

THOMAS ALLEYNE ACADEMY

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body of the Academy
held on Thursday 30th April 2015 at the Thomas Alleyne Academy, High Street, Stevenage
commencing at 6:00 pm.

Governors present: Chair- Alan Euinton (AE), Vice-chair - Jonathan Ellam (JE),
Executive Principal - Mark Lewis (ML), Principal - Julia Flanagan (JF), Howard Crompton
(HC), Eirwen Palmer (EP), Julia Cooke (JC), Stuart Melbourne (SM), Dame Pat
Collarbone (PC), Carol Hayman (CH)

In attendance: Clerk - Kaylee Bonja (KB), Andrew McLeod (AM) for Item 8 only

Actions Summary

Item	Action	Person responsible	Deadline
1	Letter of thanks to Alan Browne	AE	Immediate
3	Invite parents to school to explain new assessment of progress system	JF	July 2015
5	Removal of upgrade and replacement of IT equipment from the Estate Development Plan and add to the capital budget	JF/AM	Immediate
	Seek clarity on external renovations required after the handover	JF	Next meeting
7	List of criteria for expenditure from the Thomas Alleyne Fund Account and access to the Fund Account	JF	Next meeting
	Thomas Alleyne Fund Account to be added to the next agenda	Clerk	Next meeting
	Identification and removal or updates to outdated signage	JF	Next meeting
	Analysis of Governor Skills Survey presented to LGB	Clerk	Next meeting
8	Further review of draft budget to identify savings	ML	Immediate
	Analysis of lettings income against costs presented to LGB	JF	Next meeting
	Ideas to form a development plan for lettings	All governors	Next meeting
9	Final predictions of student achievement circulated to LGB	JF	As soon as known
13	Notify LGB of change to June meeting date	Clerk	Immediate

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Dr. Rod Pullen and Lynsey Steadman.

The Chair, clerk and governors had today received a letter of resignation from Alan Browne (AB). The Chair will write to AB to thank him for his

Action

commitment and contribution to the Thomas Alleyne School and Academy. The Chair also reported Keith Turner's (KT) resignation. KT had been offered, and has taken up, the post of Vice-Principal at Canterbury College. A replacement for Keith from the senior staff team of North Hertfordshire College will not be made. The Chair welcomed PC to her first Local Governing Body meeting.

AE

2. Declarations of Interest

AE asked if there were any declarations of interest not already recorded.
None

Part 1: Strategic Items

3. Update on Assessment of Progress

The report is Section 4- Teaching and Learning, of the Principal's report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Sample task sheets for the levels developing, introductory and advanced had also been circulated. The new method of reporting will apply to Key Stage 3 students and has been trialled with the Year 7 cohort. Students and parents will not be provided with numerical scores but teaching staff will assign a numerical score as detailed in the report for input to the management information system (SIMS).

Question: Will the Academy talk to parents about the new system? The new system is very wordy and may be difficult to understand. Also, some parents do not fully understand the current numerical system.

The Academy will invite parents to school and talk to them as a group.

JF

Question: Have the sets of specific skills been identified for all subjects?
A lot of work has been carried out and teaching staff have identified the skills appropriate to each stage and ability level by working backwards from the GCSE requirement for an A grade for each subject.*

Question: Have skills common to several subjects been treated with consistency across the curriculum?

Yes, for example a teacher is doing this where numeracy is a common skill. The same criteria for numeracy skills is applied across different subjects; for example, Maths, Science, Geography.

Question: Will staff training take place to ensure consistency of assessment?

Training will continue during the period before the end of the summer term and after the Year 11 students have left. The system had been piloted with Year 7 students and feedback had been given to students, parents and staff. Training will continue after implementation to ensure consistency. It was noted that under the new system of assessment a student achieving a score of 9 – Accomplished at advanced level in Year 7, 8 and 9 is making good progress as at the beginning of each year the student would begin at a score of 6 – Emerging at advanced level.

4. Curriculum Developments – September

The report is in Section 3 – Curriculum of the Principal's Report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Principal added that as only 5 students had selected the construction course at North Hertfordshire College the course had been opened up to

other local schools in an effort to make the course more financially viable. To date, there has been no response. The number of reserve choices is comparable to previous years and the offer letters will be issued to students on 13th May.

Question: Has the switch from French to Spanish left a French teacher with spare capacity?

No, the Head of Foreign Languages Department teaches French and Spanish.

5. Estate Development Plan

A report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Principal highlighted the priorities in the plan. The priorities include the internal refurbishment of the Maltings and relocation, change of use for other functions and rooms. The bid to the Capital Investment Fund was successful so new fire doors and fire alarm system will be fitted. This is being project managed internally and decorating cannot take place until this work is complete.

It was agreed to remove the upgrade and replacement of IT equipment from the estate development plan. This will be added to the capital budget.

A Maltings plan and breakdown of costs was requested. HCC are responsible for making the building safe and watertight. Monies not used from the grant will be passed to the Academy so there needs to be clarity about the external renovations that will be required in the future. (New external beams must remain exposed for a 12 month period before rendering). The Principal is meeting with the developer next week and will seek clarity.

It was noted that the Maltings money is not ring-fenced so that any surplus could be brought into the Academy budget.

Question: What is happening in respect of the White House?

A structural survey has revealed it will cost in the region of £500,000 to bring the building back into a state of good repair. Therefore, there is no intention by the Trust to purchase the building. HCC are obligated to keep the building in a safe state. It is hoped that HCC will eventually give the building to the Academy.

Concern remains that the poor state of the building reflects badly on the Academy as it appears to form part of the Academy estate.

The governors supported the proposal to not pursue purchase of the White House.

Question: Would TASA be able to financially support the locker room idea?

Priorities for financial support from TASA will be discussed next week

Part 2: Regular Business

6. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2015

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

7. Matters Arising

Item 3: Pupil Premium – A table to demonstrate improvements in levels of progress Nov 14 – Feb 15 for Year 11 was tabled. All groups had made progress and the gap will be narrowed further by interventions. Greater intervention is required for maths. Ofsted will look closely at the gap between

JF/AM

JF

attainment of Pupil Premium students at the Academy and the non- Pupil Premium students nationally. An analysis of reading ages has taken place and an analysis of spelling ages will be carried out next. Progress is measured by carrying out testing twice per year. The intervention by Kip McGrath has proved successful as all but 1 student exceeded expected progress. A link to research on the impact of interventions had been provided to governors. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/toolkit-a-z/>

Item 7.4: The CLA report had been circulated to governors. Appreciation to all involved was expressed, especially to Lesley Thompson and Klass Luchies.

Item 7.7: Thomas Alleyne Fund Account held by Herts County Council JF had met with the previous Chair of Governors, Richard Stephens, to discuss criteria for expenditure from the fund and how to access. JF to draw up a list of criteria and present at the next LGB meeting for discussion. JF is pursuing access to the fund with HCC and an account statement has been requested. JF was reminded there are 2 accounts; a smaller account – c.£5,000 and a larger account – c.£30,000. To be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

JF
Clerk

Item 7.14: It was reported that the Thomas Alleyne School sign had been removed. Other inaccuracies to signage were noted for action:– Principal – Mark Lewis, and disclaimer notices by Herts County Council.

JF

Item 8: Covered by the agenda

Item 9: The 2013/2014 PANDA report was tabled. A cover sheet to highlight and explain data was also tabled. Additional commentary by JF: the entry requirement for maths related subjects has been raised to GCSE Maths Grade B, previously Grade C. Two members of staff are being closely monitored (Sociology and Psychology). There has been a change of staff for Law. Vocational qualifications are no longer offered to 6th form. Entry criteria will be strictly adhered to and there is closer monitoring of the subjects significantly below national averages. The most recent data indicates a 100% success rate for A Levels A*-E.

Item 11: The four policies were recommended to and approved by the Trust at its meeting in March. JC had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Policy Review Group – 13th May.

Item 12: The level of detail in the Risk Register presented to governors has been simplified. To be presented later in the meeting. Governors were thanked for taking time to complete the skills survey. A final analysis will take place, skills gaps and training needs identified, and a presentation to the governors.

Clerk

- 8. Financial Report** – this item was taken first and attended by AM
- i. Management Accounts
- Management Accounts to the 31st March were circulated in advance of the meeting. The year to date surplus is £15,790 and the full year forecast surplus is £13,066. This is better than the budgeted surplus. AM explained changes to classification of income and where this is shown on the management accounts. The report commentary explained the variances to income and expenditure.

Question: There is a negative variance of £37,750 for teaching staff costs to the end of March, is the forecast negative variance of £64,737 realistic? Are there now additional costs to factor in for maternity cover?

The forecast figure is believed to be realistic. Maternity cover costs will be factored into the 2015/2016 budget. The overspend on agency staff cover is expected to slow down over the summer months.

Question: Is there confidence that invoices for lettings and other income have been issued and are up to date?

NHC Finance Department has issued all invoices that have been requested. Timing of invoicing will be reviewed and it is likely that invoices will be issued at the time of a booking rather than after the booking has taken place. A cancellation policy will also be implemented by JF and ML.

ii. Draft Budget 2015/16

A draft budget for 2015/16 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. This contained a commentary to explain the most significant income and expenditure lines. Income from pre-16, 16-19 and Pupil premium had been confirmed. Income shows a fall of c.£20,000 and expenditure a rise of c.£402,000 on the current year budget. The draft calculations show a deficit budget of £417,777. Although savings have been made in some areas the significant increase to salary costs, c.£413,000 is causing the deficit. The increased cost is to cover the cost of employing additional staff to cover the curriculum needs of the rising school roll, and the respective additional funding is lagged by 12 months. The staff costs presented is the worst case scenario and assumes all vacancies are filled, all staff meet performance targets and are given pay awards. Increased employers National Insurance and pension costs have also been factored in. Savings have been made to support staff costs.

ML has presented a case to the EFA for Popular Growth Funding. This will be considered for a decision at ministerial level. There is no requirement to pay back Popular Growth Funding and if the application is successful would be the best outcome for the Academy. If unsuccessful then other options will be pursued, such as a loan from the EFA. ML to keep governors informed of the situation. In the meantime AM, ML and JF will continue to review the budget and look for other savings.

ML

Question: The worst case scenario for staffing costs has been presented. What is the best case position?

This has not been calculated.

Question: The budget shows the cost of an apprentice full time so can it be assumed they will work across the whole Trust and the cost shared

An apprentice is already based with AM. It will depend on the workload.

Question: Will the Academy continue to receive IT support from HCC?

Yes, HCC provide the best value service.

iii. Cost Analysis of Lettings

A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The report shows the comparison of letting charges by other local schools and the income generated by the school across the week. There was no analysis of income from lettings against the cost of lettings. This data will be provided for the next meeting. Month by month analysis and regularity of bookings was also requested. A clear pricing structure will be worked on and commercial and voluntary group rates will be introduced. The Academy will develop and market lettings to maximise income from this source. Ideas to form a development plan to be brought to the next meeting.

JF

All Governors

AM was thanked and he left the meeting.

9. Principal's Report

The report was circulated in advance of the meeting. The updated Development Plan, SEF report, and a summary of key developments at the Academy were circulated in advance as appendices to the report.

JF was thanked for the additional papers.

JF gave further update to the following sections:

1. **Numbers on roll:** there has been a fall in the numbers in roll since September 2014. Feedback from a Year 8 was dissatisfied – although this student may now want to return. Some have moved out of the area; Year 11 had some students who were dual registered with the ESC and have now moved wholly to the ESC; Year 12 and 13 have had some losses.
2. **Achievement:** the final predictions will be circulated to governors as soon as they are known.
6. **Enrichment:** CH was thanked for organising the film premiere night.
7. **Staffing and Personnel:** Processes for managing staff performance are watertight. Staff are closely monitored and meetings are minuted.
8. **Property Update:** Arrests have been made in connection with the fires on the Tetley field. The recent fire drill was the best yet. The reporting procedure has been streamlined and the whole process took 11 minutes from the sounding of the fire alarm to the return to normal activities.

JF

10. Executive Principal's Report

ML gave a verbal report.

- JE and EP were thanked for being part of the disciplinary panel for the hearing that took place last week. ML had been urgently called to the Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise and was unable to Chair the hearing.
- Papers were tabled to show the process, documents requested, and questions asked of governors during the Ofsted Inspection of the Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise. This will help to prepare governors for the impending inspection of the Academy. Governors were advised to contact the Principal for advice on any of the questions.
- PREVENT training for staff has been booked in September.

Question: Will governors be given a briefing sheet as preparation for Ofsted?

Yes, and this will contain recent developments.

Question: Given that inspections are made on very short notice is there an expectation that governors cancel everything in order to attend?

No, when notice is given to the Academy the clerk will contact all governors to inform them of the inspection and request their availability over the two days.

11. Feedback from Trust Meeting

The Chair gave a verbal update:

- Signe Sutherland had stood down as Chair of the Trust and Adrian Hawkins was elected as the new Chair. Adrian has visited the Academy to introduce himself to staff. Geoff Cleverdon was elected Vice-Chair.
- Matt Hamnett the new CEO and Principal of North Herts College attended the meeting and was appointed a director of the Trust
- Local Governing Body Reports and the Executive Principal Reports were given
- Governor vacancies were discussed and recruitment will follow from the analysis of the governor skills audit survey
- Policies recommended for approval by the Local Governing Bodies were approved and adopted
- Risk Management for the Trust was considered
- The next Trust meeting will take place on 1st July
- The conference for the Trust’s governors will take place on 1st July at the Thomas Alleyne Academy

12. Risk Management

A new style Risk Log was tabled at the meeting. This is an extract from the full risk register and identifies the current risks. These had been discussed throughout the course of the meeting. The third risk will be closed shortly. Finance is the biggest risk. The new format for presentation to governors was approved.

13. Dates of future meetings

The next meeting was scheduled for 11th June. It was agreed to delay the meeting to 25th June to allow additional time for the outcome of the application for Popular Growth Funding. The date of the annual conference for governors and directors of the North Hertfordshire Studio School Trust has been set as Wednesday 1st July from 2pm. The venue is confirmed as the Thomas Alleyne Academy.

Clerk

14. Any Other Business

- i. Due to governor availability the governors in school day was postponed from 14th May to the afternoon of 20th May
- ii. **Question:** What progress is there with the updating of Trust policies?

The Policy Review Group is working through the policy review calendar as agreed and will meet on Wednesday 13th May at the Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm
Signed as an accurate record of the meeting

Chair’s signature:

Date: