

**MINUTES OF THE 128<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
HELD AT ASHCROFT TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY ON  
WEDNESDAY 04 JULY 2018 AT 17.30**

**Present:** Dick Whitcutt (DW) - Chair, Richard Perry (RJP), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Cristina Carli Nonnato (CCN), Phil Hall (PHA), Matt Gallagher (MGA), Steven Nash (SNA), Patricia Edmondson (PED), Stewart Harris (SHA), Tony Bothwell (TBO).

**Absent:** Simon Jones (SJO), Rachel Jarvis (RJA), Keith Wilson (KWI), Angela Entwistle (AEN)

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

**Start Time:** 17:30

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were passed on from RJA, SJO and AEN. Unfortunately, they could not attend due to work commitments. KWI was also absent and DW informed the committee that KWI had made the decision to step down in order to accept a position on the governing body of the school his children currently attend. DW expressed his thanks for Keith's valuable service.

## **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (16/05/18)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

DW acknowledged that the previously proposed subcommittee meeting to analyse the IDSR had not had a chance to take place. The new results data for the summer exams 2018 will be available in September and it would be more relevant for the committee to analyse the data for the last academic year. CCN, PED & SNA have agreed to be a part of the subcommittee. They agreed to meet on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 5:30pm. SNA asked for some assistance or tools to help the committee to understand the data. DMI & MSM will be present at the meeting to assist the committee.

DMI mentioned to the board that the opportunity for a residential Science trip to Brussels arose after the paperwork for the meeting had been distributed. The Humanities department are also looking into the possibility of running a trip to Berlin as part of the GCSE and A Level World War 2 topic. DMI will share the risk assessments with DW and SNA after they are written.

## **4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

### **STAFFING**

Staff turnover is higher than expected. DMI and RJP explained that the number and quality of candidates applying for some roles (particularly Maths and Science) has been low. We have had to advertise Maths positions several times to attract and appoint the correct calibre. Early recruitment strategies, such as appointing good PGCE students when here on placement, have helped the Academy to secure excellent teachers in English, French and Physics.

PED asked DMI why he thought the turnover was so high. DMI noted that a number of teachers secured promotion elsewhere whilst six members of staff have moved away from London due to the high cost of living. RJP added that he believes the Academy attracts ambitious staff and that our staff are very well trained and are provided with a range of opportunities which make them very attractive to schools advertising management positions. The poor supply of teachers throughout the country has forced schools to offer incentives in the form of inflated payments for additional responsibility to attract good candidates, even if these schools are in deficit.

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

## **a. TECHNOLOGY AT ATA**

DW has expressed his concern about the lack of Technology teachers within the Academy, as we are a specialist Technology Academy overcoming this problem needs to be a particular focus in the next academic year. DW shared an idea of creating a scheme that uses retired engineers on a voluntary basis to teach parts of the curriculum, and he is willing to explore and research into the idea.

DMI highlighted the fact that this would be a good model for enrichment activities, however, it would not be a sustainable solution to the problem. The Academy needs to appoint well-qualified Technology teachers in order to be able to offer a robust Technology curriculum and continuity for Year 7 to Year 11 students. DMI's aim is to advertise for and appoint a Curriculum Manager for D&T and a D&T teacher. However, a sensible back-up plan must be in place so that the Academy can offer our students a meaningful Technology experience during the time it takes to make these appointments. Violet Bailey has announced that she will stepdown from her role as Assistant Principal but will continue to teach on a part-time basis, Marie Jhugroo is able to teach Product Design and Gill Cliff is a part-time Textiles and Art teacher. We are not able to staff the current Key Stage 3 Technology offer and so an alternative plan is required.

In the national context, D&T is a subject that is being phased out of many schools. This will not happen at ATA because we are dedicated to delivering Technology as a Technology Academy. DMI has considered technology in a modern context and specifically in sectors such as finance, IT and media. The aim of the new Year 7 and 8 Technology curriculum will be to develop transferable skills across Maths, Science, I.T and Textiles. Students at the Academy who have chosen to study Engineering at university have studied Maths, Further Maths and Physics at A Level.

DMI noted that one of the Academy's science teachers, Farah Khan, has developed an excellent STEAM programme which has established strong links between departments. As a consequence, Farah will develop the KS3 technology enrichment programme which will run twice a term on a Wednesday. DMI outlined the specific topics and tasks that are being planned for each term. These include activities in Finance, Geography, Media, Maths and Science and IT for both Years 7 and 8. We have already been in contact with companies such as BP to arrange master-classes for both year groups.

The Year 8 programme will include a careers programme with modules such as model United Nations, web-design, programming, financial trading and Media. PED asked if IT would run as a separate option. DMI noted that it would not but that it would be the majority share-holder in the technology programme.

DW noted that D&T is a misleading term as it leads people to think of previous years when wood work and metal work were of particular focus. DMI noted that it is disappointing that students will not receive the practical element traditional D&T offers. DMI will update the Executive Board on progress once the recruitment process begins.

## **b. CAREERS**

DMI notified the Board that the Academy had employed a Careers Advisor to develop a clear careers strategy. Juliet Fitzherbert worked previously at the Academy as an Education Welfare Officer but left to gain experience within the careers industry. She will be working at the Academy two days a week.

JFI is looking into developing our Careers, Personal and Social Education (CPSE) programme, organising a careers fair with guest speakers and is also working with COH to develop the careers section of our website.



### **c. REPORTING**

The Leadership Group (LG) have looked into the current reporting model. During discussions, LG arrived at the conclusion that the written report is a one-way flow of information, the impact of which is questionable when one considers the time it takes to produce these reports and the time that elapses between the point of writing the report and the point at which the parents receive the report. Current research suggests that different models of reporting have more of an effect than the traditional written report. PED said that she likes the written report as it offers more detail about her son's effort and attainment in the classroom. DMI noted that the LG believe the termly data report is more valuable and provides a regular view of a student's educational journey.

Academic tracking (ACTRAC) sessions currently only run in Year 7 but DMI would like to extend this to other year groups. This will be trialled next year and then reviewed. DMI showed the board the plan which relies on fortnightly email bulletins, the ShowMyHomework website and encourages better book interaction with parents. PHA's data will be used to inform parents of students who are not achieving or exhibiting poor effort. ACTRAC will happen across the year and will increase the frequency of instances of dialogue between the Academy and parents. The Heads of Year will run the ACTRAC meetings. DMI asked for the Executive Board parent members to report back in future meetings. SNA noted that he also does appreciate the written report, however, he would be happy to dispense with these if there was increased teacher/parent communication in their place. SNA, PED and CCN agreed to the trial.

## **6. VICE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The previously discussed CCTV upgrades are almost complete. The new system will give LG and other select staff improved access to the footage via their desktops. At present, the footage can only be viewed in the Building Services Manager's office. RJP had thanked Finance and Resource Committee (FRC) colleagues for agreeing to the purchase of the new iMac machines in the Performing Arts department.

The previously discussed ventilation works are also progressing. The overall cost has risen slightly; however, remains within the parameters of the contingency budget. RJP stated that the work will be completed over the summer period.

RJP notified the committee that the network improvements are not progressing as expected. RJP had been trying to source a consultant to assist on the project, however, due to costs, this was not feasible. RJP suggested that by simplifying the work undertaken would allow the Academy's ICT Strategy Manager, John Ekpenyong, to oversee the project. Completion of the necessary updates can then be carried out in a timely manner whilst we continue to look at the more complex issues. FRC had agreed with the suggested way forward.

Replacing the truss in the auditorium has been more difficult than expected. Finding companies to pursue the tender has not been easy and the Network Manager has been actively searching for a third company to quote us for the replacement. The quotes received have varied considerably and more research therefore needs to be undertaken before a final decision can be made. The new truss would ideally be installed during the upcoming summer holidays, as the Academy has a number of events in September for which we would require the auditorium to be fully operational. These includes the annual open evening.

The provisional pupil premium figure for 2018-19 has now been confirmed and the overall income for next year has been updated accordingly. RJP is currently in the process of finalising the 3-year funding plan for the Academy.

The trading company is still continuing to provide the Academy with useful additional income on a regular basis.

RJP noted that the Executive Board meeting dates would be circulated once they have been cleared by DW & AEN.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

SNA asked whether the school could offer advice on technology usage at home. SNA believes that giving parents advice would empower them to make decisions in the best interest of their children. DMI agreed to send out some information to parents.

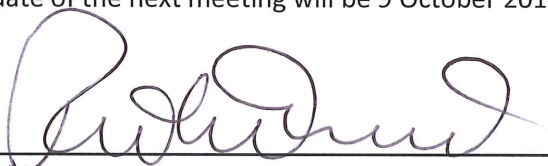
The meeting ended at 19:10

The date of the next meeting will be 9 October 2018.

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

Richard Whitcutt

Chair of Executive Board



Date: 9 / OCT / 2018