



Swift Academies

Success will inspire future triumphs

Board of Directors' Meeting

Friday 7th July 2023 at 2.00 pm Hurworth School

MINUTES

Directors present:	Dean Judson (CEO), Derek Bell (Chair), Stuart Hargrove, Michael Garmston and Zoe Beach.
Members present:	
In attendance:	Glen Hart: Chief Financial Officer, Swift Academies Sarah Jones: Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies Leon Watson: Trust ICT Manager, Swift Academies Angela Sweeten: Head Teacher, Longfield Academy John Armitage: Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy Rachel Somerville: Head of School, Hurworth School Laura Hawksby: Trust Governance and Policy Officer

Item	Description of discussion	Action by
1.	<p>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</p> <p>The chair welcomed those present to the meeting.</p> <p>It was confirmed that a quorum was present. The Scheme of Delegation for Swift Academies stated that the quorum for Board of Directors meetings will be three voting Directors. 5 (five) Directors were present.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</p> <p>It was reported that apologies had been received from Julie Cornelius (Vice-Chair), Tim Fisher, Geoff Liddle and Kelly-Ann Lyle.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were received and accepted.</p>	
3.	<p>Notification of items of urgent other business</p> <p>There were no items of any other business.</p>	

4.	<p>Declaration of personal and pecuniary interests.</p> <p>a) Complete / Review the Register of Interest</p> <p>Directors and those present were reminded that they should update the Register of Interest to declare any relevant business and pecuniary interest and close family relationships between Members or Directors and/or Members or Directors and employees.</p> <p>It was confirmed that all Directors had completed the Register of Interest for the current academic year.</p> <p>Directors confirmed that their respective Register continued to be accurate and up to date.</p> <p>b) To declare any personal or pecuniary interests in any matters arising from the agenda of the current meeting.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c) Code of Conduct</p> <p>Directors were reminded they had signed the 'Directors Code of Conduct', upon appointment. It was confirmed that signed Directors' Code of Conduct were held on file for all Directors present.</p>	
5.	<p>Approval of minutes / review of actions / matters arising</p> <p>Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting held on 31st March 2023, a copy of which is retained on file. All actions contained within the minutes had been completed.</p> <p>Draft minutes of the Extraordinary Board of Directors' meeting held on the 24th May 2023 were also considered by Directors, a copy of which is retained on file. Arising from consideration of the minutes Minute 5 (24th May 2023 Extraordinary Board Meeting refers) it was noted that Stone King had now been appointed as solicitors in relation legal services for joint representation of both Swift Academies and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form, to assist in moving forward with the Trust growth and due diligence.</p> <p>Communication had also taken place with staff from both Swift Academies and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Forms, advising them of the intention for the two institutions to come together to form a larger Multi Academy Trust.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that:</p> <p>a) The minutes of the Board of Directors from the 31st March 2023 and the Extraordinary Board of Directors Meeting 24th May 2023 were a true and accurate record of the meetings.</p> <p>b) The Governance & Policy Officer would liaise with the Chair to arrange a signed copy of the approved minutes are retained on file.</p>	Governance & Policy Officer

6.	<p>Review of Membership</p> <p>Directors reviewed the current Membership document.</p> <p><u>LGB Longfield Academy:</u></p> <p>Directors noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sarah Kelly was appointed as Vice Chair of Longfield Local Governing Body on Monday 15th May 2023. b) Sarah Glover, Teaching Staff Governor Longfield Local Governing Body, resigned as of the 19th June 2023. c) Liam McCavanagh, Teaching Staff Governor of Longfield Local Governing Body, resigned as of Friday 7th July 2023. <p>Directors also gave consideration to the appointment of the following Teacher Governors and Staff Governor to be appointed to Longfield Local Governing Body. Nominations for these roles had been advertised amongst the staff. It was noted that no election was required as the following staff had agreed to be appointed to these roles as no further nominations had been received for these vacancies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Suzie Kirkbride – Teaching Staff Governor b) Andrew Brown – Teaching Staff Governor c) Julie Walker – Support Staff Governor <p>Directors RESOLVED to appoint the following to Longfield Local Governing Body: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Suzie Kirkbride – Teaching Staff Governor b) Andrew Brown – Teaching Staff Governor c) Julie Walker – Support Staff Governor <p><u>Rydal Academy</u></p> <p>Directors noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tracy Vaughan had been appointed as a General Local Governing Body Governor for Rydal following, the prior approval of all Directors and reporting at Rydal Local Governing Body on the 19th June 2023. b) Sarah Newrick, Parent Governor Rydal Academy, resigned as of 24th April 2023. <p>Governors noted there was currently a vacancy on the Rydal Local Governing Body for a Parent Governor. The vacancy had been advertised to all eligible parents/individuals exercising parental responsibility at the Rydal Academy. No nominations were received, and it was therefore reported to the Board that in accordance with Article 54 and Article 54 A that Trustees may therefore appoint a parent or individual exercising parental responsibility to fill the vacancy. Governor Gaurav Bhatia is a</p>	
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	<p>current General Governor at the Rydal Academy and is also a parent of a current pupil at Rydal Academy. He is therefore eligible to be a Parent Governor and had agreed to take up the role. A General Governor vacancy would therefore created by Gaurav's Bhatia's appointment as a Parent Governor, which it was hoped to be filled shortly subject to appropriate approval. Approval would be sought from Directors for both these appointments.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED to note the Rydal Academy report.</p>	Governance & Policy Officer
7.	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>The Chair had been kept abreast of all current issues in relation to the Trust. He advised that the Academy Trust Accounting Officers letter to Academy Trusts and the Academy Trust Handbook 2023 had been published on the 6th July and were included on this Agenda for consideration (Minute 17 below refers).</p> <p>The Chair expressed thanks and gratitude to staff, Governors, Directors and Members for the hard work they had undertaken in a challenging year. The CEO reiterated the Chair's thanks and also for the hard work of the Directors in working towards the joining of the institutions of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form and Swift Academies.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
8.	<p>Feedback from the Standards Committee</p> <p>On behalf of the Chair of the Standards Committee, who had submitted his apologies for this meeting, the Chair of the Board of Directors provided feedback from the Standards Committee meeting held on the Wednesday 21st June 2023.</p> <p><u>Longfield Academy</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Board advised that attendance at Longfield was still above national average, however, was slightly down from last year. Persistent absent figures were lower than the national average. Persistent absence figures are monitored, with support measures and interventions put in place to support the pupils and their families. Serious persistent absences were being tracked and monitored closely. Home visits are a priority for these pupils and also for those classed as vulnerable or open to services.</p> <p>The Head Teacher had updated the Standards Committee on progress/ monitoring impact on the identified Ofsted priorities. Additional support provided to SEN (Special Educational Needs) students was also noted. The School Improvement Partner (C. Durand) was due to visit the school on the 26th June 2023 to undertake external quality assurance and to monitor progress with regard to the Ofsted priorities.</p> <p>Suspensions and exclusions had decreased. Behaviour was improving, with evidence to support this. More support was directed in the classroom for SEN (Special Educational Needs) pupils. Meetings of the school council were noted to have taken place over the course of the term to meet and to discuss key issues affecting students and hear the student</p>	

voice. More student voice information would be collected. Safeguarding concerns were noted to have risen. The Safeguarding team continued to work with the Front Door and Social Workers to ensure there is a multi-agency approach which is child centred.

Attainment and progress had been reported upon, with Year 10 figures noted to be particularly strong.

Hurworth School

The Chair of the Board advised that the attendance was above national average for Hurworth School, with low persistent absence. It was noted by the Standards Committee that the future Government led initiative to provide a specific time for cut off of registers, would be challenging for Hurworth School as the pupils could potentially arrive later due to the buses not always being able to arrive on time. This initiative was expected to come into place in 2024/25.

It was noted that this academic year the school had been challenging low level behaviour and moving their framework to ensure the school's expectations are met. This had led to an increase in external suspensions compared to the previous academic year. However, this had also seen a reduction in low level disruption and therefore had seen a significant decrease in internal suspensions compared with the previous academic year. It was noted the school was promoting positive behaviour systems and ensuring staff are consistent in following the Behaviour Policy.

The Head of School had reported upon reported upon safeguarding and advised that there had been a reduction in 'child in need', however there had been an increase in Early Help. It was noted that LAC (Looked After Children) numbers had increased in the school.

It was noted that the Arriva bus service had been cut and that at Hurworth Local Governing Body, it was agreed to raise the issue with Arriva to ascertain whether the bus service could be reinstated. The Head of School of Hurworth updated the Board of Directors and advised that the bus service had been reinstated, however only until September.

Rydal Academy

The Chair of the Board advised that pupil numbers were relatively stable. Two-year-old provision in the school is full with a waiting list. Absence levels were close to the national average and it was the severe absence of a few children which brought this figure down. These children and families continued to be worked with to improve their attendance.

The Head Teacher advised that projected numbers for pupils coming into Reception in the 2023/24 intake was currently 62 and that there was therefore the possibility of the requirement of a third class intake which would incur extra cost in relation to the provision of teaching.

Permanent Exclusions were slightly higher, with suspensions approximately the same as last year.

With regard to attainment and progress there was a Good Level of Development (GLD), with the projection above that for 2021. Growth was

9.	<p>noted by the Governing Body to be significantly more than the national average and the attainment gap had reduced by 34% from the Reception baseline. Growth for Disadvantaged pupils was significantly closing the attainment gap and was almost treble the national average.</p> <p>Key Stage 1 SAT's (Standard Assessment Tests) were moderated by the Local Authority (showed a 100% accuracy). Key Stage 2 SAT's results would be available later in the Summer Term.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p> <p>Feedback from Finance and Resources Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee provided feedback from the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee held on Thursday 29th June 2023.</p> <p>He advised that the (CFO) Chief Financial Officer had provided an update report to the Finance & Resources Committee detailing the financial position of the Trust for the period from the 1st of September 2022 to 30th April 2023. The Committee had also considered the Management Accounts update, cash flow forecast, KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) and balance sheet.</p> <p>At 31st August 2022 the reserves figure is £647k, currently predicting a deficit of £72k which will leave the anticipated reserves figure of £575k at 31st August 2023.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Assurance reports had been considered at the Committee for December 2022 and March 2023. The December Term Internal Assurance report contained no risk issues for improvement. It was noted there was one low risk finding from the March Internal Assurance report, which the Directors had asked the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Executive Officer to be queried and reported back.</p> <p>Directors considered the latest Risk Registers for Hurworth School, Longfield Academy and the Rydal Academy. It was noted that the main changes were to the 'date for next review' being made more specific in all three Risk Registers.</p> <p>The Committee had given consideration to the Swift Academies Risk Register and requested that it be amended and brought back to this meeting of the Board of Directors (Minute 19 below refers):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at category 3 (The MAT fails to expand at a sustainable rate) the likelihood of occurring be reduced from 2 to 1. • At category 7 (School ICT Systems and/or users compromised due to a cyber security incident) reference to internal/external vulnerability assessments being completed on an annual basis be added to the control procedures. <p>Tenders had been considered for passive Fire Safety Works with Ventro appointed and toilet refurbishment tenders at Rydal Academy with Flexit</p>	
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10.	<p>appointed. A quote for switching infrastructure which required replacing/upgrading across Rydal Academy, Longfield Academy and Hurworth School was also approved with Abtec appointed.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) provided a report at the Committee meeting on the proposed 2023/24 revenue budget and the medium-term financial plan (MTFP). Arising from consideration of the report the Finance & Resources Committee recommended to the Board that (Minute 13 below refers):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The 2023/24 revenue budget and the medium-term financial plan be approved. b) The key risks and budget sensitivities be noted. c) The proposed 2023/24 key performance indicators be approved. d) The Trust's capital plans across the medium-term be approved. <p>Director RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer's Report:</p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provided an update on the coming together of QE Sixth Form College and Swift Academies. An update had also been provided to the Standards Committee and Finance & Resources Committee. The CEO advised he had met with the Regional Director and would be supporting QE in their application to the Head Teacher's Board.</p> <p>a) Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>Directors considered the Scheme of Delegation, a copy of which is held on file. The CEO advised that there was a small amendment at page 4 which referred to the Head of School Report template which had been designed to comply with the DfE (Department for Education) requirements as outlined in 'Understanding Your Data; a guide for school governors and academy trustees' and a small amendment on page 11 ensuring that the Board of Trustees are provided with performance reports from each Local Governing Body meeting by populating fully the Trust's Head of School Report template which has been designed to comply with the DfE requirements.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Scheme of Delegation be approved.</p> <p>b) Trust Development Plan</p> <p>Directors considered the Trust Development Plan, a copy of which is held on file. The CEO advised there were a few minor changes to the Trust Development since last reviewed.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Trust Development Plan be approved.</p> <p>c) Trust Development</p> <p>It was noted that the CEO had provided an update with regard to the Trust development in his Chief Executive Officer's Report.</p>	
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11.	<p>Membership of Board of Directors on Point of Merger.</p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) verbally advised that Directors Tim Fisher, Zoe Beach and Michael Garmston would be Directors on the new Board of Directors of Inicio. Three Directors from Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College and two new Directors from Higher Education institutions would also join the Inicio Board of Directors at the point of merger. It was also noted that Director Derek Bell would be a Member of Inicio.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
12.	<p>Trust Business Manager's Action Plan</p> <p>The TBM (Trust Business Manager) reported on the Action and Development Plan 2021-2024 and updates for the Summer Term 2023. A copy of the report is held on file, with all new updates highlighted in yellow.</p> <p>The TBM advised that GDPR training for Governors, Directors and Members had been held on the 6th July 2023. It was also noted that applications for the CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) 2023/2024 had been unsuccessful and that there had been a significant decrease in the amount of funding on a national level.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
13.	<p>Chief Finance Officer's Report:</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) reported on the financial position of the Trust for the period from the 1st of September 2022 to 30th April 2023. He provided an update report on the management accounts, advising on areas where there were significant variances for this period. A copy of the report is retained on file.</p> <p>The CFO advised that as at 31st August 2022 the reserves figure is £647k, with a predicted deficit of £72k which will leave the anticipated reserves figure of £575k at 31st August 2023.</p> <p>The CFO also reported on the KPI (Key Performance Indicators) which were noted by the Directors.</p> <p>The cash flow forecast was also reported upon, which was noted to be in a good position.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The CFO's report be noted. b) The Management Accounts summary for April 2023 be noted. c) The KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) be noted. d) The cash flow be noted. 	

Budget 2023-2024

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) provided a report on the proposed 2023/24 revenue budget and the medium-term financial plan (MTFP), a copy of which is retained on file. He reported on the key risks and budget sensitivities, the proposed 2023/24 key performance indicators, plans to explore future actions to address the deficit and consider efficiencies or savings within the medium-term financial plan. He also reported upon the proposed capital position across the medium-term.

The CFO reported that the 2023/24 budget projects an in-year deficit of £59k, with overall projected surplus reserves at the end of MTFP at 31 March 2026 of £584k, representing 3% of income. In years 2024/25 and 2025/26 the MTFP does include adjustments to allow for a near balanced budget.

It was noted that the Finance & Resources Committee held on the 29th June 2023 recommended to the Board

- a) The 2023/24 revenue budget and the medium-term financial plan be approved.
- b) The key risks and budget sensitivities be noted.
- c) The proposed 2023/24 key performance indicators be approved.
- d) The Trust's capital plans across the medium-term be approved.

Directors noted that a Trust wide budget would be formed for Inicio, when the institution come together.

Directors **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The 2023/24 revenue budget and the medium-term financial plan be approved.
- b) The key risks and budget sensitivities be noted.
- c) The proposed 2023/24 key performance indicators be approved.
- d) The Trust's capital plans across the medium-term be approved.

14. Trust ICT Manager Update:

IT Development Plan

The ICT manager provided an update on the IT Development Plan, a copy of which is retained on file. The report set out short and long term objectives, with deadlines and progress to date.

Directors **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

15.	<p>ESFA Correspondence</p> <p>Further to Minute 10 (Board of Directors Meeting 31st March 2023) the Chief Financial Officer advised that the correspondence from the ESFA (Education Skills and Funding Agency) with regard to the IT disruption and assurances confirmed all actions had been completed and the correspondence closed.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
16.	<p>Longfield and Hurworth Staffing</p> <p>Further to Minute 5 (Extraordinary Board of Directors Meeting 7th March 2023) The Chief Executive Officer verbally reported that the internal staffing restructure had been undertaken for Hurworth School and the Longfield internal restructure was now complete.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
17.	<p>Academy Trust Handbook</p> <p>A copy of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023 and the letter to the Accounting Officer in Academy Trusts was circulated prior to the meeting and is held on file.</p> <p>The Chief financial Officer (CFO) advised of the changes to the Handbook, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement of trusts' requirement to ensure the health and safety of building occupants, accompanied by additional guidance on this area. • The removal of the requirement for management accounts to be shared with all trustees at least six times per year. Accounts must still be shared with the chair monthly, and with the Board when it meets. • The deadline for Trusts' budget forecast return has been extended from the end of July to the end of August. • Adjustments to the rules around related party transactions, with the aim of reducing the burden on Trusts by limiting the transactions that require prior approval. This has been done by increasing the approval threshold from £20,000 to £40,000 and refining some of the associated rules, especially around transactions between educational establishments. 	
18.	<p>Head of School/Headteachers Update:</p> <p>It was noted that an updated had been provided via the Standards Committee feedback at Minute 8 above and a copy of the Head of School's/Head Teacher's Update Reports were attached to the Agenda for information. Additionally, a SIP (School Improvement Plan) update was provided:</p>	

	<p>a) Hurworth School</p> <p>The Head of School of Hurworth reported verbally that the School Improvement Partner had visited in the Summer Term and had looked at Quality Assurance, looking at improvements in reading and consistency in behaviour. Progress and impact were noted to have been made. Next year's key priorities included consistency in challenge and behaviour.</p> <p>b) Longfield Academy</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised verbally that the School Improvement Partner had visited in the Summer Term.</p> <p>Main findings from the visit had demonstrated that the Academy had been effective in addressing their last inspection visit and had accurately transformed their development points this academic year.</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised there were three focuses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality First Teaching/Brain Based Learning & SEN (Special Educational Needs) Provision. • Development of Whole Child. • Collaborative Planning <p>c) The Rydal Academy</p> <p>The Head Teacher verbally advised, that the School Improvement Partner had visited in the Summer Term. It was noted that British values were being tracked through the curriculum. The academy continued to work upon the shift from a good to an outstanding school, with additional reflection and analysis from leadership team.</p>	
19.	<p>Risk Registers:</p> <p>Consideration was given by the Board of Directors to the following Risk Registers. It was noted that changes had been made to the 'date for next review' being made more specific in all Risk Registers.</p> <p>a.) Hurworth School</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Hurworth School Risk Register be noted.</p> <p>b) Longfield Academy</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Longfield Risk Register be noted.</p> <p>c) The Rydal Academy</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that The Rydal Academy Risk Register be noted.</p> <p>c) Swift Academies</p> <p>Based upon the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee (Minute 9 above refers) it had been agreed by Directors that the following amendments be included:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At category 3 (The MAT fails to expand at a sustainable rate) the likelihood of occurring be reduced from 2 to 1. • At category 7 (School ICT Systems and/or users compromised due to a cyber security incident) reference to internal/external vulnerability assessments being completed on an annual basis be added to the control procedures. <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Swift Academies Risk Register be noted and approved.</p>	
20.	<p>Policies for approval/review/information</p> <p>a) For approval – Online Safety Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Reasonable Force Policy</p> <p>The Board of Directors considered the Online Safety Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Reasonable Force Policy.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the above policies be approved and adopted.</p> <p>b) For Review – Remote Education Policy and Probationary Policy</p> <p>The Board of Directors considered the Remote Education Policy and Probationary Policy.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the above policies be approved and adopted.</p> <p>c) For information – Bereavement Policy and IT Acceptable User Policy</p> <p>The Board of Directors noted there had been minor changes to the Bereavement Policy and IT Acceptable User Policy.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that it be noted there had been minor changes to the above policies and that they be adopted.</p> <p>PART C: Business Items for Information only/circulated previously</p>	
21.	<p>Head Teacher’s Reports: Longfield Academy, Hurworth School and The Rydal Academy</p> <p>The Board of Directors noted Longfield Academy, Hurworth School and The Rydal Academy Head Teacher’s reports.</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the Longfield Academy, Hurworth School and The Rydal Academy Head Teacher’s reports be noted..</p>	
22.	<p>PART D: Concluding Items</p> <p>Approval of documents for inspection</p> <p>Directors RESOLVED that the agenda, supporting documents and approved minutes be made available for public inspection with the exception of information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers.</p>	

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