

BATLEY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Batley Multi Academy Trust
held at Batley Girls' High School on Thursday 9 February 2017 at 6.00pm
Part A

Present: Mr Siraj Mayet (Chair), Mrs Ellen Loughhead (Vice-Chair), Mr Maurice Cook (Vice-Chair), Ms Nailah Ahmed, Ms Julie Haigh, Mrs Mandy Kennedy, Mrs Ann McCall, Mrs Pam Pickles, Ms Hilary Towers-Islam, Mr Jeremy Townend, Ms Samantha Vickers

In Attendance: Ms Wendy Beasley (Company Secretary), Mrs Sally Cook (Clerk)

539. Chair's Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

540. Apologies for Absence, Consent and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from Ms Claire Geisler, Chair of UBHS LGB, who attends as an Observer.

Following on from the NGA information circulated at the last meeting and an audit of the website, Trustees were asked to complete up to date declaration of interest forms so that this information could be shared on the website.

Copies of the latest DfE publications, 'Governance Handbook' and 'A Competency Framework for Governance', January 2017 were distributed which contain important updated information for Trustees and Governors.

541. Representation

Trustees were thanked for their pen portraits which will be shared on the MAT section of the website.

542. Minutes of Meetings

Board of Trustees held on 1 December 2016 - IT WAS AGREED by Trustees that the Minutes should be approved as a true record.

543. Matters Arising from the Minutes

519a) Both academies have now considered the MAT risk management register with regard to the individual schools. Ellen, Jeremy and Pam agreed to represent the Board in meeting to review the register for the Trust.

544. Reports to Note

- (i) Draft Minutes of BGHS LGB Meeting - 19 January 2017
- (ii) BGHS Co-Heads' Report
- (iii) UBHS Head's Report

Trustees noted these reports which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

545. Key Performance Indicators

Attendance is an issue for consideration and PA a key priority, including extended holidays, although progress is being made working with families around school holidays and percentages are improving. Both schools are in agreement and provide consistent responses to requests for leave.

Recruitment across each year group is healthy especially in Years 7 and 8 at Batley Girls'. Upper Batley is proactive in recruitment and all cohorts exceed 100. Student numbers have increased by 61 over the last year and numbers coming into Year 7 are higher. Trustees discussed combining secondary school Open Days.

Issues within the current Year 11 at Batley Girls' were discussed in terms of the cohort and failed AP provision. Progress indicators are not as strong as last year. Grades for Maths and English GCSEs have moved from A-C to 9-1 but there is no comparison guidance at present and predictions are therefore difficult.

At Upper Batley, progress and attainment will be lower and there are many variables which will affect all schools so it is only possible to work on last year's results. It is therefore important to compare the academies with other similar schools.

It was noted that staff teams and their commitment and goodwill at both schools is phenomenal.

Ann reported in detail on the overall high quality of teaching and learning at Batley Girls', evident in staff's performance management reviews. Senior Leadership Team quality assurance observations are currently being carried out and will be complete by half term. Sam also reported very good results at Upper Batley from Senior and Middle Leaders' observations.

It was reported to Trustees that processes are shared and Middle Leaders from both academies work together where opportunities arise. Batley Girls' has provided History and some Geography network support and good practice is being shared with other Secondary schools too.

Increase in stress levels have been noted in students and staff over the amount of change currently taking place and keen attention is being given to attendance and wellbeing issues.

Trustees held a discussion around the student and staff worklife balance at present. Surveys are being carried out and tokens of consideration at both academies, for example, staff and student breakfasts, are offered regularly. Staff have the opportunity to join the HSF plan which provides support and there is a Staff Wellbeing Committee.

The Chair asked for this issue to be included as an Agenda item at a later meeting and Trustees asked for their thanks and appreciation to be recorded and passed to all the staff in the Trust for their commitment and hard work. Other practical suggestions of support were discussed, for example car washing and dry cleaning.

546. National Funding Formula

The NFF is in the Stage 2 consultation period until 22 March. Wendy circulated a summary document about main proposals of the NFF and the budget impact for the MAT, together with details of the figures and percentage impact for Kirklees. Further general information was provided by handouts from the CEFM.

The NFF will be implemented locally in 2018/19 and nationally in 2019/20. Kirklees will suffer an overall loss of 2.3%, higher than anywhere else within Yorkshire and the Humber and Batley Girls' will see a 2.8% funding reduction, which is £155k pa and for Upper Batley £97k.

Nevertheless this has been factored into a 5 year MAT budget estimate and still balances at the end of the period. However, it is estimated that even without the implementation of the NFF an 8% reduction in spending is still needed in the face of increased costs and school budgets will therefore tighten. It is fortunate that the MAT has retained reserves.

The NFF has been calculated based on historical funding and is designed to equal up variable funding.

Ann will be attending the next Schools Forum meeting and the LA will draft a response after which Leadership will consider a proposal for response.

547. Policies for Approval

Policies (i) - (vi) - Grievance Procedure, Disciplinary, Leave of Absence, Sickness Management, Redundancy and Flexible Working are the first drafts for Trustees' consideration and discussion prior to consultation with staff and unions. They will then be returned to the Board for final ratification. These are complex policies and in future it is suggested that review dates will be staggered.

Changes requested were as follows:

Grievance Procedure – Section 2.1 - sentence should conclude at 'seek assistance'.

Section 1.3.3. – Trustees requested clarification on timescales and for wording to be added concerning whistleblowing.

Disciplinary - Page 3 Para 1 last bullet – Trustees requested additional wording in connection with a concern raised.

Section 4 – Trustees requested the change of wording from 'may wish' to 'will need' to seek advice from HR.

Leave of Absence - Trustees requested no changes but held a discussion around discretion regarding additional leave outside school holidays.

Sickness Management – Trustees requested no changes.

Redundancy - Section 4.2 Trustees requested clarification of the minimum consultation period.

In Section 4.3.2 the sentence beginning 'It should not discriminate..' should include 'on the grounds of civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity'.

The flow chart in section 1.2 needs to reflect that notification will be made to the MAT Board and some small changes to wording were requested.

Trustees discussed future contracts where an employee would be employed to work in one main school but may be required to work across the MAT.

Flexible Working – Trustees requested no changes.

IT WAS AGREED that the policies were satisfactory to the Board, with changes where requested being communicated to the HR manager Vicky Pearson and policies returned to the Board for final ratification.

DBS – IT WAS AGREED to approve this policy.

FOI - Wendy explained that this policy had been updated with the red type showing changes since the MAT. A review date of March was suggested.

Charge Card - This has been produced as a MAT wide policy in consultation with Upper Batley, the red type showing changes made. In addition to the policy the Internal Auditors provide a further check.

IT WAS AGREED to approve policies (vii) to (ix).

Wendy and Vicky were thanked for their hard work on these policies.

548. Strategic Discussion

(i) SEF and MAT Development Plan - RSC Documentation and Discussion

Two documents were circulated, the first providing reflections of the overall effectiveness of the MAT including an analysis of pupil outcomes and the second providing an overall performance self assessment with regards to nine steps of the MAT characteristics, under the columns 'Beginning', 'Developing', 'Embedding' or 'Leading'.

Ann and Julie had been asked to attend a MAT review meeting with the Regional Schools Commission which oversees MATS. They had worked with Sam to provide a detailed outcomes summary. The green areas showed an overview of our students within the MAT and progress scores are positive. Criteria are provided to assist in deciding on own scores and they felt that the overview should sit within the 'Embedding' section.

The second document contains the rest of the SEF 9 elements to review and consider what should be our development plan across the MAT. In all steps the Trust was considered to be 'Developing' or 'Embedding' and the RSC felt that this was a typical place for our MAT model to be at this stage. Trustees were asked to take these documents and study the descriptors to consider whether they felt that the MAT was rated in the correct position.

The Trustees also had sight of the DfE Regional Academy Growth Fund bid which was submitted in January on behalf of the Board. As it is a working plan in progress, Trustees were asked to take the documentation with them to study.

(ii) Current Developments

The Chair asked Ann and Julie to report to the Trustees on the latest progress to date since the last meeting on the possible expansion of the MAT. This item is minuted under Part B of these minutes.

(iii) Trustees' Working Group

The Chair reported on the meeting of the Trustees' Working Group on 11 January. Julie felt that the Co-Headship offered a powerful model and it would be her wish for it to continue. The working

group reviewed the clear differentiation, as the MAT moves forward, between the responsibilities of the Co-Head and the CEO.

On behalf of the working group Siraj presented its proposal to recruit a Co-Head, giving Julie specific responsibilities as the CEO and the new Co-Head responsibilities as a co-head.

The working group wished the post to be advertised internally within the MAT for stability and for the leadership ethos and emphasised that the recruitment process would be robust, considering the candidate both as a single Head and working in a partnership.

Julie will not be part of the process and if no suitable candidate is found she will agree to carry on individually. A model for a single Head has been drafted.

IT WAS AGREED by the Trustees to advertise the post on this basis. HR will advise on the process and work out the schedule and a clear job description will be requested for the working group.

The recruitment panel was agreed as: Siraj, Maurice, Mandy, Jeremy, Ellen, Pam and Nailah. Potential conflicts of interest had been identified and were not an issue. The final decision will be made as a panel and its size will ensure a careful process. The vacancy will be advertised across the MAT on the last Friday of half term and the panel will convene in early March, perhaps with the participation of Mary Lawrence.

(iv) *Trustee Engagement and Communication*

Pam reported on a very interesting day conducting mock interviews at Upper Batley and was thanked by Sam for her attendance. Pam had also been part of the interview panel for a PE vacancy at Batley Girls'.

Details were circulated about a seminar being provided by Ward Hadaway on 'Academies: Governance and Growth' and Pam and Ellen expressed interest in attending on 16 March in Leeds.

Details of breakfast seminars by BHP Chartered Accountants to launch the Academies Benchmark Report 2017 were also circulated.

Wendy and Sally will be attending the NGA Regional Network event on 6 March.

Any outstanding links that Trustees would like to make with the academies were requested.

(v) *Forthcoming Events*

The Batley Girls' annual school show, which this year is 'Alice in Wonderland', was promoted to Trustees.

Sam extended invitations to the Trustees to attend the 'More in Common and 'Stepping into the Future' charity and community events which she had highlighted in her Head's Report.

549. *Safeguarding*

CPOMS had been ordered for Upper Batley and training was being organised and access identified. Gillian Hughes has been tasked with reviewing the Safeguarding policy across the MAT and will contact Matt Brayford at Upper Batley with the deadline identified for the next Board meeting.

Mark and Wendy are working on economies of scale. Mandy offered her corporate expertise regarding costings.

550. Any Other Business

There was none.

551. Agenda, Minutes and Related Papers

IT WAS DETERMINED that Item 548 (ii) and supporting documentation should form Part B owing to reasons of confidentiality and therefore be excluded from the copy to be made available at the school, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.