



## EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE ASPIRE ACADEMY COUNCIL

Date: Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015  
Venue: Aspire Academy  
Time: 1.00pm

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**Present:** Wendy Middlemas (Chair), Alana Frith, Catherine Hill, Steve Parsons, Tony Nicholson (for part of the meeting) Colin Simkins  
**Together with:** Kath Buddle (FCAT Governance Administrator and minute taker)  
**Apologies:** Sheryl Cardwell, Mick Carey.

### Action

#### 1. Purpose of the meeting

The Chair explained the purpose of the meeting which was to:

- Identify the priorities for the Academy Council in terms of ensuring its effectiveness as a governing body going forward.
- Develop a reporting cycle for next year's Academy Council meetings.
- Discuss a style of governance and code of behaviour for the Academy Council.

#### 2. Identification of priorities for the Academy Council

Governors divided into groups of two to assess the Academy Council's needs against criteria in the National College for Teaching and Leadership Self Evaluation Tool for School Governing Bodies. The following three priority areas were identified:

- Development of a Governance Statement in order for the Academy Council to publish its aims and objectives to other stakeholders. This would need to be informed by FCAT's expectations of its Academy Councils and the analysis of the Governors' skills audit.
- Establishment of a training and development programme for Governors, taking into consideration feedback from a self evaluation audit, and strategic requirements.
- Strengthen Governors' role in stakeholder consultation within established mechanisms, establishing timescales and content for this.

The exercise also identified a number of matters that Governors felt FCAT should be leading on for all its academies. These included:

- A decision on who is responsible for the performance management of the Principal. Is it FCAT or is it the Academy Council? It was felt that this could be done jointly by FCAT and the Chair of the Academy Council.
- A response to the Academy Council on the analysis of the Academy Council's Governors skills audit.
- A strategically organised training programme for FCAT Governors including training on RaiseOnline, Fischer Family Trust (FFT) and Ofsted requirements. (AF recommended an online training programme on FFT which governors might find useful). The Clerk agreed to circulate the link.

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- A review of the FCAT Scheme of Delegation to make sure it was still fit for purpose.
- A Quality Assurance Framework for FCAT Academy Councils. This would clarify the role of the Academy Council and Governors' responsibilities, demonstrate how Academy Councils fitted into the FCAT structure, identify FCAT's expectations of Academy Councils, standards and targets and how progress against these would be monitored.
- A Communication Procedure which allowed all Governors the opportunity to understand FCAT wide matters including information on how FCAT was using its funding from academies and the impact of that on students, whether or not any of the academy councils were running a deficit budget, feedback from the Blackpool Challenge initiative and FCAT's response to this, and any strategic thinking behind big decisions.
- Succession planning for Governors.
- Ensuring that the FCAT Audit Committee takes into account value for money considerations as well as income and expenditure amounts for each academy.

The Clerk agreed to note the proposals and take them back to FCAT for consideration.

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The Principal suggested that Governors might want to provide input into the Academy's termly newsletters as a way of connecting with parents and students.

### 3. Reporting Cycle for the 2015-16 academic year

Governors considered the reports that they would need at different meetings across the 2015 – 16 academic year. It was agreed that there should be a maximum of two presentations from members of staff per meeting in order to leave time for the rest of business of the meeting, and that any papers supporting the presentations be circulated in advance with other documents for the meeting. Presentations should focus on the strategic, rather than operational, issues.

A discrete website page for Governors had been set up and it would be possible for larger documents to be added to this so that they could be viewed as required. The Clerk agreed to check on everyone's access to the site through Ryan Sheldon at the Academy.

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Following a discussion, the following draft content for the 2015-16 meetings were agreed:

#### 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015

- Principal's Report – perspective on exam results, enrolment update
- Exam results, including achievement of Pupil Premium and other categories of students.
- New build update and any logistics issues.
- Pay Policy – for information

#### 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015

- Principal's Report including Admissions arrangements, and any changes to the PAN for the following year, staff development priorities.
- Achievement projections
- How we stand compared to national and local pictures
- Year 7 Catch up funding and impact
- Department challenge



**20<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

- Principal's Report
- Report from Data Collection Point 1
- Curriculum update
- SEF and School Development Plan updates
- Department Challenge

**2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016**

- Principal's Report
- Report on English, Maths and Science areas
- Report on Data Collection Point 2

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

- Principal's Report
- Report on Data Collection Points 3 and 4
- Report on careers/future destinations

**29<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

- Principal's Report
- Report on Data Collection Point 5

**4. Governance Behaviour Code**

It was agreed to defer discussion of this matter to another meeting – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015 1.00pm – 3.00pm at Montgomery High School.

**5. Date and time of next meeting**

**Day:** Thursday

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015

**Time:** 1.00pm

**Venue:** Montgomery High School

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_