

**MINUTES OF THE 110<sup>th</sup> FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF ASHCROFT TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY ON  
WEDNESDAY 3 MAY 2023 AT 16.30**

**Present:** Dick Whitcutt (DW), Richard Perry (RJP), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Angela Entwistle (AEE)- Chair, Stewart Harris (SH), Kevin Chamberlain (KC)

**In Attendance:** Jane Kiddell (JKD) (Minutes)

**Start Time: 16:30**

**1. Apologies for absence**

AEE chaired the meeting as DW's arrival had been delayed.

The Board noted that Tony Bothwell has resigned from the Executive Board and FRC. DW detailed this further at the meeting of the EB.

**2. Declaration of interest**

No interests were declared.

**3. Minutes of Last meeting held on Tuesday 28 February 2023**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 February were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**4. Matters Arising**

There were no further matters arising other than those coming up via the agenda.

**5. Capital Developments**

RJP updated colleagues regarding the successful commissioning of the lift in Zone D which took place during the Easter break.

The focus will now move to the remaining two lifts and for the works to be completed over the summer holidays. The agreed cost for fixing the three lifts is £107K, and the repairs should prolong the life of the lifts for quite some time.

RJP told colleagues that obtaining the quotes for the Astro Turf project at the Academy site has been challenging. ATA has received a quote from S & C Slatter, the company that undertook the works at Openview sports ground. The two areas being considered for upgrade are the Key Stage 3 area, used by Years 8 and 9, and the Key Stage 4 area and the project's costs came in at £220K in total. A company called Smith Construction are also due to provide a quote and is a company also listed on the same standard framework. A smaller company called First Service is also due to quote and the Academy is still trying to obtain one more supplier's quote. RJP will share the quotes with the FRC for review once he has received them all.

RJP informed the FRC of the potential IT works that will be required. The estimated cost for the recommended upgrades will be £140K. The main work is upgrading the Academy's telephone system. There are two options and the first is a fixed upgrade cost of £83K which is a like for like system and the second option is a cloud-based upgrade, which has higher annual charges and greater flexibility. RJP would seek further information and recommendations from the ICT Network Strategy Manager.

These figures are recommendations at this stage and RJP will update the FRC once he has the final costs for agreement.

RJP informed colleagues that there will be general upgrades that are required for whiteboards and IT equipment such as PC's, which will need to be upgraded and the costs are estimated at approximately £60K.

KC asked what happens to the old equipment. RJP responded and said that ATA explore the option of sending old equipment overseas for use elsewhere, which is a free service without disposal fees.

DW had asked that the ICT requirements be limited to essentials only where sensible to do so.

## **6. Revenue Funding 2022-23 Update**

RJP provided the FRC with an update on revenue funding for the current year, the position as at 31 March shows a spend of 58.6% of the anticipated income for the year which is roughly the same as last year.

The key points to note include income levels which are 10% higher than last year due to increase in student numbers compared to last year, with the additional 30 students in Year 7 over the past four years. Some schools in the area are having to reduce their student admission numbers, due to low take up.

Staff costs are 7% higher and RJP now produces a more detailed staff cost variance analysis to demonstrate where the increases are the highest and explain the reasons behind this as well as identify potential savings.

Income figures for the year are up-to-date. RJP told colleagues that ATA have received a one-off grant in 2023/24 of £315K termed the mainstream schools additional grant, which is similar to the school supplementary grant that has been in place across the last two years, and which is now included in the main funding provision. An additional £131K will be added for the remainder of this year's current funding in respect of this grant. Next year ATA will receive the full amount of the grant.

## **7. Revenue Funding 2023-2024**

RJP outlined what ATA receive as indicative figures for revenue funding in 2023/24. The income is reflective of a higher budget allocation for next year, though largely down to higher student numbers.

RJP gave colleagues a breakdown on the funding for next year.

RJP spoke briefly about the School Resources Management Tool and benchmarking statistics that can be accessed for comparison with other schools.

RJP briefly discussed with colleagues the staffing comparisons, particularly full-time staff and ATA have the same number as Southfields on this comparison, both of which are above others in the benchmarking group of schools. ATA costs will be higher due to the presence of more staff to meet the requirements of the longer school day at the Academy.

## **8. Trading Company**

RJP informed the FRC that the financial statements for the Trading Company were now ready for sign off. He stated that the performance of the subsidiary has again been operating at record levels but will provide a more focussed report at the next meeting. RJP asked colleagues if they had any comments to please let him know.

**9. Staff Exit Questionnaire**

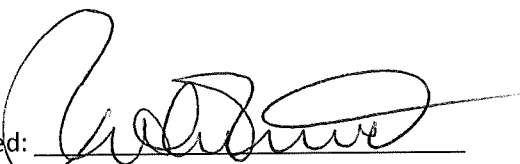
RJP shared the new staff exit questionnaire for staff that has been updated to be more user-friendly document.

The proposed rollout is scheduled for this summer. If colleagues had any comments or feedback on the updated questionnaire, RJP asked for them to let him know.

**10. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

DW thanked the FRC for their continued support.

Signed:   
Richard Whitcutt  
Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee

Date 5/7/2023