



Kaleidoscope MAT Annual General Meeting

held on Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at 5.30 p.m.
Becket Primary School, Tavistock Road, Weston super Mare, BS22
6DH

Present:

Members:

Ian Blackburn – Chair of Members (IB)
Anne Davey (AD)
Graham Briscoe (GB) attending as proxy for Diocesan Corporate Member
on behalf of Ed Gregory (EG)

Trustees:

Tristan Cogan – Chair of Trust Board (TC)
David Amos (DA)
Jane Barry (JB)
Lyn Gilbert (LG)
Walter Lewis (WL)
Clive Wilson (CW)

KMAT Staff:

Simon Marriott – CEO (SM)
Jo Walters – CFO (JW)
Kerrie Brueford – SFO (KB)
Aimee Cooper – Company Secretary (AC)

By invitation:

Luci Amos, Executive Head Becket & Hutton CE Primary Schools
Ryan Aves, Chair of LGB Worle Village Primary School
Zoe Bembridge, Head of School Becket Primary School
Emma Bray, Headteacher Crockerne CE Primary School
Sue Elliott, Executive Head St Martin's CE & Worle Village Primary
Schools
Juliet Evans, Teacher & Staff Governor Crockerne C of E Primary School
Kerry James, Acting Headteacher Christ Church CE Primary School
Thomas Johnson, Co-Chair of LGB Ashcombe Primary School
Rachel Jones, Head of School Worle Village Primary School
Chris Penny, Headteacher Ashcombe Primary School
Tracey Thomas, Head of School St Martin's CE Primary School

Action

1 Welcome

- 1.1 The Chair for the Annual General Meeting was Ian Blackburn (IB), Member.
1.2 IB welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2 Disclosures

There were no disclosures of interest raised with regard to items on the agenda.

3 **Apologies for absence**

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from ES and EG (GB attending as proxy with signed proxy documentation received).

3.2 On confirmation of quorum being met, the Chair declared the meeting open.

4 **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 25 January 2023**

The Minutes of the AGM held on 25 January 2023 were accepted and recorded as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Proposer: IB

Seconder: AD

Unanimously agreed.

5 **To receive the annual accounts of the company for the period to 31 August 2023**

5.1 JW introduced the item and presented a financial overview of the 2022-2023 academic year before moving on to the final audited accounts.

5.2 Achievements/projects over the year (photos shared):

- Ashcombe new build – As previously reported, DfE agreed funding of £5.4m for new building support – this is making good progress and we have had great support from contractors. This will be a great asset for the school on completion.
- Ashcombe literacy hub – this has now been installed following an ongoing working partnership with the Hargreaves Foundation.
- Crockerne nurture hub – secured with support from Local Authority funding. A beautiful and peaceful learning space has been installed to support the school.
- Becket garden project – £50k donation received from Alliance Homes – consisting of a beautiful garden area plus log cabin and growing area for staff and pupils to learn and enjoy.
- Christ Church successful CIF application of £268k for heating and plumbing improvements throughout the school.
- Further achievement to note - Positive SRMA visit following ESFA request linked to UCS funding agreed for Ashcombe Primary. It was noted that we were well prepared for the audit and the recommendations made supported Kaleidoscope's existing strategic planning.

5.3 Challenges:

- Funding – some schools continue to note a decline in pupil numbers resulting in reduced funding to support school operations.
- Absences – decreased capacity and staff cover alongside budget pressure.

- Rising costs – energy and catering are key examples of this.
- Repair and maintenance – works required have increased along with increased costs for materials and services.
- Additional support – rising numbers of SEN children and support required.
- Recruitment – continues to be a national challenge.

5.4 The accounts were presented to the meeting for consideration. They had been circulated to Members for inspection and are also available on Kaleidoscope's website.

JW presented the accounts and the Key Issues for Discussion Document "KIDD".

5.4.1 External auditors, Bishop Fleming, have completed their audit. The reports along with a full set of financial accounts have been circulated to members for inspection and can be found on the Kaleidoscope website. Submission of the annual accounts has been completed along with the Annual Academy Return, meeting the DfE deadline of 31 December 2023.

5.4.2 In Summary- the audit outcome is as follows:

- The audit process went smoothly – with nothing to bring to attention to Trustees.
- Kaleidoscope received a clean and unmodified audit report.

Key risks tested during the audit process:

- Management override of controls
- Fraud in income recognition
- Unauthorised transactions
- Related parties
- Unauthorised borrowing or leases

Auditors confirmed that no material errors were identified within any of these areas.

- Management letter – shows 'no new management letter points identified during the audit'
- Prior year management point was resolved with no similar errors identified.

5.4.3 Year end 31 August 2023 Summary document shared and summarised:

- Net increase for the year of £226,966 at year end
- Total pension reserve has reduced which is positive – currently a deficit of £2,238,000
- Balance sheet funding – increases noted for the financial year relating to capital grants for Ashcombe and Christ Church's CIF
- Carry forward reserves – total available reserves (including net increase) are £1,455,667 equating to 1.4 months expenditure, which is consistent with our reserves policy. We are aware that Ashcombe

project contribution of £270k is included within these reserves along with £82k of restricted funds

- Reserve position remains strong – this is due to tough financial management and budgetary controls being used
- We are in a good position overall but are aware of further and longer-term pressures with minimal room for movement – expecting funding to reduce in line with declining pupil numbers, school estates must be kept in good condition, capital funding is minimal for us so must be monitored closely, changes to top-up funding awarded by the Local Authority
- Our overall aim is for all KMAT children to enjoy the same educational experience.

5.4.4 JW summarised to confirm that we are pleased with the outcome of the financial audit. Thanks were given to schools and bursars for their support and to the central team for their hard work.

5.5 It was **RESOLVED** by Members that the accounts and annual report for the financial year ended 31 August 2023 be received.

6 To confirm the appointment of the external auditors of the company

6.1 Members were asked to confirm the appointment of the external auditors of the company.

6.2 It was **RESOLVED** that Bishop Fleming be appointed as Auditors to the company for the financial year ending 31 August 2024 and until such time that Bishop Fleming resign from office or are removed by the Members under provision of the companies Act 2006 or are deemed not re-appointed under the provision of the Companies Act 2006 and that the Trustees be authorised to determine their remuneration.

6.3 It was **RESOLVED** that Audit and Risk Committee's report on the matters specified at paragraph 4.15 of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023 be received. The signed report had been shared with Members and Trustees and is also available on the Kaleidoscope website.

7 Summary of the year and outlook for the year ahead

7.1 Meeting handed to SM.

7.2 Organisation summary:
Kaleidoscope 5Cs diagram was shared – this is our focus point for all KMAT decision making and values.

Overview of the Kaleidoscope Central Team was shared – we have a lean but efficient central team and work closely with schools to support them.

Governance structure diagram was displayed.

There have been some changes following the last Scheme of Delegation review – we now have a Chairs Forum and a Church Schools Forum. SIAMs inspection and MAT support was outlined for those not familiar with Church School requirements. The Church Schools Forum meets 3x per academic year to support Church schools within the Trust – feedback has been positive thus far.

All of our schools, Board and sub-committees work closely and collaboratively.

ELT summary diagram was shared – each member has a remit and works hard to develop and monitor key areas across the MAT. This model has been running for a couple of years and is working really well – huge amounts of trust across schools who do a fantastic job of working together. Leaders work with the CEO and set directions based on DfE guidance and expectations. Teams support these key areas.

Subject networks leads diagram shared – we are continuing to work on developing core best practice. This approach is working positively and evolved over time. We always strive to take views and expertise from across the MAT and over our 7 schools.

7.3 Review of the Year

7.3.1 COVID and Lockdown Legacy:

Challenges continue to be faced due to the legacy of COVID and school lockdowns.

These include:

- Catching up / tutoring
- Wellbeing / safeguarding – concerns have significantly increased and this is manifested in many different ways across schools
- Re-establishing community
- Pupil and staff absences – attendance and staff absences with schools working hard to manage this. Schools were thanked for working through challenging times.

Buildings / Estates:

For a small MAT, we've had a lot of success and developments in terms of buildings over the last year:

- Ashcombe build
- Christ Church heating – CIF bid – annual bids to be submitted due to smaller schools not in receipt of capital funding (good success rate with these)
- Crockerne Nurture Hub
- Resubmission of bids for St Martin's for heating and Becket for toilet refurbishments

7.3.2 Christ Church Nurture Hub:

Crockerne nurture hub installed last year. A bid was also submitted for Christ Church which was successful and a two-story extension being installed to replace outdated existing portakabin is within the planning stages (plan shared). Upstairs room will be for Y6 class and Nurture Hub will be located on the ground floor of the new building.

7.3.3 Ashcombe Literacy Hub:
Ashcombe have a very positive link with Hargreaves Foundation for support with installation of Literacy Hub but also with additional learning support for pupils.

7.3.4 School Ofsted inspections:
Section 5 inspections took place over the year at Christ Church and Crockerne – both outcomes were Good.
Well done to each of the schools involved.

7.3.5 St Martin's SIAMs inspection:
SIAMs inspection took place in November 2023 and received very positive feedback under the new framework. Christian values were noted as being manifested across the school in all areas.

7.3.6 School Leadership changes:
Many leadership changes took place in the last academic year affecting 5 out of 7 schools. Appointments were handled internally and evidence development opportunities within Kaleidoscope. Recruitment was challenging – applications were x2 external candidates only for one position advertised.

7.3.7 Headline Plan 2023 – 2025:
Table shared detailing focus areas for 2023 to 2025.

Some key areas highlighted:

- Raising standards – this is a key area of focus. Outcomes are currently in line with national averages and we are aiming to improve and build on these.
- Estates management – schools are having to conduct many checks internally; more support will be coming from the central team moving forward.

7.3.8 INSET Day – KMAT Learning Festival:
Developing staff teams and engaging with latest research. Learning festival across the MAT put together by CP in January 2024 which was really positive.

We continue to have lots of staff that want to develop, conducting training and CPD.

7.3.9 Some Successes over the year:

- Embedding ELT
- Governance reorganisation
- SIAMs
- Ofsted inspections
- EYFS approach
- Curriculum milestones
- Behaviour curriculum
- Safeguarding
- Staff development

Due to our collaborative approach, we know our schools well and this really benefits our schools to support them and know where issues are.

7.3.10 What is putting pressure on our children, families and schools? – CST:

- Negative legacies of COVID
- Impacts of inflation
- Large increases in number of children experiencing mental ill-health
- School workforce recruitment and retention crisis

Shared to give a national overview of similar challenges that we are facing.

7.4 Current areas of focus / challenges:

- Ashcombe building – completion of works in time and within budget (a few delays due to badgers and supplier delays) – project management team and contractor managing this well
- Declining pupil numbers in North Somerset – hitting schools across the area
- Longer term estates conditions – limited funding and expectations to find money within existing budgets
- Uncertain finances in the longer term – not always aware of what to expect and changes, e.g. SEND funding not known at point of setting budgets
- Recruitment and retention
- SEND - a huge issue nationally and working hard to manage this
- Expansion and fast shifting landscape in terms of MATs.

7.5 Thanks:

Thanks to Members, Trustees and Governors who give up their time to support schools and work to benefit children.

Thanks to school leaders – regular meetings held and networking support.

Thanks to all staff across schools.

Thanks to the central team.

8 **Pre-submitted questions or other business**

8.1 Pre-submitted questions:

- 8.1.1 **Q As we can see, the Trust have had many successes, as shown, over the last year, my question focuses on areas that have been hinted at – expansion. You are a small, niche Trust player and the challenges raised are true in terms of the upcoming MAT landscape. You have distinctive, positive outcomes so far, however, the ability to flourish long term is in question due to drops in pupil numbers and no local schools left to join. What have you been doing to prepare for this?**
- A This continues to be a key aspect within our Regional Directorate meetings held. We are working to the DfE guidelines of strong trusts and being assessed within clear indicators. They talk about strong trusts, sometimes in relation to size but even some larger MAT's are in**

financial difficulty with poor outcomes and poor inspection findings. 93% of North Somerset is academised but not all of Somerset – we have spoken to the Diocese within reviews for their support in this area. Our Board are open-minded but always thinking about what is best and works best for Kaleidoscope. We have also received positive feedback from Bishop Fleming in comparison to other MATs. It is difficult to predict in current political climate, but we are doing our best to provide the best for our pupils and continually monitoring and evaluating against changes.

Answer feedback included that one of the main challenges over next 2-3 years is declining pupil numbers, which was agreed.

Q Your finances appear to meet needs at present – however, successful and ongoing CIF bids are looking to be an ongoing challenge. How will you manage this?

A This seems to be a national challenge as highlighted in the recent Panorama documentary. We will continue to prioritise what we can and cannot afford and will work hard to submit bids as required. There is difficulty in funding due to funds being swallowed up for the current financial year by RAAC issues. We will aim to re-evaluate and adapt as needed.

GB thanked SM for answers to challenging questions.

8.2 Chair of Trustee's closing remarks:

TC thanked all for their contributions to the AGM and to the successes over the academic year.

It was acknowledged that the year had been massively challenging for all schools – nice to see many familiar faces present from all schools.

A huge thank you for keeping schools as a constant for pupils – schools are being increasingly asked to do this. This is very much recognised and acknowledged by the Board.

It has been around 7 years since the formation of Kaleidoscope – a deliberately small team was decided at the beginning to try something different to LA model. We faced a lot of scepticism for this, it has been nice over the last year to see that the MATSE, which was positive, supported this. The SRMA audit and annual financial audits demonstrating a strong financial position.

Wouldn't be a small MAT without all employees wearing at least 2 hats – subject networks and our ELT model works with extra effort from many which is deeply appreciated.

Thanks to Members, Trustees and Governors for giving up their time – please pass on thanks to others within schools; volunteers and staff for all that they do for their pupils and communities.

IB thanked TC and closed the meeting.

Action

9 The meeting closed at 6:23pm.

Signed:

Page 9 of 9

Date: