

## Minutes of a Governing Body meeting of Cedars Academy on Monday 18 October 2021 at 5.00pm

Governors Present: Gill Morton (Chair), Gordon Neale OBE (Vice Chair), Martin Flowers (Chief Executive), Jamie Cairns, Pamela Finn, Stuart Kay, Naomi Kelly, Rachel Lane, Joseph McCabe, Liz Neale, Andrew Thompson

Others Present: Michelle O'Reilly (Observer), Julie Vincent (Observer), Kelly Baker (Inspire) (Guest)

Clerk: Kim Ashford

The meeting started at 5.05pm and was quorate.

### **Presentation on the Academy's Accounts**

Prior to addressing the items on the agenda, a brief verbal presentation was received from Kelly Baker (Inspire) commenting on the Academy's accounts, as follows:

#### The Academy's Accounts

- It was noted that as of today's date, the draft accounts had been sent to Clive Owen, the Academy's accountants, for audit. Current figures are subject to slight changes due to the costings of summer works, but the bulk of the figures have been received for the 12-month period.
- As of 31 August 2021, the school is in receipt of £3.6 million in income. £2.9 million is allocated to direct costs and £724,000 to support costs. There is a healthy bottom-line surplus of £6,000, and there is currently £980,000 cash in the Academy's account.
- The final reports will be available in November, and will show that the Academy is in a strong financial position.

Kelly gave the following response to a question from a Governor:

- *For Governor meetings, will we have a report that will show whether we are spending too much or too little?* Yes, there is a plan to compare actual to budget going forward, month by month. This will be across all main education costs and salaries.

The Chair and Chief Executive thanked Kelly for her summary.

*Kelly left the meeting at 5.17pm.*

## 1. Apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllr Maria Hall, Paul Hills, Daniel Hearne and Joanne Carr. Consent was given for their absence.

## 2. Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda

- There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. Link Inspector Report

- The Link Inspector has not yet carried out her visit to The Cedars, therefore the report will be presented at the Spring term Governing Body meeting on 1 March 2022.

## 4. Minutes of the last Governing Body meeting held on Monday 21 June 2021

### 4.1 Approval of the minutes

- Governors received the minutes of the last Governing Body meeting on Monday 21 June 2021, as circulated with the agenda by email prior to the meeting. The minutes were **approved** as a correct record.

### 4.2 Matters arising

- There were no matters arising.

## 5. Governing Body

### 5.1 Register of Interests

- Governors were asked to email the Clerk stating whether or not they had any interests to declare, so that the Clerk can update the Register before sending a copy to the school. **Action: Governors, Clerk.**

### 5.2 Governor Code of Conduct

- Governors received the NGA Model Code of Conduct for Governors, as circulated by email prior to the meeting.
- Governors **approved** and **adopted** the Governor Code of Conduct.

### 5.3 Governing Body membership and vacancies

- Governors received and noted the Membership and Vacancies report, as circulated by email prior to the meeting.

#### 5.4 Governing Body meeting attendance

- Governors received and noted the Governing Body meeting attendance report, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.

#### 5.5 Governing Body training and development

- Governors received and noted the Governor training and development report, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- Rachel Lane stated that the online training she had undertaken via Zoom had worked well using this platform.

#### 5.6 Link Governor roles list

- Governors received the Link Governor roles list, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- The Chief Executive agreed to provide the Clerk with an updated list of Link Governor roles. **Action: Chief Executive.**

## 6. Committees

#### 6.1 Committee membership

- Governors received the Committee membership report, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- It was noted that Andrew Thompson would join the following Committees:
  - Business Partnership Development
  - Curriculum and Pupils
  - Finance and Staffing

#### 6.2 Committee meeting attendance

- Governors received and noted the Committee meeting attendance report, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.

#### 6.3 Committee meeting minutes

- Governors received the following Committee meeting minutes, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting:
  - Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee, 4 October 2021

- Curriculum and Pupils Sub-Committee, 4 October 2021

#### Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee – Matters Arising

- **Item 1.2 – Student numbers:** It was noted that there are now 162 students at Ivy Lane.
- **Item 1.3 – EN Consultation:** It was noted that a meeting has been requested with Steve Horne and Deborah Mason, for a discussion on the consultation and to obtain clarity on this process moving forward, given the significant additional pressures that this process puts onto staff.
- **Item 2.2 – Staff Development requests:** Two TAs wish to move from Level 2 to Level 3, at a budgeted cost of £6,000. Interviews will take place on Wednesday 20 October.

#### Curriculum and Pupils Sub-Committee – Matters Arising

- **Item 3.2 – College update:** It was agreed that Communication would be added as an item on the agenda for the Autumn Term Governing Body meeting. This item appears as **item 6.4** on the current Governing Body meeting agenda.

#### 6.4 Governor communication – Walker Terrace

- Governors have raised concerns regarding how information was being reported back to the Governing Body in relation to the proposed alterations to Walker Terrace, stating that some Governors have had to rely largely on social media for information.
- It was agreed that communication could be improved, and it was suggested that a WhatsApp group could be set up for this purpose, but that confidentiality would need to be maintained. The Clerk agreed to check with the Governor Support Manager as to whether it would be acceptable to establish a WhatsApp group for the sharing of information with Governors. **Action: Clerk.**
- The Clerk advised that extraordinary Governing Body meetings are sometimes held in order to share information/make decisions on important matters, and that these do not necessarily need to be clerked by the Local Authority, as long as an appropriate person can be nominated to take the minutes (not a Governor and not the Chief Executive) and that the minutes are subsequently provided to the Clerk to be kept on file for information.
- Andrew Thompson advised Governors that a meeting had taken place on 14 September 2021 on the subject of Walker Terrace, and that the minutes will be circulated to Governors in due course. **Action: Andrew Thompson.**
- Andrew advised that he has drafted a 1-page communication for parents, which provides responses to some of the main concerns and advises parents to whom they should direct any further queries and concerns. The 1-page document has been sent to the Chief Executive today, for approval. **Action: Chief Executive.**

## 7. Chief Executive's Report

- Governors received the Chief Executive's report, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for a very thorough and well written report, also stating that the Governors are very proud of the exceptional results and exit routes obtained by all leavers.
- Regarding Walker Terrace, it was noted that there are a lot of outstanding planning issues to be resolved, and that storage facilities, change of use, and building development proposals are still being considered. The Academy is responding to queries from the Local Authority.
- It was agreed that the Chief Executive would ask Cllr Hall for an update on what the outstanding issues are that are holding up planning processes, and also clarify the dates that Planning are working towards. **Action: Chief Executive.**

### 7.1 Review school-based end of year assessment data

- It was noted that this item is included in the Chief Executive's written report.

### 7.2 Implementation of recovery curriculum

- It was noted that all classes are now on the adapted national curriculum.

### 7.3 Update on School Improvement Plan

- Governors received the Academy Development Plan, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- It was noted that Governors **adopted** the Academy Development Plan for 2021/22.

### 7.4 Safeguarding

- It was confirmed that those staff working directly with children have read at least part 1 of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education document.
- It was confirmed that key staff have undertaken extra safeguarding training and will disseminate this to other staff this term, and will also share this with Governors.
- It was agreed that it would be helpful to have more direction as to what training Governors needed to undertake. The Chief Executive advised Governors to check with their development team and the members of staff associated with their pillar. **Action: Governors.**

### 7.5 Children with health needs who cannot attend school

- Governors were asked to check that the school is compliant in following statutory guidance for ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.
- It was noted that while the school is compliant, there are currently no children with health needs in school.

#### 7.6 Early Careers Teachers (ECTs)

- Governors were asked to check that the school is compliant in following the revised Statutory Induction Guidance for early career teachers. The guidance was revised in March 2021, coming into force on 1 September 2021.
- It was noted that the school is compliant, and that there are currently 2 ECTs and 1 NQT in school.

### 8. Admissions Arrangements

- Governors were asked to note the following:

*Governors to note that if changes are proposed to the school's admission arrangements for 2023/24 or if you have not consulted on the school's admission arrangements within the last seven years then you are required to consult. The consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for 2023/24 must last a minimum of six weeks and must take place between 1 October 2021 and 31 January 2022.*

*Governors are required to determine their admission arrangements for 2023/24 by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 regardless of whether they have consulted or not – minutes for this process should be retained. Once the governing body has determined their admission arrangements, they must notify the appropriate bodies of this. Governors must send a copy of their full determined admission arrangements 2023/24 to the LA by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022, and must then publish a copy of their determined admission arrangements on their website displaying them for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made).*

- Governors noted.

### 9. Academy Trust Handbook

- Governors were asked to ensure they meet the key requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, as follows:

#### 9.1 Structures

- Board meetings **must** take place at least three times a year (and business conducted only when quorate). If the board meets less than six times a year it **must** describe in its governance statement, accompanying its annual accounts, how it maintained effective oversight of funds with fewer meetings. [this is achieved through the Resources committee also meeting three times a year].

## 8.2 Management accounts

- The management accounts must be shared with the Chair of Trustees every month, irrespective of the trust's size, and with those other trustees six times a year, even if they do not meet in each of those months.

## 8.3 Audit and Risk Committee

- The board must appoint an Audit & Risk committee – either a dedicated committee (if annual income is over £50 million) or combined with another committee such as Resources, to advise the board on the adequacy of the trust's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and risk management arrangements, to direct a programme of internal scrutiny and to consider the results and quality of external audit.

## 8.4 Submit audited accounts

- The Academy Trust **must** maintain adequate accounting records and prepare an annual report and accounts. The accounts **must** be audited, and the audited report and accounts **must** be:
  - submitted to ESFA by 31<sup>st</sup> December
  - published on the trust's website by 31<sup>st</sup> January
  - filed with Companies House under company law, usually by 31<sup>st</sup> May
  - provided to every member (under the Companies Act)
  - provided to anyone who requests a copy.
- It was noted that Governors meet the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook.
- It was noted that the auditors had started investigations yesterday. The Chief Executive confirmed that progress has already been made, in that a mini audit had already been carried out in school on the school's financials and risk register, and that the findings had been published in the Summer term.
- It was confirmed that the school's audited accounts will be submitted to the ESFA by 31 December.

## 10. Information to publish on a school website

- Governors received the Information to publish on a school website document, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.

- The Chief Executive confirmed that the website was compliant, and that the issue with the font size is being worked on.

## 11. Policies

- Governors received the Policy schedule document, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- Governors were asked to re-adopt the following statutory policies that require annual review:
  - Child Protection Policy
  - SEN Information Report
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
  - Terms of Reference – Curriculum and Pupils Committee
  - Terms of Reference – Finance and Staffing Committee
  - Terms of Reference – Premises, Health and Safety Committee
- Governors to re-adopt the following statutory policy that requires periodic review:
  - Data Protection Policy (*review required every 2 years*)
- It was noted that Governors **re-adopted** the above policies.

## 12. Dates and times of future meetings

- Governors noted the following dates/times of future meetings:
  - Spring Term  
Tuesday, 1 March 2022, 5.00pm
  - Summer Term  
Monday, 20 June 2022, 5.00pm
- It was noted that an AGM will take place at 4.30pm on 6 December 2021, and that Chair of Trustees Gordon Neale will circulate the agenda to all Governors.  
**Action: Chair of Trustees.**

## 13. Any other business

### The Cedars Newsletter

The Chair asked Governors for volunteers to submit a brief paragraph about themselves, and what they want to achieve for the Academy, for inclusion in the Academy's half-termly newsletter. This would need to be submitted by tomorrow. **Action: Governors.**

Poppy appeal

It was noted that the School Council is working on this.

Vaccine for 12 to 16-year-olds

Liz Neale agreed to look into what is happening about this. **Action: Liz Neale.**

PART II – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

To decide whether any item (or part of an item) should be recorded as confidential and excluded from the papers made available for public inspection.

**14. Chief Executive’s performance management outcome**

- It was noted that the Chief Executive’s performance management would be deferred to the Spring term Governing Body meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

The meeting finished at 6.49pm.

Date: .....

Signed: .....