

**ETHOS ACADEMY TRUST**  
**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF TRUSTEES**  
Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January at 5pm @Reach Academy

<b>Present:</b>	Victoria del Giudice (VDG)	Chair & Member
	Lorraine Absolon (LA)	Trustee
	Graham Dewhirst (GD)	Trustee
	Charles Haygarth (CH)	Trustee
	Rob Whitehouse (RW)	Trustee
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Melanie Nightingale (MNI)	Clerk to the Board
	Lesley Conway	HR Manager (items 1 & 2 only)
	Chris Firth (CF)	COO
	Jayne Foster (JF)	CEO
	Tracy Jackson (TJ)	CFO

Item		Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Apologies &amp; Declaration of Interests</b>	
	Apologies were received and accepted from Jane Acklam and Andrew Rawson.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Central Team Resources</b>	
	<p><u>Central Team Staffing</u></p> <p>JF presented the proposed staffing models, which were part of the next stage in the Trust's development. She explained that the Executive Team were making these recommendations in order to future-proof the Trust by managing risk and building resilience, capacity, systems &amp; structures to enable the Trust to expand to take in more academies. Two informal stage conversations had been held recently with Bradford-based schools, which highlighted the need to prepare the Trust for future development.</p> <p><i>The remainder of this section contains confidential minutes, which have been removed and made available to Trustees via email.</i></p> <p><u>Development of Resources, Systems &amp; Processes</u></p> <p>JF referred to the frontload / one-off costs on the final page of her report to Trustees on central team structure changes and explained that these were short-term investments required in addition to the new roles to frontload the development of key resources, systems and processes, enabling these to become efficiently and effectively embedded into Trust / academy functions. This included additional resource to input / upload information to the Every system. <b>Trustees asked if the Every system would provide information about absence.</b> LC confirmed that Every would provide absence management information, as well as information about staff induction and training. The data input required could not be added to existing Office Manager roles. <b>The Chair noted that it was important for the Trust to be compliant with regard to health &amp; safety, risk management etc and having the Every system would help with this.</b> CF confirmed that it would include capital reporting, i.e. condition reports for the capital plan. <b>Trustees asked if the Single Central Record (SCR) would be go into Every, as it currently was not working smoothly and was inconsistent.</b> The Executive Team confirmed that the information from SCR would be transferred across to Every and would become an integrated system, which would also take the pressure off Office Managers to manually keep the SCR up to date. <b>Trustees asked if Every was a school-specific system.</b></p>	

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The Executive Team confirmed that Every was school-specific and explained that the HR element in particular was new and the developers were open to suggested improvements. JF referred to the need for development of the Trust website. Currently it had limited use, and the company that set it up and maintained it was very expensive but not very responsive (when amendments are requested). EAT had developed a strong relationship with Engaging Education who could supply a more suitable and cost effective website, incorporating a recruitment portal. This would bring with it a number of additional opportunities, e.g. PR and social media. **Trustees expressed concern that money needed to be spent on a new web provider so soon after the outlay on the previous provider.** JF explained that there were too many ongoing problems and costs with the existing system for it to be sustainable.

**Trustees asked about the media / PR support referred to in the report.** JF explained that this originated from a request to appear on Look North when the Trust realised that it was not media-ready. It would be helpful to have media training to deal with issues like this, as well as any potential “bad news” that might occur. It could be an opportunity to spread the word and challenge negative perceptions about alternative provision. **It was acknowledged by Trustees that some media training was important. Trustees queried whether media training and the expenditure for the website would be one-off expenditure or whether this was now part of the business. Should we be budgeting for this regularly?** It was acknowledged that if EAT had aspirations to be a 10 academy Trust this needed to be considered, as it was not a case of a school having a PR department but an Academy Trust that operates as a business requiring PR advice. The Executive Team gave examples of other schools getting in touch as a result of hearing about EAT through JF networking and presenting, as well as receiving a higher number of job applications due to the Trust’s reputation and increasing social media presence. There was some discussion about possible “stars” within the individual academies who could develop as a result of media training, taking the pressure off the CEO.

JF referred to the cost of the condition survey, which was required to facilitate the capital plan. **Trustees asked if this was a new condition survey of each school or a review of the existing surveys.** CF explained that existing surveys would be checked against indices to see if anything had been missed. Surveys had been carried out on the acquisition of each school but this would be an all-encompassing survey enabling EAT to challenge the ESFA by having an independent survey. **Trustees asked if £6,500 was enough for these surveys and CF confirmed that it was.**

JF reported that other frontload / one-off costs included overtime costs and potential redundancy costs relating to the proposed re-structure.

Decisions

**Trustees unanimously agreed to the proposed central team staffing structure set out in model 3 of JF’s report, provided that there was an agreed timeline for this. It was agreed that this included going ahead with a re-structure and redundancies and that LC would produce a timeline for this.** This would also enable EAT to look beyond the central team in terms of business support roles and the Executive Team would look at this. There was a discussion around the availability of other potential roles within the Trust for the people

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children needing laptops instead of visiting an ICT suite (linked to academy development priorities). **Trustees asked if a strategic wish was more important than a grade C item.** There was some discussion about enhancing Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision and that if a strategic wish was important for the development of the Trust and in line with EAT's vision, the money needed to be spent to make it happen. One example given by the Executive Team was expanding into the roof space at Engage to enhance their provision. This was a strategic wish that fed into the strategic development plan. It was important to know what was possible from the existing buildings or how they could be developed in order to deliver the strategic development plan.

CF confirmed that there would be no condition D items in year 3 or 5.

As set out in the capital plan summary document, the Executive Leadership Team proposed that Trustees approve one of the two following options:

**1. Option 1**

- a. Approve year one spend for condition grade C and D items - £172,500
- b. Approve year one spend for strategic wish items - £43,000
- c. Approve further investigative work linked to condition grade C, D and SW items for "up to 3 yr" and "up to 5yr" spend to refine forward spend estimates and the commissioning of interrelated items where economies can be gained (subject to FAR board approval via an Exception report)
- d. Include Capital Plan reviews as a standing agenda item within future FAR Board meetings
- e. Agree to the development of a forward Estates Management Strategy, linked to existing Service Development Plans

**2. Option 2**

- a. Approve year spend for condition D items - £161,000
- b. Approve further investigative work linked to condition grade C items for year 1 spend, and condition grade C, D and SW items for "up to 3 yr" and "up to 5yr" spend to refine forward spend estimates
- c. Include Capital Plan reviews as a standing agenda item within future FAR Board meetings
- d. Agree to the development of a forward Estates Management Strategy, linked to existing Service Development Plans

**Following the discussion noted above, Trustees unanimously approved option 1.**

Trustees noted that this report had presented things in a way that helped them to understand what was required so that they could make decisions. There was some discussion about monitoring the capital spend on a regular basis through the FAR Committee. TJ noted that there were now robust systems in place for procurement etc.

**4 Impact on Reserves and Decision Making**

The discussion about the impact on reserves and decision making took place during items 2 and 3.

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	<p><b>Trustees asked about the financial impact of additional schools joining the Trust and whether it had a negative impact.</b> The Executive Team explained that Trusts receive £25,000 when it takes on another school, which pays for due diligence, legal fees, project management etc. This happens as soon as the academy order is in place.</p>	
5	<p><b>Fair Access Protocol</b></p>	
	<p>The new Kirklees Fair Access Protocol (FAP) dated April 2020 had been circulated prior to the meeting with a letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020 from the Kirklees Council Directorate for Children &amp; Young People, Pupil Admissions. It was proposed by Kirklees that the FAP be implemented from the start of the Summer Term on Monday 20 April 2020.</p> <p>JF referred to the letter and explained that children did not get referred to EAT through the FAP but could get placed back into mainstream from EAT through the FAP. EAT was represented on the FAP meetings because the Trust knew the children that were being placed.</p> <p><b>Trustees asked if the FAP had changed dramatically from 2015.</b> It was explained that it had not but that the new protocol tightens up some loopholes in the previous system. <b>Trustees recognised that each local authority must have a Fair Access Protocol agreed with the majority of schools in its area and agreed to formally adopt the new Kirklees Fair Access Protocol dated: April 2020, to be implemented from the start of the Summer Term on Monday 20 April 2020. Trustees recognised that if the decision made by the majority of schools was not to agree to adopt the new protocol, the current Fair Access Protocol dated; April 2015 would remain in place until such time that a new protocol is agreed by the majority of schools in Kirklees.</b> As requested in the letter, the local authority must be informed of the Board's decision by 5pm on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (via email to pupiladmissions@kirklees.gov.uk) and JF agreed to send the email.</p>	JF
6	<p><b>Any Other Urgent Business</b></p>	
	<p>JF reported on the following items of business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressions of interest had been received from two schools in Bradford. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One was a primary pupil referral unit that had been recently been asked to take in KS3 and they had heard about EAT through a Twitter link. They could envisage some security in becoming part of a Trust and saw it as an exciting opportunity for joining up with other high quality provision. JF had visited the school and three senior leaders and a management committee member from the school had visited all 3 settings at EAT. The next step was for the school to feed back to their SLT and invite EAT to present to their management committee meeting.</li> <li>○ The second school had come from a link with Graham Dewhirst (the Chair of Governors was a former colleague of GD). This was a Catholic primary that needed to separate from the Catholic Diocese because hardly any of its cohort was Catholic and it was struggling to recruit Catholic staff. The school was also looking at other options, e.g. the local Church of England school. The next step would be for JF to visit pending further discussions within the school.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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- JF had spoken at a regional meeting of the Director of Children’s Services before Christmas. Several local authorities had made contact to find out how EAT could support them with developing their alternative provision.
  - JF had made contact with a medium sized Trust in Northamptonshire through her CEO course. The Trust had no alternative provision (AP) and wanted to carry out a fact-finding visit to EAT to enable them to set up their own AP.
  - **Trustees asked if there were any further developments with Howard Park.** JF explained that this had been put on pause, as Howard Park still needed to recruit a replacement Head following Marcus Newby’s departure. As Marcus had been the driving force behind the proposal for Howard Park to join EAT, this may not progress any further.
- Trustees stated that they were keen to attract a mainstream school to become a mixed Trust with a wider offer. It would be good for the current three schools to have of stronger links with mainstream.**
- JF had spoken to Leodis Trust in Leeds who planned to forge links with EAT and was currently trying to secure a Trustee for EAT with an education background beyond Kirklees.
  - A local gentlemen with expertise in property had approached the Trust via Academy Ambassadors. JF was planning an informal meeting with him to discuss him potentially becoming a Trustee.
  - Ethos College School Council would like to forge some links with the Board and had asked if a Trustee could attend a School Council meeting on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January during the morning. CH expressed an interest to attend a future meeting but was unable to attend this one. **GD agreed to attend the School Council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January.** JF would put him in touch with the relevant member of staff. JF explained that the School Council was the pupil voice, which met regularly (at least once per term) and was facilitated by members of staff.

GD / JF

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 18:30.

Action Points	Responsibility	Completion
• Explore the use of EAT’s previous contribution to the LA pot for the apprenticeship levy.	TJ	19.03.20
• Produce a timeline for the development of the model 3 staffing structure.	LC	19.03.20
• Produce full costings for the model 3 staffing structure, including the costs for data input to Every, website development, media / PR support and condition survey.	TJ	19.03.20
• Make the capital plan a standing item on the FAR agenda.	MNI	12.02.20
• Review condition of ICT items regularly .	CF	Ongoing
• Email the Board’s decision about the Fair Access Protocol to Kirklees Council.	JF	09.03.20

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- Attend School Council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January as Trustee representative – CEO to arrange with relevant staff member. GD / JF                      31.01.20



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