



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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CEO: W Hermon
Chair of Trust Board: S Tavener

14/03/2024

Minutes
An Daras Multi-Academy Trust Members
General Meeting
Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 12.30pm at [ADMAT Central Office/Hybrid]

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Steve Tavener, Chris Marshall, Margaret Young, Lee Moscato (representing Askel Veur)

Present via zoom: Jo Hunter (representing Eden)

In Attendance: Will Hermon (CEO), Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

As per the articles, ST chaired the meeting as Chair of the Board. He welcomed everyone and all Members introduced themselves.

The Members were informed prior to the meeting that Trudy Rudge had to resign as a member as at 4 March 2024 due to relocating to Surrey for work purposes. All necessary paperwork has been completed.

2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests Relevant to this Agenda

None declared relevant to this agenda.

3. Approve Previous Minutes from Annual General Meeting (11th October 2023)

No actions. Members agreed the minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

4. Confidential Agenda Items

None.

5. Presentation of Accounts

The year-end audited accounts as at 31 Aug 2023 were presented to the Members prior to the meeting. WH also noted the external audit report and the 2 matters raised by the auditors; one for second checks on transactions and one regarding leases. The accounts were approved by the Trust Board, posted on Companies House, the trust website and send to ESFA with no feedback received from EFSA.

Will staffing levels change? The staffing for the current year was very similar to this last audited year. The future academic year will need to be looked at as costs are always tight but staffing is remains a priority when budget setting. Our staff are experienced and want to stay in the trust which is great but increases the pay costs year on year compared to having younger staff. **Are there any issues forecasted with Duchy joining?** Duchy trust has a reserve to bring with them. TCAF bid of £385K has been submitted for trust growth and to improve the RI schools but we are unlikely to get all of this. WH noted his discussion with a senior staff member from ESFA, noting that the trust's position is fairly secure. He also noted consistency of our finances – some years we spend more, some years less but it evens out and there are a lot of positives to show for the expenditure;

SENDCO support, suitable IT, cyber security, a well-developed curriculum and 7 good Ofsted inspections.

What are pupil numbers looking like across the trust as will impact future finances? Anticipated a slight drop but looking now like we will maintain numbers and possibly even grow in some schools. More competition in Launceston for primary places and the Launceston free school in Athena trust has just had a good Ofsted. No concern at this current time for next year.

6. **Brief An Daras MAT Strategic Update**

The Trust has been subject to 7 Ofsted inspections in last 18 months; all good results. PT was a couple of weeks ago and slightly ahead of what was anticipated. Reports have been very positive, which is particularly good for our small schools as small schools usually struggle to provide a wider curriculum due to staffing, funding and resources. We allow flexibility with how schools go about their business but the core principles of the trust have set the conditions to succeed. Expecting SC to be securely good and hoping that SSCA will be good with some outstanding features. In the recent past, we have taken a school that was 'good but declining' back to good and our 2 RI schools are now good.

Duchy Trust (Callington, Lewannick and Boyton) will complete a voluntary transfer into An Daras Trust. An Daras will continue to operate as it does and the new schools will begin to follow our principles and processes going forward. All transfer due diligence, paperwork, legal work and so on has all been done or well underway. All stakeholders are on board. The biggest risk is that Lewannick and Boyton are RI schools and will be inspected in a short timeframe. We have been working with them but don't have executive control yet. **How will you achieve the required improvement?** School improvement officers, 30, 60 and 90 day plans which have already been started to get ahead of the game. From summer term, the support required will be ramped up and changes will need to be made. **Are the staff receptive?** Yes they are but there is a lot of work to do, and it will take its toll on An Daras capacity and presents the biggest risk but WH is confident it can be done.

In terms of school improvement, our capacity to do this has been increased. Trust improvement plan is in place, we've introduced Thinking Matters, we continue to use Visible Learning, and we have English and Maths hub leads within the schools. External sources are used where possible and JH (Eden) has recently visited LT and was positive about how the school is doing, how it uses its vision to drive everything and how it works with SC to share best practices. LM (Askel Veur) noted that the vision and ethos at trust level is very sound and works really well, and he has shared how we do this with other trusts. The members discussed that this sense of belonging and having a set of principles to work to is a good formula for success.

Other than the Ofsteds of the RI schools, have you identified any other risks with taking on Duchy trust? Duchy related risks are staff capacity, Boyton pupil numbers, lack of IT infrastructure due to building up a reserve and not investing in things like IT, and the risk of managing the £100K grant from Cornwall LA for building work at Callington which will be a drain on An Daras to manage this, especially if there are issues with it. All leases are ok and insurances sorted. **What about their trust IT – can this be absorbed into An Daras or will they need to be replaced with our systems?** There will need to be a managed integration. **Can their electronic record system be transferred into ours?** Some yes, but some is paper based so some will need to be uploaded to an electronic storage system. **SATS in May but they only in An Daras trust from April – what is the risk here? How are you managing this?** From due diligence results, this work is being covered. **Any safeguarding issues?** Non identified. Members discussed the matter further.

7. **Any other Business**

What ever happened with the work we did with Chumleigh Primary school? The work benefited them and they got a good Ofsted for Chumleigh Primary. WH thanked both Diocese for responding

positively to the Duchy transfer consultation. No other responses received re the Duchy transfer. A member noted that the school visits have been really good. When the Directors visit the 3 new schools (Callington, Boyton and Lewannick), the invitation will be opened to Members to join this visit.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Annual General Meeting planned for October – date will be confirmed by email once the Trust annual meeting cycle is put together in the summer term.

The meeting ended at 1.15pm.

TJH Martin

ADMAT Governance Officer

Distribution List:

Margaret Young – Member

Chris Marshall – Member

Eden (represented by Sue Lockwood) – Member

Askel Veur (represented by Mark Lees) – Member

Steve Tavener – Chair Board of Directors & Member

Will Hermon – CEO & Director