



**Minutes of the Axe Valley Academy Local Governance Committee Meeting  
held on 25/06/20 virtual zoom meeting**

Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Amanda Bujniewicz	AB		
Laura Jenkins	LJ		
Matt Brookman	MB		
Julie Paddick	JP		
Jeremy Walden	JW		
Mike Huskins	MH	Joanne Govier(clerk)	JG

Apologies / Absence (reason if required)	Initials	In Attendance	Initials
Dave MacCormick	DMC		

Signed as a correct record of the meeting: .....

Date:.....

## **1. Welcome and Apologies**

JW welcomed all to the meeting.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

None were declared.

## **3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20/02/2020**

JW will sign when on site on 01/07/20

## **4. Governance**

Governors attending this meeting wished to extend their commitment into the next academic year.

JW confirmed that he would contact LGC members who had not attended meetings in the last 12 months, to explain that their term would now cease.

Mark Lees application was unanimously welcomed. Two other electronic versions of the LGC application forms have been sent out, but not returned at present.

A recruitment drive for the AVA LCG will be launched in September 2020 directed to recruit LGC members with specific skill sets that can drive AVA forward.

JW confirmed that considering the length of his term as chair, being reflected again this year, it would be beneficial to the LGC to consider a new chair for September 2020 who will bring fresh challenge to the board and to the Headteacher. JW wishes to remain a supportive part of the LGC which was welcomed unanimously by the board members. LGC members agreed Jerry had been a committed chair and that him stepping down to a member role may be important due to his length of tenure as chair. LGC members did not feel there were current members who would have the time or expertise to step into the role of chair. JW suggested that looking within UAT for a replacement chair, who had experience on LGCs, that he could support may be a positive way to support his stepping down. The LGC wanted to express their gratitude for JW's long term commitment to the role of Chair and felt he should remain a part of the LGC and arrange a meeting with LH to discuss possible progression planning.

JW requested a meeting with LH and LJ to discuss progression planning for a new Chair of the board for September 2020.

## **5. Budget Updates**

At the end of the financial academic year 2019-2020 the budget stands at bringing forward a surplus of £7,000.

In order to achieve a balanced budget for this financial year there have been significant in year saving opportunities taken. Over the past eighteen months there has been a zero spend on agency staff. Internal cover has been used, using Cover supervisors and SLT. This has brought additional pressures on teams, but they were determined to support the trustees in becoming financially stable. This has also been the best model for providing quality cover for students. Additionally staff absence has reduced and as such cover implications have also reduced. Other opportunities to make in year saving have been taken for example around staffing changes and cleaning contracts.

'Non-essential spending' has been prioritised for scrutiny with careful and difficult financial decisions made with care throughout the year. Ultimately AVA needs to continue to improve its educational offer which is leading to increased student recruitment and this will secure financial responsibility. In September we are welcoming 133 new year 7 students into the school community which is a large increase upon the previous 5 years. We are proud and excited to welcome these students and their families into our community and will work to secure increasing numbers.

Fortunately, there have been no large unexpected expenditures, but the LGC need to be aware that due to the ageing site and services we may have some in our near future. We are working towards a contingency. The budget has been pared to the bone and requires careful management.

### Budget 2020-2021

The Government have removed the year 7 catch up grant of about £20,000. Can't make savings as used for existing essential staff and essential interventions we will maintain due to their impact. At present we have no details of the Covid catch up grant and as such we have not made forecasts without detail. LJ will update the LGC in August, as more details emerge. An overspend of approximately £30,000 is predicted; however this does not account for the Covid catch up funding that will be available or the funding for the AGP.

**Governor challenge** – As you have done such a good job at reducing costs, are you going to be expected to cut even more? LJ- We have worked closely with LH and UAT to bring expenditure in line with schools in the trust and for LH to gain an understanding of the budget. Support has been given repeatedly to manage the budget and to make savings where it is possible to do so.

**Governor challenge-** Will the independent review for PP be re-scheduled? The PP grant expenditure has been questioned by the LGC earlier this year LJ- Yes, this will be re-arranged following the cancellation due to the Covid crisis. This will go ahead when safe to do so with a full review of the current spending models and changes implemented based on recommendations.

**Governor challenge-** How have you been able to track the impact on PP students during this time? LJ- Disadvantaged and vulnerable students have had extra support during this period of time. Focus has been re-directed for these students, and has included:

- Additional time in School

- Welfare checks
- Pastoral support
- SEND interventions
- Zoom lessons for those who have needed additional tuition
- Direct support with FSM vouchers
- Food parcel drops
- Stationery packs and resources delivered
- Referrals to other agencies who can offer additional support

PP will resume supporting academic progress-literacy skills, reading, writing and other academic interventions from September. Intervention models and catch up programmes are all being considered for a strategy in September but will depend on what is allowed based on Government guidance. This will be part of the responsibility of the new deputy joining us in September who will focus on effective teaching and excellent lessons and interventions.

#### Budget 2021-2022

The government are introducing new pay awards for staff. Solutions will need to be investigated to incorporate this in the budget. We will have a contingency plan to facilitate this going forward.

\*A confidential minute was held.\*

**Governor challenge-** The central costs seem large from UAT. As an LGC we have seen tangible and felt intangible benefits of joining UAT and as such feel that these costs are value for money. Do you feel the central costs are justified? LJ - The UAT costs of 4.1% have been used to underpin significant positive change at AVA and the support in terms of personnel and systems has shaped AVAs journey toward good and outstanding.

**Governor challenge –** There is a new Financial Director post advertised on a large salary. Can this be justified when AVA is such a small school? LJ-Since joining UAT AVA is in the most financially stable position it has been in some time and that is with the support already given however financial stability has not been reached yet. The new the Financial Director post will bring strategic leadership, systems and support that is needed with such a difficult financial backdrop.

**Governors unanimously agreed and supported the budget to be forwarded to Directors. Governors wanted it minuted that working with UAT has been a hugely positive experience for AVA and that AVA has never been so stable.**

## 6. Covid updates

The AVA site remains Covid secure. This is the second week that we have welcomed year 10 back into School for face-to-face teaching. We have had a very positive 79% attendance: this is made up of 74%, 4% in School meetings, and 1% (shielding) via zoom lesson. Over the next three weeks we will be inviting year 7 to year 9 students back in bubbles with their year leaders to increase pupil contact. Tutor teams have been making regular phone calls to their tutees to offer support.

**Governor Challenge-** What is the average attendance for year 10 students across the county? LJ- there is no reported data however anecdotally it seems to be between 50-80%. Different schools have wildly different models and so comparison is difficult. It feels we have had a high proportion of students return for the summer term in Y10.

**Governor Challenge** – are any staff shielding? LJ- Two members of teaching staff are shielding, and one member of support staff is shielding due to a family member's health.

**Governor Challenge-** Will you have contact with year 6 before they start in September? LJ- All year 6 students have received information packs. Letters have been sent out explaining in detail the next steps. Zoom meetings have taken place, for face to face communication. This has given a chance for parents/carers to ask any questions that may have arisen following meetings with the transition team. A virtual tour of the School has been recorded and will be circulated to all prospective year 6 students. Staff members introduced both themselves and areas of interest around the site.

## 7. Heads Report

Extensive training has taken place to welcome students back on site. Staff had a half-day session supported with a hard copy of all relevant information, sickness reporting form, Fire Emergency Evacuation Procedures, Accident-Injury reporting form, EEC Risk Assessment, Information to parents poster and Student routines- including parent letter and home-school agreement.

No parents have been pushed to send their children in to School in line with the guidelines set out for schools. The majority have felt safe and secure, trusting us to support and supervise the children in our care. We have had contact with approximately 80% of students in Y10. It has been a pleasure to welcome such hard working students back.

Small group and 1-1 intervention has taken place in Learning Support. RTL has been in place- this has not been needed. The RTL Co-ordinator has been providing mentoring for SEMH students. Additional lessons have been arranged for critical and vulnerable students who attend due to parent's work commitments.

**Governor challenge-** Have you had/or heard of any cases of the virus in the School? LJ- No staff or students have contracted Covid to our knowledge. Governors reported that some cases had been recorded in care homes in Seaton, and positive cases have been in the local community.

**Governor challenge-** What would you do if a child became unwell? LJ- We have a secure Covid room, with full PPE, for the member of first aid staff on duty. Home would be contacted for immediate collection, and we would request testing. If this case was confirmed as positive we would follow PHE guidance.

**Governor challenge-** How will year 11 students get their exam results? Two letters will be sent out to both year 10 and year 11. They will collect their exam results on August 20<sup>th</sup> as would have happened but under government guidance for safety.

**Governor challenge-** Will you be open over the summer holidays? LJ- No, following new guidance- the children of critical workers are not required to attend during this period. What about summer School? LJ- Unfortunately, this will not be running this year. It has been agreed that AVA will close.

In September all students will be back in full uniform if the guidance allows.

The first 2 days of the term will remain as inset days. We plan to have just year 7 in on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September, as a transition day. Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> – all students will be back. P1&P2, students will be with their tutors for welcomes and timetables. Again, this is all subject to any government guidance changes.

**Governor Challenge-** How are the current year 10 students going to catch up, to be ready for their GCSE's next summer? LJ- We are in consultations with staff and will be looking to, for next year, introduce catch up lessons for year 11 timetabled as P6 up until 4.30pm. Students have been working tirelessly at home, and rather than extend the School year the students need a break to come back fresh in September with a quality catch up package from their own specialist teachers.

#### Staffing Update – Recruitment

Calvin Thain – has already joined us as RTL Co-ordinator

We have recruited staff for September;

Phil Wilson – Deputy Head

Pauline Lamond – English maternity cover

Adrian Bennett – teacher of science and social science

Jen Stockton –TA

Will House – TA

#### Staff leaving

Lyndsey Kane

Eleanor Delaney

Michelle McGrath

Siobhean McCarthy

LJ- requested to say a special thank you to all staff who had been incredible during these challenging times. Especially; Year Leaders, Site staff, Learning support and Admin teams.

**Governors requested**- an update meeting, before School re-opens on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

## 8. Standing Items

8.1 Safeguarding-Training completed by all members bar 1

8.2Chairs Update-none

8.3Risks and concerns-none

8.4Link Governors-To clarify links to departments

8.5Governor Training-Skills audits outstanding

8.6Trust Update-none

8.7Clerks Business-Arrange LGC update meeting in August. Dates of future meetings will be sent out, as soon as agreed by the trust.

9. The date of the next meeting to be confirmed

The meeting closed at 11.55am

## ACTIONS

Agenda item	Action	Who	Deadline
4.	Governors to be contacted who have not attended meetings for 6 months to cease their term.	JW	08/07/20
4.	Meeting with LH and LJ to discuss LGC chair progression planning	JW	01/07/20
4.	LGC recruitment drive	All	23/10/20
4.	Website needs to be updated with Governor photos	JW	01/09/20
4.	Calendared Governor development day re-scheduled from 11.03.20 due to Covid? Discuss rescheduling at the beginning of the new academic year	JW	01/09/20
7.7	Update meeting to be arranged (for August)	JG	17/07/20