



MINUTES OF THE FULL ACADEMY BOARD MEETING – Thursday 26 January 2017 at 6.00pm

Attending Directors:

	Mrs S Baker	Mr A Davis (Principal)	Mr J Elliott
	Mr R Foster	Mrs S Harris	Ms C Mortimer-Ford
	Mr D Smith (Vice Chair)	Mrs S Wright (Chair)	Mr L Wilson-Chalon (arrived late)
Also present:	Mrs S Harwood (Clerk)	Mrs A Eastwood (Business Manager)	
	Mr R Vaughan (Vice Principal)		Ms L Robson
Apologies:	Mr R Clark	Mr G Rumary	
Absent:	-		

The Chair opened the meeting by introducing and welcoming three new Academy Directors. Ms Robson is still awaiting DBS clearance so would be present as a non-voting Director until this had been received.

ACTION

1 a) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Rumary (personal commitment) and Mr Clark (overseas). **Directors accepted the apologies.**

b) DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were made. Mr Elliot informed the Business Manager that he would be updating his Declaration shortly.

2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Full Board – 5 December 2016

The minutes were agreed as accurate and signed.

Item 7 – there has been a change of postholder for the Regional Schools' Commissioner, who appears to want the formation of larger MATs and is looking carefully at pairings. The Principal has been assured that the MAT application is still live and they are looking at the context and geography of the application to see how it fits. However, the Principal is still not sure of the current position and is working to keep the proposed Trustees of the MAT on board; to this end they have been invited to visit the Academy. In the meantime, the Principal is continuing discussions with Leading Schools South West and Huish should be included in the next bid that is being put in, to become a training provider for such things as the NPQH qualification. The Academy's Vice Principal has also become a PiXL associate so that we can be a hub for training. The Academy is working with two schools who are TSAs (Teaching School Alliance) and we may also have the opportunity to become one. These actions will demonstrate that Huish is an outward looking school.

Item 8(a) – the Principal reported that the Post 16 Taster Evening held yesterday had been very successful with 90 students attending; all external students were also present. 105 applications have already been received towards the target of 130. The Principal felt that a Sixth Form of 230-250 students was about the right size for Huish and that recruitment was on track. The Chair queried the position of A Level classes with five or less students. The Principal said he would be meeting with the Vice Principal and Head of Sixth Form shortly to start discussions regarding the curriculum. While models have been compared with other schools, he wanted to keep a differentiated curriculum to provide choice. The Vice Principal and Business Manager would also be carrying out some curriculum modelling to look at costs and how this is deployed. While student choices are respected, they could not be guaranteed. The 'norm' is for 8 periods per fortnight at Post 16 and Huish currently offers 9. There will be no AS Levels next year; students will be able to

take three A Levels with an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification). A Director asked how much money would be saved by not offering AS Levels. The Vice Principal said it would be in the region of £30k. Options Evening for Year 9 students had also recently taken place and application forms were now arriving. Students' selections will be carefully examined.

Item 8(e) – the Chair asked for an update of the CIF bid. The Business Manager explained, for the benefit of new Directors, what the bids were for. The outcome would not be known until March/April.

Action Points: 5/6 – on the agenda today.

3 – the Business Manager reported that the Academy is still owed £7k from the original project, however final invoices still need to be raised. Once this has been done the total owed to the Academy will rise to £44k.

Proposal to accept the minutes as an accurate record.

Proposer: Mr Foster
Unanimously agreed.

Seconded: Mrs Harris

Finance, Audit and Premises – 23 November 2016.

The Chair of the Committee commented that the main item of discussion at this meeting was the Financial Report from RSM, which was discussed at the last Board meeting. Directors noted the minutes.

3 POLICIES

Leave of Absence

This policy is a Local Authority policy which was discussed at the last Board meeting. The Business Manager explained to new Directors that last year around £12k was spent on staff who were absent for personal appointments or child care. The Academy is looking to be more efficient on this without undermining the goodwill of staff. The current Academy policy allows for three days' paid leave of absence in a rolling 12-month programme, which initially the Academy wanted to halt. However, following staff consultation the Academy would compromise and change this to one day paid leave in a 12-month programme and anything more would be unpaid. The Principal reassured Directors that the vast majority of staff don't take advantage of this element. A Director felt the title of the policy was confusing and it could also do with a context at the start. The Business Manager pointed out that this is a HR LA policy and doesn't apply to anyone else other than staff. Ms Robson thought the policy was fair and asked if there were any 'keeping in touch' days included as there is for maternity leave and how staff would know about it. The Business Manager said that when she is notified of a pregnancy, the staff member is given a copy of the policy. There are no 'keeping in touch' days outside of maternity leave as this would have financial implications. Ms Robson would like it noted informally that this was good practice. A new Director enquired how staff absence and extended absence was covered. The Business Manager explained that for teaching staff Huish has three cover supervisors who would be called upon or, beyond that, cover teachers would be engaged. It could be challenging, especially with short notice. If the cover supervisors did not have the expertise in a required specialism then a specialist would be brought in.

6.35 Mr Wilson-Chalon arrived.

The Business Manager said that support staff are not covered unless it is for an extended absence. This revised policy will now go back to staff for a week's consultation before being adopted.

Proposal to adopt the Leave of Absence Policy.

Proposed: Mr Smith
Directors unanimously agreed to the proposal.

Seconded: Mrs Baker

4 TERMS OF REFERENCE**MIG**

The TORs were unavailable at the last full Board meeting but as the first meeting of the group had now taken place, the TORs were reviewed and it was agreed that under Membership there would be no minimum number of members for the group.

Admissions

Following the last full Board meeting where the TORs were referred back to the Committee, one amendment was recommended for clarity. Under Terms of Reference (General), the third bullet point to be changed from "... Academy policies that the Board has delegated responsibility for, as detailed ..." to "... Academy policies delegated by the Board as detailed ..."

No amendments were recommended and the Board are asked to approve them for the forthcoming academic year.

Directors unanimously agreed to both Terms of Reference.

5 SWIMMING POOL

This item was deemed confidential and minuted separately.

6 CATERING CONTRACT

The current catering contract with Taylor Shaw came into effect on 1 September 2013 to run until 31 August 2016 but it was not signed until September 2014. In October 2015 it was agreed to extend this until August 2017 and it contains the option to extend the contract for an additional two years if the Academy chose to do so. A full tendering process was not carried out at the time as Taylor Shaw purchased the previous company (Proserv) when they went into liquidation, with the right to operate their existing contracts.

While the provision from Taylor Shaw was adequate, it was thought there was room for improvement and generally considered that the Academy could offer better provision by in-house catering. However, at the moment there was no staff capacity to be able to initiate this, so the Business Manager would like to take up the option of extending the contract for a year and then go to tender. A Director asked if the costs were likely to change. It was stated that the Taylor Shaw proposal would go to the FAP committee; the company are prepared to make some investment, which may change the guaranteed return, but there is the option for provision to stay as it is.

Proposal to extend the contract for one year and then go to tender, with the FAP committee authorised to make the final decision.

**Proposed: Mr Wilson-Chalon
Unanimously agreed**

Seconded: Mr Smith

7 NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

From figures announced by the Government, Somerset had not done too badly in the proposed National Funding Formula compared to schools in Devon who will have big deficits. This proposal is still at consultation stage and the Government may come under pressure to change it, but as it stands at the moment there will be some extra funding for the Academy.

7.30 pm Mrs Baker left the meeting.

Despite this, the Academy would still need to find £100k each year for the next five years. The Academy is in a relatively strong position financially but the Government want schools to reduce their reserves, so it will be challenging. The increase is

estimated at 5.6% but the ESG will be removed, effectively reducing the increase to 3.5%, which will be phased in.

7.35pm Mrs Baker rejoined the meeting

The Principal asked for Governors to make their voices heard in the consultation, which closed on 22 March. The Business Manager will supply Directors with the links to the consultation document. Business Manager

8 RESTRUCTURING

This item was deemed confidential and minuted separately.

7.35 The Clerk left the meeting and returned at 7.45pm.

9 ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT

a) Academy Improvement Plan

The Principal said there had not been many changes since the last Board meeting, with the main items being the swimming pool and efficiencies already discussed. As far as student progress is concerned, students have now sat their mock exams but it is difficult for the Principal to give an indication of how they performed as English and Maths are new courses and now measured on a 1-9 scale which doesn't match the old measure. Results then have to be norm referenced. The Academy had entered the PiXL Curve for Maths and English and also Edexcel for Maths so that data would go into a larger database of schools for comparison and to give a better idea of performance. He acknowledged that this was an anxious time with lots of uncertainties, especially for students. In other subjects some Departments are on the Department+ programme and there has been rigorous examination of coursework; the Academy is doing all it can to have accurate predictions. Outside of Maths and English, predictions look promising. The Vice Principal said there had been a focus on FSM6 students and closing the gap, especially on intervention for individual students. There is some improvement seen. A Director said that in general the grade boundaries are lower in the first year of a new course, so the changes will probably affect Year 10 more. The Vice Principal acknowledged that there had been some good practices being shown.

A Director asked about staff confidence. The Principal said there was some anxiety around Maths and English and being unsure of where students are because of norm referencing and finding it difficult to report on their progress. Year 10 has been challenging but staff are being positive with students as they move towards Year 11. The Chair clarified that it is the outcome rather than effort that is unknown.

b) Reports to note

Responsible Officer – no visits had been made since the last Board meeting.

Directors' visits – the next arranged visit is on Monday 30 January. Following Mrs Carne's departure, Mrs Harris has agreed to become the Link Director for SEND/PP Audit (now to be called Disadvantaged and Vulnerable students).

Safeguarding – the Link Director had been due to meet with the DSL but it had to be cancelled due to illness. The Link Director reminded everyone that the new Directors would need to undertake Prevent and Safeguarding training. Safer Recruitment training could also be completed online.

Health and Safety – on 23 January the latest H&S audit had taken place and scored 98.64% overall, which was slightly lower than last year. The areas identified to be improved are being worked on. Work on site security is ongoing and orders are being placed to fence the rear of the site and the front/field. Safety barriers have been installed at Huish Leisure and the separate entrance. A total of £83k has been spent on this in the last year.

c) Risk Register

A Director stated that with some of the discussion this evening, there are a few updates to be made to the register as follows:

Ref 1: the impact has now reduced from 4 to 3 and the risk level could also be

reduced from 16 to 12.

Ref 7: this has not been revisited for a year and the Director recommended that it should be considered at the next meeting.

Board Agenda
item

Ref 23: another item not revisited for a year. The Director recommended that the Pay and Personnel Committee should review the risk

Ref 32: this has also not been reviewed for a year. The Director felt that this should be reported back on, to the Academy Board, fairly quickly.

Refer to P&P
Board Agenda
item

Ref 37: this item was no longer necessary and the Director felt it could be removed.

d) Summary of Academy Accounts

The Business Manager had tabled a document but said that the full report would be sent to Directors on the FAP committee tomorrow. The carry forward allocated to the budget is £1,103m; £738k balance includes £300k of agreed reserves plus £45k allocated for the pool. The Responsible Officer queried the costs incurred by the pool; the Business Manager said they were included in the expenditure.

e) Summary of Leisure Accounts

The total outturn was £16k with an estimated profit of £12k; the AGP estimated profit of £4.5k is an old figure and includes lighting and electricity. The accounts are looking positive.

10 HOW DID WE DO?

The agenda was covered with opportunity for all members to speak. A good meeting overall.

11 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Directors noted the approval of the Registration of Pupils policy undertaken by the Principal.

The Business Manager informed Directors that she was trialling i-cloud with the Leisure Centre and if Directors were interested the same could be set up for them to enable documents to be shared.

12 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Mr Wilson-Chalon welcomed the new Directors and announced that he would be resigning following this meeting. He has been a Director at Huish Episcopi for 6½ years. Huish Episcopi has established a good reputation and he felt that this had, in part, been down to Mrs Wright's strong and quiet leadership. He wished the Academy good luck for the future and felt that he had gained more personally than he had ever anticipated.

The Chair was sorry that Mr Wilson-Chalon was leaving and outlined his varied roles on the Board since he was appointed. The Chair thanked him for all he had done over the years and wished him well.

There were no urgent matters to raise.

8.15 Members of staff left for the confidential section of the meeting which was minuted separately.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm.



Full Board Minutes
26-1-17 ActionSht.d