



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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CEO: W. T. Hermon

4/05/2020

Minutes

Full Board of Directors Extra-Ordinary Meeting Monday 4th May 2020 at 9.30am Remotely via Zoom

1. Join Meeting

The meeting was opened to attend from 9.15am. TM highlighted a few etiquette measures when meeting remotely and ensured everyone had visual and sound communication.

2. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Will Hermon, Graeme Barriball, Claire Paul, Carol Green, Jonathan Sharpe, Trudy Rudge, Tim Woodward, Peter Hague, Stephen Tavener

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Emma Gilbert (CFO), Jo Callow (Ex Officio) and Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.

PH dropped off connection a couple of times throughout the meeting, however, he was present for any decisions and the meeting remained quorate throughout.

3. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests relevant to this Agenda

None declared.

4. Confirm Minutes of previous full Board meeting Summer (11th Dec 2019) and matters arising (TM)

- Confirm Vice Chair of Board (TM). *PH agreed to be Vice Chair for this academic year.*
- MAT Improvement Capacity Framework; People and Leadership to TLA (WH). *Discussed at TLA, recorded on TLA minutes dated 3 Feb 2020.*
- MAT Improvement Capacity Framework; Quality assurance, governance and accountability to Audit Committee (WH). *To be covered in future when normality resumes, noted on Covid 19 log.*
- Letter of complaint to LA regarding the need to spend @£50K on a sewage system instead of spending it on learning provision for children (WH/EG). *To be covered in future when normality resumes, noted on Covid 19 log.*
- External Audit Key Issues Document onto Spring agenda (TM). *Action for Audit meeting and if necessary full Board meeting later this term, noted on Covid 19 Log.*
- Ascertain the catering funding issues with Chartwells, re Holsworthy school – to FSD (EG). *EG gave some background on this potential issue and noted that Chartwells are not being forthcoming with numbers and information. It is assessed that SSFA is owed money to cover catering and utility costs for producing meals for Holsworthy school. This will continue to be chased and is noted on Covid 19 log for further investigation in relation to Chartwells contract.*

- Confirm funding for free school meals at KS1 and for those eligible, and for those that should be claiming – to FSD (EG). *EG confirmed that funding received is the funding based on the figures but the numbers of children present on the census days is not the full number of children. Hence, there is little that can be done other than ensure more children are present on census days. EG highlighted some of the measures in place to try to achieve this.*

No actions from confidential minutes. Any further actions are logged on Covid 19 log and will be dealt with at relevant meeting. Minutes were approved and a copy will be signed by the Chair when normality resumes.

5. **Update from CEO**

WH thanked everyone for the messages of thanks over the last few weeks. Directors have had sight of feedback from LGBs on the provision in their schools and the welfare of vulnerable children. DfE has issued direction on what the schools should be providing for the children and have also issued a number guidance documents. WH has conducted a review of learning across the MAT. Class Dojo is being used, there is work provided to the children and it involves a combination of paperwork, online and interactive learning. The staff have done well, helped by the schools, to switch to a remote learning capability. It is estimated that 80-90% are accessing remote learning and staff are doing their best to ensure all children access this learning but there is only so much that can be done. With regards to key worker provision, uptake has been low, mainly because parents think it is safer to keep their children at home, and so the MAT has been operating hubs rather than opening every school. Most staff complete one or 2 days on the rota every couple of weeks.

Challenge: why has it been difficult to ascertain the % of children accessing Class Dojo from NP&W? JC explained that it was tricky as some are accessing the resources but not posting material once they have completed it, so it is not easy to see what is being done (this issue is primarily at Wer not NP).

Challenge: what impact do you think that this remote learning will have on the curriculum that we have to offer when the children return to school? WH stated that the assumption will be that children have 'stood still' and we will have to assess where each child is and move on from there. There will be no testing for the remainder of this school year. CP noted that FSM children are likely to be further behind. Learning will need to be assessed and provision put in place to allow children to catch up.

Food has been provided for FSM children, including over the Easter holidays, by Chartwells and staff driving around and delivering food to doorsteps. There has been an issue with the government portal but it is likely that all families will switch over to food vouchers to obtain food from supermarkets.

Ofsted inspections are postponed for the time being. There are no tests this academic year so there will be no externally viable data to assess this year. WH highlighted some new direction issued by DfE.

Challenge: Is there any thought being put into Yr 6 transition? JC stated that Launceston College is closed but liaison is taking place. JC will contact Launceston College to ascertain a plan for this. CP noted that we also need to consider the transition into Foundation Year; schools are looking at this via class dojo and providing videos of the classrooms and the staff to familiarise the children as much as possible before they physically attend school. Some children come from the pre-schools attached to our schools so these children will be more familiar with the site.

It was questioned whether Yr 6 children are going to other schools other than Launceston? It was considered that there are probably only a few, including some to Okehampton so JC will liaise with them also. The Chair queried whether thought has been given to children returning to schools given social distancing and potentially vulnerable staff? WH stated that it is dependent on the government guidance and until they issue that, it is difficult to firm up plans. There are so many issues involved with it.

[Afternote: Liaison with Launceston College confirmed they are developing an online offer and have been keeping in regular contact with schools. Last week some transition activities from the maths faculty were sent to primary schools. More detailed updates will be provided to parents and work has started on a virtual tour for students. They are hoping to set a project for the current Y7's to engage with Year 6. Transition days will be held in July if possible although they may be somewhat different with social distancing measures. A full week of transition activities for students to get to know the school, staff, procedures and help them feel confident and excited about learning at College will be held in September. There will be bespoke plans and phased transitions for some students with high level needs. It is difficult to plan any further detail until we know what is happening with the current situation and all parents are urged to keep an eye on their website]

WH confirmed that the Central office is still functioning albeit with different working practices.

6. **Safeguarding**

New Covid 19 safeguarding appendix issued. WH highlighted a few safeguarding measures and CP noted the issues with ensuring vulnerable children are safe as access to the children is limited. Social workers have limited access so it is a challenge. Operation Encompass is still active. Teachers try to keep in touch through video links. Good practice is being shared across the Trust.

All schools have completed annual safeguarding return, however, CP need to chase up Coads Green school to ensure it was completed and sent off. Due to the current situation, we are not expecting responses from the LA in the near future.

Action: Confirm that all schools have completed annual safeguarding return (CP)

It was noted that things may be disclosed to teachers on return to school; it was agreed that there is a need to deal with this appropriately and to support teachers in doing so.

7. **Staff & Pupil Health & Well-being**

There is regular contact with staff to ensure their well-being. Feedback from the staff on remote working has been positive so far. WH is in constant contact with Heads. Staff illness has not yet affected school capability. Bereavement policy has been issued.

Challenge: Are TAs being gainfully employed or is it just teaching staff? WH confirmed they are working from home updating resources, contacting children and marking work. They are able to contribute within the restrictions of self-isolation.

8. **Current Key Worker Provision and Remote Learning**

The Chair noted that LGBs are engaged and in contact with school leaders. Liaison is happening albeit remotely and WH noted that Chairs are being good sounding boards for the Heads and supporting them. TM is logging evidence of remote activity with LGBs.

9. **Finance**

The CFO noted the difficulties with conducting work remotely, especially as much of the work is paper based. EG updated on furloughing staff and noted that a public funded staff member cannot be furloughed which counts out most of An Daras staff. Only pre-schools have partial private

funding and there are rules on how many staff can be furloughed – the numbers in the pre-schools are so small that it is proving difficult to identify a staff member so it may not be viable. WH updated on additional costs incurred by Covid 19 and they are being logged. He noted that all costs may not be reimbursed by the government after all as it depends on the level of reserves held and whether we will add to our reserves. WH noted this is unlikely so we should get reimbursed for some costs. EG noted payments and grants for any self employed staff.

Monthly management accounts for Feb and KPIs recently made available and TM will load on SharePoint for scrutiny. CG is still a concern with all schools remaining running on track. Funding for after school clubs and PE activities was discussed.

Challenge: Regarding ebb and flow on the year to date budgets, what checks and balances are there in place to ensure we don't over shoot the budget at year end? Given that there will be savings this year, do we know what they will be? WH noted that there will be some savings in certain expenditure but not all; certain things will need to be done when schools re-open, so there will be an ebb and flow and until things are back to normal it is difficult to know exactly what is being saved. EG noted how the accounts are managed, and explained some of the issues with capital costs such as NP sewage for which no grants have been received. It was suggested that EG led a workshop to discuss the management accounts and how they are formulated for the Chair of Audit Committee (ST), Finance Director (PH) and anyone else who may wish to join to better understand this.

Action: Organise (TM) and run (EG) a Management Accounts Workshop (ST, PH and others as needed)

CP questioned when the extra money from government will be received? WH noted that it wasn't due until September. BFRO return for projected budget is now not required. Internal scrutiny checks (Responsible Officer) will still be conducted by Bishop Fleming. Annual accounts audit is due to still go ahead in October.

The current contract with Chartwells is for 5 years but we have a break in the contract after 3 years to put out for tender again but with the option to accept a further 2 years (taking it up to 5 years in total). Because of the current situation, the only company to tender was Chartwells which isn't useful in terms of competitive tendering. *[Afternote: Holsworthy School has confirmed that it will not be continuing with the Chartwells contract from September]*

Challenge: can the contract just be extended for 6 months or a year to get past the current crisis and then be put out to tender again? Also, have we thought about doing in-house catering? WH noted the challenges with doing it in house but said this can be looked at again. EG noted that the current contract is for 3 years with option for a further 2 years. If we ask for a shorter period, it may require a re-negotiation of the contract and thus the costs may go up. Decision from the Board; ascertain if Chartwells willing to extend for just one year for now so that proper tendering can be completed once the Covid 19 crisis has hopefully been dealt with. The outcome of this negotiation will be taken to the FSD for a decision.

Confirmation that audited accounts are filed with Companies House by 31 May 2020 (for financial year ending 31 Aug prior). **Complete, filed on 30 Dec 2019.** Confirmation that accounts and annual report published on trust website by 31 Jan 2020. **Complete.**

10. Future Meetings Plan

Plan for committee meetings and Board meetings agreed as follows:

- FSD as planned on Monday 22nd June 2020 to cover finance matters, management accounts and scrutinise budgets, and any RSS matters that may need to be covered.
- Audit as planned on Monday 29th June 2020 to cover risks that should now be on the risk register due to Covid 19 school closures, external audit key issues document progress and internal audit (responsible officer) checks.
- Full Board ExO meetings to be called as required to discuss safeguarding, staff/pupil well-being and provision depending if decisions need to be made and how long this continues for.
- Full Board ExO meeting to discuss the implications of school closures when they open again (importantly what it means for the children).
- Full Board Meeting to approve final budgets and any other mandatory items. Can be combined with above depending on timings.

11. AOB

On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked WH and leadership team, and all staff for effort put into achieving remote provisions and looking after our children at this difficult time.

The meeting closed at 11.23am

TJH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

W. Hermon – CEO Director	C. Paul – Director
G. Barriball – Director (Chair)	J. Sharpe – Director
P. Hague – Director (Vice)	S. Tavener - Director
T. Rudge - Director	E. Gilbert – CFO
C. Green – Director	J. Callow – Ex Officio Observer
T. Woodward – Director	