

THE DOMINIC BARBERI MAC
MINUTES OF THE 21st DIRECTORS MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 19 APRIL 2016 AT ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

Present:

David Forster (Foundation, Chair) DF
Paul Concannon (Foundation Director) PC
Hazel Murray (Foundation Director) HM
Gerald Crown (Parent Director) GC
Breda Bowles (Principal Director) BB
Marcella McCarthy (Principal Director) MM
Virginia Moffatt (Foundation Director) VM
Khursh Ahmed (Staff Director) KA

In attendance:

Pam Rodgerson (DBMAC HR Manager) PR
Georgina Paton (DBMAC CFBO designate) GP
Marie Poulson (DBMAC Finance) MP
Steve Jones (Assistant Principal St Gregory's) SJ
Kerry Simmonds (Interim CFBO) KS
John Whitehead (Clerk) JW

Apologies:

Sue McGarry (Staff Director) SMcG
Fraser Long (Foundation Director) FL

The meeting opened at 6.30pm

1. Welcome, apologies and opening prayer

DF led the meeting in prayer and welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted.

The meeting was quorate.

2. Minutes of the last meeting (9 February) and Matters arising therefrom:

A number of typing errors were identified and corrected.

Action arising - a minute to be circulated as an ongoing activity.

The Skills Audit had been completed.

3. Finance, Resources, Staffing:

(a) Recovery Plan

VM reported that the Staffing Review was ongoing.

The review of Central Office costs was ongoing.

At St Gregory's the direction could be seen as to where the school was going.

In the primaries the Staff Review was on hold, and needed further work. There was to be a further meeting with Hampshire.

Achieving the 2.5% target saving was dependent upon the range of efficiency across the different schools, and there were different reactions from them.

MM reported upon work in progress regarding the Staffing review at St Gregory's.

PR reported that jobs would be advertised across DBMAC in its entirety, with internal advertisement preceding the external. The principle was that vacant posts should be publicised so as to give existing staff opportunity to apply, with one week minimum internal notification.

PR reported that the Primaries were meeting the next day, and replies were wanted for the following Friday (22 April). The proposals would be published on 9 May, followed by around of consultation to 7 June. Individual schools were discussed.

MP said that the 2.5% figure had been delivered but there were other costs in running the Primaries.

VM said progress was being made; at St Gregory's the process was still continuing but the picture was clearer than in September 2015.

VM said more information was needed to explain what were the differences between schools. Some schools felt they were being ordered to save more when they actually are already efficient.

GC asked if the 2.5% saving could be achieved across the DBMAC *in toto*. VM and MP said time was not available.

BB said the 2.5% had been found if they cut to the limit.

VM said the subject needed to be discussed further at Finance Committee so as to avoid problems mid-year .

DF pointed out that if a member school did not make the saving of 2.5% someone else in DBMAC will have to save more.

MM said the group was well on in the process, and that it needed to be realistic with the schools. If they were already making the 2.5% saving then they did not need to do more.

MP referred to the freeze on building maintenance, saying that work will be needed. There are needs to be met, and capital purchases to be made.

MM spoke of whether savings were real or merely holding off on expenditure.

DF said Finance Committee should discuss building maintenance.

(b) Staffing review

DF proposed that in regard of the Accounting Officer a sub-committee composed of VM, GC, HM and DF should make recommendations to Finance Committee. DF to discuss the matter with PR.

Finance Committee would meet in two week's time when Leadership Scales were to be discussed.

HM pointed to bigger decisions regarding the role of Heads.

MP enquired as to the effect on budget plans (to be discussed later in the meeting), VM raised the point about appraisals regarding the moves of personnel, and GC asked about timelines on appointments etc.

(c) Planning for Next Year's Budget

MP said the draft budget for 2016-17 was based on the information available and that there was a need to explain to schools what they get for being members of DBMAC

(d) Central Office Costs

The Top Slice payment by member schools of 5%. GC enquired as to the thinking behind the 5% MP said if there was a surplus then the money can be used to redress the balance.

GC said there was a need to know in regard to capital and building expenditure

KA said the extra 1.5% over the previous 3.5% came when savings were being asked for and made problems with the staffing review.

MP said central costs were included

VM said schools were aware that the sum was likely to rise, but this was not yet in the budget.

GC said if funds were transferred to DBMAC that should save schools money as savings would ensue.

VM said the central structure was still under review.

BB said there was pressure from the D of E to get information back to them, and schools were fighting deadlines.

PC suggested 2.5%/3.5%; DF asked how the £150k would be made up. PC said there were £200k savings

VM said budget setting was still going on and it was necessary to indicate a figure; DF said 5% was the worst-case scenario

MM said the central structure should have been established first.

CP said there was a need to explain how the 5% was made up, and that there had been extra expenses over the 3.5% in the last year.

As to a possible Executive principal VM said there were too many variables at present to make such an appointment.

MM pointed out that differing structures exist, and how would such an appointment be explained if there are cuts in schools to both staff and curriculum

VM said more detailed matters would be left to Finance Committee, and these would be communicated after that meeting.

(e) Feedback from Business Managers' Meeting

Nothing to report.

4. Curriculum, Standards, Teaching and Learning

(a) Ofsted Report for St John Fisher

Ofsted had reported on the school which continued to be rated as Good. DF expressed congratulations to the Head. MM pointed out that the school was situated in a difficult area. BB pointed out that the Ofsted Inspector had said the Head needed a mentor and this she had done herself by seeking out one. DF is to write officially to express appreciation of a "great job"

(b) ICT Update:

SMcG reported that there had been a leak of information about St Gregory's on e-mail, and suggested removing sixth formers from the list. KA said this had been done and people had been regrouped to ensure security. DBMAC e-mail was not at risk, being password protected, and Directors should do so as well. There is a need to clear old accounts of former staff. St Gregory's did not send e-mails in general.

GC said there was a need for better communication, as had been shown by today's meeting. DF said Chairs were not passing on information.

GC said there was a need to set up a system for Directors as well as a public domain. He agreed to set up and circulate. There is a need to decide if e-mail should be imported into the system. Google Drops works well as a system. GC enquired as to its security. The cost would be about £4 per person per month.

Finance Committee will discuss the issue. GC will do a paper for this and set up a trial.

There is a need to train people how to use the system. GC said it would cut out IT support costs and merge the website in.

The availability of money to buy in or contract IT was raised. DF asked if this would raise central cost. MM asked if schools could be charged as they use the system

GC is to organise a new working party.

(c) Feedback from Principals' meetings:

The next meeting is on 7 June.

(d) Matters for consideration by the next Curriculum Subcommittee meeting:

Items to MM

(e) SIPs

It agreed to see what Newman University can offer and possibly St Mary's Roehampton

BB said Hampshire offer three day pre-inspection reports at a cost of £1800.

St Thomas More has not had a full review in 9 years. This is because it has been rated as outstanding but it probably needs a full review.

MM enquired if it could be done within DBMAC, with staff trained by Ofsted.

5. Leadership and Catholicity

(a) Governance Review:

There was nothing to report.

(b) Skills Audit

This had been completed and results circulated to Directors.

(c) Safeguarding:

2J had been offered participation in safer recruitment training

At St Gregory's they had paid £50 per head for such training. All schools should have someone trained in safer recruitment.

BB spoke of having staff trained in this respect.

DF said the process was in place across DBMAC. BB is to ask all schools what they do, and send a check list audit to Principals

Enhanced DBS checks for all. In September on-site risk assessment on phone is required

(d) Communications and recent publicity in the *Oxford Mail* :

It was suggested the *Oxford Mail* be bombarded with positive news about the Academy schools.

BB pointed out the problem in a paperless situation as to how information reaches parents DF thought parents should contact the Principal. BB suggested notifying schools to send out information by certain times and dates. DF suggested asking the schools if they had any issues they wanted addressing

(e) Directors and Academy Reps - recruitment, induction and training:

KS is staying until 24 May, so as to give one day's overlap with GP for the handover of responsibilities.

On the evening of 18 October there was the opportunity to host The Oxford Governors Association meeting and lecture. They are offering to pay £100. This was thought to be a good opportunity to showcase the work of DBMAC

6. Any Other Business

GC raised the issue of the pre-school group at Our Lady's Cowley. The group cannot pay and would DBMAC consider remitting the fee. That would require contacting the EFA as their agreement would be needed. The meeting was sympathetic.

HM asked about updating the recovery Plan. Finance Committee will discuss this.

If another school was interested in joining the MAC how would that affect DBMAC funding? If there are 3000 pupils in total funding is automatic.

The meeting closed with prayer at 9.50pm.