



Swift Academies

Success will inspire future triumphs

Board of Directors, 2pm Friday 1 April 2022
The Rydal Academy

MINUTES

Present	Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer), Derek Bell, Tim Fisher, Michael Garmston, Stuart Hargrove
in attendance	Sarah Jones: Clerk/ Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies Glen Hart: Chief Financial Officer John Armitage – Head Teacher – The Rydal Academy Nick Lindsay – Head of School, Longfield Academy.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of discussion</u>	<u>Action by</u>
	PART A: Procedural items	
1	Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present It was confirmed that a quorum was present. The Scheme of Delegation for Swift Academies stated that the quorum for meetings of the Governors will be three voting Governors.	
2	Apologies for absence and their acceptance It was reported that apologies had been received from Chris Carr, Geoff Liddle and Julie Cornelius Governors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were accepted and noted the absence of the Swift Academies Director.	
3	Notification of items of urgent other business	

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Page 1 of 7

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

The Chief Executive asked that 2 additional items could be discussed. The possible further expansion of the Trust and the next steps regarding Governor skills audits.

DIRECTORS Resolved that these items could be added under item 17 of this agenda.

4 Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests

a) Governors and those present were reminded that they should complete the Register of Interest annually to declare any relevant business or pecuniary interest and close family relationship between members and / or other trustees and / or employees. Registers should be updated during the academic year should circumstances change.

All Governors present completed submitted a Register of Interest.

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

Governors 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 received.

c) Code of Conduct

Governors were reminded they had signed the Governors Code of Conduct, upon appointment to the Longfield Academy Local Governing Body. It was confirmed that signed Governors Code of Conduct were held on file for all Governors of the Local Governing Body of the Longfield Academy.

5 Approval of minutes/matters arising

Swift Academies Board of Directors

- a) Thursday 14th October 2021 (Pay Review)
- b) Friday 10th December 2021

The Chief executive confirmed that draft minutes of the Pay Review meeting held on Thursday 14th October 2021 had been previously shared and approved with Directors off this committee and copies were available upon request for all remaining Directors.

A DIRECTOR confirmed this as true and confirmed the Pay Review minutes were a true reflection of the meeting.

Draft minutes of the Swift Academies Board of Directors' meeting held on Friday 10 December 2021 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Chief Executive asked if Directors wished to discuss the subject of EBACC subjects again at this time, as denoted in the actions.

Directors

Directors resolved they did not wish to discuss this again at this time and suggested this is re-visited in Summer term.

Directors RESOLVED that the minutes of the Pay Review Committee and Swift Academies Board of Directors' meetings held on Thursday 14th October 2021 and Friday 10 December 2021 were approved as a true record of the meetings and should be signed by the Chair.

PART B: Business items for discussion

6 Trust Business Manager Action Plan (attached)

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

The Trust Business Manager discussed with Directors the content of the updated, circulated Trust Business Manager Action & Development Plan, drawing Directors' attention to the following:

Successful CIF funding and ongoing capital projects - Updates were provided including completed and planned works for both Rydal and Hurworth to take place throughout summer holidays. They advised JH mechanical had been appointed by the finance committee to undertake Boiler replacement works at Hurworth school in line with the scheme of delegation. Tenders for the remaining two projects, fire safety works at Hurworth and Rydal, are currently open to tender submissions.

Covid Guidance for schools – The Trust Business Manager advised that in the expectation all additional measures for education would be redacted in the near future, plans to address future Covid outbreaks was now included in the Trust Infection Control Policy.

A Director stated this was a good idea and asked if there was an agreed date that the additional school guidance was expected to be withdrawn.

The Trust Business Manager advised there was not although expected this to be very soon which would omit the need to regularly review additional Risks Assessments relating to Covid.

Directors RESOLVED that the Trust Business Manager Action Plan and information presented had been noted.

7 **Management Accounts Report**

The Management accounts 2021/22 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Information regarding the current position of the Trust finances, reserves and breakdown for each school was provided by the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer provided an update on staffing and advised that recruitment is carefully considered when vacancies arise to ensure the staffing structure meets changing requirements and staff are not always recruited on a 'like for like' basis.

Following recent press releases the Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the concerns raised regarding pension indexation do not affect any staff employed by the Trust, and despite receiving several queries this was now resolved with no action being required.

The Chief Financial Officer advised Directors that the current supplier for school transport at Hurworth School has recently contacted him regarding the increasing costs of fuel and a temporary, additional levy has been discussed to cover costs of this. The Chief Financial Officer had requested a breakdown of miles covered per route so this could be considered and is awaiting a response.

A Director stated this was a very valid point and a concern also for his establishment and agreed this should be monitored moving forward as fuel costs may fluctuate.

Directors RESOLVED that the Management Accounts and information presented had been noted.

8 **Internal Assurance Work Update**

The Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the internal assurance report and confirmed this was a good overall report and that the only feedback for improvement received was for schools to ensure any cash received was fully logged and a breakdown filed for reference.

The Chief Financial Officer confirmed this was actioned with immediate effect and therefore already in place.

A DIRECTOR sked that the CFO pass congratulations and thanks to all involved in the audit and stated it was extremely positive that only one very minor action be recommended.

Directors RESOLVED that this information presented had been noted.

9 **School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool (attached)**

The Chief Financial Officer informed Directors that the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool has been completed and is ready to upload. CFO

An online issue is currently preventing this although this has been reported to the DfE who are aiming to resolve this as a priority. The Chief Financial Officer will provide an update once available.

10 Trust Network Infrastructure and Development Manager Update including,

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

The Trust ICT Manager provided an update on Cyber Security and current preventions the Trust currently has in place. They confirmed the guidance from the RPA has been fully reviewed and all recommended actions are in place. They advised that the ICT team are aware of current trends in phishing and monitoring of all incoming and outgoing mail is standard.

A DIRECTOR suggested that phishing test or exercise may be a useful training tool for the ICT team and is aware these are completed within other establishments.

The Trust ICT Manager confirmed he would explore options for these.

TICT

They informed Directors that the DfE pilot scheme questionnaire had been completed for the Trust and would be submitted.

TICT

The Chief Financial Officer stated that Cyber Security was added to the Trust Risk Register.

A DIRECTOR agreed this was a good idea as was a high risk in current climate.

The Trust ICT Manager provide an update on short, medium and long term goals plans for ICT. They stated that they have completed a heat map and plan for investment at all three Academies.

A DIRECTOR queried if usage of computers and equipment was evidenced on the document.

The Trust ICT Manager confirmed it was.

11 Head of School/ Head Teacher Update

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

Directors RESOLVED each of these reports had previously been circulated and noted.

The Chief executive asked if there were any further queries regarding these reports.

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Directors RESOLVED there were not.

12 Chief Executive Officer Report

Chief Executive Officer Report (attached)

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

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

The Chief Executive provided a summary of the report and drew Directors attention to recent staffing issues following the COVID pandemic and the impact this had on each institution. They confirmed that in addition to staff absences, securing temporary staff from agencies had been challenging also. Despite this, pupil attendance still remained above national average in all three schools.

The Chief Executive advised that the Trust development Plan would be reviewed and updated in Summer term.

A DIRECTOR asked if the arrival of families from Ukraine would cause issues in school placements

The Chief Executive advised they did not feel this would be an issue as there were spaces across all year groups throughout the locality, and added that they felt such families would be welcomed and Darlington had a great reputation for offers of support.

13 Policies for Approval:

- a) Infection Control Policy

The Trust Business Manager advised this has been updated as previously discussed to include Covid.

Directors RESOLVED this policy had been reviewed and noted changes were accepted.

PART C: Business Items for information only / circulated previously

14 Head of School/Head Teacher Report

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

15 EDP Reports

- a) Hurworth School (attached)
- b) The Rydal Academy (attached)

16

Risk Registers

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

17

Any urgent other items raised under item 3

- The Chief Executive advised that, as raised under item three of the agenda, Swift Academies continue to be in discussion with another Academy regarding the possible expansion of the Trust. They stated this Academy share similar ethos, values and beliefs and this is a relationship that will continue. Further updates will be provided as they are available.
- The Chief Executive confirmed that a recent skills audit had been circulated and four areas of development were identified. These areas would be covered over both summer and autumn terms at governor development sessions. The identified areas of development were;
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Finance
 - Ofsted
 - Staff Health and Wellbeing

18

Approval of documents for inspection

Governors 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.

19

Date and time of future meetings

MAT Development Sessions (all from 5pm)

- Thursday 7 July 2022

Board Of Directors

- To be confirmed

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

on: 8.7.2022 date

Signed by: (Chair of Board) 

Printed name: D. BELL

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Page 7 of 7

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