

**Great Oak Multi Academy Trust**  
**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2017**

<b>Directors</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Term</b>
Andrew Armour		23/12/2020
Gary Benn		23/12/2020
David Boatman	Vice Chair	23/12/2020
Melissa Challinor		23/12/2020
Lisa Jeremy		23/12/2020
John Luke		23/12/2020
Sarah Mitchell	Executive Headteacher	Ex-Officio
Andrew Taylor	Chair	23/12/2020
<i>Vacancy</i>		
<i>Vacancy</i>		
<b>In attendance</b>		
Tom Bennett	Clerk	

\* *indicates absence*

*The Executive Headteacher opened the meeting with a prayer*

**53/17 Apologies for absence**

It was noted Joanna Grandfield had decided to stand down as a Director of the MAT due to time constraints and her wish to focus her available time on being a governor at Debden Primary Academy [DPA] that was currently going through a period of transition on the LGB with a number of governors standing down.

The Directors expressed their thanks to Joanna for her work and contribution in the setting up of the MAT and for staying on as a governor at DPA.

*The Clerk took the Chair*

**54/17 Chair**

The meeting noted Andrew Taylor had expressed an interest in being re-elected as the Chair of the Board for 2017-18 Academic Year. No other nominations were received and on a proposal from David Boatman, seconded by Melissa Challinor, Andrew was re-elected as the Chair.

*Andrew Taylor took over the Chair*

**55/17 Vice-Chair**

The meeting noted that David Boatman had expressed an interest in being re-elected as the Vice-Chair for the 2017-18 Academic Year. No other nominations were made and on a proposal from Lisa Jeremy, seconded by Melissa Challinor, David was re-elected as the Vice-Chair.

**56/17 Notification of AoB**

None.

**57/17 Notification of business interests/ Self Declaration**

- a) No Directors declared a potential conflict of interest on any matters to be discussed at the meeting.
- b) All the Directors completed a declaration of business interest form , updating the

**Action**

- c) All the Directors completed the HMRC Self Declaration of being a fit and proper person in being a Director and Trustee of the MAT.

## 58/17 Governance

### a) Board Membership

The meeting considered the current membership of the Board and noted there were two vacancies following Joanna Grandfield's decision to stand down. It was **agreed** there was no current need to fill the vacancies and it was important to allow space on the Board for Directors of other schools who may wish to join the MAT.

### b) Local Governing Bodies [LGBs] Membership

It was **agreed** the following should be appointed members of the LGBs:

<b>Debden Primary Academy</b>	<b>Name</b>
General Member	Damian Carlier
General Member	Melissa Challinor
General Member	Linda Stephenson
General Member	Gau Gurung
General Member - Executive Headteacher	Sarah Mitchell
Foundation	Vacancy
Foundation Incumbent	Reverend John Saxon
Parent	Andrew Armour
Parent	Joanna Grandfield
Staff	Jo Fradd
Headteacher	Louise Gurney
<b>Great Chesterford Primary Academy</b>	<b>Name</b>
General Member Headteacher	Sarah Mitchell
General Member	Andrew Taylor
General Member	Gary Benn
General Member	Jan Menell
General Member	Fiona Keys
Foundation	Jennifer Fullerty
Foundation	Bob Rust
Foundation Incumbent	Vacancy
Parent	Adele Peters
Parent	Nicholas Rowe
Staff	Amy Sargent
Staff	Natalie Starbuck

It was noted that Andrew Taylor continued to be the Chair of the GCPA LGB while it found someone to replace him. The meeting re-iterated it was important the Chair of the Board of Directors and LGB were not the same to maintain a level of independence and challenge.

It was **agreed** Andrew Taylor should be continue as the Acting Chair of the LGB and the LGB should be asked find a governor willing to be the Chair and, if necessary, find other people who would be interested in being appointed as member of the LGB.

### c) Audit Committee

The Board had been appointed the following members of the Audit Committee for a two year term in January 2017.

- Andrew Armour
- John Luke
- Joanna Grandfield
- Joanna Francis (independent member)

It was **agreed** to appoint that Melissa Challinor as a member of the Audit Committee for a two year term to fill the vacancy following Joanna Grandfield's decision to stand down as a Director.

MC

**d) Audit Committee Terms of Reference**

The meeting considered and approved the terms of reference for the Audit Committee and **appointed** Andrew Armour as the Committee Chair.

**e) MAT's Financial Regulations**

It was **agreed** to ask the Audit Committee to review and amend as necessary the Financial Regulations and recommend them for adoption at the next Board Meeting.

The Audit Committee would hold its first meeting following the completion of the preparation and audit of MAT's Annual Report and Financial Statements by the external auditors.

It was **agreed** to circulate and agree a date for the first Audit Committee meeting.

Chair Audit Committee

EHT

**59/17 Corporate/ Strategy**

**a) MAT Development Plan**

The EHT introduced the draft MAT Development Plan that she had been prepared and was being presented as a discussion document.

The following comments and suggestions were made:

- It was a very clear and would be very helpful for schools considering joining the MAT.
- The MAT Development Plan needed to link with the SDPs of each of the academy within the MAT and should provide details as well as pictures of the two academies.
- It was important to highlight the main advantage of the MAT in freeing up resources to allow the teaching staff to focus on the core provision of schools, classroom teaching and learning.
- References to economies of scale should refer to those achieved from the provision of back office services and not teaching
- The plan should include positive statement of pupils' person development as well as academic achievement
- The recruitment and retention objective should include to create an inspiring environment when staff can prosper and improve.

The meeting discussed the proposed aim that the MAT should be to create a group of Church of England [COE] primary schools.

It was noted the MAT was not constrained in only accepting COE primary schools but should preserve its distinctive Christian Ethos and welcome schools of other faiths and community based schools.

It was **agreed** to amend the draft and circulate it after the meeting.

The EHT reported she had been in contact with two local primary schools who had expressed an interest in what the MAT could provide.

EHT

The EHT had been unable to approach other schools as part of the development of the MAT due to having to spend a lot of her time managing the new building works at GCPA and recruiting and inducting the new Business Manager. The building works would take six months to complete.

It was **agreed** that the EHT should continue with “soft” marketing the MAT.

It was noted that, as the MAT has now been established, the time needed for new schools to join the MAT will be quicker than the time taken for DPA and GCPA joining the MAT. Schools wishing to join the MAT needed to first to convert to an Academy, which can take time.

Gary Benn asked whether the MAT was monitoring schools in South Cambridgeshire who may be considering joining a MAT as they could be encouraged to join another MAT.

The EHT reported there was a still high level of resistance among schools in Essex and South Cambridgeshire in becoming an academy and joining a MAT.

The EHT was under considerable time pressure in her role as both the EHT and HT of GCPA and it was **agreed** the MAT should consider appointing a separate HT for GCPA to provide time for the EHT to develop the MAT.

#### **b) 2017-18 School Development Plans [SDP] for each Academy**

The meeting received the 2017-18 SDPs for each Academy setting out each Academy’s aims and objectives, key priorities, the tasks to deliver each priority and the expected output and impact.

Andrew Armour asked whether the SDP for DPA included plans on improving DPA’s attainment results for children working at greater depth.

The EHT confirmed that she will be working with the HT and staff at DPA on improving pupils abilities at working at greater depth.

The 2017-18 School Development Plans for both Academies were **approved**.

#### **60/17 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2017 were **approved** as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

#### **61/17 Matters Arising**

All the matters arising from the previous meeting had either been discussed at the meeting or had been completed.

#### **62/17 Finance**

##### **a) Financial Position**

The EHT reported the new Business Manager had started on improving the financial management reports that would improve the Board’s ability to monitor and manage the MAT’s finances better.

Work had also started on preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 August 2017 that would then be audited in September and October and presented at the next meeting of the Board.

The MAT’s auditors had prepared their pre-audit planning work.

The preliminary financial results for the financial year showed both Academies had come within budget and had made surpluses that would be carried forward to the new financial year.

DPA had managed to turn the forecast deficit into a surplus through a range of measures

including a reduction in staff working extra hours, reducing the amount of supply teaching and running one less class.

DPA still had a number of high cost contracts for its telephone and photocopying provision and there would be further saving when these contracts ended.

**b) Requests for expenditure above EXCEO approval limit**

None.

**c) Requests for expenditure from other committees**

None

**d) Charging and Remissions policy**

The Charging and Remissions policy had been reviewed and approved in May and it was **agreed** did not need updating.

**63/17 Personnel**

It was noted the Academy's Performance policies including capability and dismissal measures had been reviewed and approved in May and it was **agreed** did not need updating.

**64/17 EHT and HT's Performance and Pay**

It was **agreed** that Anne Fisher should be appointed as external adviser to support the MAT/EHT in the EHT/HT's Performance Reviews and pay.

**65/17 Any other business**

The MAT had received a letter from the National Education Union representing all the Heads and teachers. The letter providing advice and guidance to MATs, Academies and schools on setting teacher pay awards.

The EHT recommended and it was **agreed** the MAT should follow the recommendations of the School Teacher Pay Review Board and agreed National Teachers' Pay Award and use the teacher pay scales to increase the pay of teachers who had met their performance and development targets.

**66/17 Date/time of future meetings**

5 December 2017 – 19:45 hrs

EHT

Signed by Andrew Taylor [the Chair] on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017