



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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CEO: W. T. Hermon

12/12/2022

Minutes
Full Board of Directors Autumn Meeting
Monday 12th December 2022 at 9.30am via Zoom

Note due to the very cold weather conditions and icy roads on 12th December, it was decided to hold the meeting via Zoom for everyone's safety.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Steve Tavener (Chair), Jon Sharpe, Peter Hague, Claire Paul, Will Hermon, Ian Wilkinson, Margaret Savage, Gillian Shippides

Apologies: Trudy Rudge (work commitment), Graeme Barriball (personal commitment)

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

2. Director Appointments

The Board agreed to co-opt Margaret Savage as at 12th Dec 2022 under article 58. All paperwork and reference received. DBS has been actioned with the Trust Child Protection Officer. MS has completed the SSS online Prevent and Safeguarding training on 1st Nov 2022.

Askel Veur (Diocese of Truro) have agreed to appoint Gillian Shippides as a Foundation Director under article 50AA. The Board agreed with this appointment as at 12th Dec 2022. All paperwork and reference received. DBS has been actioned with the Trust Child Protection Officer. GS has completed the SSS online Safeguarding and Prevent training on 29th Oct and 9th Dec 2022 respectively.

TM noted the plan to requested that Margaret Savage and Ian Wilkinson become Member appointed directors under article 50 at the next Member's meeting in March 2023.

Due to the appointment of two new directors and their skills the following was agreed:

LSS Committee; TR (Chair), CP (Vice), ST, GB, GS, MS, WH

FRS Committee; JS (Chair), ST (Vice), PH, CP, IW, WH

Audit Committee; GB (Chair), PH (Vice), JS, ST, IW, WH

The following lead roles were agreed:

ST – Chair, H&S, Personnel

TR – Vice, Safeguarding, Whistleblowing

GB – Property, Risks

CP – Cyber Security

PH – Financial Planning/Budget monitoring

JS – Risks, Financial Planning & Monitoring

IW – Finance, Business, HR

GS – Foundation, Christian Distinctiveness & Ethos, Stakeholder Management
MS – Improvement, leadership & school improvement liaison

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

None declared.

4. Elect/Re-Elect Chair & Vice Chair

Under article 82, the Board voted for ST to remain as Chair and TR to remain as Vice Chair.

5. Confirm Minutes of previous full Board meeting (6th July 2022) and matters arising

No actions. No actions from confidential minutes. Board agree minutes were an accurate reflection of the meeting and the Chair will sign a copy at the next available opportunity.

6. Confidential Matters

Performance management for the CEO (WH) and Jo Callow (Executive Head) was discussed at the end of the meeting and recorded at confidential minutes.

7. CEO Report to Board

RSC's office had requested school improvement support be provided to Duchy Trust (a primary trust of 3 primary schools; Callington, Boyton and Lewanick) by one of two trusts. Duchy Trust have chosen An Daras to be their school improvement partners which is promising for any future partnership. **Do the trust improvement officers have capacity without affecting other schools?** Yes, DS is increasing her hours and NS has spare capacity in Spring term.

IDSRs received and WH explained what the statements mean. Provided to the trust board as part of the CEO's report. SC weak progress in 2 out of 3 core subjects but attainment was good. Wer weaker progress from KS1 to KS2 maths and reading. Need to keep eye on progress at these two schools. So far, Wer is looking positive but SC still slightly unknown due to high mobility this year.

Woodland Skills school is developing nicely. The Wer building work is progressing; still inconvenient for staff and pupils but will be better once complete. DfE confirmed that additional income per pupil (approx. £1K per pupil) will be received next year and it is not an insignificant amount of additional funding which will be very useful. Working with LGBs with provide support, training and networking.

Current risks on the radar at the moment; WH noted that pay increases will affect the in-year budget. Slight dip in numbers at some schools which is a concern but it seems to change so one to monitor. Nationally attendance has dipped this term (live data available from DfE now). Nationally it is around 94%, with the trust sitting between 91-91%. However, children's resilience to germs is less due to Covid measures and there is now much more illness. Launceston swimming pool is due to shut by Spring 2023 but hopeful it will open again in future. This will affect the ability to achieve the swimming requirements on the curriculum and will potentially mean further travel and cost.

Requirement to coach children to activities, swimming and woodland skills centre. Prices have increased significantly to over £300 a day and also tricky to get hold of coaches due to availability. We can't ask parents to pay both morally and it's not allowed for activities that are part of the curriculum such as swimming. Option is to hire a mini bus – long term lease for a term at £3.5K per term for 17 seater mini bus. This can be signed off under CEO's delegation but WH requested feedback from the directors. **Are you going to employ a driver as this was an issue last time we had our own mini bus?** Yes only additional cost is to employ a driver on a when required basis. WH noted that longer term leases are cheaper so this is probably the way to go in the future. The Board agreed with the leasing of a 17 seater mini bus and employing a driver.

In terms of significant risk mitigation, WH gave a brief update. Coads Green successful Ofsted has reduced the risk from Ofsted, curriculum and standards. Energy costs have been mitigated by putting a significant amount of money in the budget to address increased energy costs (to 230%); this has thus far worked. Succession planning for central office staff, senior leadership and other key specialised staff such as SENDCOs is also being monitored and addressed as best as possible.

IW joined the meeting.

WH noted a new part of the CEO report entitled “support and challenge” where assistance is required from the Directors such as working groups, feedback or decisions. The Trust growth plan needs to be revised and combined with other plans such as IT, estates strategy, sustainability plan and so on to ensure it is a comprehensive, joined up plan that is fit for purpose in the current environment. ST updated the new directors on the trust growth strategy – quality over quantity – right partnership that works for both parties and so on. Is the RSC positive about the conversations you are having with the other schools? Yes. Also now Coads Green has gone from ‘RI’ to ‘good’ it puts the trust in a positive light for future partnerships. JC is in liaison with Headteachers at two primary schools regarding the future of those schools and we have the partnership with Duchy Trust to build on. **WH requested support from the Board to formulate these plans and a working group will be held in January** (see item 17). JC is in liaison with Headteachers at two primary schools regarding the future of those schools.

Catering contract is being assessed with potential new contractors; trust board decision will be required next term. **Are you planning for the catering to be in house or kept external?** One company is well regarded external provider. Whereas the other company works on a hybrid model; provide menus and kitchen management but using staff employed by An Daras. The latter is probably cheaper but An Daras would then take on the additional costs associated with staff. **Where did we get to with Chartwells as their contract was up for renewal wasn't it?** EG explained the issues and confusion over the contract.

8. Improvement Plan

Improvement plan update provided to directors after 8 weeks of progress. Some progress made around safeguarding and sustainability but some of the items are more long term so making progress but nothing more significant to report at this time. Improving writing is still a focus and inroads are being made. Not so much progress in Maths but this will be more of a focus in the spring term. WH noted that staff training is now very specific to the needs of individual staff rather than blanket staff training (adaptive CPD programme). It is resource heavy and more expensive but it is of more benefit to the staff and will have a more positive impact going forward. **Would a trust have an accreditation for sustainability such as ISO 1401?** IW explained what this was including policy requirements and audit processes. Financial aspect would need to be assessed but it is acknowledged that the requirements are getting tougher. Even if the cost of a formal audit precludes full accreditation, the check lists will be useful to allow us to move forward.

9. Finance Management Reports/Current Budget

The finance management reports were explained to the new directors by the Chair, including the dashboard that shows at a glance where the budget expenditure is. EG explained the situation with regard to Period 1. Some SEN income for 2 schools is still due in. WH noted that each school is funded per pupil numbers but local authority exerts a minimum funding guarantee, and if too much funding for pupils in the school, they will claw back a minimum each year. NP is about to lose some funding due to this, around £6-7K. Salaries are in line at the moment but some payments have to be backdated so this will affect the budget but will still need to be managed. EG updated on the capital expenditure at Wer and some funding received for CG. Payroll now in house – working well for staff and centrally, but it is taking a little longer to bed in than was expected. Electronic pay slips sent out

– hoping to get on a portal in the near future. ST explained the condition improvement funding to the new directors.

JC left the meeting.

10. Audited Accounts

WH explained the audit process to the board for the benefit of the new Directors. Long and detailed process that takes place annually. Last year the audit was ‘unqualified’ which is that the trust’s business practices were very positive. This year’s report was briefed to the Audit committee by Francis Clark. EG and WH explained the three minor audit points and noted that the audit this year will also be ‘unqualified’ which demonstrates another successful audit.

The accounts will be signed and submitted to ESFA by 31 Dec 2022. The trustees noted the basis in which they consider the trust to be a going concern; maintenance of reserves, a balanced budget, small surplus, one school moved from RI to good, comprehensive risk register and mitigation, and a full, multi-skilled trust board.

11. Appoint Internal Auditor

Audit committee recommended appointment of Griffin as internal auditor. They produced a better quote and the standard of internal audit needs to improve which it is felt that a new internal auditor will achieve.

12. Christian Foundation/Distinctiveness

Plans made with education governance lead from diocese in process of being implemented. GS to establish role as Foundation Director, Diocese education lead will be attending the LSS committee, LGB link with GS, GS to complete foundation training, and LGB agenda items with be more specific regarding SIAMS headings. It was noted that the SIAMS framework has changed. WH explained the difference in Christian character of LT and SC.

13. MAT Vision & Aims

Vision and aims formulated 4-5 years ago. Wholesale change is not required but some tweaking is required and can be considered as part of growth planning next term.

14. Actions from Committee

- LSS –None
- FRS – None
- Audit
 - Risk register will be reviewed in Spring term.
 - The hardware at WHA is due renewal and ipad provision at NP&W is a new requirement. As a lease, it will be renewed and updated in 3 years. The cost can be met from the existing IT budget, recommended that full Board make decision on the IT contract.
Decision - enter IT lease agreement for WHA, NP and Wer.
 - Refer the decision to increase minimum wage for support staff to £10.50 in line with Cornwall LA and approve support staff pay policy. WH explained the background to this decision with rise in national living wage and Cornwall LA decision to raise this to £10.50.
Decision – agree minimum wage at £10.50 and support staff pay policy approved.
- LGBs - None

15. Complaints and Compliments

WH highlighted one suspension complaint and other minor ones noted in the CEO report. Nothing further to discuss.

16. **AOB**

Cyber security training completed by: TR, JS, ST, WH, CP. **Remaining directors requested to complete Cyber training as soon as possible**; any issues contact TM.

The following directors visited LT and the WSC; ST, PH & GS. Also a member CM.

The speeding restriction outside LT was noted. The villagers campaigned for 30mph in the village but this ends just before the school with 40mph outside the school. The board agreed this is nonsensical and potentially dangerous, and will send a letter to Devon LA requesting that action be taken. **Action: Letter to Devon LA from trust board re LT speed limit (WH/ST)**

17. **Date of next meeting**

Meetings for next term:

- School Liaison Scope Working group – Monday 16th January, 10am at central office (WH, ST, TR, MS, GS, TM)
- Trust growth planning/plan integration/vision & values working group – Wednesday 18th January, 10am central office (WH, ST, JS, GB, PH, IW) (MS & GS welcome to attend)
- LSS – Wednesday 8th February 2023, 9.30am, central office
- Full Board Extra-ordinary Meeting – Monday 27th February 2023, 9.30am, zoom (school admissions)
- FRS – Wednesday 1st March 2023, 9.30am, central office
- Audit – Wednesday 15th March 2023, 9.30am, central office
- Full Board – Wednesday 22nd March 2023, 9.30am, central office

The meeting closed at 11.20

TJH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

W. Hermon – CEO Director	J. Sharpe – Director
S. Tavener – Director (Chair)	I. Wilkinson – Director
T. Rudge – Director (Vice)	G. Shippesides – Foundation Director
G. Barriball – Director	M. Savage – Director
P. Hague – Director	E. Gilbert – CFO
C. Paul – Director	J. Callow – Ex Officio Observer