



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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CEO: W. T. Hermon

09/12/2020

Minutes
Full Board of Directors Autumn Meeting
Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 9.30am via Zoom

1. Join Meeting

All participants had audio and video connection.

2. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Will Hermon (CEO), Graeme Barriball (Chair), Steve Tavener (Vice), Peter Hague, Trudy Rudge, Carol Green, Tim Woodward, Claire Paul, Jon Sharpe

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

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

Annual declarations complete and no changes declared. No interests relevant to this agenda less GB expressed an interest regarding a confidential matter at item 6 as an individual is known to him as a family friend. He was willing to take part in the discussion but will not vote on the final decision.

4. Elect Chair & Vice Chair

GB agreed to continue as Chair and the Board voted in favour. However, GB noted his intention to step down as Chair this time next year and noted the positives regarding this fulfilling role.

ST volunteered to be Vice Chair and the Board voted in favour. He was thanked for volunteering.

5. Confirm Minutes of previous full Board ExO remote meeting (8th July 2020) and matters arising

Produce a short report on selection of external auditor as per para 4.17 AFH 2020 for Members.
Complete and Members made decision at AGM.

Board agreed the minutes and a copy will be signed by the Chair once normality resumes.

6. Confidential Matters

Two items were discussed and recorded under the confidential minutes.

7. Recovery Schedules and Impact

WH briefly talked through the recovery plan so far and some data. Phonics has caught up to where the children would have been nationally in 2019 which shows a good use of recovery funding. Schools have published on websites the use of recovery funding. Ofsted inspections cancelled until March at the earliest. There is no science reporting, no SPAG tests and other changes recently implemented by the government. There is some recovery funding remaining that will be used in the spring term. **A director questioned whether the Yr 2 phonics have to be submitted formally?** WH confirmed they do and having secure results in the phonics will be positive. **A director noted that the attainment figures seem to show a drop back of 3-5 months, can funding be used to address**

this with anything other than IT? WH noted that there is funding available to use for other initiatives going forward and explained where this would be targeted.

The Chair noted how impressive it is that the staff formulated and implemented their recovery plans so quickly and the Board passed on their thanks to the School leaders and staff. TM will pass this on to Chairs of LGBs and Heads.

8. Finance

EG noted all on track. Latest management accounts and KPIs have been submitted for Directors to check; staffing budget is on target. There is further expenditure on IT that has been spent or committed to be spent; some of this needs to be reallocated to Covid recovery expenditure. Chartwell's account is now sorted out.

EG noted the School Resource Self Assessment Tool. There is the odd red flag but these are known about; the tool doesn't tell us anything we don't already know as our finances are carefully tracked. **What impact with the freeze on staff salaries announced by government have?** EG noted that staff increases had been funded previously so it has not been affected up until now but rises this year would have had to come from elsewhere? So while not ideal, a pay freeze would prevent this from happening. WH noted that staff incremental rises are not affected by this freeze, it just refers to the annual public sector pay increase. It was noted that increased pension liabilities may affect the budget in future.

EG noted that the audit has been very successful and was much smoother than last year. Auditors questioned whether the additional Covid funding should have been applied for but some funding has been received by some schools so it will be utilised appropriately. The auditors findings were summarised and have been looked at in detail by the Audit committee. WH noted that the aim has been to increase unrestricted reserves but spend restricted reserves as these are more limited in their use. EG noted the financial controls in place are working really well and centralising funds has proved positive. A director noted that the CIF funding has gone into debtors which makes the debtors seem much larger than it is? EG noted this is a method of accounting but the expenditure will balance that out this year. **The Board approved the annual accounts and annual report ready for submission to the ESFA by 31 Dec 2020** (noting an extension is optional).

The Board noted a huge thanks to EG, Marg Basford, the central finance team and the school Heads/teams involved in the preparation for the external audit.

Financial Scheme of Delegation has a minor amendment allowing Executive Heads increased sign off to £1500 from £1000 which is more realistic. **A director challenged whether Heads sign off own expenses as picked up previously?** WH noted that this is dictated elsewhere and not in the Financial SoD. **Action: Ascertain the direction on the signing off of Head's expenses (WH)**

9. CEO Report to Board

Progress and attainment maps provided. Government has noted that attainment might be 15% lower than for 2019. He noted the school forecasts and that they are generally conservative and cautious. WH talked through each school and some concerns about specific year groups in specific schools. **A director challenged that with the extra resources put in to the schools, that they should be on track for positive progress?** WH noted that generally yes this is the case, but there are some issues at some schools that need to be fixed over the next term with help from trust funding, MAT improvement officers and other resources. **What is the impact on workload for the two MAT Improvement Officers?** They are mostly working flexibly and remotely, and focussed on certain areas so all is manageable at the moment; they are focussing on the higher risks.

WH noted positive behaviour across the trust and attendance has also been high, better than it would be at this time of year normally. National attendance for primary schools is around 83% but An Daras schools are at circa 95%. A couple of minor exclusions across the trust but all have been dealt with appropriately. Staff satisfaction surveys on the whole have been positive. **A director noted it would be useful to know the number of staff in total and the number responded, so that the % make more sense?** WH agreed to amend this in future. **Action: Ensure all staff surveys are marked with total number of staff and number of staff responded (WH)**

WH noted the new Head Teachers standards issued by the DfE but noted that job descriptions do not need amending. WH discussed the current contract for the CFO at 1 day a week as initially agreed and noted that this is insufficient and needs to be reviewed. In addition to the audits, there are many other tasks that EG is involved with and from an HR perspective, if someone paid overtime regularly, their hours should be adjusted. It was agreed that this should be reviewed and decided at the next RSS. **Action: CFO contract review at RSS committee (WH)**

WH noted that the Head's performance management has been completed by WH and Chairs of LGBs, and confirmed whether the Board want to scrutinise the recommendations? **Board agreed that the process is robust and they are content to delegate this review to WH and the Chair of each LGB.** The Board noted that a broader picture needs to be looked at and not just the attainment/progress for example as much of this has been outside the control of school leadership.

WH mentioned the internal audit process (used to be called responsible office checks). So far only one quote has been received and at least one more quote is being sought. A decisions needs to be made on internal auditor appointment prior to the next committee meetings in January and directors agreed to make this decision in writing prior to Christmas. EG gave thoughts on the process. **Action: Appointment and decision for internal auditor to FSD agenda (TM)**

10. Items Brought Forward from LGBs

No issues raised by LGBs. It was noted that LGBs have been meeting and completed the remote monitoring, focussing on recovery curriculum, safeguarding and staff/pupil well-being.

11. Complaints & Compliments

There have been 3 minor complaints from parents limited to a specific issue, and dealt with at school level. No complaints from outside agencies. Thanks received from Diocese of Exeter and Truro. No formal compliments. A director noted that there has been much positive parental feedback and attendance levels speak volumes of parental confidence in sending their children to school. A parental survey at PT has been positive and the remaining schools will be done late spring term. The Chair noted the hard work by the HoS, Emma Byrom, in raising the profile on the school.

12. Admissions

All Admissions policies have been published on school websites for the mandatory 6 week consultation periods, although it was noted that any amendments to these policies have been minor. All LGBs have agreed their school admissions policies as part of the consultations process. **The consultation process for WHA, PT, SSQA, NP, Wer, LT and SC has finished and the Trust Board formally approved the Admissions policy and arrangements for these schools. CG consultation period ends on 12th January, subject to no contentious feedback, the Trust Board approve the Admissions policy and arrangements for CG. TM will produce a letter from the Trust Board to be sent to the relevant Diocese or Local authority through each Head Teacher.**

13. Trust Board School Visits

The Chair gave feedback on his visit to PT. All director's visit notes have been collated and shared with the Board. The visits were completed by one director per school for now due to Covid but once

it is safe to do so, the directors intend to visit all schools. WH noted that the Heads have appreciated the visits from the trust board.

14. Lead Roles for Directors

The following director leads were confirmed/agreed:

NAME	LEAD
GRAEME BARRIBALL	Property (Site, Buildings & Insurance), Personnel (PM)
CLAIRE PAUL	Data & Improvement
PETER HAGUE	Financial Planning/Budget monitoring
WILLIAM HERMON	CEO
TIM WOODWARD	Vision & Ethos/SIAMS
TRUDY RUDGE	Protection (Safeguarding) & Whistleblowing
CAROL GREEN	Data & Improvement
JONATHAN SHARPE	Strategy/Budget Monitoring/Risks
STEPHEN TAVENER	Health & Safety, Risks

15. Policy

Health & Safety Policy – approved.

16. AOB

Governance decision planner and TORs for VC schools – minor amendments – approved.

ST, JS and PH will meet with WH in the New Year to discuss the risk register. This will be done via zoom and TM will amend the register during the meeting. This will take place at 9.30am on Friday 15th January 2021.

17. Dates of Spring Term Meetings

Dates for spring meetings and provision summer term meeting dates are:

Meeting	Spring	Summer
Teaching, Learning and Achievement (TLA)	Wed 20 th Jan at 9.30am via zoom	Weds 5 th May at 9.30 at central office or via zoom (additional meeting)
Finance and Strategic Development (FSD)	Weds 3 rd Feb at 9.30am via zoom	Weds 12 th May at 9.30am at Central Office or via zoom
Resources, Staffing and Safeguarding (RSS)	Weds 27 th Jan at 9.30am via zoom	Weds 19 th May at 9.30am at Central Office or via zoom
Audit (Au)	Weds 10 th Feb at 9.30am via zoom	Weds 26 th May at 9.30am at Central Office or via zoom
Full Board	Wed 24 th Mar at 9.30am at Central Office	Mon 12 th Jul at 9.30am at Central Office

The meeting closed at 11.50am.

TJH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

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