



Swift Academies

Success will inspire future triumphs

Board of Directors
2pm, Friday 13 December 2019

Longfield Academy, Longfield Road, Darlington DL3 0HT

Present

- **Directors**

Stuart Hargrove, Tim Fisher, Derek Bell (Chair),
Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer), Keith Bernstone

- **also**

John Armitage (Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy),
Nichola Peaker (Head of School, Hurworth School),
Nick Lindsay (Head of School, Longfield School),
Glen Hart (Chief Finance Officer, Swift Academies)
Sarah Jones (Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies)
Tracey Curtis (Governance Partner, Avec Partnership)

Item:

1

Description of discussion:

Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present

Directors were informed that a quorum was present. The Articles of Association for Swift Academies documented that *the quorum was any three trustees, or where greater, any one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the total number of trustees holding office at the date of the meeting. The quorum for a meeting of the Board of Directors was therefore any three trustees.* Four (4) trustees were present. Dean Judson joined the meeting later.

2

Apologies for absence and their acceptance

Apologies for absence had been received from the following Directors, and from Andrew Hutton, Trust ICT Manager, Swift Academies:

- Ian Black
- Julie Cornelius

action by:

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Directors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence were accepted and noted the absence of Jim Marshall.

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: restructure, Hurworth School / The Rydal Academy.

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 or Governors and/or members or Governors and employees. A register should be completed annually and updated during each academic year where circumstances change.

The Governance Partner confirmed that Jim Marshall, a Director of Swift Academies had not completed a Register of Interest during the current academic year.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

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 received.

5 Approval of minutes / matters arising

- Board of Directors of Swift Academies, Wednesday, 17 October 2019 and Friday 8 November 2019
Draft minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting of Swift Academies held on Friday 8 November 2019 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Swift Academies held on Wednesday 17 October 2019 had been shared with the Chair of the meeting. It was explained that the minutes considered the performance management and pay scale awards where appropriate and had not been circulated widely due to the personal information contained in them.

Directors RESOLVED that the circulated minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting held on Friday 8 November were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and should be signed by the Chair. The signed, approved minutes would be retained by the Trust Business Manager. The minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting held on Wednesday 17 October 2019 would be considered for

Chair /
Trust
Business
Manager

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approval by the Chair and Directors who attended this meeting, for approval.

6

Report of delegated duties

Finance & Resources Committee of Swift Academies

Draft minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee of Swift Academies held on Thursday 21 November 2019 had been shared with the Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee confirmed that a meeting had taken place on Thursday 21 November 2019. The audit report (to 31 August 2019), annual report and financial statements had been presented to the Committee by Chris Beaumont of Clive Owen LLP. Directors were informed that no concerns had been contained in the audit report. Swift Academies had received a clean audit report. Directors were informed that the audit report had recommended that Cyber insurance was explored. In addition the committee had approved a three year energy contract and a bid to the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) for boiler replacement in two schools, roof repairs and improved fire alarm arrangements. Further information in respect of the CIF application were anticipated at the end of March 2020.

Directors were informed that SEEF funding had been oversubscribed when Swift Academies had originally submitted a bid: the original bid had been resubmitted and it was believed that the application was likely to be successful. No further applications were being allowed until previous applications had been considered. Further information would be available in February / March 2020, with projects completed during the summer break 2020.

Directors queried an increase in depreciation contained in the financial statements of £277k: it was explained that the entry had been made by the auditors when preparing the year end accounts and that a summary was contained in the summary results for the period. The Chief Finance Officer would explore further and provide clarity in an e-mail to the Chair (Derek Bell).

Chief
Finance
Officer

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee (Stuart Hargrove) reported that the committee had recommended the annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2019 were approved by Directors.

Directors RESOLVED that the presented information was noted.

7

Approval of annual accounts and financial statements for the period ended 31 August 2019:

- a) Audit findings report period ended 31 August 2019
- b) Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2019

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The audit findings report, annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2019 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2019 were approved and should be received by the Members of Swift Academies at the Annual General Meeting arranged to take place immediately after this meeting of the Board of Directors of Swift Academies.

8 **Internal Assurance Work Programme**

The internal assurance work programme had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Chief Finance Officer explained that termly assurance visits take place across the Trust by Clive Owen LLP. Historically assurance visits had explored salary and pay arrangements. However, the current Academies Financial Handbook recommended a wider scope. Directors were informed that the first termly assurance visit would take place in mid to late January 2020. Directors were asked to consider the content of the circulated internal assurance work programme and confirm which areas should be subject to scrutiny.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted and that IT, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and risk management processes would be the areas of scrutiny during internal assurance visits carried out by Clive Owen LLP.

During this item, Dean Judson entered the meeting.

9 **School Transport**

The Chief Executive Officer reported on the current position with school transport and the impact of new legislation in respect of PSVR compliant buses.

Directors were informed that tenders had been sought for the operation of school transport from February 2020. Transport would continue to be provided to the end of January 2020. Parents would be informed in due course of the school transport arrangements beyond the end of January 2020: initial indications were that the cost per day would be circa £4 per pupil.

Directors sought clarification in respect of information to be shared with parents. The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that a letter had been prepared and that parents were already aware that transport to 31 January 2020 had been identified. Transport arrangements from February 2020 required further clarification.

Directors queried whether a 'link' arrangement could be put in place with the buses used to bring pupils to school which would involve pupils from different schools using the same bus, at the same time. It was

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explained this was not a preferred option, and neither was the provision of statutory and non-statutory buses.

Directors discussed the financial compliance of the contracts for school buses: current contracts are with Darlington Borough Council. New contracts may be with Swift Academies. More information would be known shortly.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

10

School Admissions

Directors were reminded that admissions arrangements for all schools within the Trust were revisited annually.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted. Admissions would be an agenda item for the spring term meeting of the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School.

11

Ofsted feedback – The Rydal Academy

The Head Teacher (The Rydal Academy) provided Directors with an overview of the Ofsted inspection at The Rydal Academy on 4 December 2019.

The Head Teacher reported that the Senior Leadership Team at The Rydal Academy had begun to explore the areas identified during the Ofsted inspection. An EDP visit was scheduled for January 2020 to further support this process.

Directors RESOLVED that the information presented was noted and thanked the Head Teacher for the information presented.

12

Scheme of Delegation

The Scheme of Delegation for Swift Academies had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

No changes to the Scheme of Delegation had been made during Autumn Term 2019. Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Scheme of Delegation was noted.

13

Trust Development Plan

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

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Trust Development Plan was noted.

14

Risk Registers

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

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Risk Registers for Hurworth School, Longfield School, The Rydal Academy and Swift Academies had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Trustees were informed that the Hurworth School Risk Register had been updated.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Risk Registers and information reported was noted.

15 Feedback from governance events, including trust wide activities, induction, Chair and Vice Chair events

The Chief Executive Officer reported that the annual Trust review with the Department for Education had taken place recently. No formal letter documenting the review meeting had been received to date due to purdah being applied prior to an election. The letter would be shared with Directors in due course. Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

**16 Any urgent other business raised under item 3
Restructure: Hurworth School / The Rydal Academy**

Directors were asked to consider the establishment of a committee to review the staffing support structure at Hurworth School. Documentation would be prepared and shared with Directors in due course. Similar considerations would be made in respect of The Rydal Academy in March/April 2020.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted and that the Head of School (Hurworth School) and the Head Teacher (The Rydal Academy) were approved to continue work to review support staffing structures at their respective schools.

17 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, date and venue of future meetings

Directors RESOLVED that the time, date and venue of future meetings were noted, as follows:

- 2pm, Friday 20 March 2020 at The Rydal Academy
- 2pm, Friday 10 July 2020 at Hurworth School

These minutes were approved by the Directors of Swift Academies with effect from Friday 27 March 2020. The minutes were approved electronically via an e-mail communication with Directors of Swift Academies.

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