

Swift Academies

Success will inspire future triumphs

Board of Directors' Meeting
2pm, Friday 9 July 2021

a virtual meeting, held via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present

- **Directors**

Derek Bell (Chair), Stuart Hargrove, Tim Fisher,
Julie Cornelius, Michael Garmston, Geoff Liddle,
Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer), Sam Hirst

- **also**

Nichola Peaker (Head of School, Hurworth School),
Nick Lindsay (Head of School, Longfield Academy),
Glen Hart (Chief Finance Officer, Swift Academies)
Sarah Jones (Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies)
Beth Wright (Swift Academies)
Chris Carr (Infrastructure & Development Manager, Swift Academies)
Tracey Curtis (Governance Partner, Avec Partnership)
Katie Turnbull (Deputy Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy)

Item:

Description of discussion:

action by:

1

Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present

A quorum was confirmed to be present. Three Directors were required in order that decisions could be taken during this meeting of the Board of Directors of Swift Academies. Eight (8) Directors were present.

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Apologies for absence and their acceptance

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It was reported that apologies for absence had been received from Keith Bernstone (Director) and John Armitage (Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy).

Directors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence received from Keith Bernstone were accepted, and the absence of John Armitage was noted.

3 Notification of items of urgent other business

- items that the Board of Directors of Swift Academies regard are of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the end of the agenda

One item of urgent other business was notified for consideration at the end of the agenda: earned autonomy

4 Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests

a) complete the Register of Interest

Directors and those present were reminded that they should complete the register of interest to declare any relevant business or pecuniary interest and close family relationship between Members, Directors or Governors and/or Members, Directors or Governors and employees. A register should be completed annually and updated during each academic year where circumstances change.

It was confirmed that all Members, Directors and Governors had completed the Register of Interest for the current academic year.

b) to declare any personal or pecuniary interests in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting

Directors and those present were reminded that they should declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting. No declarations of interest were made.

c) Code of Conduct

Directors were reminded that the Board of Directors of Swift Academies had approved a Code of Conduct for Directors. The Code of Conduct had been signed by all Directors.

5 Approval of minutes / matters arising

Swift Academies Board of Directors

Board of Directors of Swift Academies, Friday 26 March 2021

Draft minutes of the Swift Academies Board of Directors' meeting held on Friday 26 March 2021 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the minutes of the Swift Academies Board of Directors meeting held on Friday 26 March 2021 were approved as a true record of the meeting and should be signed by the Chair.

Chair

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Review of Membership Board of Directors

a) Election of Chair

Nominations had been sought via e-mail, prior to this meeting for a Chair to the Board of Directors of Swift Academies to the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2022. It was reported that four nominations had been received for Derek Bell. No other nominations had been received.

Directors RESOLVED that Derek Bell as elected Chair to the Board of Directors of Swift Academies, with immediate effect, to the first meeting of the Board of Directors in Autumn Term 2022.

Derek Bell in the Chair.

b) Election of Vice Chair

Nominations had been sought via e-mail, prior to this meeting for a Vice Chair to the Board of Directors of Swift Academies to the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2022. It was reported that three nominations had been received for Julie Cornelius. No other nominations had been received.

Directors RESOLVED that Julie Cornelius was elected Vice Chair to the Board of Directors of Swift Academies, with immediate effect, to the first meeting of the Board of Directors in Autumn Term 2022.

Hurworth School

c) appointment of Mick Hatton

A pen portrait to support the appointment of Mick Hatton had been shared with Directors prior to this meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that Mick Hatton was appointed to the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School with immediate effect, for a term of four years.

d) appointment of Trish Heron

A pen portrait to support the appointment of Trish Heron had been shared with Directors prior to this meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that Trish Heron was appointed to the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School with effect from 13 October 2021 for a term of four years.

e) appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

It was reported that due to a change in work commitments, Franco Sinaguglia had resigned as Chair of the Local Governing Body, Hurworth School. However, Franco would continue as a governor of the Local Governing Body. Louise Johnson had resigned as a governor (and vice chair) of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School

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Governors RESOLVED that the information was noted. A Chair and Vice Chair would be sought via e-mail before the end of summer term 2021.

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Chief Executive Officer Report

- a) Scheme of Delegation
- b) Trust Development Plan

The Chief Executive Officer Report, Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Chief Executive Officer Report

The Chief Executive Officer drew Directors' attention to the content of the circulated Report, and reflected on the unprecedented period over the last 16 months, which had caused significant disruption to staff and the community. However, it was reported that in partnership with other agencies, the response to the challenge had been immense and everyone should be very proud of what had been achieved across the Trust.

Condition Improvement Fund

It was reported that progress was being made with capital projects across the Trust:

- Replacement of fire alarm system, sensors and flat roofs at The Rydal Academy
- Replacement of flat roofs at Hurworth School
- Replacement of boilers, calorifiers and fire alarm system at Longfield Academy

Funding had also been successful for CIF bids submitted in 2021-2022, for three projects, totalling £907,000 which would see further improvements across the Trust, including fire safety projects at The Rydal Academy and Hurworth School and replacement of heating system at Hurworth School.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the Chief Executive Officer's Report, Scheme of Delegation and Trust Development Plan were noted.

8

Trust Business Manager Action Plan

The Trust Business Manager Action Plan had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)

Directors' attention was drawn to the content of the circulated Trust Business Manager Action Plan: it was reported that five CIF bids were successful in the 2020-2021 round totalling £1.3M. Tenders for fire alarm projects at The Rydal Academy and Longfield Academy closed in March 2021 with projects scheduled to be completed throughout

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summer 2021. Roofing replacement projects at Hurworth School and The Rydal Academy commenced in December 2020 and are now completed.

Application results for the 2021-2022 CIF round were released in June 2021 – Swift Academies has been successful with three projects awarded funding totalling £907k. This will support fire safety and door enhancements at The Rydal Academy and Hurworth School and the replacement of the boiler and heating system at Hurworth School. Works are expected to commence in Spring Term 2022.

Premises / Health & Safety

It was reported that a significant flood of the server room had taken place at Longfield Academy recently. An insurance claim would be submitted for the damaged equipment.

Health & Safety committee meetings continue to take place termly to ensure relevant staff and governors have a detailed knowledge of occurrences, actions and improvements related to Health & Safety.

Contracts

Directors were advised that the contract register is reviewed on a monthly basis and contracts in excess of £40,000 are discussed and approved during meetings of the Finance Committee.

Catering

Since April 2021, Catering Managers have met termly, to compare products and costings, by working collaboratively, they have reduced catering supply costs.

GDPR

The GDPR working group will continue to meet termly to review overall compliance and outstanding actions. Meetings will continue as they are extremely helpful to ensure the Trust remains compliance and there is a consistent approach across the Trust when implementing legislation.

Business Continuity Plans

The Trust Business Manager reported that a review of plans was scheduled to take place during Autumn Term 2021 to reflect on lessons learnt during the coronavirus pandemic, including for instance, remote learning.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Trust Business Manager Action Plan and information reported was noted.

Chief Finance Officer's Report

- a) Including Management Accounts 2019-2020 and Budget 2021-2022
- b) Audit Plan

Management Accounts 2019-2020

The Management Accounts Report (April 2021) had been shared with Directors prior to this meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Chief Finance Officer reported that the circulated outturn report had been prepared at a time when it was hoped normality was gradually

returning and no further lockdowns are enforced and therefore additional costs in respect of Covid are minimal.

Directors were advised that a claim was submitted for £58k to cover the costs of Free School Meal (FSM) vouchers that were purchased 5 January 2021 to 8 March 2021, has now been paid in full.

Directors' attention was drawn to the circulated Management Accounts Report (April 2021) for a commentary on the analysis of income and expenditure on areas identified with significant variances for the period.

As at 31 August 2020 reserves were £319k: a budget surplus of £2k was currently predicted with reserves of £321k at August 2021.

Budget 2021-2022 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The 2021-2022 Trust Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan had been shared with Directors prior to this meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Academy Trust had received notification of the funding allocation for 2021-2022 from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in March 2021. In summary the key funding streams were reported as follows:

- Pre-16 pupil funding, which continues to be based on a formula set by the local authority, as agreed by the Schools Forum
- High needs pupil funding (special schools), which is based on the level of needs of individual pupils, for which place funding of £10,000 is received from the ESFA, with the remaining funding for the pupil paid by a top-up from the local authority responsible for the pupil
- Nursery funding, receivable from the local authority, which is based on the school's projected pupil numbers for the three terms in the academic year. From September 2021 we will be expanding the nursery at The Rydal Academy to include an eight place two-year old provision.

Directors were informed that the proposed budget for 2021-2022 and MTFP for the Trust and individual schools (Appendix 1), projects an in-year surplus, with overall projected reserves position of £583k at the end of 2021-2022. Based on current income and expenditure predictions for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 the level of reserves is expected to increase to £603k.

- **Pupil Numbers**

The Chief Finance Officer discussed with Directors the pupil numbers over the course of the MTFP: it was reported that funding was driven primarily by pupil numbers, therefore it is important to be aware of the assumptions made and how pupil numbers will fluctuate over coming years.

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Nursery pupils are funded on a termly basis: for budget planning purposed it has been assumed that nursery numbers will remain static across the MTFP.

Pupil premium numbers for the period September 2021 to March 2022 are based on October 2020 census data, and pupil premium numbers for the period April to August 2022 are provisional estimates as actual pupil numbers will not be confirmed until October 2022 census. Assumptions have been made for future years, for example pupil numbers have been adjusted for pupil number decreases at The Rydal Academy.

The ESFA have advised that Recovery Premium allocations will be based on pupil premium entitlement. It has been assumed that ESFA will use Ever6 free school meals as the basis of calculations.

Directors RESOLVED that the proposed 2021-2022 budget and MTFP were approved and should be submitted to the ESFA not later than 31 July 2021.

Audit Plan

The Audit Strategy and Planning Memorandum prepared by Clive Owen LLP had been shared with Directors prior to this meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the Audit Strategy and Planning Memorandum was noted.

10

Academy Trust Handbook (September 2021)

The Academy Trust Handbook and report had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors' attention was drawn to the content of the circulated Academy Trust Handbook (September 2021) report and the changes relating to the new handbook, and how these affect Swift Academies, including any actions required to implement the changes.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the Academy Trust Handbook September 2021, and associated report, were noted.

11

Trust Network Infrastructure and Development Manager Update including

- a) IT Development Plan
- b) Trust Assets ICT / Overview

The IT Development Plan and Trust Assets ICT / Overview had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Directors were advised that work was currently underway to ensure that the Trust was secure from any Cyber Attacks, with actions taken to ensure that any risk has been mitigated.

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It was reported that a number of activities would take place at Hurworth School over the Summer Break 2021, including the installation of 15 touch screens, replacement of teachers' computers, installation of CCTV and upgrading the telephone system. These actions would improve the teaching and learning experience at the school.

Following a recent flood in the server room at Longfield Academy, it had been decided the server room would be relocated. However, Directors were assured that Longfield Academy was operational following the flooding incident.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the IT Development Plan and Trust Assets ICT / Overview and information reported was noted.

12 Head of School / Head Teacher update

- a) Hurworth School
- b) Longfield School
- c) The Rydal Academy

Refer to Head Teacher's Report (item 13 of the circulated agenda), for information.

**13 PART C: Business Items for information only/circulated previously
Head of School / Head Teacher Report**

- a) Hurworth School
- b) Longfield School
- c) The Rydal Academy

14 EDP Reports

- a) Hurworth School
- b) Longfield School
- c) The Rydal Academy

15 Risk Registers

- a) Hurworth School
- b) Longfield School
- c) The Rydal Academy
- d) Swift Academies

**16 PART D: Concluding Items
Any urgent other business raised under item 3**

- Earned Autonomy

Directors RESOLVED that The Rydal Academy, Hurworth School and Longfield Academy were RAG rated green in respect of Earned Autonomy.

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Approval of documents for inspection

Directors RESOLVED that the agenda, approved minutes and supporting documents be made available for public inspection with the exception of information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers.

18

Time and date of future meetings


- 2021-2022 meeting schedule

Directors RESOLVED that the 2021-2022 meeting schedule was approved: the next meeting of the Board of Directors would take place from 2pm on Friday 10 December 2021.

These minutes were approved by the Board of Directors of Swift Academies as follows:

_____ (date)

signature (chair):



Approved

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