

**Review Meeting covering agenda, reports and actions arising from papers for cancelled Executive Board and Finance/Resources Committees**

**13 December 2017**

Present: Dick Whitcutt DW (Chair of above); Douglas Mitchell DMI (Principal); Richard Perry RJP (Vice-Principal)

1. The scheduled meetings of the above Committees for 13<sup>th</sup> December had been cancelled at short notice due to the inclement weather conditions and a high number of apologies for absence having been received since the original change of date.
2. Previous minutes, actions arising and reports tabled for both meetings were reviewed for areas where it might not be appropriate to defer all consideration to the next scheduled date (February 8<sup>th</sup>). It had not been thought feasible, in view of the imminent festive season, to re-schedule these meetings during the remaining week of term - and after New Year the next scheduled meeting date would be too close.

Aspects discussed are noted under headings below – these include items from both meetings.

3. Swanage Trip

The year 13 residential trip to Swanage from 28 to 29 March had been agreed at the last meeting of the Executive Board subject to perusal of risk assessment. DW had now done this on behalf of the Executive Board with no issues arising. Final planning for the trip could now proceed.

4. Auditorium

DMI showed the promised photographs of the auditorium in use for a number of purposes, including the important and increasingly popular “study hall”, which takes place before school start in the morning and after lessons in the afternoon – with typical attendance of 50 (am) and 100 (pm) students. The help available via the (voluntary) study hall initiative was making a very important contribution to student achievement. The high take-up by students of this opportunity was an excellent tribute to the atmosphere of motivation and commitment now prevailing at ATA.

5. Curriculum

This was discussed in some detail but will be aired again at the February meeting. The background is that the new Chief of Ofsted has been expressing concern about over-constraint of students’ subject breadth (and future options) at an early age. This arises by schools cutting the time studying a broader curriculum at Key Stage 3 down to two years, then limiting subjects taught to a smaller number in KS4 (at an earlier age than previously) to allow three years of study for GCSE exams. This seems a valid criticism in schools where students in KS4 concentrate on a small number of GCSEs but we would defend the shorter KS3 that we have adopted by pointing out that we insist on students maintaining a wide range of GCSE studies at KS4 with 10 or 11 courses offered to each student as discrete subjects. Our longer school day and range of after-school learning support enables this in comparison with the schools that are attracting critical comment. However, we need to discuss further with parent members at the February meeting when it is hoped that Jennifer Calvert will be able to lead the presentation and discussion originally scheduled for the present meeting.

6. Cladding on ATA buildings

Building analysis has been ongoing. No concerns were expressed by a recent DfE general review but a specialist contractor will still be hired when one is available to give a definitive view on external cladding at ATA. Such contractors do not prioritise buildings below the height thought to be the minimum for fire safety issues to arise from the void between cladding and building and are hence very over-committed to higher rise buildings. We will nevertheless, for full assurance, pursue this - although DW was convinced by the school management view that there is little cause for any concern in this area.

7. Contracts

There were no contracts above the school's own authority that needed urgent approval by the Finance and Resources Committee. For information, Tyco/ADT was already agreed at the previous FRC to undertake the upgrade to the security system, but further representations based on ADT's long association with the Academy's security installations produced a welcome further discount. This made it the lowest quote as well as the most logical for compatibility with existing equipment.

8. Documents previously circulated for comment

There had been no further comments from members of the FRC on the draft Annual Report and Financial Statements. These were now in the hands of Trustees for finalisation. Similarly there had been no comment from members on the draft Anti-Fraud policy though RJP had already suggested to members that its perusal and adoption could be deferred to the February meeting.

9. Other matters in reports for the meeting

RW expressed appreciation for the staff-authored reports tabled as part 3 of the Principal's report. The very positive settling-in and excellent start of the new Year 7 cohort was excellent news; the Term 1 review of the sixth form showed good engagement and excellent attendance, along with benefits from more frequent tracking and intervention for students' achievement. The report on progress with the Healthy Schools application was important, in the light of more attention being given to this in judging schools as well as the obvious individual benefits. The ATA response to the previous National review of PHSE education's focus on mental health issues was also important to note, insofar as a strategy had been under development and initiatives completed over the last two terms which gave increased focus to this area in assemblies and in the year 7 and 8 CPSE curriculum, as well as in staff training.

A brief review of Exclusions and Accident reports revealed no worrying patterns for Executive Board attention.

DW 16/12/17