



**Minutes of the Diverse Academies Trust Board Meeting held 9 June 2021
at 5.00pm via Microsoft teams.**

Trustee name	Initials	A = absence
Mr M Quigley MBE (Chair)	MQ	
Mr J Rolph	JR	
Mrs M Blore	MB	
Mr I Storey	IS	
Mr P Mabbott	PM	A
Mr D Schwarz	DS	
Miss C Burn BEM	CB	A

In attendance: [staff or other invited persons]

Staff name	Initials	Role	A = Absence
Mr D Cotton	DC	Chief Executive officer & Accounting Officer	
Mrs J Harrison Hill	JHH	Company secretary & Clerk to Board of Trustees	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/when
Agenda item 1 DAT/ 99/2021	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and agreed from Mr P Mabbott	
Agenda item 2 DAT/100/2021	Declaration of interest and any changes to be advised. There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda. Mr Quigley declared he now held the position of Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council and had ceased as a member of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority. The Chair asked if anyone had any further declarations to update. No further declarations were made.	
Agenda item 3 DAT/101/2021	Minutes of the meeting dated 24 March 2021. The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed by the Chair.	
Agenda item 4 DAT/102/2021	Matters arising DAT/78/2021 <u>CONFIDENTIAL</u>: NCEAT Update This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes. DAT/88/2021 7.1 Governance and Partnership Committee update	

	<p>(10/02/2021) Action: Trustees to contact clerk to inform of any Academy Committee meetings they are available to attend. This item has been refereed back to the Governance & Partnership Committee for discussion. Complete.</p> <p>DAT/89/2021 7.2 Audit and Risk Committee update (24/02/2021) Action: Mr Storey to write to co-opted governors to inform them that the committee membership is being reviewed. Board members were informed that this has been actioned by Mr Storey. Complete.</p>	
<p>Agenda item 5 DAT/103/2021</p>	<p>Retford Post 16 Centre update. Mr Cotton updated the Board having previously agreed not to sign the agreement for increased liability for the Retford Post 16 Centre to Diverse Academies Trust (DAT). Within the current arrangement DAT has liability for £80k, work is underway to redefine the usage of the building amongst the users and this is being submitted to the Local Authority.</p>	
<p>Agenda item 6 DAT/104/2021</p>	<p>Chief Executive Officers Report</p> <p>Document: <i>CEO Board Report June 2021</i> was previously received by the Board. Mr Cottons CEO Board report June 2021 apprised the board on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vison, ethos and strategic direction Educational performance of the organisation and its pupils <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summer examinations update - Primary attainment - Attendance and Inclusion - Covid catch up/Summer schools - Nuffield Speech and Language Intervention - Special Education Needs and Disabilities Impact Update Financial and Business performance of the organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance - Quality and efficiency of business delivery - Capital Planning - Compliance and Risk update Engagement with Stakeholders, parents/carers, staff and students and the wider community <p>Trustees asked Mr Cotton what he envisaged the format of additional support would be for staff and students referred to in his report and were informed that, following a staff workload and wellbeing survey, action was being taken to put in place management and support mechanisms some of which link to staff benefits. Support for pupils was taking the form of wellbeing champions, pastoral systems, personal development with consideration being</p>	

	<p>undertaken to assess the need for additional training to create more specialist roles within schools.</p> <p>Trustees enquired who was leading the process and Mr Cotton clarified that Mr Simpson was leading for pupils and Mrs Green was leading for staff.</p> <p>From the report a trustee questioned why Hillocks Primary Academy had not participated in the Nuffield Speech and Language Intervention, Mr Cotton explained that this was likely due to them participating in a different scheme at the point of joining the trust and it is potentially a timing issue regarding bringing them onboard.</p> <p>Action: Mr Cotton to clarify reason for Hillocks Primary Academy not participating in Nuffield Speech and Language Intervention.</p> <p>Mr Storey informed the board that internal tender process referred to in the report had now been completed, following presentations from suppliers the contract had been awarded to Cooper Parry based on extensive experience of internal audits in the Multi Academy Trust sector.</p> <p>Trustees noted and accepted the CEO report.</p>	DC
<p>Agenda item 7 DAT/105/2021</p> <p>Draft DAT Strategic Plan</p>	<p>Document: <i>Diverse Academies Trust Strategic Plan 2021 -2026</i> was previously received by the board.</p> <p>Mr Cotton informed trustees that significant progress had been made on the DAT Strategic Plan, objectives still require some work and will be discussed at subcommittee meetings.</p> <p>The document was for comments and views of trustees with a launch planned for September.</p> <p>Trustees commented that the report was clear. Feedback given from trustees was concerning how concepts link together to ensure the final version is explicit on how they relate to each other, how the key performance indicators are measured and how these will feed back to inform the board on progress.</p> <p>Trustees suggested that the plan needs to be communicated in creative ways throughout the trust to ensure a consistent message and a common theme throughout any planning.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that the report approach was appropriate.</p> <p>Action: The final Strategic Plan document will be brought to the board in September.</p>	DC
<p>DAT/106/2021</p>	<p>Mr Cotton raised that the current DAT logo and branding is outdated having been created to represent the small number of schools when the trust was first formed. A new logo is required, and trustees agreed for work to be carried out by a design agency to create a new trust logo reflective of the current trust and its vision, mission, and values.</p>	
<p>Agenda item 8 DAT/107/2021</p>	<p>Committee Meeting Update from Chairs</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>8.1 Audit and Risk committee update (28/04/2021)</u> <p>Mr Storey gave the board members an update of the Audit and Risk Committee work carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal audit programme for next academic year is being discussed with input from internal and external auditors. - Covid reporting has been reduced to report in May and June. - Results of the Health and Safety audits and Safeguarding audits were reviewed, and actions are being addressed. - Discussion have taken place regarding cyber security and controls in place to mitigate the risk. - The corporate central risk management report is underway. <p>Following the update Mrs Blore, Safeguarding Trustee, asked for Mr Storey to contact her directly to discuss the safeguarding actions which required urgent action.</p> <p>Action: Mr Storey to communicate safeguarding actions from audit to Mrs Blore.</p>	IS
<p>DAT/108/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>8.2 Standards and Outcomes committee update (05/05/2021)</u> <p>Mr Schwarz gave the board members an update of the Standards and Outcomes Committee work carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Knight had attended the committee to discuss the Mental Health survey and update on Safeguarding. - The committee are inviting different members of staff with a relevant responsibility to present at the Standards and Outcomes Committee meetings, as very informative for the committee and also provides development for the staff. - Mental Health survey recommendations require some budgetary decisions, these should be reflected in the current budget setting process. - A major review of the safeguarding policy is required due to recent safeguarding developments in procedures. - Secondary academies are facing a major challenge with the preparation for a teacher assessed grading system and there is the potential for appeals which may put further strain after results day on workload. - The committee had received a presentation on a project led by Mrs Thornton on communication in early years and intervention. 	
<p>DAT/109/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>8.3 Finance and resources committee update (19/05/2021)</u> <p>Mr Rolph gave the board members an update of the Finance and Resources Committee work carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee received staff absence reports, mid-year pip reviews and grievance and disciplinary issues. - Pay proposals were reviewed with increases varying across categories of staff due to national bodies recommendations. - The Apprentice Levy report was approved. - Eligibility of Executive and Senior Management on education side to participate on the teachers' pensions was reviewed and discussed, and the committee agreed still eligible. - Progress of budget setting and capital commitment was monitored. 	

<p>DAT/110/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current year finances are healthy and projecting surplus, and this progressed discussions regarding bringing forward some capital projects. <p>Trustees raised a concern regarding the expenditure of surplus on Capital and queried if this surplus should be focused on catch up learning. Mr Cotton clarified that some of the surplus would be invested in staff to deliver programmes but, due to the current high percentage of staff costs against GAG funding, long term staffing expenditure is to be avoided to prevent problems in future years.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the level of lost learning against media coverage of the situation, with Mr Cotton assuring trustees that having carried out a number of visits he was impressed with how academies were approaching the situation, certain groups of profile children are behind, these include SEND, Pupil Premium, Early Years are showing impacts on Oracy and Literacy, in Secondaries impacts can be seen on Literacy, Primary are also showing impacts on more able in mathematics. Work is being carried out with these groups.</p> <p>The overarching picture, due to the high-quality remote learning offer in place during lockdown, and contact with home, is a strong position.</p> <p><u>Policies approved at committees:</u> A&R: Photography and Videography Policy S&O: Covid 19 appendix to behaviour policy Trustees noted the approved policies.</p>	
<p>Agenda item 9 DAT/111/2021</p>	<p>Statutory Updates, Changes to legal documents and Companies House filing</p> <p>The annual Confirmation Statement is due for filing at Company House by 23rd June 2021.</p>	
<p>Agenda item 10 DAT/112/2021</p>	<p>Annual Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filing of School Resource Management Self-Assessment tool to EFSA on 14 April 2021 (Appendix 1) <p>The Board were updated that the above return was approved and agreed by the Chair and Chair of Finance and Resources Committee and submitted to the EFSA.</p>	
<p>Agenda item 11 DAT/113/2021</p> <p>DAT/114/2021</p> <p>DAT/115/2021</p>	<p>Trustee items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Trustee Recruitment</u> <p>Mr Quigley updated the Board that adverts for recruitment were now underway with Academy Ambassadors and various other social media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Draft Meeting Calendar for 2021/22 (Board and Sub Committees)</u> <p>The Board having previously received the draft meeting dates agreed the calendar.</p> <p>Chair Correspondence since last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Diverse Academies Trust SEND provision proposal to Queen Elizabeth’s Endowed School Trust trustees (Appendix 2)</u> 	

	<p>Mr Cotton updated the committee that since this proposal conversations have been held with the Local Authority and Two Counties Trust, regarding redefining land boundaries to accommodate Yeomans Park Academy, rendering the proposal to Queen Elizabeth's Endowed Trust no longer relevant.</p>	
DAT/116/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Media Enquiry – Leadership Pay decreases (Appendix 3)</u> <p>Email response to media enquiry was shared with the board. Mr Cotton raised that he may wish the board to consider a request for him to leave the Teachers' Pension Scheme and consider an alternative option.</p> <p>Action: Mr Quigley asked Mr Cotton to submit his request to the Finance and Resources Committee.</p>	DC/JR
DAT/117/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Board Management Accounts February & March (Appendix 4 & 5)</u> <p>The Board Management Accounts having previously been received were noted by the trustees. Mr Rolph assured the board that the management accounts had been discussed in detail at the Finance and Resources Committee. Trustees requested April Management Accounts to be shared with the board. Action: Mr Cotton to follow up April Management Accounts for the Board.</p>	DC
DAT/118/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Minster Trust correspondence 10/05/2021 (appendix 6 & 7)</u> <p>Copies of the correspondence were shared with the board.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 12 DAT/119/2021</p>	<p>Determination of confidentiality of business Equality Act consideration Nolan Principles</p> <p>Trustees considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An Item discussed within agenda item 4 DAT/102/2021 (DAT/78/2021) should remain confidential to attendees and Board Trustees. - There had been no Equality Act implications - Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles. - Trustees agreed there were no items which need to be reported to Charities commission. 	
<p>Agenda item 13 DAT/120/2021</p>	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 14 July 2021 at 5.00pm via Microsoft Teams</p>	
	<p>The meeting closed at 6.29pm</p> <p>Minutes agreed 14/7/2021 Minute number: DAT/123/2021</p>	