**Academies – Questions for Governors (September 2016)**

**Initial considerations:**

1. What do we wish to achieve by this process? What will be the benefits for our pupils and the school, and what will be the implications for staff?
2. How will these changes influence, impact on and improve our levels of achievement and the quality of teaching and learning?
3. What will the financial implications be?
4. What powers, responsibilities and accountabilities will we have after the changes?
5. Which organisations can we talk to, visit or ask to visit us in order to discuss their experiences, the support they provided or received, and the resources available to them?
6. Do we have confidence in the educational experience and track record of the sponsor or school, and does it have the core competence to deliver successful school improvement and make a difference?
7. What is it that drives the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) or school? Does it match our values, vision, ethos and philosophy?
8. Does our governing body have the necessary culture of challenge and eye for detail needed to take on these changes? If not, what options are available to us?
9. Has the MAT or the Department for Education (DfE) broker explained, in detail, exactly what it will mean for us, and have they explained all the terminology?
10. What benefits will there be in terms of our reputation and the community?

**Questions relating to organisational structure:**

1. What is the structure of your academy?
2. How is governance structured and managed?
3. What is the financial top slice your academy takes? What is this used for? How often is it reviewed?
4. How does your school improvement service operate? Do the schools in your academy trust pay additionally for school improvement?
5. How large is your school improvement service?
6. What other additional support services are available to the school as part of your academy? Is there an additional cost to these? e.g HR, Health and Safety etc.
7. What is the distance between your schools? How is collaborative working between schools managed?
8. How do you intend to work with the Local Authority?
9. How will this affect the governing body structures?
10. What will the new local governing bodies look like?
11. What will be the role and responsibility of the local Governing Bodies? What powers will we have?
12. Would an academy receive extra funding above that allocated to Local Authority (LA) schools?
13. What financial risks are associated with academy and Multi-Academy Trust status? Would the Department for Education (DfE) be more involved?
14. Would an academy require more financial expertise to cover the increased financial accountability?
15. What happens if one school in the Multi-Academy Trust has a budget deficit?
16. Who is going to be on the Board of Directors? How can you be sure they will know how to run a Multi-Academy Trust?
17. Would the Directors be paid?
18. Will the Directors include representatives from some of the schools in the MAT?
19. If the school becomes an Academy and part of a Multi-Academy Trust when is this likely to take place?
20. When Ofsted arrive, who will they want to meet with?
21. Could the Multi-Academy Trust take over other schools?

**Questions for sponsors:**

If we are to be sponsored by your organisation…

1. What will it look like for pupils if you get it right?
2. How do you plan to raise standards and accelerate the progress of pupils?
3. How do you identify priorities for the school?
4. What will you do that is different from what we do now?
5. How do you assess what this school needs?
6. How will you appoint the Principal? Will governors of this school have a role in this?
7. How will you support the leadership of the school?
8. How will you determine who will lead the school?
9. What will happen to the name of the school?
10. Will the uniform change?
11. How will you engage with the community?
12. What is your definition of inclusion and what would it look like in this school?
13. How will the school be financially better off?
14. You talk about “economy of scale”, how will it work?
15. How will you approach behaviour management?
16. How do you work with parents and support school communities?
17. How do you support and improve teaching and learning?
18. How do you support leadership and management at all levels?
19. How do you raise aspirations for pupils, staff, parents and the community?
20. If we are in your Multi Academy Trust (MAT), how do we work together?
21. With regard to the Trust’s Governance, can you explain what the structure looks like?
22. Who appoints the individual governing bodies and what representation do they have on the Trust?
23. Who are the actual team that will support the school and what impact have they had elsewhere?
24. What evidence do you have that you have made a difference in other schools?
25. As an academy would we still be able to be involved with our existing collaborative?
26. What makes you different from other sponsors?
27. If we passed a resolution to become an academy with you as the sponsor, at what point would you start to work with the school?
28. What are you views on TUPE? At what point do the TUPE arrangements change?
29. Do you continue with the Teachers Pay and Conditions for all staff?
30. Do you continue with the pension schemes currently in place for all staff?
31. What will the official consultation process look like and what is included?
32. How will you engage with pupils, parents, staff and the community in the early stages?
33. Who are you as sponsors accountable too?
34. What happens if the parents, governors, staff and community are not happy about the way in which the trust is working?
35. What will happen to the Trust if the school does not improve under your stewardship?
36. What happens if the governors of the school don’t agree with the direction the Trust is going?