

**Minutes of the Diverse Academies Trust Board Meeting
Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 5pm, at Diverse Education Centre, Retford**

Quorum Required:3
Trustees Present:8

Trustee name	Initials	A = absence
Mrs M Blore	MB	
Mr L Donald	LD	A
Miss N Marriott	NM	
Mrs J Mordue	JM	
Mr M Quigley MBE (Chair)	MQ	
Mr J Rolph	JR	
Mr D Schwarz	DS	
Mr R Shearing	RS	
Mr I Storey	IS	

Quorum required: 3
Trustees Present: 8

In attendance (staff or other invited persons):

Staff name	Initials	Role	A = Absence
Mr D Cotton	DC	Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer	
Mrs J Harrison Hill	JHH	Company Secretary and Governance Professional	

Agenda item number	Item	Action by who/when
1. DAT/91/2223	Apologies for absence Mr L Donald sent his apologies for absence.	
2. DAT/92/2223	Declaration of interest and notification of any changes to declaration made. Miss N Marriott informed the Board that her employment had changed to the Post Office.	
3. DAT/93/2223	Minutes of the meeting dated Wednesday 1 February 2023 The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed by the Chair.	
4. DAT/94/2223	Matters Arising: DAT/67/2223 (DAT/119/2122) Equalities Act and review of training. Action: Trustees who were unable to attend the online LGBTQ+ Diversity and Inclusion unconscious bias training to confirm to J Harrison Hill once they have watched the recorded session	

All trustees confirmed they had watched the LGBTQ+ training. This item is now complete.

DAT/67/2223 (DAT/40/2223) Growth Strategy

Action: Landing page with value proposition to attract schools wanting to join the trust.

Mr Cotton confirmed that the landing page has been developed and is now available on the website, Trustees were invited to send any feedback on the landing page via the governance professional. This item is now complete.

Action: Further detail to support Growth Strategy

The plan to support the growth strategy is being developed.

DAT/67/2223 (DAT/41/2223) Brazel v Harpur Trust case pay decision.

Action: Apply Option three: Automatically apply the 'Brazel' ruling and pay the backpay using the new calculation for existing staff.

The changes have now been provided for and will be actioned in the April pay. This item is now complete.

Trustees queried if, following the consultation by the government on the ruling, any further changes would follow. Mr Cotton confirmed that there had been a challenge to the ruling, no contracts have yet been changed but the requirements required for the current year have been implemented.

DAT/67/2223 (DAT/43/2223) External Governance Review

Action: Action plan to be updated once review of Communication carried out.

See discussion under **agenda item 4 DAT/94/2223 (DAT/85/2223)**

DAT/67/2223 (DAT/46/2223) Audit and Risk Committee update

Action: Committees to discuss any items for Audit and Risk planning for internal audit.

Trustees were informed by the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee that the Audit and Risk meeting in June would be the deadline for planning the internal audit programme. This item is now complete.

DAT/67/2223 (DAT/47/2223) Governance and Partnership Committee update

Action: Governance professional to set up meeting for task and finish group to look at the appointment process of the next Chair of Board.

Mr Rolph updated the Board that the group had met and were now considering the report back to the Board on 17 May 2023.

DAT/67/2223 (DAT/47/2223) Action: Agenda item for Governance and Partnership Committee to reflect if an item needs to be added to Committee agendas: items to refer to Academy Committees

This item was discussed at Governance and Partnership Committee, a decision was taken to await the outcome of the one-to-one communication reviews. Response will be via the action plan derived from the review. This item is now complete.

DAT/72/2223 Equality and Diversity

	<p>Action: <i>Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) outcomes from external consultant to be shared with Trustees prior to wider circulation.</i></p> <p>Mr Cotton confirmed that initial EDI training had been completed. The EDI consultant is scheduled to meet with the executive team next week to discuss further work.</p> <p>DAT/73/2223 Governance Conference</p> <p>Action: <i>Mrs Elway to feedback to Governance Professionals to include on LAC agendas for discussion on topics for Governor conference.</i></p> <p>The Board were apprised that a number of speakers have been provisionally booked. Discussion is underway regarding attendees and locations. Proposals will be reported back to the Board.</p> <p>DAT/73/2223 Policies</p> <p>Action: Miss N Marriott offered to provide example templates of policies which are separated into principal statements and operating standards.</p> <p>Miss N Marriott will provide example of templates.</p> <p>DAT/85/2223 Review of Communication with Chairs of Academy Committees</p> <p>Action: <i>Governance Professional to set up one to one meetings.</i></p> <p>These meetings had been arranged and undertaken. Complete.</p> <p>Action: <i>Feedback to by task and finish group to Board meeting on 22 March 2022</i></p> <p>The task and finish group provided feedback to the board of a summary of the meetings held with Chairs of Governors regarding communication between Board and Academy Committees.</p> <p>Trustees held a discussion regarding the summary of findings. The task and finish group recommended setting up a working party of three Trustees, three Chairs of Governors, and Head of Governance to brainstorm actions in response to the feedback. This will ensure involvement of the Chairs in solutions and buy into any revised ways of working.</p> <p>Action: Task and Finish Group to meet with Head of Governance to discuss feedback prior to next steps.</p>	DS/NM/RS/AE
5. DAT/95/2223	<p>Chief Executive Officers Report</p> <p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CEO Board report March 2023</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>1. Introduction</i> ○ <i>2. Vision, ethos and strategic direction of the organisation</i> ○ <i>3. Educational performance of the organisation and its pupils</i> ○ <i>4. Financial and business performance of the organisation</i> • <i>Appendix 1 Safeguarding Report</i> • <i>Appendix 2 Corporate Risk Detailed Report Feb 2023</i> • <i>Appendix 3 Your benefits package</i> <p>were previously received by the Board.</p> <p>Mr Cotton highlighted from the report the strike action data and impact. Informing the Board that action is now paused during discussion with unions.</p>	

<p>DAT/96/2223</p> <p>DAT/97/2223</p> <p>DAT/98/2223</p> <p>DAT/99/2223</p> <p>DAT/100/2223</p> <p>DAT/101/2223</p>	<p>Trustees queried the number of staff illness increasing over the course of strike days and what action was taken to ensure genuine illness. Mr Cotton explained that staff are required to provide a doctor's note for any sickness during industrial action.</p> <p><u>Principal Appointments</u> The Principals of Tuxford Primary and Hillocks Primary are both retiring. Succession planning meetings have been held and it is expected that replacements will be internal through movement of current leaders. Principals have been informed to ensure Academy Committees are involved.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL: This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes. External recruitment is underway for Principal of THA and East Leake Academy.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL: This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes. Following a Trustee's query Mr Cotton confirmed that exit interviews are undertaken, the information is used to reflect on recruitment and development of staff. CONFIDENTIAL: This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL: <u>National Offer Day</u> This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes.</p> <p><u>Vision, mission values</u> The Board were informed that the programme of rolling out the physical expressions to bring the shared vision and values into working and learning spaces had begun. Trustees were asked if there were any further questions.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL: This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL: This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL: This item was deemed confidential and was recorded in the confidential minutes.</p>	
<p>6. DAT/102/2223</p>	<p>Committee Meeting Update from Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Finance and Resources Committee update (13/03/2023)</u> <p>Document: <i>Financial performance March 2023</i> was previously received by the Board. Mr J Rolph, Chair of Finance and Resources Committee provided the Board with an update from the Committee meeting: Integrated business planning presentations had been received for three areas- finance, people first, communication and engagement to produce one integrated business plan. The Committee reviewed the financial performance of the Trust and considered the risks and opportunities for the year. Mr Rolph explained to the Board that there is potentially a deficit for the year. Benchmarking reports were analysed by the committee, informing the Board that further work alongside the budget setting is being undertaken to assess areas to improve and appropriate use of resources.</p>	

<p>DAT/103/2223</p>	<p>The Committee discussed the financing of Thoresby Vale Free School due to open in September 2024. No associated financial risks were identified related to the school with funding guaranteed for the first five years.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed and approved the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool (SRMSAT) submission.</p> <p>The Committee discussed a salary sacrifice scheme proposal and requested further work to be carried out regarding the sharing of benefits. Further information will be shared with the Board once more details are known.</p> <p>– <u>Standards and Outcomes Committee update (08/03/2023)</u></p> <p>Mr D Schwarz, Chair of Standards and Outcomes Committee provided the Board with an update from the Committee meeting:</p> <p>The Committee had been to Yeoman Park Academy, it was described it as an inspirational visit that highlighted the work being carried out to educate pupils, while dealing with a variety of physical, mental, and emotional issues alongside other challenges. The Committee raised the new school build project and the fact that this will address the problems associated with the challenges of split sites.</p> <p>The Committee received a presentation on SEND and the proposed changes of the Governments SEND Green Paper. The Committee reviewed the Safeguarding report, highlighting that attendance is a concern in academies, particularly in Secondaries for certain categories of pupils. To address this the Trust is engaging with a DfE attendance advisor.</p> <p>A review of progression of The Holgate Academy improvement plan was undertaken with progression reported as positive.</p> <p>Mr Schwarz informed the Board that student voice is a focus, the negative influence of social media has led to adapting the curriculum to ensure awareness and understanding by students.</p> <p>The Committee discussed any risk to refer to Audit and Risk and agreed to first refer an issue to Governance and Partnership Committee regarding concerns about low numbers of Governors.</p>	
<p>DAT/104/2223</p>	<p>– <u>Audit and Risk Committee update (01/03/2023)</u></p> <p>Mr I Storey, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee provided the Board with an update from the Committee meeting:</p> <p>The Risk Management Audit and Internal Scrutiny report was reviewed.</p> <p>Internal audit arrangements for 2023/24 were discussed, it was agreed for a tender process to be initiated for an internal audit provision.</p> <p>A review of insurance arrangements and declaration of interests was undertaken by the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Risk Policy.</p> <p>Discussion was held regarding the risk management framework, and an additional meeting was held to undertake a deeper dive into the framework.</p>	
<p>DAT/105/2223</p>	<p>– <u>Governance and Partnership Committee update (22/02/2023)</u></p> <p>Mr M Quigley, Chair of Governance and Partnership Committee provided the Board with an update from the Committee meeting:</p>	

<p>DAT/106/2223</p>	<p>Discussion was held regarding ways to recruit and appoint new governors. Exit forms for governors resigning were reviewed and areas for improvement discussed. Feedback on Governance AIR meetings was received. Discussion took place regarding future developments for the Hucknall Sixth Form Centre. The Committee reviewed the Academy Committee feedback forms and discussion was held on how to improve for better communication.</p> <p>Policies approved at Committees:</p> <p>Audit & Risk Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk policy • Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy <p>Standards & Outcomes Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles <p>Finance and Resources Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charges and Remissions policy • Expenses Policy <p>Governance and Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors Allowances Policy <p>Policies for approval at Board: No policies for approval</p>	
<p>7. DAT/107/2223</p>	<p>Statutory Updates, Changes to legal documents and Companies House filing Modern Slavery Statement was published on registry service.</p>	
<p>8. DAT/108/2223</p> <p>DAT/109/2223</p>	<p>Annual Requirements Document: <i>School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool Checklist</i> was previously received by the Board. The SRMSAT return, as previously discussed under agenda item 6 was reviewed and approved by the Finance and Resources Committee for submission. Trustees approved the submission.</p> <p><u>Trustee reappointments</u> The Board were informed that Mr D Schwarz's term of office expires on 15 October 2023. Having previously been appointed under article 58 co-opted by Trustees, it was agreed for reappointment to be undertaken by Members under Article 50, proposed at the Members General meeting being held on 24 April 2023. Mr John Rolph term of office expires on 6 June 2023 and reappointment by members will be proposed at the Members General meeting being held on 24 April 2023.</p>	
<p>9. DAT/110/2223</p>	<p>Trustee items: Chairs Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential: CAS 479594 QEA 31 January 2023 • Confidential: 2023-02-27 Tuxford Academy CI-0183188 <p>The Board confirmed receipt of the Chairs correspondence.</p>	
<p>10. DAT/111/2223</p>	<p>Executive items: Document: <i>SIAMS Report Queen Elizabeth's Academy 144486</i> was previously received by the Board. Mr Cotton informed the Board that the outcome was the first 'Good' grading that the academy had received.</p>	

	The report commented on the Trust vision which was supportive to strengthen the link to Church values. Action: Letter to Academy from Board congratulating on report outcome.	Gov Prof/MQ
11. DAT/112/2223	<p>Determination of Confidentiality Trustees considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Items discussed within agenda item 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – DAT/96/2223 will remain confidential to attendees due to relating to an individual. – DAT/97/2223 will remain confidential to attendees. – DAT/99/2223 will remain confidential to attendees. – DAT/100/2223 will remain confidential until decision made. – DAT/101/2223 will remain confidential to attendees. <p>Equalities Act consideration. The Board discussed the EDI training which has taken place and the external advisor workstream to develop a programme of improvements.</p> <p>Have decisions been made according to the 7 Nolan Principles? - Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles.</p> <p>Consider any item to be referred to Charities Commission - Trustee resolved that no items need to be reported to the Charities commission</p>	
12. DAT/113/2223	Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 17 May 2023, 5.00pm at Diverse Education Centre, Retford.	

The meeting closed at: 18:49

Minutes agreed by Chair: on 17 May 2023 minute number DAT/116/2223