



Alderman Jacobs Primary School (Academy Trust)

AGM meeting

Wednesday 8th December 2021

MINUTES

Key:

Trustee Questions

School Improvements

Trustees Present: Cathy Carlisle (Head) Laura Holland (Chair) Elaine Crane, Andrew Pattison, Lisa Hatfield, Laura Hemmaway, Sadie Wiles, Kevin Blencowe, Eamonn Dorlin

In Attendance: Amy Ure (Governance Professional) Mark Jackson (Rawlinsons Chartered Accountants)

Meeting commenced at 5.21pm

1	Welcome and Apologies Please send apologies for absence in advance to aure@ajs.education LHO welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Joel Combes (JC) and Lindsey Boucher (LB).	All to note
2	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests Cathy Carlisle (CC) - Daughter carries out temporary midday / TA work Lisa Hatfield (LHA) - Step Son works for Newflame Laura Holland- Trust Member of Alderman Jacobs School (Academy Trust). Joel Combes (JC) - Wife, Sarah Combes is a teacher in school Sadie Wiles (SW) - CFO of OWN Trust, Governor of Nene Valley Primary School. Lindsey Boucher (LB) - Headteacher at Coates Primary School	All to note
3	Minutes of previous Meeting ~ 9 December 2020 The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record. Proposed by AP and seconded by SW. Minutes signed by LHO & SW on behalf of JC	All to note



4	<p>Agreed Actions Update</p> <p>KB was asked to contact Darren Purrell (DP) by the members to see if he still wants to be a member. KB had no response. The action is now closed and DP was removed from the Members and GIAS was updated accordingly.</p>	All to note
5	<p>Trustee report to members</p> <p>LHO introduced Mark Jackson from Rawlinson's Chartered Accountants. Mark provided a presentation with opportunities for trustee questions, these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management information for year ending 31/08/21 • Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31/8/21 • Audit findings report <p>MJ started by informing everyone that the audit went smoothly and they had everything they needed from JS and the team.</p> <p><i>Management information for year ending 31/08/21</i></p> <p>MJ explained that the Management information document is not part of the official accounts to be submitted but is an internal document. MJ summarised some of the pages:</p> <p>Page B - Shows the whole set of accounts. Total funds at Aug 20 was just over 1.9million and at Aug 21 it's just short of 1.6million. On paper there is a deficit in-year but depreciation and pension will be impacting on that. Total real funds started at 290,621 and ended with 384,728 so there is an underlying surplus better than the original budget. With 384,728 money left over, the reserve policy is 200,000 so we're getting near double that.</p> <p>The top of the page shows funds tied up in fixed assets, capital pots of money. This has gone up due to various projects throughout the year i.e. music room, fire safety. The Roof and Water tank funds are restricted to the original projects.</p> <p>Pension provision is an overall deficit but this is the same for every school.</p> <p>Nothing major of concern is the key message.</p> <p>Page C - is a breakdown of income in the year. We are up but the bulk increase is a one off. There are no surprises from their review.</p>	All to note



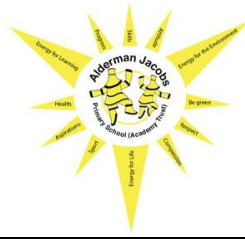
<p>Page D-F - this relates to expenditure, we are up but the bulk is on the heat/water project, staff costs are up, excluding pension movement.</p> <p>Page A - These are the key financial ratios Hard numbers in income/expenditure because of capital projects, which have gone down a lot. A big proportion of the budget are salary costs which are higher than Azets primary's average across schools but is being managed within school and is part of the strategic plan.</p> <p>The number of day's (money) held in reserve is now at 44 so much closer to the average of their clients which is 50ish days. Again no concerns.</p> <p><i>Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31/8/2021</i> This is an Official set of accounts which are submitted to the ESFA, they are a public record and must be published on the website. It's in the same format as previous years.</p> <p>Page 1 - This details the members/trustees, there have been a couple changes in the year. We started the year with 4 members and by the end of the year 1 member became a trustee so we are complying with ESFA rules in terms of separation of trustee/member. But there is a strong preference for 5 members. EFSA are not penalising yet but they may start to, in some way, in the future. The Academy is aware.</p> <p>Two trustees are employees. ESFA guidance is no trustee should be an employee, we are making progress towards the guidance.</p> <p>The report goes on to cover trustee reports and governance statements. How we organise/structure/achieve and plan forward.</p> <p>Page 7 - We need to add a sentence to the final version. There have been 5 full governing meetings in the year. ESFA handbook says if there is less than 6 we must explain why only having 5 is good enough. Trustees thought there was a meeting last year (in the last term), which was moved to January. This may have changed the numbers. We can check previous meeting dates. ACTION: We can check previous meeting dates</p>	<p>AU</p>
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	<p>Page 13 - This is the Head Teacher as title accounting officer statement to declare that they are not aware of any irregularities in finances.</p> <p>Page 15-19 - This is the auditor's statement again in relation to any irregularities in finances and to ensure they do reflect the finances of the school.</p> <p>Page 20 - This shows the official expenditure</p> <p>Page 24 - Going concern, this is to assess the schools ability to operate for the foreseeable future and as Trustees we do believe we can continue.</p> <p>Page 32 - This is a summary of staff costs and head counts. Over all staff costs are up but this is covered by the gag income. Agency staff costs were at zero.</p> <p>MJ gave a big well done as this has been a big concern for most schools.</p> <p>Page 22 - This is a snapshot of liabilities. Debtors/creditors are much higher than last year but this is down to capital projects going on. So at year end (Aug) bills were paid so these were a liability and then in Sept we were due money from ESFA to cover those costs, these were Debtors.</p> <p><i>Audit Findings Report</i></p> <p>The first few pages explain what the audit is.</p> <p>Page 5 - This is the observations and summaries that have been made.</p> <p>Advisories were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have less than 5 members, recommendation is to get to ESFA preference of 6. • The Head teacher had authorised her own expenses. Best practice is expenses need to be authorised by the chair of trustees or any trustee. <p>Trustees questioned if the Deputy Head should be included in the recommendation.</p> <p>MJ advised no, this is an error and will be removed from the document.</p> <p>Another recommendation which is ongoing from last year and we are working towards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESFA strong preference is for no employee to serve as a trustee. <p>Page 11 - This is a summary of adjustments which is put through as part of the audit. The big numbers are capital and pension related as they usually are.</p> <p>Only error for correction was just over £300 so credit to JS.</p>	<p>MJ</p>
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	<p>ESFA finance and governance side - to summarise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AFH is now called the Academy Trust Handbook. This should be available and would be useful to all trustees. The Handbook has introduced new terminology. The Clerk to the board is now the Governance Professional. <p>Mark invited questions.</p> <p>The Trustees wanted to thank both JS for her hard work pulling everything together and MJ for providing and summarising the resorts.</p> <p>The audited accounts were proposed by KB, seconded by EH and adopted by all.</p> <p>5.52pm Mark left</p>	All to note
6	<p>Trustee update to members</p> <p>Trustees and members were provided with a copy of the AJS Annual Summary.</p> <p>LHO summarised that it has been another challenging year, with last year and the continued effects of COVID but we have stuck to the 3 year plan and will carry that on over the next year. It's been a positive year and we are making real progress, pushing forward in challenging times.</p> <p>LHO invited questions.</p> <p>Members asked if we envisage any implications regarding catering.</p> <p>No, we use an external catering company, the SLA covers a 4 year period which comes to an end in 18 months. If we are looking to change over we would give consideration to tender if the company is not offering the services we want or look at offering the service in house. JS is already looking at in-house options to this to see if it's feasible/viable, that way we will be prepared.</p> <p>The Additional money for COVID has been allocated to a mixture of training and additional staff for interventions with children.</p> <p>Members asked if we feel supported by LA to catch up quickly.</p> <p>As an Academy we try to work closely with the LA and accept any support offered. The money given by the Government is not vast, it's 18,000 which does not go far.</p>	



Members asked if the gap was larger than expected when pupils came back across years/classes.

Initially when pupils returned they were still in bubbles so it made interventions difficult. We are now able to pull pupils out for intervention. We have broken year 6 into 4 separate classes. We are not sure if this can continue next year.

Members commented on the preparation that had been done and that it was clear as a parent, that all the hard work paid off in the second lockdown as the switch was really good.

Member were informed by Trustee that although it has been a challenging year things are progressing reasonably positively. Pupils are back into routines, we have pockets of struggles across the school in terms emotionally, behaviourally and academically. There are plans to close the gap but it won't be a quick fix.

Members asked if the school was ready to implement online schooling if we were closed again due to Covid.

Trustees were informed that there is a contingency plan in place, the school reviewed what worked and what didn't and Trustees considered these plans in their monitoring visits. There was a school closure due to a burst water pipe which proved the school was able to roll out effective home learning at short notice. Staff and most children switched well to home learning. It was acknowledged that home learning does not work for some pupils.

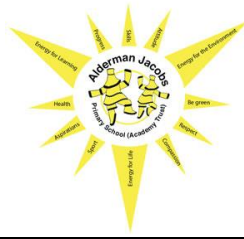
The second lock down there was more engagement and interaction. Teachers/Staff had closer monitoring and contact with parents to offer support/problem solve and Trustees considered this in their visits.

Members asked if another lockdown is the biggest threat to the plan.

We do not feel it's a huge issue, we are prepared this time but the impact will be unknown once again. We have the resources in terms of laptops and know which children need those resources.

Members asked what the sports facility is.

The strategic vision is to enhance the site. The plan is to put up a canopy, steel frame with a plastic roof to support outdoor active provision. The academy maintains a sport coach and PE specialist and at least two classes doing PE, so in wet weather, it makes space tight. Having the sports facility would allow active provision for both classes to continue outside. Trustees feel that a well-resourced school site attracts pupils & families



	<p>Members raised a point in respect of the 1% budget increase for gas and electricity this year and next year. Is this enough?</p> <p>In theory all the new work should bring down costs. Trustees will monitor this with school leaders and will review this when we do the mid-year budget review to see if we need to put more money in.</p>	
7	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
8	<p>Summary of Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed accounts (MJ) • Looked at the advisories • Reported annual summary to members <p>The members thanked everyone for everything they have been doing this year.</p>	

The meeting closed at 6.14pm

Signed as a true record: Date:
 Laura Holland (Chair)