

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS****Minutes of the video conference meeting held on 15 July 2022**

<b>Directors</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Term</b>
Andrew Armour		31/08/2025
* Gary Benn		31/08/2025
* Melissa Challinor	Vice Chair	31/08/2025
Paul Gray		10/02/2026
Alison Meadows		11/05/2025
Sarah Mitchell	Executive Headteacher [EHT]	Ex-Officio
Andrew Taylor	Chair	31/08/2025
* Liam Tobin		22/07/2023
<i>In attendance:</i>		
Tom Bennett	Clerk	
* indicates absence		

***The Executive Headteacher opened the meeting with a prayer*****Action****32/22 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Gary Benn, Melissa Challinor and Liam Tobin.

**33/22 Notification of Any Other Business [AoB]**

No items were declared for later discussion under AoB.

**34/22 Notification of business interests**

No director declared a potential conflict of interest on any matters to be discussed at the meeting or that they had received or given hospitality or a gift that could be perceived to compromise their impartiality when dealing with matters for the Trust.

**MAIN BUSINESS****35/22 Governance****a) Academies' Local Governing Bodies**

The meeting noted the Chair had approved, under his power to act on behalf of the Board of Directors in between meetings, the appointments of Wazz Mughal, Nick Patterson and Andrew Pickering as Governors on the GCPA LGB.

The Board ratified the Chair's action and **agreed** to the appointment of the following members to each Academy's Local Governing Body for the 2022-23 Academic Year.

**Great Chesterford Primary Academy [GCPA]**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Term</b>
Andrew Farrimond	Foundation		01/09/2024
Alex Jeewan	Foundation	Incumbent	Ex-Officio
Gary Benn	General Member		21/02/2025
Jayne Greenwood	General Member		01/09/2024
Wazz Mughal	General Member		05/07/2026
Nick Patterson	General Member		05/07/2026

Andrew Pickering	General Member		05/07/2026
Laura Saunders	Parent		15/06/2023
Joe Edwards	Parent		14/05/2025
Sarah Mitchell	Co-Headteacher [Joint]	Executive Headteacher	Ex-Officio
Amy Sargeant	Co-Headteacher [Joint]	Headteacher	Ex-Officio
Natalie Starbuck	Staff		21/02/2025

#### **Debden Primary Academy [DPA]**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Term</b>
Rev. John Saxon	Foundation:	Incumbent	Ex officio
Tom Caster	Foundation		02/02/2026
Sarah Belchambers	General Member		27/03/2026
Catherine Gibson	General Member		23/02/2023
Sarah Mitchell	General Member	Executive Headteacher	Ex officio
Lin Stephenson	General Member		01/01/2025
Vacancy	General Member		
Isobel Tunnecliff	Parent		14/07/2025
Vacancy	Parent		
Matt Hawley	Headteacher	Head of School	Ex officio
Sarah Bailey	Staff		03/12/2023

#### **b) The appointment of the Chairs for the LGBs of both academies**

##### **GCPA**

The meeting noted that following the retirement of the current Chair for the LGB, Adele Peters, the LGB had not had the opportunity to select and nominate a governor to be the new Chair. One of the newly appointed governors had expressed an interest in being the Chair but needed to be selected and nominated for election by the LGB first. It was **agreed** that Andrew Farrimond, the former Vice-Chair, should chair the first meeting of the LGB at which a new chair would be elected and nominated for appointment by the Board of Directors.

EHT

##### **DPA**

The DPA LGB had elected and nominated Lin Stephenson for appointment as Chair. She had advised the LGB that she was considering stepping down as the Chair in 2023-24 but would like to remain a governor.

It was **agreed** to appoint Lin Stephenson as the DPA LGB Chair for the 2022-23 Academic Year.

EHT

### **36/22 Strategy/ Future Plans**

#### **a) Growth/ expansion of the Trust**

*Refer to confidential minute.*

#### **b) Risk Management**

The Directors considered the risk registers for the MAT and GCPA and were invited to challenge those risks listed, their assessment and the mitigating actions in place or planned.

It was noted the Audit Committee had reviewed the risk registers in detail and had noted significant improvement in the identification, description, likelihood, and impact of the significant risks facing the MAT and the robust mitigations in place

The Chair highlighted the ongoing risk arising from the global pandemic and the current uncertainty on what to expect after the summer holiday.

The EHT reported that adults rather than children were contracting Covid badly with many staff being on sick leave that had had a significant impact on the provision of teaching and learning in the summer term - particularly at GCPA.

It was **agreed** to circulate the Excel version of DPA's risk register after the meeting.

#### c) **School Development Plans [SDPs]**

The meeting received the updated SDPs 2021-2022 for each Academy.

The EHT highlighted the progress that each Academy had been made in delivering their key priorities.

The meeting noted that the number of pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural needs had increased, and staff spend a lot of time in meetings with external agencies in supporting them.

Social, Emotional & Mental Health [SEMH] would remain a key priority for 2022-23.

### **37/22 Policies**

The meeting received the Trust's Pay Policy and noted there had been minimal changes to the terminology to bring it in line with the recent Academy Trust Handbook and Early Career Teacher framework.

It was **agreed** to approve the Trust's Pay Policy.

### **38/22 Executive Head Teacher [EHT]**

The meeting received and noted the EHT's summer term report on the operation and performance of the MAT.

The EHT highlighted the following:

#### **Admissions and roll**

There had been a small increase in the number of pupils at GCPA with more joining the school during the year than leaving that would further increase with a full reception intake in September 2022.

The numbers on roll [NOR] at DPA had increased significantly with a net nineteen children joining the school over the year.

#### **Attendance**

The overall attendance level at both schools was lower than the attendance rates for previous years (particularly at GCPA due to Covid absences with 2 outbreaks at the school) but was in line with local and national levels.

Families were being contacted and follow up action taken for those pupils whose attendance fell below 95% unless their absence was due to parents following the government's advice regarding self-isolation for Covid or pupil absence due to having Covid.

Paul Gray highlighted that the number of unauthorised absences were higher at GCPA.

The EHT reported this was due to bad punctuality for some pupils within a vulnerable group, children arriving late in the morning were recorded as absent.

#### **Summer 2022 Outcomes – [provisional / unvalidated]**

The Trust was still waiting for National data to compare the provisional outcomes for Early Learning Foundation Stage and Year 1 Phonics Check.

EHT

EHT

Key Stage 2 [KS2] outcomes at GCPA were very high and included the outcomes of three pupils with Education and Health Care Plans [EHCPs]. The teacher assessment data for both KS1 and KS2 SATS had been moderated by external moderators from ECC at both schools. No changes had been recommended which validated teacher assessments being robust and accurate.

The KS2 outcomes at DPA had been very good in reading and writing and provided strong evidence of the improvements being made. DPA's SDP priorities for 2022-23 included a review on the teaching and learning of Maths as the outcomes lagged National outcomes at expected level.

Alison Meadows asked whether the Ofsted findings and recommendations following the recent Ofsted inspection at GCPA would also apply to DPA.

The EHT reported the preliminary Ofsted findings and recommendations were positive and following receipt of the full report, all findings and recommendations would be shared with DPA. The inspection process would also be shared with the SLT and governing body at DPA.

### **39/22 Safeguarding**

Covered in the EHT's report and the Annual Safeguarding Report for each Academy circulated with the agenda.

### **40/22 SEND**

The meeting noted the annual SEND report for GCPA. It was **agreed** to circulate the Annual Send Report for DPA after the meeting.

EHT

### **41/22 Finance**

#### **a) Managements Accounts**

The meeting noted and approved the managements accounts for the 9 months to 31 May 2022 showing the actual income and expenditure totals to date, the forecast for the year-end against budget and the explanations provided for the variances.

#### **b) Reserves Policy**

It was **agreed** to review and update the Trust's current reserves policy and present it at the meeting when considering the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2022.

EHT

#### **c) Budget 2022-23**

The meeting considered draft budgets for 2022-23 together with projections for 2023-24 and 2024-25 and the assumptions made for each Academy and the Trust. The following points were made:

#### **GCPA**

The draft budget 2022-23 recorded a surplus of £2,840 compared to a surplus of £25,972 for the current year and projected deficits for 2023-24 and 2024-25 of (£24,797) and (£36,367) respectively.

The significant variances between the budget 2022-23 and the forecast surplus were:

- Lower budgeted income (£30,827) arising from a drop in ESFA GAG funding (£16,610) due to lower pupil numbers, lower LA funding for SEND (£28,445), a reduction in donations and other income (£10,902) to previous budgeted levels. These reductions were offset by an additional one-off Schools Supplementary Grant [£23,905] for 2022-23 only.
- Lower budgeted expenditure (£6,899) that including forecast Teacher Salary

Awards based on the recommendations of the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) of 5% and higher gas and electricity costs.

- The projections for 2023-24 and 2024-25 were based on an increase in pupil numbers of 2.5% and 1.5% respectively, an increase in the ESFA's per capita pupil grant of 1% for each year and CPI of 4% and 2.5% and staff costs increases of 3% for each year.
- The projected deficits for 2023-24 and 2024-25 highlighted the need, in the absence of additional funding being available, to carry out a structural staff cost review.

It was **agreed** to approve the 2022-23 Budget and approve as necessary the 2023-24 and 2024-25 projections following a preliminary review of staff costs.

#### **DPA**

The draft budget 2022-23 recorded a surplus of £ 5,217 for 2022-23 compared to an agreed budgeted deficit of (£9,610) and revenue forecasted deficit (£8,798) for the current financial year.

The budget also included predicted surpluses for 2023-24 and 2024-25 of £25,220 and £11,790 respectively.

The improvement on the budgeted surplus arose primary due to the Academy receiving increased ESFA GAG income reflecting the large increase in pupil numbers.

The projections for 2023-24 and 2024-25 were based on an increase in pupil numbers of 14% and 8% respectively, an increase in the ESFA's per capita pupil grant of 1% for each year and CPI of 4% and 2.5% and staff costs increases of 3% for each year

The projection for 2024-25 included the costs for an additional NQT & LSA for a further additional class due to projected increase in pupils.

It was **agreed** to approve the 2022-23 Budget and 2023-24 and 2024-25 Projections.

#### **MAT**

The meeting noted and **agreed** to approve the draft 2022-23 Budget and Projections for 2023-24 and 2024-25, subject to establishing a MAT Development Reserve in the region of £5,000 to fund future growth of the Trust.

#### **d) 2022-23 Capital Funding/ Expenditure Budgets**

#### **GCPA**

The meeting noted the 2022-23 Capital Budget reported a deficit of capital expenditure over capital income of (£164,966) arising from the need to carry out urgent building work and purchase IT and catering equipment.

The Capital Budget did not include any ESFA funding from the Conditions Improvement Fund as the Academy had been unsuccessful with their applications for funding in the current cycle.

#### **DPA**

The draft budget included a capital budget for 2022-23 showing a capital budgeted deficit of (£26,044) for 2022-34 to be funded from reserves.

The budgeted capital expenditure included £20,000 for the new EYFS outside area and £10,000 for upgrading the lighting to low energy LED lighting and/or the refurbishment of the kitchen.

It was **agreed** to approve the 2022-23 Capital Budgets subject to a review of the Trust's reserves and each Academy complying with the Trust's financial regulations on procurement for each capital project.

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e) **Requests for Expenditure Exceeding the EHT's Approval Limit**

None.

**ROUTINE BUSINESS**

**42/22 Minutes of the previous meetings**

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 3 May 2022 were approved as an accurate and true record of the meeting.

**43/22 Matters arising**

The matters arising from the previous minutes had either been completed or were covered on the agenda.

**44/22 Minutes/reports of committees**

The meeting noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the GCPA LGB held on 14 June 2022.

The Clerk highlighted the main points discussed and the actions agreed of the last meeting of the DPA LGB held on 30 June 2022.

It was **agreed** to approve the recommendation from the DPA LGB to extend the school day to 3.15 pm from September 2022 to help the school to implement the curriculum in full and meet the latest requirements from the DFE.

**EHT**

**45/22 Any other business**

The Chair thanked Andrew Armour and Melissa Challinor, who were stepping down as Directors at the end of the Academic year, for their time and support in helping the Board meet its responsibilities and the smooth operation of the Trust.

**46/22 Date/time of future meetings**

The meeting noted the schedule of the proposed meeting dates for the next Academic Year.

It was **agreed** to amend the first meeting of the new academic year to Monday 12 September 2022.

**All**

**Approved by the Board on 12 September 2022**