



**BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL**  
 Parsonage Lane Bishop's Stortford CM23 5BD  
 Company No: 07791971

**Minutes of the Full Annual General Meeting of the Academy Trust Governing Body held remotely via Teams on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 20.00**

	Name	Category	End of Term
	Annie Swanepoel – <b>Vice Chair</b>	Member	M
*	Alison Wilson	Member	14.03.23
	Leigh Lloyd-Warren	Member	22.01.24
	Jane Mansfield	Member	22.01.24
*	Fred Gray	Member	08.12.24
*	Jim Winter	Member	06.07.24
	Ruth Bamlett	Member	14.03.23
	Catherine Gater – <b>Chair of Governors</b>	Member	13.07.24
	Charlotte Sear	Member	22.01.24
	Richard Townsend	Member	03.03.24
	Vacancy	Member	
	Jane Wach	Member	09.09.24
	Gill Turner	Member	04.12.22
*	Hilary Scotcher	Member	30.06.22
*	Lisa Watkins	Member	30.06.22
	Ruth Crowland	Member	06.03.21
	Chris Ingate – <b>Principal</b>	Member	Ex-Officio
	Ross Noblett	Member	01.04.23
	Claire Pressland	Member	02.11.24
	Lee Bothwell	Member	30.06.22
	Vacancy	Member	
	Nicola Coop – <b>Finance Director</b>	Advisory	

\* Denotes absence

Also Present

Charlie Gilbank – Deputy Principal

Sam Stopps – Deputy Principal

Gary Miller – Price Bailey

Ivan Shepherd – Clerk

Item		Action
1.	<b>Welcome and receive apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received and accepted from Fred Gray, Jim Winter, Hilary Scotcher and Lisa Watkins.	
2.	<b>Declarations / pecuniary interests</b> There were no new declarations of any new pecuniary interests, gifts or hospitality. There were no interest declared that related to matters being discussed at this meeting.	

3.	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> The minutes from the previous AGM held on 11.12.19 were <b>AGREED</b>.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Matters arising from previous minutes</b> There were no matters from the previous AGM to consider.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Proposed change to the academy articles of association</b> Members noted the discussion on proposed changes to the articles of association which had been had during the FGB held at 18.00 on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Audited accounts and financial statement for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.</b> GM summarised the accounts and financial statement, the key points of discussion were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GM reviewed the management letter, highlighting Restricted Funds, which must only be spent on Birchwood High School and Unrestricted Funds which are self-generating and must be spent on furthering education.</li> <li>• Revenue recognition, management override, related party transactions, fund allocation and salary costs are recognised as being the key risks, these were all reviewed.</li> <li>• One priority one matter was identified this was with regard to a change in disclosures required around related party transactions. When the Bishops Stortford Educational Trust (BSET) was set up each member school, including Birchwood, put £3k into the account. This transaction was fully accounted for and audited.</li> </ul> <p>Some of the head teachers from the schools who set up BSET have moved to other schools and the membership has not been updated. This means that BSET now only has two directors. Either more directors have to be appointed or BSET needs to be dissolved.</p> <p>This matter has been sent to the ESFA who recognise that there has been no misuse of funds; is not considered to be a serious matter and is in the process of being resolved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NC told the meeting updated related party transactions need to be logged with the ESFA in advance of the respective transaction occurring.</li> <li>• NC added that the reconciling of school trips has been advanced from circa 4 years when she started at the school to around 12 months, with the recently cancelled trips taking priority over lockdown which impacted tackling the full backlog.</li> </ul> <p>GM left the meeting at 20.36</p>	
7.	<p><b>Adoption of the audited financial statements of the company for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020</b> Members wanted to record their thanks to NC and her team who have worked very hard in a very challenging climate to ensure accurate and detailed financial governance of the school.</p> <p>Members <b>AGREED</b> to adopt the accounts.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Consideration of the reappointment of Price Bailey as auditors for a further term of twelve months</b> Members <b>AGREED</b> to re-appoint Price Bailey as auditors for a further 12 month term.</p>	

	Members did <b>AGREE</b> that there should be an exercise in price testing and service levels to see what other audit suppliers charge and offer. This will be picked up by the audit committee. <b>AP1 – Audit committee to run a price testing and service level revue of audit providers.</b>	<b>Audit</b>
9.	<b>The general suitability of the governing board and its committees.</b> Members <b>AGREED</b> that the governing board and its committees are fit for purpose. Members <b>AGREED</b> that an exercise in self-evaluation should be carried out early in 2021. This will be picked up by the steering committee <b>AP2 – Steering committee to run a governance self-evaluation exercise.</b>	<b>Steering</b>
10.	<b>Appointment and removal of governors/directors</b> Members <b>AGREED</b> not to make any changes	
11.	<b>Any other business</b> NC told the meeting that the findings from the previous 3 ICE audits have been reviewed by the audit committee. These audits will go alongside the accounts.	

Meeting closed at 20.56

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Catherine Gater – Chair of Governors Birchwood High School

#### **Summary of action points**

AP1 – Audit committee to run a price testing and service level revue of audit providers.

AP2 – Steering committee to run a governance self-evaluation exercise.