

Minutes of the Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust incorporating  
Hereford and Worcester Sixth Form Colleges

Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2019

Present: Ken Hopkins (Chair), Gillian Slater (Vice-Chair),  
Phil Douce, Sheila Boniface, Marion Hawkins,  
Toby Hooper, James Miller,  
Andrew Parsons, Shirley Tully,  
Peter Cooper (Executive Principal)

Apologies: Sallyanne Griffiths

In attendance: Jonathan Godfrey (Clerk to the Trust)

**ACTION**

1        **Apologies for absence:**  
Sallyanne Griffiths

2.        **Declaration of interests and gifts**  
None was declared

3        **Minutes of the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2019 and Matters arising**

These were approved as a correct record.

It was confirmed that Ed Senior and Ruth Scotson, acting Principal and Deputy Principal respectively of Worcester Sixth Form College, have been appointed to these positions permanently.

4        **Minutes of Executive Group Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2019**

The key issues, outlined by Peter Cooper, were related to activities to address the challenges of funding, recruitment and maintaining quality.

It was agreed that the MAT website should be a separate site with links to the constituent colleges. Jonathan Godfrey will liaise with Mark Ridgeway on its development. The individual college websites will continue to be the main source of information for students and parents.

JTG/MJR

Following discussion it was agreed that a draft Internal Audit Plan for the MAT would be produced by the Executive Principal and Finance Director for approval by the Audit Committee at its first meeting in September. The current HSFC internal auditors will be retained for this work for the coming year.

PC/SAGR

It was suggested that MAT board and committee papers be distributed electronically and this will commence from September. Board members requiring hard copies should request these from the Clerk.

JTG

## 5 **Minutes of Local Governing Body Meetings**

Issues noted were:

HSFC LGB have agreed not to work through committees but to hold 8 full meetings per year. In addition to standing items, key issues would be considered on an annual basis at the appropriate time. Owing to clashes between HSFC meetings and MAT committee meetings, James Miller will not normally attend the latter.

WSFC will retain a two-committee structure for 2019/20, comprising Finance and Resources and Curriculum and Quality.

The possibility of WSFC students taking the D of E award at Hereford was discussed. The delivery model is currently under review.

## 6 **Executive Principal's Report**

Peter Cooper highlighted the following:

Concern was expressed over the future of applied general qualifications (BTECs) in the light of the introduction of T levels. Professional associations are lobbying strongly to oppose the ending of these qualifications which suit many students in both colleges.

Both KE VI Stourbridge and Cirencester College are keen to join the MAT. It was agreed that both should become 'associate members' with senior staff attending meetings as appropriate and a governor from each college attending MAT board meetings. Associate colleges could buy services from the MAT such as MIS.

KE VI Stourbridge have an overarching charitable trust and will need to have legal agreements in place before they can proceed to an application to become an academy. The board agreed to instruct Blake Morgan solicitors to carry out 'due diligence' on Cirencester.

Peter Cooper confirmed that legal advice from Blake Morgan and from the office of the FE commissioner suggested that staff at academies within the same MAT need not be on the same pay and conditions. This could be an issue over time, however, and future pay negotiations may ultimately need to aim at achieving parity.

It was agreed that management capacity in the MAT would need to be reviewed as the MAT grew.

KH/PC

7 **Three year financial forecast**

The forecast and Finance report for May were reviewed. Following discussion and clarification these were approved. It was noted that action already taken and planned further action relating to staffing and recruitment should improve the financial position at Worcester. PC

The procedure for setting individual college budgets (including capital works) will be clarified. PC/SAGR

8 **Worcester SFC action plan following quality review**

Progress on implementing the action plan was noted. Peter Cooper commented that WSFC staff were committed to the necessary changes.

9 **MAT/college policies**

A draft list of policies was discussed. There will be a small number of overarching MAT policies covering issues for which the MAT has statutory responsibility.

It was agreed to replace the second category of policies, outlining frameworks for individual college policies, with a single document stating what each college policy should, as a minimum, contain.

It was agreed that the priority was to produce the MAT policies asap and to change the individual policies in an evolutionary manner. MAT governance procedures and the Scheme of Delegation have been previously agreed. MAT Policies on Risk management, Financial regulations and Whistleblowing will be approved at the committee meetings in September. It was agreed that other policies currently operating in each individual college would continue to be used pending their annual reviews.

10 **Appointment of local governors**

It was agreed to amend the Operating Principles of Local Governing Bodies such that power to appoint governors was delegated to the colleges:

Independent Governors are appointed by the LGB.

Recommendations are made through the Search Committee, the local Principal or other Local Governors. The Principal and Clerk follow up recommendations. The term of office is 4 years. Governors would normally serve for two 4 year terms.

The role of MAT trustees mirrors that of MAT Members with respect to the Trust Board, such that if a college board was underperforming, and the MAT cannot see evidence that the governors have the capacity to ensure that the situation improves, the Trustees should seriously consider if they need to appoint different, or additional trustees.

11 **Meetings/agenda schedule and committee membership**

The agenda plan and calendar of meetings was approved.  
It was confirmed that:

The times of meetings are Audit 3.00pm, Finance 4.00pm, Curriculum 5.00pm, MAT Board 6.00pm.  
Committee membership will be as on the draft structure circulated prior to the meeting.

**Audit:** Andrew Parsons, Marion Hawkins, Gill Slater  
In attendance: Peter Cooper, Sallyanne Griffiths

**Finance and Resources:** Shirley Tully, Toby Hooper, Ken Hopkins, Peter Cooper,  
In attendance: Sallyanne Griffiths

**Curriculum and Quality:** Phil Douce, Ken Hopkins, Sheila Boniface, Toby Hooper, , Peter Cooper  
In attendance: Catherine Brearey

Trustees with oversight for Safeguarding and GDPR will be determined at the start of next term.

12 **Training for Trustees/national governance association**

The services available to Directors following the Trust's joining the NGA were noted.  
A training film on GDPR has been sent to all Directors with a request to confirm it has been viewed. The MAT is required to keep a record of training on this issue.

14 **Any other business**

None

15 **Date of next meeting:**

**Committees: 3.00- 6.00pm 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at WSFC**

**Full MAT board : 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2019 at HSFC**