

Anglian Learning Annual General Meeting Minutes



21 January 2021

Members Present

Christopher Walkinshaw (CW Chair), Amanda Askham (AA), Claire Lawton (CL), Philip Hodgson (PH), Alben Madej (AM) and Martyn Postle (MP)

Trustees Present

Jon Culpin (JC CEO), David Lamkin (DL), Helen Abrahams (HA) Sue Speller (SCS) and June Cannie (MJC)

Others Present

Charity Main (CM Finance Director) and Kerrie Jones (KJ Clerk)

This meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom

	ITEM
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence
	There were no apologies for absence.
2.	Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items
	<p>CW declared an interest with regards the new Marleigh School. This is referred to in the Chair's Report though is not due to be discussed specifically at this AGM.</p> <p>Most pecuniary interest forms for 2020/21 had been returned. Outstanding forms were requested as soon as possible.</p>
3.	Review of AGM Minutes 16 Jan 2020
	<p>Members confirmed that they had all received and noted the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16 January 2020.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true record. CW will sign a copy to confirm this and return to the Clerk.</p> <p>The item on pupil outcomes has been postponed and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is included instead. Pupil outcomes will be discussed at a future meeting.</p>
4.	Receive Annual Accounts and Auditors Report
	<p>The annual accounts and auditors report had been circulated. Members confirmed that they had received and read these documents. The accounts were scrutinised by the Audit and Risk committee on 8 Dec 2020 and approved by the Anglian Learning Trust Board on 15 Dec 2020. They have been submitted to the ESFA.</p> <p>CM explained that 19-20 was a year of significant growth with a surplus reflecting monies transferred in from JFAN and CHET. This has led to Anglian Learning having reserves of £3.8m which is 10% of the general annual grant (GAG). Whilst this level of reserves is greater than ideal, the pandemic has impacted on the usual processes for allocating reserves for projects across the Trust. This will be addressed during a mid-year budget review.</p> <p>The Trust has invested significantly in its estate, with School Condition Allocation and Condition Improvement Fund monies totalling £2.8m.</p>

	<p>The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on schools, though the effects have been somewhat uneven: those schools with commercial activities such as sports centres have been adversely affected, albeit with furlough providing some mitigation, whilst other schools have made savings by not recruiting staff. Ongoing Covid-19 related costs are likely to have an even greater impact on 20/21 finances</p> <p>The auditors management letter identified some weaknesses to be addressed but these were all low priority and overall the Trust is in a secure position.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that the financial statement presents a secure picture but questioned how that places Anglian Learning with respect to central government support and funding, particularly in light of the current situation. CM explained that there is very much a mixed picture where schools may find themselves disadvantaged for prudent financial management. For example, funding for Covid-19 related costs last year was only available to those who ended the year with a deficit. The CEO went on to describe the positive relationship that Anglian Learning has with the DfE. The Trust is able to demonstrate sound financial management and leadership and its's good reputation ensures it is well placed for future conversations within the sector.</p> <p>On behalf of the wider stakeholder group, Members accepted the Annual Report and Accounts as approved by the Trust Board.</p> <p>ACTION: Members requested a brief session on interpreting the financial data and the clerk will arrange this.</p>
5.	Report from Chair of Trust Board
	<p>The Chair of Trustees had circulated her report in which she described development and progress of Anglian Learning during the last year. She thanked the Trust Leadership Team for the enormous amount of work they have put in and the effective way they have handled the Covid-19 crisis which dominated the second half of the year.</p> <p>Despite the pandemic and its impact, Anglian Learning has had a successful year seeing significant growth by the addition of Joyce Frankland Academy Newport and the former Chilford Hundred Education Trust. Anglian Learning has a robust Trust Improvement Plan in place and is proud of the improvements already being seen.</p> <p>Other areas of note include the establishment of a good operational system and the development of the risk management strategy which will be further explored in the coming year. Local Governance structure is currently under review and IT systems continue to be developed and enhanced.</p> <p>ACTION: KJ will send Members the Trust Strategic Improvement Plan.</p>
6.	Impact of Covid-19
	<p>The CEO explained how the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the Trust, its schools and most importantly it's young people.</p> <p>There have been a number of positives such as the development of high quality remote learning which has transformed the approach to education. The Trust and its schools are very proud of what has been achieved.</p> <p>There have been negative aspects, in particular the impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged students. Inequality of digital access has been highlighted and schools have worked hard to ensure all students have devices and internet. Some students have found engagement during lockdown very difficult and the impact on their life chances will be felt in the longer term.</p> <p>The Trust central team has provided direction and support, including advice and guidance on risk assessments, mass testing, ICT and HR. Schools have worked</p>

	<p>together collectively to cope with the challenges and JC praised the Trust executive team, school headteachers and staff who have worked tirelessly under very difficult circumstances.</p> <p>Members asked whether Prue Rayner was working with the feeder primary schools in catchment areas. JC confirmed that whilst Prue does not have capacity for this, the schools engage with the secondary schools and also get support from the LA.</p> <p>A question was also asked about checking that donated IT equipment is not infected with malware as has been reported in the press. The Trust has every confidence in Richard Mayer, Director of IT, in this regard.</p> <p>Members thanked the CEO for his update.</p>
7.	AOB
	<p>On behalf of the Members CW thanked the CEO and Trust Leadership Team for all their effort and hard work managing and steering the Trust, particularly during the challenging Covid-19 crisis. He went on to thank the Trust Board for their dedication and commitment.</p> <p>The CEO also expressed his appreciation of the Trust Board for their support and challenge during the last year which has been especially demanding.</p> <p>Finally CW expressed his thanks to the Clerk to the Board.</p>
9.	Set Date time and venue of next meeting
	<p>The date of the next AGM was set for Thursday 20 January 2022 at 7pm to be held at Bottisham VC.</p> <p>A general meeting was agreed for Thursday 10 June at 7pm to be either virtual or held at Bottisham VC.</p> <p>Meeting ended 8pm</p>