



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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CEO: W Hermon
Chair of Trust Board: S Tavener

12/03/2025

Minutes
An Daras Multi-Academy Trust Members
General Meeting
Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 12 noon at ADMAT Central Office/Hybrid

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Sue Lockwood (representing Eden), Clare Kendall (representing Askel Veur), Steve Tavener (via zoom)

Apologies: Chris Marshall, Margaret Young

In Attendance: Will Hermon (CEO), Jo Callow (interim CEO from 1st May 2025), Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

CK agreed to Chair the meeting as ST was attending virtually.

2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests Relevant to this Agenda

None declared relevant to this agenda, other than those already declared on the register.

3. Approve Previous Minutes from Annual General Meeting (2nd October 2024)

No actions. Members agreed and a Member signed a copy (as the Chair was attending via zoom).

4. Confidential Agenda Items

Matters regarding budget and restructuring were discussed under item 5 & 6 and recorded in confidential minutes.

5. Presentation of Accounts

The members were presented with the end of year audited accounts as at 31st Aug 2024 prior to the meeting.

WH noted it was a tricky year last year with the Duchy schools transferring into the trust at a deficit. Work has been undertaken this year to rectify some of the issues and restructuring is underway to ensure the budget balances for the new academic year. **What % of reserves do you hold?** Around 2-2.5% currently, plans in place to increase slightly for next year but as a trust, we have never aimed for large reserves because we believe in spending the money on the children's education. SEND funding is slow and not always available, and providing for children with additional needs takes a lot of funds and resources. WH noted the falling rolls, not helped by the new 2 form entry primary school in Launceston. WH discussed some confidential matters regarding the budget and restructuring.

It was agreed that the budgets are always tight, but we have proven standards (multiple successful Ofsted, schools from RI to Good) and An Daras Trust remains a going concern.

It was noted that on page 4 of the Trustee's report for year ended 31 August 2024 – 3rd line/1st bullet down stated 'up to 4 trustees who are appointed as members, currently 5' which does seem to match the articles where article 5 states at least 5 member appointed directors? It was acknowledged that this was an error and will be corrected for the next report.

6. Brief An Daras MAT Strategic Update

The Members were updated on the Chair's positive meeting with the RDD's office. The RDD's office were consulted on the change of CEO appointment and were content with the success plan. **Can you confirm, is the CEO appointment interim?** ST confirmed the plan and interviews will be conducted in September with a view to appointing a permanent CEO.

Are there any plans or options for expansion? There was a discussion on this matter and it was agreed that the political landscape has less appetite for academies so there is uncertainty and challenges that lay ahead. Two priorities coming into this academic year were Boyton and Lewannick who joined the trust as RI schools, but they are now considered "good" and ready for what is envisaged as a successful Ofsted inspection. WH noted that Boyton's pre-school has re-opened with 5 pupils which is positive and will hopefully feed into the main school.

The two remaining priorities are Wer (due to attainment, attendance below national average, high % SEND, and high mobility) and Callington (restructure and also ensuring standards as those expected across the trust). Although Callington was previously a "good", there is work to get them to the standard of our other town schools, which will be tackled from September onwards.

The external governance review, as instructed by the RDD's office, was completed by an NGA consultant. There were no actions or important matters raised, just a few recommendations that we can choose or not choose to implement as we see fit. The members agreed it was a positive report and thanked those involved in governance across the trust. **Reference the recommendation regarding termly LGB Chair meetings with the CEO, and the directors being involved, will you be looking at that?** This has been considered but we feel the LGB Chair-CEO relationship is important, has been developed over the years and has helped to build trust and good communication. We would not want to lose that. There is merit in a director being present from time to time, but as the CEO is also a director under our articles, they are effectively also meeting with a director. In terms of the specific recommendation to include 'updates on the functioning of the Board', it is fine to include updates on what the Board has been doing (although they have access to all Board minutes to do that) but it is not considered necessary to include how the board functions. **Noting that some directors and LGB Chairs were interviewed, why did the consultant not interview a Member, given that Members are also part of the governance structure?** It was opined that either the consultant decided to focus on directors and LGB Chairs because of the formation of the hubs and transfer in of new schools, or the requirement to interview a Member is not on the ERG template?

Action: TM will contact the consultant to find out and if it is the latter, make a recommendation to the NGA regarding this matter. Afternote: NGA consultant contacted. Not speaking to the Members is not a standard feature of their approach. The decision to focus on the trust board was based on the trust situation and the focus of the review (driven by RDD's office and the trust). The consultant felt that as the Members meet twice a year and provide challenge as demonstrated in the minutes, that it was not a priority to speak with them. The trust expansion and the change in local governance arrangements to governor hubs led him to focus on these 2 layers of governance in this instance.

WH mentioned the Church supplementary agreements and the requirement to remove some out of date clauses. He confirmed the trust will change these by the quickest and cheapest method, but just wanted to let both Diocese know that they are aware of the issue and will fix it.

7. Member Appointed Director Under Article 50

Further to the conversation in item 5, it was confirmed that the current articles stipulate at least 5 Member appointed directors. Members agreed to appoint Margaret Savage as a Member appointed director in accordance with Articles 46(a) and 50. The ordinary resolution was signed and passed.

8. Any other Business

None other than the Members wished to say a huge thank you to Will Hermon for his leadership and hard work as they have seen a tremendous work across trust over the last 6 years or more, improving schools and standards, and so much more. They wished him well for his retirement.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Annual General Meeting planned as usual for early October – date will be confirmed by email once the Trust annual meeting cycle is put together in the summer term.

The meeting ended at 12.50pm.

TJH Martin

ADMAT Governance Officer

Distribution List:

Margaret Young – Member

Chris Marshall – Member

Eden – Member

Askel Veur – Member

Steve Tavener – Chair Board of Directors & Member

Will Hermon – CEO & Director

Jo Callow – CEO Designate