Sixth Form.

PED asked about the possible strain on the communal areas in the Academy, in particular the restaurant. DMI noted that this will need to be assessed in three years, as the restaurant in its current form is big enough to accommodate 3 extra form groups. SNA asked about toilets and DMI confirmed that this will not be an issue. SNA asked whether the building/adaptation work would affect teaching. MSM explained that building work happens constantly throughout the school year and it does not disrupt teaching because most major jobs are undertaken in the school holidays. The Executive Board agreed that increasing from a 7 to an 8 form entry would benefit the Academy and this matter will now go to the trustees.

### **c. DATA PRESENTATION – M.SMITH**

Before starting the presentation, DW suggested that it would be sensible for a small sub-committee of Executive Board members to meet to at some point in the near future to discuss the data in the recent ISDR report in further detail since the board's role was always to monitor and challenge aspects of student's performance, independently of "being told" of its implications. He commented that, in his experience, ATA had always been very open and self-critical with performance data but the Board needed to dig deeper to ensure that all appropriate challenges had been voiced and action was in hand where appropriate.

MSM presented the ISDR document to the board. This is a document that compares a variety of Academy statistics with the rest of the country. MSM drew attention to the first page of the document which highlighted Ofsted's key areas for inspection.

The ISDR (Inspection Data Summary Report) highlighted the fact that the Academy has more students leaving prior to the end of year 11 than average. MSM explained that this is not of any concern and that this level of movement can be explained by the fact that we are an inner London Academy and we have a large transient community. Our attendance is excellent in comparison to the national average.

Our progress 8 scores are in the top quintile in nearly every measure. SNA asked for some more information about the lower scores in the open element in progress 8. MSM explained that the open element is usually made up of subjects such as Citizenship and RS. MSM confirmed that LG have made this an area of focus.

MSM highlighted the difference between male and female progress 8 scores. Our progress 8 score for female students is currently 1.00 which is higher than our male progress 8 score of 0.60. SNA commented on this statistic, questioning why the difference was so large. MSM noted that this is common throughout the country. The committee then discussed the perceived differences between boys and girls in terms of maturation and academic commitment.

DW noted that the huge amount of data contained within the report will take a significant amount of time to absorb and discuss. DMI and DW agreed that the sub-committee will meet and discuss their findings at their next meeting.

DW asked MSM to share the presentation with colleagues. PED, CCA, KWI and SNA agreed to make efforts to attend the sub-committee meeting once a date had been proposed.

## 6. VICE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

RJP discussed the recent ventilation problems at the Academy. RJP confirmed that the project had been broken down into three component parts, in the hope that parts two and three may not be required. New roofing vents were being installed as phase one to allow for the release of hot air at the top of Zones C and D. RJP noted that the Academy has received quotes from 3 companies. The cheapest quote received was from a company we have used in the past to maintain our roofing. They provided a good service at the time and the committee agreed that using them again would be in the best interests of the Academy.

RJP also discussed the possibility of upgrading our Windows operating systems. An upgrade to these will give the Academy access to Window 365, will allow the migration of Academy data to cloud storage and will make the data held more secure. The Academy has received quotes from six companies, two of these did not meet the relevant criteria for the tender and will not be considered. The Academy's Network Manager has assessed the tenders and it is intended to appoint consultants for a second opinion. RJP will share the final quotes with colleagues between meetings.

RJP reported that the Academy's expenditure at March 2018 was very similar to expenditure at the same stage last year. However, the Academy is in a slightly more difficult position because, while our income remains unchanged (broadly speaking), our operating costs are increasing. RJP noted that the anticipated changes to funding for next year appear to be less hard-hitting than expected. Funding per student has continued to increase. However, funding sources, such as the Extra Support Grant, have been fully withdrawn. MFG has decreased but not at the rate anticipated. The Academy will still be in deficit and requiring to draw on reserves to balance the budget this year. This will be a continuing picture for the foreseeable future.

## 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

The meeting ended at 19:10

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 4 July 2018.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Richard Whitcutt

Chair of Executive Board

Date: 4 / July / 2018