



**Appendix One  
Minutes of the Academy Committee Meeting  
held on Wednesday 30 September at 7.30am  
via Microsoft Teams**

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/ when
AC/01/2021	<p><b>Training – Scheme of Delegation with Alison Elway</b></p> <p>Alison Elway projected the updated Scheme of Delegation (SoD) for the governors to see. It was explained that the document has not been reviewed for a long time and how there is no set procedure or template for a SoD so is completely the Trust’s decision as to how it is framed. The Diverse Academies SoD describes what the trustees, their committees and the academy committee governors do all the way down to the CEO. Its then down to Dave Cotton, CEO, as to how he delegates those responsibilities downwards which is typically done through policies and within the policies it will state who does what.</p> <p>Within governance there are 4 strategic functions for both trustees and academy committee governors that make sure governance is an integral part of the Trust business. Previously there has always been 3 key functions with the fourth being a recent addition within the last year. The fourth is; <i>Engage with stakeholders, parents/carers, staff and students and the wider community.</i></p> <p>Part of Mr Cotton’s vision as CEO is that the communities are at the heart of everything. As well as the strategic functions, all trustees, their committees, and academy committees must adhere to the Nolan Principles. The trustees and the trust also have to adhere to the charity commission rules and the independence school standards. It was highlighted to governors all the documents they could read with the focus on the DfE handbook, although an update is expected soon, and the Trust governance handbook and Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Mrs Elway then confirmed to the governors that the members in the Diverse Academies Trust are akin to shareholders and ultimately their main role is to make sure the trustees are holding the chief executive to account. Their position is a hands-off role and they only attend an AGM where they ask the chair of trustees to report on how the trustees are fulfilling their duties. There are currently 3 members, with a fourth due to join in the coming weeks. The academy financial handbook states there should be 5 so the Trust is looking for one more. The Trust board are the ones who are accountable within the organisation to Ofsted and the DfE etc if there are any issues. To help with the number of duties that need to be carried out they then appoint board committees and academy committees to carry out some delegated duties. There are still some jobs which are unable to be delegated, some of which are the charitable trust regulations and companies house.</p> <p>Mrs Elway then moved on to the roles and responsibilities of the Academy Committee and emphasised that nothing had majorly changed from the</p>	



previous scheme of delegation. The small change has been that the roles and responsibilities have now been split into the 4 key areas as noted above and that as governors they need to continue to review and challenge the senior leaders. As in previous years, the agendas will be set to ensure they are meeting the 4 key areas across the year. It was confirmed how as a trust there has always been link governors in safeguarding, health & safety and EVC but there must also be a SEND and careers link governors too, although the careers link governor is more specific to secondaries. Governors can also be asked to be panel members if needed, especially in any disciplinary hearings, complaints and any other concerns which might reach the academy committee level.

Where the financial performance is involved it was highlighted that the main role for the academy committee governors is to check on how they are dealing with the allocated budget and curriculum led financial planning. Governors also need to be ensuring they are challenging the Principal and Executive Principal on how they are spending the Pupil Premium and other benefits to ensure the money given is being used in the right area and affecting those children directly. By doing so the governors can then highlight any cause for concern to the Trust board as well as looking at the impact and outcomes from the financial performance.

The Terms of Reference for the trust are more for the clerks to monitor and ensure the governors and Trust board are dealing with all duties effectively of which one of the main duties is the membership. On an academy committee there needs to be a minimum of 5 governors and a maximum of 10. Within the Articles of Association it states there needs to be 2 elected parents, 1 staff governor (although this position is optional and is at the discretion of the chair) and up to 7 or 8 appointed governors depending on whether there is a staff governor. Both the Executive Principal and Principal must attend every academy committee meeting.

In the new Scheme of Delegation, there has been an update on the terms of office of which will come into effect from January. From then the maximum term of office is 2 x 4-year terms but when governors have completed this term, they are able to transfer to another academy committee or apply to be a Trustee if there are any vacancies. If you are in the position of being the chair, then you can serve an additional 4-year term of office. Vice-chairs and staff governors are also now optional and are at the discretion of the chair. It was also re-emphasised that the governors must attend a meeting within a 6-month period and if there is no good reason for non-attendance the governors can be removed from the committee.

*Sarah Cooper joined the meeting at 7.49am.*

At the end of each academy committee meeting, the governors are asked to complete a report to the Governance & Partnership committee for anything that the trustees need to be made aware of. Mrs Elway did confirm it is fine should there be nothing to report. Governors were reminded that trustees also have a strategic role so when completing the document, it needs be



	<p>items the trustees can deal with. If there is anything operational that needs actioning, then the Executive Principal and Principal need to action via their routes.</p> <p><b>The Chair advised the governors</b> that it is a large document, but it is key to understand where the governors sit with attention being drawn to page 20 / point 8.6 where it capsulates everything governors do. It was stressed that the governors need to understand how they fit into the bullet points, so they were advised to have a look and inform Mrs Webb if there were any concerns.</p> <p>Mrs Elway then updated the governors about the Trust governor training plan. This year things are going to be done slightly different, so it is more direct training on a range of subjects across the trust. The training sessions will be offered the week before the academy committee meetings start. Next term the training will be on SEND and the PP strategy, then in the academy committee meeting, the Principal will highlight how they are implementing this at a local level. By operating it this way it will mean that all governors have had the same training which will help should they want to move to another academy once their term of office is completed.</p> <p><b>The Chair highlighted</b> to the governors about the recent trust safeguarding training where only the chair had attended. All governors were asked to catch up on the recording from the session. The session had provided questions that the governors could ask the academy which are what Ofsted will be looking for.</p> <p>Clerk to distribute the recording.</p> <p><i>Mrs Elway was thanked for her attendance and she left the meeting at 8.02am.</i></p>	<p><b>Clerk / govs</b></p>
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