

**THE DOMINIC BARBERI MAC**  
**MINUTES OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> DIRECTORS' MEETING**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2014 AT ST. THOMAS MOORE**

**Present:** Katherine Powley (F, Chair) KP  
Angela Anderson (F) AA  
Chris Bevan (F) CB  
Sue McGarry (Staff) SMcG  
John Hussey (Ex. Principal) JH  
Breda Bowles (Principal) BB  
Duncan Marshall (C.S.) DM  
Hazel Murray (F, V.C.) HM

**Apologies:** Roberto Barressi (F) RB  
David Forster (F) DF  
Father John O'Connor (F) JOC  
Robert Dick (Parent) RD  
John Kirwan (F) JK

**In Attendance:** Liz Hayes (Clerk) LH

The meeting opened at 7.30pm.

The meeting was Quorate.

**1. Welcome and Opening Prayer**

KP welcomed all those present to the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the directors. BB opened the meeting with a prayer.

**2. Apologies, Declarations of Pecuniary Interests & AOB**

Apologies had been received and were accepted from RB, RD, DF, JK and JOC.

BB declared an interest in item 13b of the agenda.

There would be three items of AOB to discuss.

**3. Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Last Meeting**

There was one amendment to be made to these minutes, before they could be approved.

**ACTIONS: LH would make the necessary amendment and would forward the minutes again to all Directors.**

**KP would sign and date them as an accurate record of that meeting, and give them to DM for filing.**

**4. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda and On-going Actions**

- **RD would send all Directors more detail about Governance self-assessment.**
- **DM would forward the Top Slice expenditure report to all Directors.**
- **DM would clarify the Staff Pay Policy, in particular the Teaching Assistant pay guide for the Thame partnership.**

## **5. MAC Development and Vision**

CB voiced his concerns that the MAC is not strategically well set up, and would therefore not be well placed for an OFSTED visit. He said that the Board of Directors should prioritise the development of its strategic vision, before operational decisions could be made in light of this vision. He said that it is the responsibility of all the Directors to ensure the progress of each academy within the MAC. CB feels that the vacuum left by the Local Authority has not been filled, and is concerned that the H.M.I. may think that the MAC is a supported academy, which it is not. A supported academy legally has to employ a company as a School Improvement Partner (S.I.P.). CB said that the MAC could not employ a company as a S.I.P. because, as it is not a supported academy, it has no funding to do this. However, the MAC should employ an independent S.I.P., whose first task could be to help the Directors to agree the strategic vision for the MAC.

HM said that she likes the idea of an external view of the MAC, and that the support and guidance of an external S.I.P. would be useful. She agreed that it would be important for Directors to be clear about the plans and progress for each academy within the MAC, and that she would like to see the Board working collaboratively with an external advisor.

SMcG agreed. In addition, she emphasised the priority of raising the profile of the MAC across all the academies.

BB and JH said that the idea of an external S.I.P. had been discussed at the last Principals' meeting. All the Principals had submitted data for all their year groups' Teaching and Learning in Literacy and in Maths. In most of the academies, Writing and Maths gave the most cause for concern. DM is currently collating data from each academy, to present to the Directors at the last meeting of this academic year. The principals are streamlining their data so that they all present it in the same format. The new principal of Our Lady's, Cowley had suggested the name of an OFSTED inspector, who could be considered as the S.I.P.. BB said that the principals would come to their next meeting with the results to a number of Actions, e.g. each academy is looking at how Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) is being taught and learnt across each year group. The Directors agreed that this had been a very useful operational meeting of the Principals, but that it had not been strategic. JH said that the meeting of the Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) from each academy has been put back until the Directors and the principals have something concrete to share with them.

Directors agreed that the S.I.P. should be clear about the Board's strategic view, before he or she meets with each principal. The S.I.P.'s role would be different from the role of the monitoring consultant.

**ACTIONS: DM would collate and present the performance data.**

**Directors would meet in the evening of Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June to draw up a first draft of the strategic vision of the MAC, and to agree a facilitator.**

**Directors would present this first draft to principals, who would then review it at their next meeting on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June, and thereafter with their SLTs.**

**The profile of the MAC would then be raised as the strategic vision is presented to each Academy Committee early in the autumn term.**

## **6. Principals' Away-Day Feedback**

See item 5 above.

**7. Feedback from Our Lady's HMI Visit / 8. Cricket Road - Project Update / 10. Risk Management - H. & S. Update / 11. Executive Principal's Report**

The Chair agreed that JH could cover items 7, 8, 10 and 11 together. The following items were discussed and questions asked:

JH reported that, in St. Gregory's area of Oxford, only 42% of the required nursery places are provided. JH is discussing with the Local Authority how St. Gregory's might be able to help to meet the additional 58% of places required.

Q. Could JH elaborate on the possible inevitability of some redundancies at St. Gregory's?

A. JH said that St. Gregory's currently employs too many specialised music teachers and general support staff, and that the Administration structure would need to be tightened.

Current staff, who might be affected, would be able to apply for the new positions or take redundancy.

Q. Has the appointment of the new Vice Principal at St. Gregory's gone ahead?

A. Yes, Marcella McCarthy has been appointed, so there will now be two Vice Principals at St. Gregory's.

Q. When the current Head of Computing retires, will she have to be replaced by a qualified teacher?

A. No. JH is keen to appoint a network co-ordinator and a Head of Computing.

Q. What were the results from the parental ballot?

A. Four parents have applied to become Directors.

JH shared the HMI report from their visit to Our Lady's, Cowley. This shows that accelerated progress is expected to have been made by the end of this academic year.

Q. How can the forecast be 88.9% when only 53% was achieved in 2013?

A. It is down to a combination of better focus and a different cohort of children.

The HMI report said that there would be no immediate need to revisit Our Lady's, but that they would be interested to visit other academies within the MAC.

JH drew Directors' attention to the OFSTED Dashboard for each of the academies.

Q. Can Directors view the RAISE On-line data for each academy?

A. Yes, Directors can ask each academy to give them access to this.

Q. Further to the Health and Safety review across each academy, is there a timescale for the Action Plan?

A. It is imminent.

**9. Safeguarding**

No Safeguarding issues had been reported by any of the Principals.

**12. Update from Finance Committee**

DM said that he now has the required timeline from the EFA, and that the Academy Committees now know what detail needs to be submitted to him and by when. He said that variances have been highlighted for each academy's budget, but that overall the MAC has a positive budget for this year. DM said that, although the three-year position looks more worrying, the MAC will be moving away from the current budget structure. He said that he will be more confident when he has submitted the budget to the EFA.

Q. Some carry-forwards seem very large. Is this correct, and is it a good thing?

A. Yes, it is correct. The budget highlights items that had been missed from some of the academies' initial budgets. There is now transparency across the academies, but academies are still learning the new process.

Directors agreed that, at some point, they would need to determine a carry-forward policy.

DM reported that £335k capital funding has been secured this year from the ACMF. In total, £750k funding has been received from the ACMF, since the MAC was formed. DM said that a priority is a new roof for St. Thomas More. BB said that St. Joseph's, Carterton is still hoping to replace its doors. AA asked if it was too late to submit a bid. DM said that the Diocese would need to approve any bids, before they could be submitted to the Board.

### **13. Governance / Leadership**

a) **Directors** - KP welcomed AA officially to the Board of Directors.

b) **Succession Planning at St. Thomas More** - BB left the room. JH told Directors that the Chair and Vice Chair of St. Thomas More's Academy Committee have resigned. In addition, the Principal has now resigned. The Assistant Principal has agreed to stay and support the academy, but is not a catholic. JH and HM had met with the Principals to bring this to their attention, and to ask them to consider how they could support St. Thomas More in the short-term. BB has offered to support St. Thomas More. Both she and JH have discussed the idea of BB having a term's secondment to St. Thomas More with the Chair of the Academy Committee at St. Joseph's, Carterton. Alternatively, the Directors could ask Julia Hamper to support the academy in the same way that she has helped at Our Lady's, Cowley on a part-time basis. JH pointed out that St. Thomas More has a very strong SLT, but that they require a strategic leader. The Directors agreed that the quality of teaching at St. Thomas More is extremely good, and that the data is the best across all the academies. They agreed that they would need to approve a short-term solution as a matter of urgency. The Directors asked JH to invite Julia Hamper to support St. Thomas More in the short-term, and to ask BB to continue to support St. Joseph's, Thame. JH said that, if Julia Hamper is not interested, the Diocese has recommended two other possibilities.

**ACTION: JH and HM would chair the next meeting of the Academy Committee at St. Thomas More, and would suggest a way forward for the next academic year.**

Once the Board of Directors has a clear strategic vision for the MAC, they would address the long-term solution for St. Thomas More.

### **14. A.O.B.**

- KP said that she would resign as Chair of the Board of Directors for personal reasons at the next meeting.

**ACTION: Election for a new Chair would be at the top of the next agenda.**

- CB said that Portsmouth Diocese is very interested in the MAC, and would like him to give them a presentation. CB asked if JH would accompany him. The Directors gave permission for this to go ahead.
- DB had circulated to the Directors a Recruitment and Selection policy, which had been drafted by SMcG. The Directors approved it in principal, but agreed that it should state at the beginning that the MAC strives for excellence and therefore always looks to employ the best candidates.

Q. Could 7.1 be reworded so that more than one committee member can be involved in teacher recruitment?

A. There would be no need to do this as it states in 7.1 “a minimum of one”.

Q. Could the policy clarify the timescales on offering positions?

A. **ACTIONS: SMcG would do this, and would amend the wording at the beginning of the policy to reflect the MAC striving for excellence.**

**Date of next meeting:**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm at Our Lady's, Cowley

The meeting ended at 9.20pm with a prayer.

**EH/13/05/14**