

**Great Oak Multi Academy Trust**  
**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018**

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<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
John Luke		23/12/2020
Sarah Mitchell	CEO [Executive Headteacher]	Ex-Officio
Andrew Taylor	Chair	23/12/2020
* indicates absence		

*In attendance*

Tom Bennett Clerk

*The EHT opened the meeting with a prayer*

**53/18 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Gary Benn and Melissa Challinor.

**54/18 Notification of AoB**

- None.

**55/18 Notification of business interests/ Self Declaration**

No Director declared any potential conflicts of interest on any matters to be discussed at the meeting or that they had received or given any gifts or hospitality that could or be perceived to compromise their impartiality when dealing with matters for the MAT

**56/18 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2018 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**57/18 Matters Arising**

**Minute 40/18 Notification of business interests/ self declaration**

It was **agreed** to send a Fit and Proper Person self declaration form to David Boatman to complete.

All other matters had been completed or were included on the agenda for discussion at the meeting/

**53/18 Chairman's action**

The Chair and Vice-Chair reported they had not taken any urgent action since the last meeting.

**54/18 Correspondence**

**a) ESFA**

The meeting noted the ESFA letter dated 18/09/2018.

**b) Other**

No other correspondence had received for the attention of the Directors.

**Action**

**Clerk**

## 55/18 Governance - Membership

### a) Board of Directors

The meeting considered the current membership and vacancies on the Board.

It was **agreed** there should be a representative of the LGB of each Academy and following the resignation of Andrew Armour and Melissa Challinor there were no representatives from DPA.

The EHT reported she had been advised that the Rev. John Saxon, a governor on the DPA LGB had advised that he had been appointed as the Vice-Chair of the LGB and felt he did not have sufficient time to be a Director.

It was **agreed** to approach Liam Tobin to ask if he would be interested in being a Director on the Board and if so to provide a pen portrait to the Board.

EHT

### b) GCPA Local Governing Body [LGB]

The Chair advised the Board had not received a nomination from the GCPA LGB for the Chair position and the Directors had agreed to wait until the LGB first meeting in September when a recommendation may be made.

The LGB agreed to nominate Adele Peters as the Chair on the basis the appointment would only be for a year, due to her other commitments, and that another governor will be nominated for the position in each of the following years.

It was **agreed** to approve the appointment of Adele Peters as the Chair for the current year and to advise the LGB the Board's preference for a governor who would be the Chair for more than one year to ensure there was continuity on the LGB.

Chair

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the LGB meetings held on 18 September 2018 and 6 November 2018.

### c) DPA LGB

The meeting noted there were currently two parent governor and one co-opted governor vacancies on the DPA LGB and the Academy had advertised the parent vacancies without success.

The EHT will be available at the Academy's assemblies to promote the role and field any questions / enquiries.

The meeting received the minutes of the LGB meetings held on 6 September 2018 and 22 November 2018.

### d) Audit Committee

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meetings held on 8 November 2018.

The meeting agreed to the committee's request to be sent copies of the minutes of the Board meetings to allow the committee to have visibility of the decisions made.

Clerk

The meeting noted the committee had discussed its role when considering the Annual Report and Financial Statements. It felt their role, when considering the Annual Report and Financial Statements, should be focused on the receiving a report from the auditors on how the audit was conducted, their findings relating to the preparation of the Annual Report, on the operation of internal controls and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

The information presented in the Annual Report and the financial information included in the financial statements was normally the responsibility of a finance committee or the Board, in the absence of a finance committee.

It was suggested the presentation and consideration of the Annual Report and Financial statements for future years could be done at a joint meeting with the Audit Committee.

It was **agreed** the Chair would review the Audit Committee's terms of reference with the Audit Committee Chair to ensure the committee's and Board's responsibilities were clearly set out for approval, as necessary, at the next Annual General Meeting of the Members.

Chair/  
AA

## 56/18 Corporate/ Strategy

### a) MAT Development Update

The EHT reported there had been a lot of change at local primary schools with a number of Headteacher moving and some schools beginning to be affected by financial pressures.

Local Authority maintained schools with less financial autonomy did not always recognise the benefits and support that would arise from joining a MAT.

Some LA maintained schools are concerned about the cost and time needed to convert to an academy and did not see any benefits of becoming an independent academy with increased financial responsibilities.

Becoming an academy and joining a MAT are permanent and once part of a MAT, schools cannot withdraw and, say, move to another MAT.

Headteachers of schools considering becoming an Academy and joining a MAT could feel vulnerable with the risk of their position changing and possible redundancy.

The EHT suggested the MAT could offer schools, prior to joining the MAT, a range of teaching and back-office services on a competitive basis that would help show the benefits that MATs can provide and promote the MATs collaborative ethos.

IT was **agreed** to continue monitoring the position and responding to interest received from schools on the benefits of joining a MAT.

EHT

### b) To receive an update on the 2018-19 School Development Plans for each Academy

The meeting received and noted the progress being made in achieving the key priorities set out in the School Development Plan for each Academy.

David Boatman asked why the Year 1 and 2 pupils at DPA were not doing as well as the others.

The EHT reported that this was due to inconsistency in teaching and learning and the need for a more robust assessment system. The DPA governors were aware and had addressed the problems by putting in place more robust targets and by monitoring this area through governor monitoring visits. School based assessment is also being developed with support from Great Chesterford Primary Academy.

## 57/18 EHT Report

The EHT presented her termly report and highlighted the following points.

The DPA's KS1 pupils' progress in meeting expected standard and working at greater depth were not good, however the progress for Year 6 was better. The EHT was closely monitoring the pupils' progress in Maths with the Headteacher.

The results for GCPA have been excellent with the Academy achieving fourth place on the performance of all the primary schools in Essex and in fact the whole of East Anglia. The Directors congratulated the EHT and all the staff who had contributed to the academy achieving such an excellent result.

## 58/18 Finance

a) **Audit Findings Report to Trustees following the audit to 31 August 2018**

The meeting received and noted the Auditors' Audit Findings report setting out the key risks that had been identified and tested, the key findings and assurance work, the resolution of the management letter points raised in 2017 as well as the management points being raised for 2018.

None of the management points raised had been given a high rating requiring the Trustees to ensure the recommendation was addressed as a matter of priority. Andrew Armour confirmed the ESFA would receive the report but were only interested in any high priority management points raised.

The report also set out the emerging issues for academies and MATs including the need to produce and provide monthly management accounts to the Trustees.

It was **agreed** to accept the report.

b) **Draft audited Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 30 August 2018**

The meeting received and approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 30 August 2018 and the Value For Money Statement included in the Annual Report.

c) **Auditor's Letter of Representation**

The meeting received, noted and **agreed** the Chair should sign the letter of representations confirming the Trustees' responsibilities on the maintenance of proper accounting records and the provision of information to the auditors, the implementation of internal controls and compliance with statutory and all other regulations.

d) **Appointment of auditors for 2018-19**

It was **agreed** the Audit Committee should review the current appointment and make a recommendation for 2018-19.

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

None.

f) **Requests for expenditure from the LGBs**

None.

**59/18 EHT and HT's Performance and Pay**

*The EHT left the meeting*

The Chair provided a summary of the meeting held by the EHT's Performance Management Panel to review the EHT's progress in meeting her 2017-18 objectives and targets and to agree the EHT's 2018-19 objectives, targets and development priorities.

The meeting noted and approved the objectives and targets set for 2018-19

*The EHT rejoined the meeting*

**60/18 Personnel**

a) **The appointment and departure of staff**

The meeting noted the Headteacher at DPA had given written notification that she would be resigning at the end of the Summer term.

AA

Pupils and parents had been advised of the HT's decision and the next step was to advertise the vacancy in January. The post and job description will be amended to reflect the new Head of School role and responsibilities as part of MAT.

The new position should attract teachers looking to further their careers and find an opportunity to take on the responsibility as a Head of School.

The person appointed needed to be charismatic, able to build good relationships with parents and the community to help grow the number of pupils as well as provide good direction and to motivate staff to improve standards and performance at the school.

The Board is responsible for the appointment of all staff at both academies including the appointment of the Headteachers. DPA governing body will take part in the process and recruitment in nominating a governor to sit on the recruitment panel and others will be involved in different parts of the interview day.

The meeting **agreed** to consider a start date in April / September 2019 to ensure there is a smooth handover, as necessary

b) **The MAT's pay policies and the structure of the pay bands to be operated and the extent of the EHT's delegation to make decisions on pay.**

It was **agreed** this should be reviewed at the Board's meeting in July.

**61/18 Any other business**

None.

**62/18 Date/time of future meetings**

- **Tuesday 21/05/19**
- **Tuesday 16/07/19**

***All meeting to commence at 19:45 hrs***

**Signed by Andrew Taylor [Chair] on 21 May 2019**