



An Daras Multi Academy Trust

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Chief Executive Officer – W Hermon
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05/12/18

Minutes

**An Daras MAT Board of Directors – Full Meeting Autumn 2018
Monday 3rd December 2018 at 9.30am at ADMAT Central Office**

Note that actions are highlighted in bold and red, and will be carried forward to the next meeting and questions or challenges during the meeting are highlighted in bold and blue

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Brian Jennings (Chair), Graeme Barriball (Vice), Claire Paul, Nicola Murphy, Sally Cooksey, Tim Woodward and Will Hermon

Apologies: Bex Couch

In attendance: Clerk, Emma Gilbert (CFO designate), Peter Hague (Director designate) and Jo Callow (Ex Officio)

The Chair introduced Peter Hague who is a guest at the meeting with a view to becoming a Director. PH then gave some detail on his background in finance with the Metropolitan Police. Introductions were made.

2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests Relevant to this Agenda

None declared relevant to this agenda and no updates required to annual declarations. WH, EG and JC are employees of ADMAT.

3. Elect/Re-Elect Board Chair and Vice Chair

Brian Jennings was nominated for Chair by GB, seconded by SC and the Board agreed unanimously for him to remain as Chair. BJ nominated Graeme Barriball to remain as Vice, this was unanimously agreed.

Responsibilities based on 4Ps were agreed as follows:

- (1) Protection (Health and Safety, Safeguarding) – Brian Jennings
- (2) Finance Planning – Peter Hague
- (3) Property (Site, Buildings and Insurance) – Graeme Barriball
- (4) Strategic Planning – Risks and Growth – Brian Jennings & Bex Couch (*latter agreed after the meeting*)
- (5) Strategic Planning – data and improvement – Sally Cooksey & Claire Paul (*latter agreed after meeting*)
- (6) Strategic Planning – vision & ethos (including SIAMS) – Brian Jennings and Tim Woodward
- (7) Personnel (PM, discipline etc) – Brian Jennings and Nicola Murphy
- (8) Personnel (recruitment) – Brian Jennings and Nicola Murphy
- (9) Whistleblowing – Nicola Murphy

4. **Confirm Minutes of Previous full Board Summer Meeting (18th June 2018) and Matters Arising**

- Approval of external auditor by Members. *Completed at Members Meeting.*

5. **Confirm Minutes of Previous Extra-Ordinary Meeting (17th July 2018) and Matters Arising**

- No actions.

The Board agreed both sets of minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

6. **Confidential Agenda Items**

A matter covered under item 13c is covered at the confidential minutes.

7. **Review Documents**

- a. ADMAT Statutory Decision Planner, ADMAT Scheme of Delegation and ADMAT Code of Conduct – *all reviewed and approved in July 18.*
- b. Review committee TORs – *governance officer will review the cyclical plan against AFH 18 and other required documents in January 19, and then TORs can be amended accordingly – update at Spring Full Board. The Chair thanked the Governance Officer for embracing her new role.*
- c. MAT Vision and Aims – *WH noted that the need to review vision and aims as the MAT has grown since they were last reviewed. WH suggested a short meeting early in the Spring term with Director input; BJ and TW will do this.*

8. **Risks and Improvement**

Risk register has not been adjusted since the summer term and the risks still stand. WH talked through the last improvement plan impact summary; it was a year of two halves in that teaching and learning achieved what was set but the business/financial side was not all in line. However, the issues were identified and action taken, and more importantly, lessons were learned so that the same issues do not arise again.

WH discussed the data from last year, explaining the results on progress and attainment. He explained that the average 'band' in terms of progress is quite wide and does show good progress. He confirmed that all schools are operating within the national average in attainment and progress. He confirmed that the focus on maths last year has really paid off. However, the writing results now need some work and will be a focus on the next improvement plan, along with maintaining the momentum with maths.

WH discussed the MAT improvement plan and confirmed the priorities as:

- (1) Improve writing and spelling attainment/progress for boys and other vulnerable groups
- (2) Improve IT access and IT on the curriculum
- (3) Review MAT vision and growth
- (4) Embed TIS strategies across all schools
- (5) Increase skills and capacity of middle leaders

BJ challenged how far along the MAT is with implementing strategies for these improvements? WH explained that some are in hand but they will be embedded properly from Jan 19.

The draft teaching & learning improvement plan will be amalgamated with the business/finance improvement plan (being produced by the CFO). It will be submitted to Directors for final approval, via the Governance Officer, prior to Christmas.

9. Approve Annual Accounts

The CFO briefed on the finances and that the figures are more positive than were first thought prior to the staff re-structuring.

The pooling of reserves was discussed and the need to communicate what is happening to the local governing boards. **SC challenged that when pooling resources, the MAT needs to ensure that there is a fair distribution across the schools. Stating that the reserves will be pooled and spent as seen fit does not provide enough clarification to the schools. She also challenged the need to communicate the financial situation of each schools and the use of reserves, especially as some of them have come into the MAT with seemingly positive finances and now don't seem to be in that situation.**

BJ noted that the management of school accounts before they joined the MAT was not diligent enough and they were being 'propped up' by the council and therefore it always looks negative when they join the MAT. The Directors agreed that this is an issue that needs to be communicated properly, otherwise it seems unfair to the schools and jeopardises the MAT's reputation.

WH will discuss finances including pooling of reserves with Chairs at the next termly meeting. WH reiterated that despite the need to adjust finances in-year, it is a more positive picture than first thought. WH highlighted the management letter with very few areas for concern, all of which are either resolved or in hand.

Accounts were approved by Directors.

CFO updated the Directors on the allocation of tasks to support staff; it has been dealt with by discussions and negotiations rather than a formal restructure. It will centralise many tasks and includes the employment of an apprentice. One issue being dealt with is that the finance calendar is all year round and does not match the school academic year. Some staff may be required to work out of school hours but be given time off during term time, as this can be factored in. All the staff have been very positive and open to the changes needed to make the work more efficient.

CFO gave an update on how the finances are being managed. The five top potential priorities for finance are centralisation, re-structuring, sorting the purchase order process, pooling of reserves and linking expenditure to the strategic vision.

10. Financial KPIs

These are being formulated and will be presented to the FSD for consideration and then the Full Board for approval in the Spring term.

11. CEO Report to the Board

The CEO's report was made available to the Board prior to the meeting. The improvement plan was covered at item 8. WH discussed the need to update IT across the MAT. He asked for direction on whether leasing was the sensible way forward. GB noted that this is a task for RSS committee. All Directors agreed that leasing should be looked at and WH will take details of options to the next RSS.

Action: Options for IT upgrades across the MAT to RSS Committee (WH)

The new Legionella policy was approved.

WH highlighted a small amount of additional funding available and he asked for direction on how it should be used. **SC challenged that this funding should be given to the schools to spend as they see fit. CP noted that parents are aware of this funding and may question its use if they do not see evidence of it being spent at the schools.** The Directors were in agreement that the funding should be given to schools but spending it will be subject to the restrictions placed on it by the government.

CEO gave an update on Princetown. The view of the MAT and the management partnership is that the school should academise and join the MAT. Pupil numbers are improving, parental feedback is positive and staff surveys are positive. LGAB has minuted that they are content to start due diligence. **GB challenged the financial stability of the school** and WH confirmed that it is fairly stable but due diligence will include particular attention to finances given the issues other schools have faced. It was noted that Abby Bassett is doing a tremendous job as acting Head at Princetown.

The CEO raised the issue of working office space in the central office. There are a number of options available including restructuring the current office or renting additional space.

Action: Proposals for re-organisation of office space, or renting additional space or options for income generation to RSS committee (WH)

12. Items Brought Forward from LGAB Meetings

Governance Officer gave a quick update on the implementation of the local governance plan and the Directors thanked her for her work in this regard.

13. Items Brought Forward from Sub-Committees

a. Teaching, Learning and Achievement (TLA)

None

b. Finance and Strategic Development (FSD)

- Produce new Critical Incident Policy (WH). *In hand but certain additional elements that need to be added. It will be produced for the Spring FSD. Lockdown procedures have been sent out to schools.*
- *From Confidential Minutes - Update on Support Staff Review – covered at item 9.*

c. Resources, Staffing and Safeguarding (RSS)

- MAT Improvement Officer to pull together a VL impact report (DS via WH). *Wendy Delf briefed the Directors at the meeting on the progress so far.*
- Brief staff annual survey outcomes and actions (WH). *Overall, positive feedback. One issue discussed in the confidential minutes.*

d. Audit (Au)

Approval of annual accounts (covered at item 9). *Accounts approved.* The CFO talked though the management accounts, how they are formatted and how Directors can scrutinise them. She highlighted a few of the nuances, and discussed any financial line that is not in line with planned expenditure. FSD committee will now look at management accounts, question the variances and check these, and report back to the full Board.

14. **Visible Learning Presentation** (Wendy Delf)

WD gave a brief outline of the Visible Learning for the benefit of the Directors that have joined the Board recently. She highlighted what work has been done and how the programme has been managed, all with the aim of developing better outcomes for learners. The main changes she has seen are:

- (1) There has been a notable change to making learning more visible so that the children can see it.
- (2) There has been a lot of progress, particularly in maths and how to tackle learning difficulties.
- (3) The impact coaches have made a definite impact, along with some of the support staff.
- (4) Pupils are more confident about their learning and how they overcome learning challenges.
- (5) Data is being managed more intelligently and is fed into how the pupils are taught.
- (6) There has been a cultural change between verbal and written feedback. The pupils view speedy verbal feedback much more positively.
- (7) There is more feedback through pupil voice.
- (8) The mind-frames of the teachers have adjusted and they have really thought about the impact of their teaching.

WD briefed on what comes next:

More feedback is required. The process is only about half way through and so there is more work to be done going forward. WH noted that the children have really started to take responsibility for their own learning. **SC challenged whether all the staff have bought into this and whether they consider it a positive process.** JC and WD updated and confirmed that the staff have now embraced it and the positives are evident.

GB challenged whether there has actually been any evidence in the data that the visible learning is having an impact? WD explained that it is a long-term process that continues to be implemented and will bear fruits in years to come. She noted that there are some fantastic teachers across the MAT and the impact coaches are doing a good job. **BJ challenged whether as a MAT, we now have the skills to pass on this work to any new school joining the MAT?** WD confirmed that there is certainly an element of that, but there is always external support available should it be needed.

15. **Any Other Business**

The policy register has been made available to Directors; all policies in date and on the website.

Peter Hague was formally co-opted on to the Board. The governance officer will complete all the necessary paperwork and inform the members with a view to him filling the 'member appointed' vacancy.

16. **DONM**

Dates confirmed as; TLA 23rd Jan, RSS 30th Jan, FSD 4th Feb, Au 6th Feb and Full BoD on 25th Mar 18, all at 9.30am at the ADMAT Central Office.

The meeting to discuss vision and aims will take place on Friday 18th January 2019 at 10am at the central office.

TJH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

B. Jennings – Director (Chair)
G. Barriball – Director (Vice)
C. Paul – Director
N. Murphy – Director
T. Woodward – Foundation Director
R. Couch – Foundation Director

P. Hague - Director
S. Cooksey – Director
W. Hermon – CEO/Director
E. Gilbert – CFO
J. Callow – Ex Officio Observer