



Viking Academy Trust (Company No.09449979)

Annual General Meeting Minutes



Annual General Meeting held at Upton Junior School		6pm -6.35pm, Monday 23 January 2023
Members in attendance:	Chair: Richard Farr Philip Graham Nick Rowland-Hill Paul Luxmoore	Member Member Member and Trustee Member and FAR committee member
Also In attendance	Jon Cleverdon Robin Curtis Michaela Lewis Heidi Russell Neil Roby Phil Votta Jo Brand Nicky Costin	Trustee, Chair or FAR, LAB Governor (Upton) Trustee & Chair of LAB (Upton) CEO/EHT & Trustee (ex-officio) Trustee, PA Committee Chair of Trustees & Chair of LAB (Chilton) Trustee & LAB Governor (Chilton, Ramsgate Arts, Upton) Trustee & Chair of LAB (Ramsgate Arts) Clerk to the Trust
1	Procedural (part one)	
1.1	Welcome & Introductions (Chair)	Richard Farr welcomed attendees to the meeting. Remote attendance had been offered by Clerk, not required so Teams function was closed.
1.2	Apologies for absence (Governance Professional)	None received. Meeting was quorate
1.3	Confirmation of 2021-22 AGM minutes (January 2022)	Minutes to the previous meeting (AGM Jan 22) were reviewed by Members. <i>Chair asked if anyone at the meeting had any amendments or alterations to the minutes?</i> None were received.



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		<p>It was noted that the minutes were accurate and no amendments or alterations were needed.</p> <p>R Curtis proposed their approval and this this was seconded by N Roby.</p> <p>The 2022 AGM minutes were adopted by Members and will be signed electronically in agreement.</p>			
1.4	<p>Matters arising from the minutes held Jan 2022</p>	<p>Passing of Alan Emby</p> <p>At the last AGM it was indicated that Upton were intending to do something to commemorate Alan and keep his legacy alive. Has this happened?</p> <p>Initial thoughts were to name the new sports hall after Alan but it was felt that, as Alan was an accountant and keen mathematician, a commemorative Maths shield would be more fitting. EHT is still in contact with his family. Item to be put on the Term 3 Upton LAB meeting for discussion.</p> <p>An agenda item will also be put on Ramsgate Arts Term 3 LAB meeting for discussion around a commemorative bench for Liz Somers-James.</p> <p>2022 AGM Minutes will be sent for final signing.</p>			
2	<p>Business (part two)</p>				
2.1	<p>Appointment/retirement of members</p>	<p>B McFarlane</p> <p>As there has been almost no communication received from Bob over the past year, either by post or by email, it was agreed that the trust needs to check that all is ok. EHT will try to contact Bob by telephone. If this is unsuccessful then a letter</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>To try and make contact either by phone or letter</p>	<p>By who</p> <p>EHT/ Clerk/ Members</p>	<p>By When</p> <p>February 23</p>



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		<p>will be written seeking his intentions going forward.</p> <p>No Members left the trust in 2022 No Members joined the trust in 2022</p>			
2.2	<p>Chair's report to include adoption of the annual report and accounts to 31.08.22</p>	<p>The accounts and audit findings report for 2022 were made available to the Members and Trustees in advance of the meeting and have been published on the Trust website.</p> <p>Comments regarding report The Trust accounts approved December 2022. For the second year running this was another 'clean' report. UHY's comments as to how rare it is for a Trust to achieve a 'clean' report was shared and CFO commended for her and her team's work.</p> <p>Chair asked if anyone had any observations regarding the report. J Cleverdon, Chair of the FAR committee, spoke about the changes to the government pension figures, and how this can distort the accounts, but overall there is a positive move of £3.2 million.</p> <p>P Luxmoore proposed the adoption of the annual report and accounts. This was seconded by R Curtis</p> <p>All members at the meeting voted unanimously to adopt the annual report and accounts.</p>			
2.3	<p>Appointment/reappointment of Auditors</p>	<p>Chair of FAR recommended the reappointment of Hacker Young as External Auditors and the appointment of PLR Advisory as Internal Auditors. The trust has changed internal auditors from Kreston Reeves as they had significantly increased their fees. P Reynolds, owner of PLR advisory, has previously worked for Kreston Reeves but has now branched out on his own. CFO has worked with him over the last year and he also works as a CFO in a MAT, therefore understands both</p>			



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		<p>sides of a MAT. The first audit will be taking place this month looking at Cashflow and Financial Policies.</p> <p>Chair asked attendees if there were any other recommendations for auditors?</p> <p>JC explained as part of FAR, CFO shares options of appointing new external auditors. Best value and satisfaction on high level of service were the main factors for recommendation of reappointment of UHY.</p> <p>FAR have agreed this and Trust Board has ratified</p> <p>J Cleverdon proposed the appointment of the new Internal Auditors (PLR Advisory) and the reappointment of the External Auditors (Hacker Young). This was seconded by N Rowland-Hill.</p>
2.4	Trust achievements 2021-2022 & priorities for the year ahead (CEO/EHT)	<p>EHT had shared presentation prior to meeting.</p> <p>No specific questions were raised prior to EHT summarising key points covered, these being:</p> <p>Test Results</p> <p>Tests results for 2022 showed a huge achievement for all 3 schools and there were good outcomes all round, meeting national outcomes. This is the first formal testing of the children post Covid and all three schools did well. The RAPS cohort that took this test are first children that have been through the whole school.</p> <p>Strategic Priorities</p> <p>This year, for the first time, the central team also have set their own strategic priorities. These are centred around raising the visibility of HR, improving staff retention, and working with the schools to help improve attendance, health & safety and overall communication.</p> <p>The common thread with the strategic priorities for the trust, central team and all three schools is the wellbeing of both children and staff. Reading is also a big focus for all three schools this</p>



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year. Key leaders meet with Chair of Governors as a 'Viking Leadership Strategic Meeting' three times across a year to aid communication across central team departments & school leaders. Priorities & challenges are discussed during these meetings as well as reviewing culture, ethos and vision of Viking.

What's working Well

- Stability of Central Leadership team & development of HR / Coaching function
- KL role as DoE, & her developing relationship with DA
- Viking collaborative practice for teaching teams (Term 2 Curriculum Inset day all VAT teachers, best practice shared across schools e.g. RWI phonics support)
- Robust financial processes -end of year audit & central finance team settled to role with schools now adjusted to this change.
- Recruitment of 2 new AHTs: SENCo @ C & EYFS leaders @ RAPS

What's not Working Well

- CIF projects at a standstill (or very slow moving) Fence & Drainage @ Upton
- RAPS new build: increase in costs have put project back (FAR meeting 12/12)
- Cleaning contract: not getting service we pay for. Impact of this. H&S & staff time.
- SENCos / wellbeing teams are very stretched & over capacity. Makes us vulnerable as a team. New appointment will help. Need to look at reallocation of funds for this growing area of need in all 3 schools. Mental Health & well-being remains highest priority for children & staff.
- Number of Referrals from GPs/other external services for schools to refer/assess/provide support. Service within school is at crisis point & needs direct intervention now (not one school but all VAT and all schools)
- Behaviour of small % of VAT children take up large amount of senior leadership time
- Vulnerability of teaching staff. Staff absence has been high. Majority of pressures external but low mood & low resilience levels



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What's taking up CEO Time

- Leadership development: appraisals, mentoring, improvement planning. Line manager to central & school SLT.
- EFSA/Auditors: prep for end of year accounts
- Supporting DA on her return from maternity & the Upton leadership team
- Relationships between leaders and their staff and between leaders as a group
- 2 vexatious parents at RAPS

Even Better if

- Recruitment & Retention of staff across all staff levels: calibre of applications low, poor uptake. Not VAT specific but nationwide & staff are leaving VAT for better paid employment.
- CIF underway
- RAPS build was on track, affordable & no issue with planning

Chair spoke about the retention & recruitment of staff being a national issue at the moment. EHT shared ways HRD and her were looking to ensure Viking remained an attractive employer.

Pupil Numbers

Again, this year, there are more school places in Thanet than children. Preliminary numbers for September 23 show that all 3 schools will be full on first choices. This is a remarkable achievement.

Chair commented that this is reflective of the success of the Trust.

Chair spoke about the ongoing relationship that Viking Academy Trust has with the press. Members look forward to getting the updates on what has been going on across all three schools.



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		<p>Members thanked EHT and the SLT for their continued communication and good rapport with the press and commented that this all helps when parents come to choose what school their children attend.</p> <p><i>Chair asked N Roby, Chair of Trustees, what the priorities for the Trust were moving forward?</i></p> <p>During the recent difficult period Viking Academy Trust has bucked the trend. We are now getting back to where we were, pre Covid, and are once again pushing targets. Relaxed expectations on attendance are now back up to high expectations. Attendance is still a big challenge for VAT. This is national and not unique to the Trust. Staff resilience also needs help to get back up to where it was. Everyone needs to be on board with this but it may be difficult due to current issues with teachers pay and the strike actions that are to follow. This will be a continual challenge as pay will need to come out of current budgets.</p> <p>Changes in the Trust leadership staffing structure will hopefully help, including having a full-time director of education.</p> <p>There is also the external pressure of Ofsted, with both RAPS and UJS currently in the Ofsted window.</p> <p>Chair invited questions to the EHT from attendees No questions were received.</p>
2.5	Any proposed changes to the Articles of Association	<p>No changes to the Articles of Association were proposed by the Trustees or Members.</p> <p>No changes proposed. No comments made.</p>



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2.6	Resignation/retirement/election of Trustees	Terms of Office	Action	By who	By When
		<p>Reappointment of N Roby as Chair of Trustees (TOO ending 12.03.23) and N Rowland-Hill as Trustee (TOO ending 20.02.23).</p> <p>Both N Roby and N Rowland-Hill were happy to be reappointed as Trustees for another term of office.</p> <p><i>The Trust Board were in agreement with this.</i></p> <p><i>All members present were pleased to agree their continuing service.</i></p> <p>Chair thanked N Roby and N Rowland Hill for their contribution as Trustees over the past 4 years.</p>	<p>Reappointment of NR and N R-H as Trustees</p>	<p>Clerk</p>	<p>End of current terms of office</p>
2.7	Questions from those in attendance - invited in advance	<p>None received in advance. None received by those in attendance.</p>			
2.8	Date of 2023-2024 AGM	<p>Monday 22 January 2024 - 6pm 5.30 - Pre-meet (Members only). Chair of AGM to be decided in pre-meet.</p> <p><i>Question: Is the AGM advertised?</i></p> <p>Yes, the date for the AGM is advertised on the Trust website from the beginning of December. It is shared with Viking parents via MCAS, school calendars and term dates and an invitation is shared with all staff and members of governance.</p>			

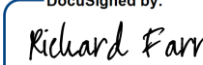


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2.9	Any other urgent business Closing remarks	The Chair shared his thanks and appreciation, on behalf of the members, to the Trustees and LAB Governors for all that they do for the Trust, and to every member of staff working across the Viking Academy Trust for all the hard work and effort that has been put in during another difficult year. Hopefully 2023/24 will be just as good.
	Meeting closed at	18.35pm

Draft Minutes signed in agreement by:
Richard Farr: Member of Viking Academy Trust

Name:	Richard Farr
Signed:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <small>DocuSigned by:</small>  <small>F24E3E4405F1421...</small> </div>
Date:	7 / 2/2023

Final Minutes signed following approval at next meeting:
Richard Farr: Member of Viking Academy Trust

Name:	
Signed:	
Date:	