

Minutes of a Governing Body meeting of Cedars Academy on Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 5.00pm

Governors Present: Gordon Neale OBE (Acting Chair), Martin Flowers (Chief Executive), Pamela Finn, Cllr Maria Hall, Paul Hills, Naomi Kelly, Rachel Lane, Joe McCabe, Andrew Thompson

Others Present: Michelle O'Reilly (Observer), Julie Vincent (Observer)

Clerk: Kim Ashford

The meeting started at 5.02pm and was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Joanne Carr, Daniel Hearne, Gill Morton and Liz Neale. Consent was given for their absence.
- No apologies were received from Jamie Cairns and Stuart Kay. Consent was given for their absence.

2. Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda

- There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the last Governing Body meeting held on Monday, 18 October 2021

3.1 Approval of the minutes

- Governors received the minutes of the last Governing Body meeting on Monday, 18 October 2021, as circulated with the agenda by email prior to the meeting. The minutes were **approved** as a correct record.

3.2 Matters arising

- There were no matters arising.

4. Governing Body

4.1 Governing Body membership and vacancies

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

- It was noted that the following term of office is coming to an end:
 - *Naomi Kelly – Parent Governor – End date: 01/07/2022*
- The Clerk advised that a Parent Governor election would need to be held to fill the vacancy currently held by Naomi, and that it would be better to hold the election in September 2022, when a new intake of parents may be interested in applying.
- Naomi expressed that she is keen to continue in her role on the Governing Body. The Chair and Governors stated that they would be delighted to receive Naomi's application for the position, when the election is run.
- The Chair informed Governors that he has been approached by the Academy Ambassadors, offering to provide their help and support whenever there are vacancies that need to be filled on the Governing Body. This is to ensure that the Governing Body is equipped with the appropriate skills set to allow it to function effectively. It was noted that the ESFA also has a commitment to working with Governors to ensure they are supported and fully equipped to carry out their role.

4.2 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.
- The Chair thanked Governors for their commitment to attending meetings, and expressed the wish for this to continue going forward.

4.3 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.
- It was noted from the report that Pamela Finn and Jamie Cairns have undertaken training since the last Governing Body meeting. Pamela stated that the training had been well informed, delivered well and was very useful.

4.4 Link Governor roles list

- Governors received and noted the Link Governor roles list, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- It was noted that it has been difficult to arrange Link Governor visits due to the continuing problems posed by the pandemic.
- Pamela expressed that she will be happy to come into the school, as soon as it is practicable for her to make arrangements with her link middle leader.
- It was noted that Naomi has visited the school in her capacity as Creativity Link

Governor. Naomi stated that the visit was most engaging, and that a good deal of very positive work is being done regarding the Creativity agenda, which also includes Art, Music, and the Performing Arts. Naomi was pleased to report that there are excellent plans for the year ahead.

- The Chief Executive asked Governors to let him know if they have not heard from their link middle leader, as they should be receiving updates regarding what is happening with their link subjects. If this is not the case, the Chief Executive will rectify this. **Action: Chief Executive.**

5. Committees

5.1 Committee membership

- Governors received the Committee membership report, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- It was agreed that Paul Hills will join the Curriculum and Pupils Committee, and Naomi Kelly will be removed from the Finance and Staffing Committee. **Action: Clerk.**

5.2 Committee meeting attendance

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

5.3 Committee meeting minutes

- Governors received the following Committee meeting minutes, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting:
 - Finance and Staffing Committee, 14/02/2022
 - Curriculum and Pupil Committee, 14/02/2022
- Item 3.2, Finance and Staffing Committee minutes: It was noted that it has not been possible to discuss the applications for staff development as these have not yet been received. It was **agreed** that this matter will be dealt with through the Business Partnership Development Committee. **Action: Business Partnership Development Committee members.**
- Following a query from a Governor, it was confirmed that in cases where staff have requested training and development, staff are expected to remain in post for 2 years before leaving the Academy. Any resignations before this period would require staff to repay an appropriate portion of the training costs back to the Academy.
- Item 3.1.1, Curriculum and Pupils Committee minutes: The Chief Executive

informed Governors that Ann Muxworthy was planning to come into the Academy on 10 March 2022 at 4.00pm, to provide feedback to Governors on her Curriculum SIP visit on 9 February. This will be a full Governors meeting, held either in person at the Academy or virtually via Zoom. Governors were asked to make a note of this date, and the Chief Executive will send further details to Governors, once confirmed with Anne. **Action: Governors, Chief Executive.**

6. Chief Executive's Report

6.1 Update on School Improvement Plan

- The Chief Executive stated that the School Improvement Plan is an open working document, subject to regular and ongoing update. The SIP will be RAG rated by the end of the Spring term, in terms of the plan for this year. **Action: Chief Executive.**

6.2 Safeguarding

- The Chief Executive stated that an update on Safeguarding will come in due course, following the upcoming Governors' meeting with Ann Muxworthy. **Action: Chief Executive.**

6.3 To consider the School resource management self-assessment tool

- The Chief Executive confirmed that the Academy will complete the resource management self-assessment tool (link included, below) and will submit the completed checklist to ESFA by the specified annual deadline, which is 15 March 2022. **Action: Chief Executive.**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-resource-management-self-assessment-tool#history>

7. Admissions Arrangements

- Governors confirmed that:
 - Admission arrangements for 2023/24 were determined by 28th February 2022, and appropriate bodies were notified.
 - A copy of the full determined admission arrangements for 2023/24 will be sent to the LA by 15th March 2022. **Action: Chief Executive.**
 - Determined admission arrangements will be published on the school website and will be displayed for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made). **Action: Chief Executive.**

- It was noted that the Academy has raised concerns with Trustees regarding Academy admissions. Once again, the Academy will be oversubscribed by the September 2022 intake.

8. Policies

- Governors received and noted the Policy schedule document, as circulated with the agenda by email, prior to the meeting.
- It was noted that all policies are on the school's website.

9. Dates and times of future meetings

- Governors noted the date and time of the Summer term Governing Body meeting, as follows:

Governing Body meeting

Monday, 20 June 2022 at 5.00pm

- Governors noted the date and time of the Summer term Committee meetings, as follows:

Finance and Staffing Committee meeting

Monday, 6 June 2022 at 4.00pm

Curriculum and Pupils Committee meeting

Monday, 6 June 2022 at 5.00pm

10. Any other business

Finance

- Julie Vincent stated that there is a need to be mindful of spend going forward, as a lot of resources have been spent on improving facilities across the Academy and currently staffing costs are high. Julie agreed to circulate the most recent figures from Inspire, when these are available. **Action: Julie Vincent.**
- The Chief Executive confirmed that there are £1 million in reserves, and that the recent large development has cost the Academy £65,000, excluding furnishings.
- In response to a query from a Governor, Julie confirmed that she is currently obtaining quotes from suppliers for utilities and other SLAs including grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts. It was noted that costs will be increasing next year, hence the need to go out to tender for all SLAs. **Action: Julie Vincent.**

Damage caused by fallen trees

- Keith Vincent, Head of Academy Services, joined the meeting and was able to provide information on the situation with fallen trees on the Academy's land causing issues for neighbouring properties.
- Advice given to Keith to date from tree surgeons has been to remove all rotten trees, rather than to top the trees which will weaken the trees which will also require constant topping once this has been started.
- Keith confirmed that none of the trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and that the insurers will be visiting the site on Friday 4 March to assess all damages and to provide quotes for potential claims from the Academy to cover the costs.
- Keith will obtain 3 quotes for the costs, which he will present to the insurers on Friday.

Easter and Summer Schemes

- Keith stated that Friday 4 March was the deadline for submitting a bid to Gateshead Neighbourhood Team for funding the Easter and Summer Schemes across both sites. These schemes were a success last year and there are hopes that the Neighbourhood Team will again agree to finance the £6,500 for required costs. All risk assessments will be in place, as they were last year.

Website

- Joe MacCabe confirmed that he is looking into software that can link to the website to manage the issues with the font, and other difficulties encountered with the website.
Action: Joe MacCabe.
- Joseph agreed to look into the possibility of a sponsor for the website. **Action: Joe MacCabe.**

Film Festival

- Joe stated that the Film Festival has been a big success, with pupils writing, producing and acting in their own films.
- It was noted that the Baltic has agreed to support the next Film Festival by donating film space in the form of a 70-seater cinema. A Governor suggested that any numbers over the 70 available seats wishing to view the film, could do so via live streaming of the event.
- Some students will be taken to Wooler on an 'IMPACT week' prior to the May half term, to make films for the Festival.
- There will be 'Be Inspired To...' podcasts from celebrities including Lewis Denny and Natalie Jamieson, speaking to the children about how they got to where they are in their career as performers.

Residential Programme

- Keith confirmed that the Academy's Residential Programme was being opened up this term, and as part of this the children will be able to undertake the Kielder Challenge – a fundraising event including a walk and other activities within the children's range of abilities. This event will take place on Saturday 21 May.

- The Chief Executive stated that he would like as many students as possible to take part in residential visits. These also require staff to accompany the students, and to their credit it was noted that many staff have volunteered for these events.
- Future planned events include a long weekend in France in October, and a skiing trip next Winter.
- The Chair wished to record the Governors' best wishes to the member of staff who has suffered a recent skiing accident.

Register of Business Interests

- The Clerk wished to remind Governors that the Register of Business Interests has not yet been completed by all Governors, following the Autumn Term Governing Body meeting. The Clerk asked all Governors who have not yet done so to email her, stating whether or not they have any business interests to declare, so that she can then update the electronic Register. The Clerk will then email the completed Register to the Chief Executive, for retention at the Academy. **Action: Governors, Clerk.**

The meeting finished at 6.00pm.

Date.....

Signed.....