



Viking Academy Trust (Company No.09449979)

Annual General Meeting Minutes



Annual General Meeting held at Upton Junior School		6pm - 6.50pm, Monday 22 nd January 2024
Members in attendance:	Chair: Richard Farr Philip Graham Nick Rowland-Hill Paul Luxmoore Chris Turner	Member Member Member and Trustee Member and FAR committee member Member (Ratified at today's meeting)
Also In attendance	Jon Cleverdon Robin Curtis Michaela Lewis Heidi Russell Neil Roby Phil Votta Kate Law Traysi Higgin Lisa Blatchford 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) Director of Education CFO HR Director Clerk to the Trust (Governance Professional)
1	Procedural (part one)	
1.1	Welcome & Introductions (Governance Professional)	R 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)	J Brand - on holiday H Beech - work commitments Meeting was quorate
1.3	Confirmation of 2022-23 AGM minutes (January 2023)	Minutes to the previous meeting (AGM Jan 23) were reviewed by Members.



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	(Governance Professional)	<p>Governance Professional asked if anyone at the meeting had any amendments or alterations to the minutes?</p> <p>None were received.</p> <p>It was noted that the minutes were accurate, and no amendments or alterations were needed.</p> <p>P Luxmoore proposed their approval and this this was seconded by N Rowland-Hill</p> <p>The 2023 AGM minutes were adopted by Members and will be signed electronically in agreement</p>
1.4	Matters arising from the minutes held Jan 2023	<p>None received.</p> <p>2023 AGM Minutes will be sent for final signing.</p>
2	Business (part two)	
2.1	Chair of Trustees report to include adoption of the annual report and accounts to 31.08.23	<p>The accounts and audit findings report for 2023 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</p> <p>The Trust accounts approved December 2023. For the third 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.</p> <p>None were received.</p> <p>N Rowland-Hill proposed the adoption of the annual report and accounts. This was seconded by P Graham</p>



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		<p style="color: red;">All members at the meeting voted unanimously to adopt the annual report and accounts.</p>
2.2	Appointment/reappointment of Auditors	<p>Chair of FAR recommended the reappointment of Hacker Young as External Auditors and PLR Advisory as Internal Auditors.</p> <p>FAR have agreed this and Trust Board has ratified</p> <p style="color: red;">R Farr proposed the reappointment of both the External Auditors (Hacker Young) and the Internal Auditors (PLR Advisory). This was seconded by N Rowland-Hill</p>
2.3	Trust achievements 2023-2024 & 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>VAT Structure EHT went through trust, governance, safeguarding and leadership team structures, along with lines of accountability, with all at the AGM</p> <p>Director of Education K Law has been in her new role since September 2023. She has been working directly with all heads of school and senior leadership teams.</p> <p>Safeguarding All HoS and SLT members, SENCOs are DSL trained. This means that there is always someone in school DSL trained at all times. All three LABs also have a designated safeguarding governor as well as trust-wide lead governor (J Brand). K Law and L Blatchford are the senior VAT staff with trust-wide responsibility for safeguarding.</p>



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Safeguarding incident - Upton Residential Trip

At Upton's recent residential trip an allegation was made by some pupils about a member of the Kingswood staff. Immediate action was taken and the HoS and DSLs worked with the LADO and Police during the investigation. Following this an internal review took place. This was carried out by the L Blatchford (HRD), J Brand (Trust Safeguarding Lead) and J Collison (Upton LAB Governor with a background in safeguarding.) Recommendations have been made and moving forward there are non-negotiables that must be adhered to for any future residential trips to take place to ensure the trust remains proactive in all matters relating to safeguarding and Outdoor Adventurous Activities.

The internal review showed that everything that could be done by Upton HoS, and other leaders, was done. There was lots of coverage about this incident in the news and on the internet. A small group of Upton parents were particularly vexatious to the HoS following the incident, both in person and via social media. This was dealt with and resulted in two parents being banned from the school premises. HoS dealt with all of this exceptionally well and has come through this more confident. She has also had fantastic support from Upton staff.

Member question: Did the HoS meet with the parents individually, if requested?

One to one appointments were made available to any Year 6 parents who wanted them. The meetings took place alongside the EHT and CoG.

Strategic Priorities for 2023/24

EHT went through the trust (EHT/DoE), central team, and school specific 23/24 strategic priorities. Staff wellbeing and mental health is a priority this year across the trust. Looking at staff retention and recruitment and how we can help staff to achieve a good work life balance. L Blatchford, HRD, is making this a priority.



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		<p>Pupil Numbers September numbers looking good, with all 3 schools are oversubscribed with first choices. Final confirmation will be available by 5th February 2024 and EHT will share with BoT.</p> <p>School Improvement SIPs are updated termly by HoS and DoE. These are reviewed and shared with EHT and other VAT leaders to ensure joined up approach. LABs remit continues to be to focus on holding HoS and their SLT to account by using SIP as the measure.</p> <p>Ofsted An Ofsted inspection took place at RAPS in September 2023 (Section 8). EHT thanked members and trustees that attended to speak with the inspector. The trust had hoped for the inspector to request a graded inspection (Section 5) but unfortunately the Covid data did not show enough progress in KS1. The report did show that overall RAPS is in a very strong place. EHT explained the timetable for Ofsted Inspectors for Chilton (Section 8) and Upton (Section 5). The mental health and wellbeing of the Heads and leadership team due to the pressures of a pending inspection is something the executive leaders are acutely aware of and will monitor. The BoT and LABs are also aware and CoGs will continue to ensure leadership wellbeing is a focus during their termly meetings with Heads.</p> <p>RAPS From September 2024 RAPS will be a two-form entry throughout from Reception to Year 6. The new build is now in place and in use. Thanks go out to S Hickman (Estates and H&S Manager) and FAR committee for all the work that has gone into this project.</p> <p>Chilton</p>
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New HoS has been in place since September and has settled in well. The number of first choices for applications to Reception is continuing to grow so having a change of head has not affected this.

Mid year reviews have taken place with all Heads and executive leaders, with Trustees on PA committee involved in these.

Upton

D Walker, DHT, has left Upton for promotion to Head Teacher at a local primary school.

All three schools have revised senior leadership teams and are rigorous in driving school improvement.

EHT asked if there were any questions regarding her report

How do we know that Chilton's inspection will be by July 2025 and Upton's by September 2025?

These are the dates obtained from the timetable Ofsted has shared with schools. What July/September difference actually is - we are unclear as the wording doesn't make sense. However, we will be in Ofsted 'mode' from September 2024 and on red alert by Jan 2025.

What is difference between a graded and ungraded inspection?

Both are 2 day inspections. A Section 5 (Graded) inspection means that the grade of the school can be changed following the inspection and each area receives a new grade as well as an overall grade. A Section 8 (Ungraded) inspection doesn't change the grade of the school, but it can give a recommendation to come back in 18 months to 2 years for a change in grade. A section 5 will also have more inspectors. All inspections are intense. A McAuley, being a new head, has additional pressure as Chilton is currently an outstanding school. D Arthur has more pressure as the inspection at Upton will be a Section 8. Ofsted inspections put a lot of pressure on heads. See comments made previously regarding monitoring well being of Heads and senior staff.



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		<p>Member Question: At the last AGM EHT spoke about the possibility of her reducing her hours. Has this happened and if so, what does the new structure look like?</p> <p>EHT was looking at the possibility of retiring after the last AGM. After discussions with the PA committee, it was agreed to look at reducing her hours rather than retiring and K Law working full time as Director of Education. We are now 6 months into new structure with EHT working 0.5 of her previous hours. EHT focuses on the business function of the trust and line manages the central team, including K Law.</p> <p>K Law line manages the Heads of School and works with them with regards to teaching and learning. Day to day there is no difference for staff, children, or parents. HoS still lead the schools but are supported by the Director of Education. Strategically the trust has more options moving forward if it wants to expand.</p> <p>Members congratulated the trust and FAR on the clean audit and RAPS for a successful Ofsted inspection.</p>
2.4	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>
2.5	Appointment/retirement of members	<p>Members leaving the trust in 2023</p> <p>Bob McFarlane resigned on 30.01.23. At last years AGM it was decided to try and make contact with Bob to see if he would like to carry on as a member of the trust. Following the meeting EHT made contact with him. Unfortunately, he has had a few health issues and as he doesn't live close it was agreed that he would step down. A thank you card and flowers were sent from the trust.</p> <p>Members joining the Trust in 2023</p> <p>Chris Turner joined as a member on 1.9.23. Members welcomed Chris to the trust.</p>



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		<p style="color: red;">This appointment was ratified by members today.</p> <p>Retirement Richard Farr announced his retirement from the Trust at the end of this academic year. He has been part of school governance for the past 25 years (and as a member of the trust for the past 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ years), when his oldest child had just started statutory education. This year his youngest daughter is about to leave statutory education and as he joined school governance, and eventually Viking Academy Trust, to give parental representation he feels that now is the right time to step down.</p> <p>Replacement Members have discussed this and are happy for any members of governance to put names forward They feel it would be better for the new member to be someone with no connection to any of the schools or the trust, and preferably not a trustee who steps up to be a member. It was felt that someone with a financial background or an educational background may be of benefit to the trust.</p> <p>Ideally, we should have someone in place by September 2024</p> <p>Members and Chair of Trustees thanked R Farr for his long service as a member of the Trust and for all his input, both as a governor at Chilton and as a member of the Viking Academy Trust.</p>									
2.6	Resignation/retirement/election of Trustees	<p>Terms of Office Reappointment of J Cleverdon, R Curtis, and P Votta, whose term of office ends on 2.2.24</p> <p>All were happy to be reappointed as Trustees for another term of office</p> <p style="color: red;">The Trust Board were in agreement with this.</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Action</th> <th style="text-align: center;">By whom</th> <th style="text-align: center;">By When</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">Reappointment</td> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">Clerk</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Action	By whom	By When	Reappointment	Clerk			
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		<p>All members present were pleased to agree their continuing service. Chair thanked them for their contribution as Trustees over the past 4 years</p> <p>Election of Trustees</p> <p>Paul Higgin. Members ratified this appointment. Paul was welcomed to the trust</p> <p>Hanna Beech Members ratified this appointment</p>	as Trustees		End of current term of office
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 2024-2025 AGM	<p>Monday 20th January 2025 - 6pm - venue TBC</p> <p>5.30pm - Pre-meet (Members only). Chair of AGM to be decided in pre-meet.</p> <p>Members spoke about the possibility of having the next AGM at one of the other schools. The logistics of this will need to be looked into due to lack of space and the other schools having lettings in the evenings.</p>			
2.9	Any other urgent business Closing remarks	<p>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 2024/25 will be just as good.</p>			



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	Meeting closed at	18.50 .pm
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:	20/3/2024	
Final Minutes signed following approval at next meeting: Richard Farr: Member of Viking Academy Trust		
Name:		
Signed:		
Date:		