Community Council Handbook
2022-2023

Table of Contents

A Welcome from Hugh Greenway
CEO of The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust

First, let me say thank you for your optimism and your selflessness. Anyone who volunteers to support schools is, by definition, an optimist. No one involves themselves in education to make tomorrow worse than today. And with that belief in a better possible future for all our children, you join a growing family. The Elliot Foundation was conceived to help all children achieve beyond even their own expectations and perhaps your most important function as part of our community councils is to help schools sustain that aspiration and optimism on behalf of ALL their pupils.

Primary schools are the cornerstones of communities; they bring people together in a way that almost no other public function can. To function properly schools must understand the communities they exist to serve but they must also be helped to communicate effectively with all of their stakeholders. Community councils exist to support this and to help our schools shape a vision, ethos and curriculum that meet the needs of their children and prepare them for continuing education, work and life.

Best wishes,

Hugh

www.elliotfoundation.co.uk

Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Values

1. Put children first

  a. We trust and value your professionalism
  b. We share the responsibility for the learning and welfare of all of our children
  c. Our purpose is to improve the lives of children

2. Be safe

  a. Don't assume that someone else will do it
  b. Look after yourself, your colleagues and all children
  c. We are all responsible for each other's safety and well being
  d. Discuss any concerns with an appropriate member of staff

3. Be kind & respect all

  a. People are allowed to be different as are you
  b. Kindness creates the positive environment we all need to flourish
  c. This kindness should extend to ourselves as well as to others

4. Be open

  a. If you can see a better way, suggest it
  b. If someone else suggests a better way to you, consider it
  c. We exist to nurture innovators and support those who take informed risks in the interests of children

5. Forgive

  a. We all make mistakes
  b. Admit them, learn from them and move on

6. Make a difference

  a. Making the world a better place starts with you
  b. Model the behaviour that you would like to see from others

> **Key updates to note for the 2022-23 Community Council Handbook**
>
> - Updates to the template agenda in section 10
>
> - A new section on safeguarding requirements under section 2

1.   Community Council Handbook

This handbook is designed to support Community Councils to carry out their role effectively by:

- Explaining within the Terms of Reference the purpose; membership and training; meetings and visits; schedule of responsibilities; lines of enquiry; role in broader school life and role in supporting compliance

- Explaining the Trust wide governance model and where Community Councils sit within that model

- Providing guidance, templates and signposting to other resources to support the effective set-up, induction of councillors and ongoing running of Community Councils

This handbook is reviewed annually and will undoubtedly be revised as the Community Council model embeds and develops over time.

In the meantime if you have any suggestions as to how to improve this handbook or any questions about Community Councils more generally then please do contact - Madison Gough (madison.gough@elliotfoundation.co.uk) Governance and Policy Officer: Jem Shuttleworth (jem.shuttleworth@elliotfoundation.co.uk) Legal and Governance Director.

2.   Terms of Reference for the Community Council

2.1.   Purpose

- Within the Elliot Foundation a Community Council is a group of volunteers appointed by the Trust to offer challenging but positive and proactive support to the Principal and Senior Leadership on behalf of the children and community that the school serves.
- They do this by knowing and celebrating the strengths of the community that the school serves alongside holding the highest aspirations and expectations for all children.
- Community Councils are, whilst a full and formal part of the governance structure in line with the Trust's Articles of Association, **wholly advisory bodies** focused on;
  - The ethos and values of the school

- The ambition, appropriateness and effectiveness of the school's curriculum for its children
- The wellbeing of pupils, families and staff
- Community Councils support the Trust to work as one entity, in the interests of all its schools equally.
- Community Councils provide a mechanism for meaningful Trust Board engagement with a school, its parents and local community enabling trustees to understand stakeholder views, needs and listen to their feedback. Each Community Council must have at least x 2 councillors who are parents/carers.

2.2.   Membership and Training

- Reflective of the community that the school / federation serves
- X 9 councillors -
    - Principal (or by exception designated representative such as HoS);
    - Parents/Carers of pupils at the respective school (up to x 3 and ideally drawn from each KS) elected by the parent body. If not enough candidates put themselves forward, the Trust can appoint;
    - Staff (up to x 2 and drawn from KS, role, specific expertise or federated partner school) elected by the staff body. If not enough candidates put themselves forward, the Trust can appoint;
    - Balance of membership may be drawn from the wider community (could include those that the school is already working with or those that the school has identified as being integral to developing community and curriculum links). Trustees may choose to appoint people to sit on a Community Council who provide links to the local community and / or or whose expertise meets an identified school need, in addition to parents and / or
    - Balance of membership may be drawn from pupils of the school / federation. This is for each school to determine based on their existing models of Pupil Voice, Pupil Leaders and Subject Champions. Terms of Office for pupils to be determined at a local level.

- Councillors are required to act in the best interests of the school rather than act as a representative of their respective stakeholder group; to adhere to the Nolan Principles of public life and at no time to bring the school into disrepute as a result of their actions.
- Chair of a Community Council to be appointed annually by the Trust Board with all working to a collective responsibility model.
- Councillors may, where useful, be linked to specific areas of responsibility. The role of a Link Councillor is to ensure specific oversight of a particular area and deepen the Community Council's knowledge of that particular area. This role remains strategic and not operational.
- Term of Office - x 4 years (maximum of two terms). Election of staff and parents to continue as is currently with all other councillors appointed by the Trust. Each councillor will be required to have an enhanced DBS check.
- Associate Membership as an alternative to full for pupils of the school / federation. This is for each school to determine based on their existing models of Pupil Voice,

Pupil Leaders and Subject Champions. Terms of Office for pupils to be determined at a local level.

2.3. Safeguarding Requirements

As set out in the [Trust's Safeguarding Policy](#), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt appropriate action.

To support Community Councillors in fulfilling this role all are required to complete mandatory safeguarding training through the Flick Learning portal; accessed via the allocated tenancy email address.

Community Councillors should look to complete the following modules:

- Child Protection L1
- Prevention of Radicalisation
- FGM
- CSE
- Online Safety

As a minimum, Community Councillors must complete the Child Protection L1 module once every three years.

Alongside completing the safeguarding training, Community Council members should also be aware of the [Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1) guidance](#) and their schools local safeguarding arrangements. Schools can choose how best to complete the training, for example in the first Community Council meeting of the year.

2.4. Meetings and Visits

- Quorum for both - Principal + 3 (ie: not quorate without the Principal or by exception designated representative such as HoS)
- X 4 meetings across an academic year (x 2 in the Autumn, x 1 in the Spring and x 1 in the Summer) with an expectation that at least two of those meetings will be directly linked to visits by members during the school day. In this way councillors can visit together and have an opportunity to feedback, discuss and triangulate evidence immediately following the visit. Mindful of the collective responsibility model and the nature of this voluntary role it is not expected that each member will attend all school visits.
- The specific timings of the meetings and visits are for each school / federation to determine locally with due regard to the agreed Trust priority of reducing workload, supporting staff wellbeing and enabling Associate members to actively contribute.

- Agenda items should be agreed at the start of the year and aligned to the areas of responsibility with visits allowing an opportunity to explore a particular line of enquiry in more detail.
- Each meeting and school visit should be supported administratively to ensure that an accurate record of a meeting (template to be provided) is made alongside ensuring completion of Notes of Visit (template to be provided). If it is more suitable to the school's needs that administrative support is provided other than through a formally recognised and qualified Clerk that is acceptable. Across all Community Councils professional governance advice guidance and, where necessary, instruction will be provided from the Trust. Instruction when given must be adhered to.
- All members **must** use a tenancy email address, noting that all tenancy email addresses are subject to eSafe monitoring. All documentation to be retained within the Trust tenancy.
- When conducting school visits, members and leaders should think creatively about when and how visits are conducted to ensure visits are purposeful, clearly aligned to an area of responsibility and allow opportunity to engage directly with staff and pupils.

2.5.   Schedule of Responsibility

2.5.1.   To ensure on behalf of the Trust Board that the strategic responsibility to set a clear and ambitious vision for each school / federation is acted upon and evidenced through strong shared values, a positive and respectful culture and a focus on the quality of education provided. Values should be lived not laminated!

2.5.2.   To ensure that each school / federation engages effectively and positively with parents, stakeholders and the wider community and in such a way as to provide opportunities that are focused, purposeful and support pupils' education.

2.5.3.   To ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to contribute positively to the life of the school / federation and wider community alongside a coherent and well planned offer of opportunities and experiences to support the personal development of all pupils.

2.5.4.   To review the Academy Development Plan termly to be assured that it reflects the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum offer, that the offer is best placed to support improving outcomes for all pupils and to evaluate impact accordingly.

2.5.5.   To review termly attendance including patterns of attendance of different groups of pupils and to be assured that where necessary appropriate, swift and effective action is being taken to improve both attendance and lateness.

2.5.6.   To review termly the impact of Pupil Premium Funding on the achievement and attainment of pupils; to be assured that the Pupil Premium Funding is used effectively and that this information is easily

accessible to all stakeholders via the school website.

2.5.7. To review annually the impact of Sports Premium Funding on the achievement and attainment of pupils; to be assured that the Sports Premium Funding is used effectively and that this information is easily accessible to all stakeholders via the school website.

2.5.8. To promote and model a strong and positive safeguarding culture; to ensure that local contextual information regarding safeguarding is regularly considered in the curriculum provision.

2.5.9. To review the information about the curriculum that is made available to pupils and stakeholders; to ensure that information about the work and impact of the Community Council is shared regularly with stakeholders and is accessible to stakeholders via the school website.

2.6. Lines of Enquiry

Vision, engagement and wellbeing

- What is the vision statement for the school and what are the ambitions and hopes of the staff and pupils in the school? What evidence do we have of this?
- How as a school we gather the views of pupils on aspects of school life (behaviour, safeguarding, provision, wellbeing, school environment and ambience; the overall lived experience of being a pupil at the school) alongside ensuring provision of meaningful leadership opportunities for pupils
- How as a school we gather views from our parents, staff and wider community and how, where appropriate, we use those views to inform our next steps
- How differing approaches and CPD are identified and implemented to support all staff in further developing their expertise alongside taking into account reducing their workload and supporting wellbeing

Curriculum

- The curriculum offer – breadth, depth and ambition across all subjects
- How the curriculum takes account of local context and addresses typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills
- How the curriculum reflects pupils' cultural diversity and is relevant to their life experience
- How the curriculum expands pupil's horizons, fosters ambition and creates a climate of high expectations
- How visits, trips or partnerships with external organisations expand the offer and raise aspirations
- What extra-curricular provision is on offer and how does it add value to pupil's experience
- What does the data and other sources of evidence tell the school about the impact of the curriculum offer on attainment and progress
- What does the data and other sources of evidence tell the school about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school

- Pupil groups – do some children perform better / less well than others. If so why and how is the school closing the gap
- Pupil premium and Sports Premium spending and impact
- How does the curriculum support and develop children's understanding about how to keep themselves safe? For example, in a digital environment, in leading a healthy participative lifestyle and having safe online/offline relationships.
- How do local safeguarding challenges inform the curriculum
- How is pupil voice heard and used to inform the schools safeguarding culture and the curriculum

2.7. Role in broader school life

- The intention on the part of the Trust is that Community Council members are recognised and supported to add significant value at a local level to a school / federation with local governance being meaningful, effective and enjoyable.
- As such it is hoped that Community Council members will be able to actively contribute to the broader life of the school; be that through attendance at class and whole school events, supporting identified local initiatives and positively promoting the school amongst the wider community.
- It is also hoped that the Chair of a Community Council will act as a sounding board for the Principal and by so doing provide support and proportionate challenge within the recognised role of critical friend.
- Community Council members will be invited to join Principals in providing annual feedback to the Trust Board alongside participating themselves in an annual end of academic year Trust initiated review of their own effectiveness in supporting school improvement.

2.8. Role in supporting compliance

As indicated by the Scheme of Delegation:

- A Community Council member will, as per the Concerns and Complaints Policy, participate in a Stage 3 Complaint Panel alongside a member of the Operations Group and a 3rd independent panel member.

- A Community Council member (s) will be invited to participate in the Trust led recruitment process for the Executive Principal or Principal of the school.

- A Community Council member may, at the discretion of the Trust, be invited to participate in an Ofsted inspection alongside representatives of the Trust Board and Operations Group subject to the applicable inspection framework and the identified needs of the school.

Please note Ofsted advise that with reference to the Ofsted published inspection report, the Chair of the Trust Board will always be named in the schools detail section not the chair of any local governance group. This is because Ofsted recognise that the Chair of the Trust is the legal head of governance, irrespective of any delegation,

and as such the Trust Board remains accountable and responsible for all decisions made.

3.   Trust wide governance functions and structure

Effective governance is based on six key features.

- Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy
- Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance
- People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity
- Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements
- Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance

All levels of governance within the Trust incorporate these features; often referenced as setting the tone, setting the direction, picking the team and asking is it working?

Trust governance functions

Body	Function	How appointed
Sponsor	Founder and initiator of the vision and purpose	Appointed by DfE
Members	Custodians of the organisation's purpose; appoint and dismiss Trustees	Appointed by Sponsor
Trust board	The responsible body; agrees and oversees strategy; appoints and dismisses CEO, Trust committee members and community council chairs	Appointed by Members
Trust committees & advisory boards	Support Trust board in holding executive to account, approve and recommend policies, challenge performance	Appointed by Trust board
Executive (Ops. Group)	Formulates, recommends and implements Trust strategy, policy and planning; Trust operational management	Appointed by Trust board
Work groups	Support the Executive in the implementation of organisational plans and review of their effectiveness across the Trust	Convened by Executive
School Principals	Shaping, articulating and leading a vision for their school, operational school management	Appointed by Executive
Functional groups	Self managed groups with common interests and/or roles that feedback to the executive on effectiveness of plans	Reviewed by Principals' Council
Community councils	Advisory committees that support and challenge school leadership on school vision, values and curriculum	Chairs appointed by Trust board

Trust governance structure
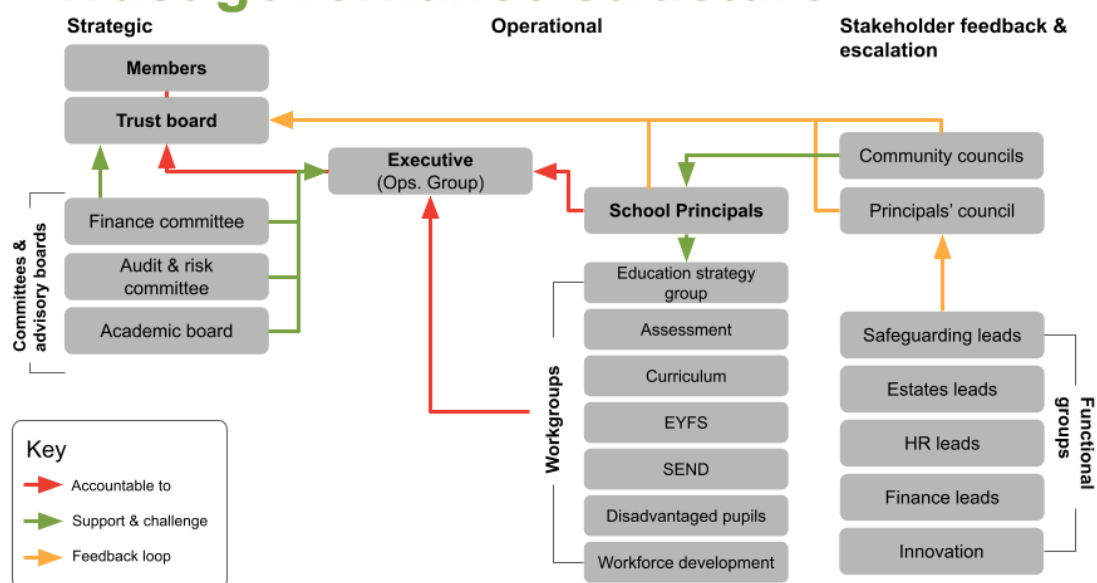
As seen in the previous diagrams the Board of Trustees has considered carefully how they will exercise their governance and oversight through both executive and non-executive channels and how the two fit together (this section will be updated for 2022-23).

The Scheme of Delegation sets out the delegated powers between Members, Trustees, Board Committees, CEO/CAO, Ops Group, Exec / Principal and Community Councils in the governance and operation of the Multi Academy Trust and academies. This approach supports effective working, ensuring checks and balances but avoiding duplication at different levels, and delivering good two-way communications.

The Scheme of Delegation is available on the Trust website under Trust Governance documents and should be read alongside the TEFAT Terms of Reference, TEFAT Governance Functions and Structure 2021,TEFAT Accountability, Support and Challenge and Elliot Plain English Governance

4.   Code of Conduct for Community Councillors

The Trust has high expectations of all those involved in governance across the organisation; ambitious for all children, infused with a passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables the best possible outcomes for all pupils whatever their circumstances.

In exercising governance functions all must act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school (s); be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and be prepared to explain their actions and decisions.

The Code of Conduct outlines the expectations and commitments required from all Community Councillors. This is not a statement of responsibility but aims to ensure a mutual understanding of the role and the conduct which is expected. The statement of responsibilities can be found in the Terms of Reference.

As a Community Councillor you agree:

- To the purpose and role as defined in the Community Council Terms of Reference and the TEFAT Scheme of Delegation
- To follow and adhere to the Scheme of Delegation and to not step outside the remit of the Community Council
- To understand how the role differs from that of the operational roles within school and the other strategic governance roles of the Trust (i.e Trustees) but also how we can collectively work together for the benefit of the organisation as a whole
- To accept no legal authority to act as an individual body, unless where there is delegated authority to do so by the Trust board
- To always act fairly and without prejudice or bias
- To consider carefully how decisions will affect pupils, staff and the wider community
- To be mindful of maintaining and developing the ethos and promoting the schools values
- To actively support and challenge leaders where appropriate to do so
- To respect the role of the SLT and the day-to-day operational management of the school and not attempt to undermine such arrangements
- That when authorised to speak on behalf of the Community Council or when representing the school in any arena, ensure that comments reflect the organisation even if they are different to your own personal views
- That when you are communicating professionally or personally, to uphold the reputation of the school (including your presence on social media)

As a Community Councillor you are committed to:

- Accepting the commitment of the role and the time and energy that it demands
- Actively involving yourself and getting to know the school community
- Ensuring you make full effort to attend all Community Council meetings and any other events or commitments where Community Council presence is required
- When visiting the school in a different capacity (as a parent, carer etc.) you will maintain your underlying responsibility and role as Community Council member
- Accepting that information about yourself regarding your role (terms of office, names, date of appointment, attendance, interests and who appointed you) will be made publicly available as is compliant with the requirements of the ATH
- Accept that data regarding the Community Council membership will also be recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information About Schools) as a statutory requirement
- Using your school tenancy email address as part of your safeguarding responsibility

Within your professional relationships as a Community Councillor you are expected to:

- Continuously strive to work as a team, collaboratively and constructively with the school and pupils best interest at heart
- Have respectful communication with anyone you work with
- Confront or report malpractice or any other concerns you have to the appropriate authority, particularly those that put pupils at risk or that conflict with the Nolan Principles
- Continuously seek to develop good relationships with leaders, staff and all members of the school community

As a Community Councillor you are expected to have the utmost level of confidentiality by:

- Observing complete confidentiality, especially when matters are deemed confidential
- Maintaining complete confidentiality even if you cease to be a member of the Community Council

Community Councillors are required to disclose their Conflicts of Interest by:

- Recording and disclosing any pecuniary or business interests and any conflicts to be managed appropriately
- Accepting that pecuniary or business interests will be made publicly available and published on the schools website
- Acting in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any external group, even if elected to the council

In the event there are breaches to the code:

- Where the code is believed to be breached, this must be raised with the Principal and escalated where appropriate, suspension or removal will be a last resort if issues cannot be resolved constructively.

- Where a Community Councillor has consecutively missed six months of meetings/commitments and not tended apologies or has not been heard from, the Principal and / or Trust may consider disqualification. The Chair of the Community Council should endeavour to make contact and investigate reasons for non attendance.

Community Councillors must sign the Code of Conduct before beginning their role and the Code must be considered at the first meeting of every academic year thereafter.

5.   Training and Support for Community Councils

In order to ensure that councillors feel supported to carry out their role, TEFAT will provide a plethora of support and training opportunities.

- Half termly newsletter to include guidance and signposting to additional resources
- Access to Flick Learning modules (https://www.flicklearning.com/courses/)
- Bespoke training sessions most likely around the curriculum lines of enquiry for this academic year
- Virtual termly regional networking sessions (this will develop with the model)
- Trust weekly social media update recognising and celebrating success across all of our schools

Community Council members are **required to use a tenancy TEFAT email address** that will be provided to them by their school; personal email addresses **must not be used.** The use of tenancy email addresses supports, amongst other things, our approach to safeguarding enabling us to have in place appropriate filtering and monitoring through the use of Smoothwall.

In order to ensure that councillors feel confident using our Google system, google training support sessions are available on the **Community Council site.** If you require further support please contact the governance team.

On an annual basis feedback from councillors will be sought on the effectiveness of the model at a local level. The resulting outcomes and recommendations will be shared with both the Trust central team and trustees so as to support a cycle of ongoing review and continuous improvement.

The central governance team is available for continuous support. At any point please feel free to contact Madison (madison.gough@elliotfoundation.co.uk) or Jem (jem.shuttleworth@elliotfoundation.co.uk) with any questions or queries.

6.   The recruitment and appointment of Community Councillors

The principles and personal attributes that individuals bring to a Community Council are as important as their skills and knowledge. These qualities enable councillors to use their skills and knowledge to function well as part of a team and make an active contribution to effective governance.

All those elected or appointed should fulfil their duties in line with the seven Nolan principles of public life. In addition all those involved in governance should be:

Committed: Devoting the required time and energy to the role and ambitious to achieve best possible outcomes for children. Prepared to give time, skills and knowledge to developing themselves and others in order to create highly effective governance.
Confident: Of an independent mind, able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role.

Curious: Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach and understanding the value of meaningful questioning.

Challenging: Providing appropriate challenges to the status quo, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement.

Collaborative: Prepared to listen and work in partnership with others and understanding the importance of building strong working relationships within the council and with staff, parents and carers, pupils and the local community.

Critical: Understanding the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support, and self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole council effectiveness.

Creative: Able to challenge conventional wisdom and be open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving; recognising the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success.

It is vitally important that Community Councils reflect the diversity of the school community that they serve.

Depending on the type of Community Councillor, this will determine the method of recruitment and appointment:

- Trust appointed councillors; appointed to meet an identified skills or knowledge gap on a Community Council

- Elected parents and staff representatives; schools should share the vacancy with the whole school community to gather interest. If there are more potential candidates than vacancies on the Community Council then they should be appointed by the normal election process

Some positions may be filled through election rather than appointment. In the case of elected parents, this helps to ensure that Community Councils stay accessible and connected to the community that they serve and that there is always a diverse range of perspectives around the table. With the right election process and subsequent support and training there is no reason that those elected need be any less effective than those chosen specifically for their skills.

Parent and Staff Elections

Responsibility for the holding of parent and staff Community Council elections in individual schools is delegated to the Principal, as returning officer. Elections should be conducted in accordance with the Trust's procedure. Any dispute shall be dealt with and, if necessary, determined by the Legal and Governance Director.

The Terms of Reference for the Community Council requires a minimum of two parent councillors; the Trust recommends three wherever possible.

In addition to the Principal, who is the ex officio, the Terms of Reference for the Community Council requires a minimum of two staff Community Councillors who are employees of the academy.

To be eligible to stand or vote in staff elections:

- Any paid member of staff (teaching or support) paid to work are eligible to sit on the council and to vote, volunteers are not eligible

- Casual supply teachers or teachers on contract are not eligible to vote

Please see the Community Council Recruitment Pack for more information on the nomination and election process. Please note that all councillors will be required to undertake a DBS check.

7. Website Requirements for Community Councils

In accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook Sept 2021 academies are required to make available certain information about their governance.

The following should be published on the Community Council page of each school website:

- Welcome from the Community Council (role and remit, biogs and priorities for the year)
- Membership (full name, date of appointment, term of office, resignation date, who appointed them, business and pecuniary interests) and attendance register
- Declaration of business and pecuniary interests
- Agendas and approved minutes
- Annual end of year self-evaluation of Community Council; to include notable school successes and challenges across the year alongside identifying contribution and impact on pupil outcomes and school improvement. This is in turn shared with the Trust Board for comment as an annual feedback loop from councillors to trustees to councillors.

Copy for the school website can be found here.

8. Membership and Attendance Register

Attendance of councillors must be recorded at each meeting. Once updated this document should be uploaded to the Community Council page on the website, the template for the attendance register can be found here.

9. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests

All Community Councillors are required to annually register all business and pecuniary interests, financial or otherwise, which are likely, or if publicly known would be perceived to be likely, to interfere with the exercise of independent judgement and the decision-making processes of The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust.

In accordance with the Academies Trust Handbook the following should be declared:

- Directorships, partnerships and employments with businesses

- Trusteeships and governorships at other educational institutions and charities

- For each interest: the name and nature of the business, the nature of the interest and the date the interest began

Councillors should also consider any potential conflicts of interest. If the declaration requires changes, councillors are requested to notify the school and the Trust of the relevant update. The link to the template Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests can be found here.

10.   Meeting Schedule and Agenda Items

Community Councils are required to meet 4 times across the academic year; meeting twice in the Autumn term, once in the Spring term and once in the Summer term. There is an expectation that at least two of those meetings will be directly linked to visits by councillors during the school day, where possible. We encourage Community Councils to meet during the day to ensure they are actively engaging with the school community.

A brief overview of what the Community Council may look like over an academic year;

- Community Councils may want to convene in the first half of the Autumn Term to address a number of administrative matters and to hear from the school as to the identified priorities for the coming academic year that align to the remit of the council

- This could be followed by a meeting in the latter half of the term, reviewing the curriculum offer in line with the Academy Development Plan through presentations from staff and pupils. This might include the Community Council attending a curriculum evening to discuss the curriculum with pupils and parents and the effectiveness of its delivery

- For the Spring term meeting, Community Councils may want to discuss the personal development of pupils. Review the catch-up programmes that are in place and how they impact wellbeing, attendance and attainment, particularly considering the impact on Pupil Premium pupils.

- Finally in the Summer term, Community Councils can discuss the successes of the year and work with SLT to provide a short informal summary for parents, which will also be shared with the Trust board.

Fixed agenda items:

- Apologies
- Updates to declared business and pecuniary interests
- Minutes from previous meetings and any matters arising not covered in the agenda
- Academy Development Plan

- Reports - Principal or appropriate staff member (achievements/recent successes/challenges, impact on pupil outcomes and overall effectiveness and next steps)

Periodic agenda items:

- Safeguarding Training, training available to councillors and tenancy email issues - Autumn 1
- Review of membership, revisit Code of Conduct and handbook - Autumn Term 1
- Confirmation of appointment of Chair by the Trust Board - Autumn Term 1
- Appointment of Link Councillors where appropriate - Autumn Term 1
- Meetings, visits and events schedule for the academic year - Autumn Term 1
- Consideration of Code of Conduct - Autumn Term 1
- Attendance by members of the Trusts central team to update and support
- Review contribution to and impact on whole school outcomes - Summer Term 2
- Pupil input to be determined at a local level

Please remember that agenda items should demonstrate how they are linked to the Schedule of Responsibilities and Lines of Enquiry. TEFAT recommends that meetings should be **limited to 2 hours** and where possible, mindful of workload and work life balance for all, scheduled at the start or end of the school day, during the school day or shortly thereafter.

Autumn Term 1

Suggested comms: Principals should consider sharing a welcome back email at the start of term which includes meeting dates and priorities for the year ahead.

Agenda item	Schedule of Responsibility	Lines of Enquiry to discuss
Recap of training Tenancy email addresses Review of membership Code of Conduct and Handbook **Safeguarding Training (Flick Training) must be completed before or during the first meeting**	Code of Conduct and requirements of the role.	N/A
Review of the ethos and vision for the school	1 and 2	1(a) and any other relevant Lines of Enquiry that will inform discussion
Priorities for the school for the year ahead linked to Academy Development Plan	4	Priorities will inform Lines of Enquiry to discuss

Autumn Term 2

Agenda item	Schedule of Responsibility	Lines of Enquiry to discuss
The curriculum offer - Academy Development Plan review	4	Consider all relevant elements under 2 based on discussion topics
Presentations from staff and pupils	4 and 9	1(b), 1(c), depending on what is included in presentations this will inform Lines of Enquiry to discuss under 2
Wellbeing check and attendance	5	1(b), 1(d), 2(d), 2 (i)
Pupil Premium	6	2 (j)

Suggested visit - on the same day as Autumn Term 2 meeting

Spring Term 2

Agenda item	Schedule of Responsibility	Lines of Enquiry to discuss
Recovery programmes	3	2(b), 2(c), 2(f), 2(g), 2(h), 2(i)
Academy Development Plan	4	Consider all relevant elements under 2 based on discussion topics
Attendance	5	1(b), 1(c), 2(d), 2(i)
Pupil Premium	6	2(i), 2(j)

Suggested visit - on the same day as Spring Term 2 meeting

Agenda item	Schedule of Responsibility	Lines of Enquiry to discuss
Second wellbeing check and attendance	5	1(b), 1(d), 2(d), 2 (i)
Pupil, Sport Premium and recovery programme	3,6 and 7	2(b), 2(c), 2(f), 2(g), 2(h), 2(i), 2(j)
Prepare annual summary of the school's success and achievements over the academic year from the Community Council's perspective/remit	9	All relevant Lines of Enquiry

Suggested visit - on the same day as Summer Term 2 meeting

11.   School Visits and Note of Visit form

The visit should remain strategic in nature with councillors focused on asking questions within their remit. Please remember that visits are neither inspections nor observations.

The following must be adhered to whilst planning and conducting a visit:

- The Principal must always be aware prior to the visit, regardless of whether their presence is required for any activity/action as part of the visit,

- Appointments should be scheduled with any staff they want to spend time with. Ensuring that staff are available and avoiding busy periods by finding a mutually convenient time will ensure productive visits,

- Setting expectations; ahead of the visit clarify the purpose of the visit, if you have specific questions send these ahead of time so that everyone feels prepared. The visit should be planned with fellow councillors as part of a planned programme for the year,

- Visits should take place as a group where possible.

For every visit made to school a Note of Visit form should be completed, it may be useful to complete the Note of Visit form as a whole council to discuss and reflect on your visit.

12.   And finally, a big thank you

Thank you for stepping up to support your school in this voluntary role. Whilst the remit is advisory that does not mean that councillors are not valued or that you are not governing; quite the opposite.

The model of Community Councils is based on a desire to ensure that discussions about arguably the most important aspects of school life - vision, values, curriculum, well being and the threads of aspiration and expectation that should run through each and every school - take place at a local level and with time to consider them properly.

Community Councils also provide a vital annual feedback loop to the Trust Board and back again, drawing the attention of trustees to the successes but also to the challenges that a particular school and community may be facing. This is essential to the overall effectiveness of the Trust governance model.

We wish you all another successful inaugural year!