



The Active Learning Trust
ACTIVE LEARNERS • ACTIVE LEADERS • ACTIVE CITIZENS

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST
*held on Thursday 27th May 2021
1pm via online Video-link***

MINUTES

Trustees & Members
Present:

Ms L. Adams
Prof. A. Boddison
Mr C. Bush
Mr G. Hely-Hutchinson
Ms M. Lloyd
Ms R. Weaver BEM

Mr S. Chamberlain (CEO)
Mr R. Dool (Chair)
Mrs C. Quinn

Officers Present:

Mr D. Hilton
Mr C. Paskell

Mrs K. Jarvis
Mrs S. Martin (part meeting)

THE KEY DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING ARE SUMMARISED BELOW	
DECISION	Overall Trust strategy for ITT & ECF approved
DECISION	CEO to progress Ambition Institute diagnostic programme and continue work with Unity Schools Partnership approved
DECISION	Open role of ACEO for September 2021
DECISION	Recommendations of Information Governance Report approved
RECOMMENDATION	SC to explore further links with Ipswich Town Football Club

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, NOTICE & QUORUM

1.1. Apologies for absence had been received prior to the meeting from Mr Bateson, Mr Beswick and Mr Thethi.

1.2. All apologies were accepted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1. No new interests were declared for items on the agenda.

2.2. No updates were notified for the Register of Interests.

3. CHAIR'S ACTION

Mr Dool confirmed that he had not undertaken any Chair's Actions since the last meeting. Mr Dool reported on his recent visit to Cambridgeshire schools. Littleport & East Cambs Academy, Highfield Littleport Academy, Cromwell Community College and Isle of Ely Primary School were a joy to visit, with superb facilities seen at all schools. Staff and pupils showed passion, enthusiasm and good behaviour. He asked Trustees to consider how they could begin to visit schools again as the experience is immeasurable to enable a greater understanding of the work throughout the Trust.

Mr Dool also referred to Agenda item 11.2, when a discussion would take place on whether to reintroduce face-to-face Board meetings.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25th MARCH 2021

6.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2021 were accepted as a true record.

The Action Points from the last meeting were considered:

1. It was noted that the action to produce an ITT Business Plan would be covered under Agenda item 6.
2. It was noted that the action to link Trustees with the Strategic Plan would be covered under Agenda item 8.
3. Mrs Jarvis was able to report that the Health & Safety recording at Burrowmoor Primary School is much improved.

5. BOARD COMMITTEES

5.1. Trustees noted the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 25th March 2021. It was also noted that the Finance Committee had met prior to this meeting.

5.2. Trustees noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 25th March 2021. It was also noted that the Audit Committee had met prior to this meeting.

Mr Bush asked if the issues reported at the Audit Committee were under control. He was assured by Mr Paskell that actions were progressing and the School Improvement team have been tasked with holding heads to account.

5.3. Trustees noted the minutes of the Quality of Education Committee meeting held on 6th May 2021.

5.4. Trustees noted members of the Safeguarding Committee had attended a presentation on Mental Health & Wellbeing across the Trust on 6th May 2021

Trustees confirmed that they were pleased with the structure of the committees and the work being reported to them. Mr Dool agreed, stating that the level of detail being considered by the committees allowed the full Board meetings to focus at a strategic level.

6. ITT & ECF STRATEGY & BUSINESS PLAN

Mr Chamberlain introduced Ms Sarah Martin and explained that part of her role is to manage the ITT scheme under the Early Careers Teachers programme. He went on to say that he and the Education Team have considered carefully what is required from an ALT teaching school and there are now three strands to the model, partnering with Ambition.

- ITT
- Early Careers Teachers
- Middle Leaders

Ms Martin gave an informative presentation (attached) that showed how the model fits together with the ALT Institute and meets the requirements of ITT. Mr Paskell, Mr Hilton and Mr Chamberlain are refining the income streams to provide a detailed budget plan and ensure viability. Mr Hilton reported that the team have used caution with finances as it is unknown at this point how many will come on board. He added that part of the Education Team's role will be to target members of staff for NPQ. It is hoped that the scheme will grow to become self-funding, but Trustees were assured that there is no risk in year one as Ms Martin's costs will be covered from the central budget.

Mr Bush asked for clarification on the length of time a teacher will take to qualify. Ms Martin replied that a formative assessment is expected at the end of the second year, but the course is not completed until the end of year 3.

Prof Boddison asked if there are any implications of recruiting from another provider. Ms Martin explained that the principles remain that there is no detriment to teachers.

Mr Dool thanked Ms Martin for her work to date. He added that it is essential that ALT are involved to enhance learning. Trustees agreed to approve the overall strategy and recognise the financial model. A more details Business Plan will be provided, along with an update on actions, for the July meeting.

Trustees approved the ITT and ECF Strategy for ALT as presented.

Ms Martin left the meeting at this point.

7. CEO's REPORT

7.1. Trustees confirmed that they had received the CEO's report prior to the meeting and had reviewed its contents. Mr Chamberlain highlighted the following:

Section 1: Proposed Trustee Strategic Leads. Trustees were asked to confirm acceptance of lead links, which has been drafted by Mr Chamberlain and Mr Dool and had been allocated on experience and interests. No objections were raised. Mr Bush expressed concern around the practicality of visiting schools, and was reassured that on-line meetings are acceptable. Mr Hilton will produce a proforma for visits to ensure consistency is achieved. In response to a question from Ms Weaver, Mr Chamberlain clarified the expectation from Trustees. It was noted that this area of Trustee work links back to the Trust Strategic Plan. It was agreed that Board Committees would make arrangements on how to move forward.

Section 2: External & Peer Reviews. Mr Chamberlain explained the advantage of being part of a benchmarking group to support the Trust's work on self-evaluation. He proposed undertaking the Ambition Institute Diagnostic Programme, whilst continuing work with Unity Schools Partnership to establish how ALT might use benchmarking data across one or more Trusts. ***This was approved by Trustees.***

Section 3: ALT 2025 – next Phase. Mr Chamberlain outlined some of the work he has been doing as part of the Apple Executive Leaders Programme, which is focused on skills, roles and how this might influence learning and the curriculum in our schools. He proposed that Trustees devote time in the final Board meeting of the academic year to further developing the change and aspiration model, with an emphasis on reviewing the Trust Mission, Vision and Values, so that there is an opportunity to share work with all staff at the September ALT Conference. ***Trustees agreed with the proposal.***

Section 4: ALT Institute – ITT & ECF. Covered under item 6.

Section 5: ALT Institute – Digital Strategy Update. Mr Chamberlain thanked Mr Thethi for his support in building learning communities for the ALT Institute. The next stage is to develop ALT's own pedagogy, and ensure models are sustainable. Mrs Quinn spoke about a recent course she had joined where headteachers were encouraged to consider their own practices around diversity and inclusion.

Section 6: Central Team Staffing & Restructure. Mr Chamberlain informed Trustees that Mrs Elaine Hammond had been appointed to the role of Director of HR, and has been charged with developing a People Strategy.

Mr Chamberlain reminded Trustees of the original Central Team Structure that was approved in late 2019, and requested that the role of Assistant CEO be opened as previously approved.

Trustees approved opening the role of ACEO for September 2021.

Section 7: Community Partnership Development. Mr Chamberlain explained that he has been in negotiations for Ipswich Town Football Club to link with schools to deliver sports activities, including after-school clubs and PPA cover. A cost analysis has shown that the offer from Ipswich Town could considerably reduce outgoings from schools. ALT would be expected to sign up for a two – three year period and would be able to use Conference facilities for free. A Post-16 sports based course would form part of curriculum development.

Whilst recognising the benefits of the partnership, Ms Weaver asked that Mr Chamberlain ensure there is equality for girls (as football is very male- orientated). She also asked about the possibility of developing links with apprenticeships and work experience. Mr

Chamberlain responded by explaining that a Year 6 tournament has already been arranged in July, where girls will compete. He added that the offer is for multi-sports and not just football. A Post-16 consultant will work with secondary schools on models for running sports related businesses.

Trustees approved the proposal the partner with Ipswich Town Football Club and asked Mr Chamberlain to develop this further.

Section 8: Letter to Ofqual. Mr Chamberlain made Trustees aware that MAT CEOs had written a robust letter to the Chief Regulator of Ofqual with the subject line of Summer 2021 and planning for possible 2022 scenarios. No response had been received to date.

Section 9. Quality of Education & Ofsted Reports.

A monitoring visit at Kingsfield was positive, with inspectors recognising the work of the Trust and the progress made.

Gusford Primary School has also been monitored – no report is yet available, however the feedback noted “leaders are taking effective action”. Governance has been strengthened, with a strong and committed Chair in place.

Hillside has been subject to a rigorous section 8 visit. The head and deputy ran the day well, and the inspectors were able to see quality and impact. School leaders were not defensive on issues identified, and were able to explain clearly planned actions. Trust engagement was noted and the report is expected to be positive. It was recognised that the Ambition Programme of CPD had been installed to support staff.

Action continues at Neale-Wade Academy. The new Principal is working hard to embed strategies for behaviour for learning and raise expectations. Mr Bush spoke for all Trustees when he said he was heartened to hear the Principal appointment is working out well.

Section 10: Capital Projects.

SEND funding has been agreed for a project at Chantry. The only issue remaining is that Suffolk County Council are reluctant to fund renewable energy rather than gas heating. Discussions are on-going.

The Trust communication on the planning application for the Carr Street primary project is ready to be launched, however the DfE stance prefers that this is not released until planning is approved.

8. TRUST STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

It was noted that this item was covered under Item 7, the CEO report.

9. PUPIL NUMBER RISK ASSESSMENT

Mr Chamberlain made Trustees aware that data gathered from a variety of sources shows that there is a national expectation that pupil numbers will fall in the coming three years, which will have an adverse impact on school rolls and budgets. Schools of particular risk are Earith Primary School and Hillside Primary School.

Mrs Weaver asked where figures have been gathered from and whether housing supply statistics have been used. Mr Paskell replied that the data is from local authorities. It is unknown whether housing statistics are included.

Mrs Jarvis informed Trustees that this year has seen a marked increase in parents requesting deferred entry to primary schools. This is thought to be a knock-on affect of COVID as children have missed out on a full year of nursery education.

Mr Chamberlain informed Trustees that a new development in Waterbeach includes planning for new schools. Mr Paskell will be attending a meeting in June to establish the viability of ALT bidding to run one/some of these.

10. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

10.1. **Policies.** No policies were presented for ratification. Mr Dool asked that a list of policies which indicate which are currently Trust led and which are school led be provided for the next meeting.

10.2. **Safeguarding.** No update for the meeting, however Mr Dool reminded Trustees that they should ensure they have completed annual safeguarding training, and pass details to Mrs Jarvis.

10.3. **Health & Safety.** No update for the meeting.

10.4. **Information Governance Report.** Trustees confirmed that they had read the Information Governance Report and were happy to approve the recommendations as presented.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 8th July 2021. Mrs Jarvis was asked to produce a draft schedule for 2021/22 meetings.

11.2. Mr Dool asked Trustees for their thoughts on whether, and when, meetings should resume face-to-face. Following discussion, where Trustees stated views including public health advice, the success of on-line meetings, cost savings for travel and venues and the benefits of meeting in person, it was agreed that Mrs Jarvis should produce the draft schedule with a mixture of meetings included for consideration. Mr Hely Hutchinson suggested that one face-to-face strategy day be included into the calendar.

Mr Dool thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 3.10pm.



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ACTION POINTS

Agenda Item	Who?	Action	Timeline
6	CP	Produce detailed Business Plan on ITT & ECF for next meeting	Next meeting
6	SC	Update on progress of ITT & ECF	Next meeting
7.1.S1	Committee Chairs	Consider the engagement of strategic lead links	Next meeting
7.1.S3	Trustees	Consider Mission, Vision & Values at July Meeting	Next meeting
10.1	KJ	Provide list of policies	Next meeting
10.2	ALL	Complete safeguarding training & provide KJ with details	ASAP
11.1	KJ	Draft meeting schedule for 2021/22	Next meeting