



**SOUTHFIELDS ACADEMY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Held on**

Wednesday, 7 December 2016 at 6.00pm

Present:

Jonathan Clatworthy, Trustee
Donna Collins, Support Staff Trustee
Susan Hayday, Community Trustee and Academy Chair
Mark Heathcote, Community Trustee
John Moore, Vice Chair
Annabelle Myers, Parent Trustee
Jessica Pearce, Community Trustee
Verity Pillinger-Cork, Community Trustee
Jacqueline Valin, Principal
Heather Williamson-Cole, Vice Chair and Parent Trustee

Absent:

Charlene Ellis, Parent Trustee

In Attendance:

Mel Brown, Clerk (minutes)
Stephen Elson, Director of Finance

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Victoria Simpson, Tara Minto, Wanda Golinska and Tessa Strickland, and were accepted.

Trustees noted that Victoria had read the papers and had contacted the Chair to request that a number of questions were asked on her behalf.

2. Declarations of Interest

Trustees were asked to declare any personal or pecuniary interests relating to the agenda items for this meeting. Donna Collins declared that her daughter had recently been appointed as the sixth form admin assistant, and was asked to include the declaration to her personal interest form.

Action: Donna Collins

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Jackie Valin nominated Susan Hayday to continue in the role of Chair, this was seconded by Heather Williamson-Cole.

John Moore was nominated Jackie Valin as Joint Vice Chair which was seconded by Donna Collins.

Heather Williamson-Cole was nominated as Joint Vice Chair by Verity Pillinger-Cork, which was seconded by Annabelle Myers.

The Board unanimously approved all appointments.

4. Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the meeting held on 30 June 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2016 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair. The signed minutes were retained by the Director of Finance for the minute book.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Trustees reviewed the action plan and noted:

Autumn development session to be used to discuss strategy and MAT conversion

This action was complete.

Principal and Headteacher's to contain an Executive summary. Highlights strengths and areas of development

This action was outstanding. The Clerk agreed to give sufficient notice for this to be done in time for the next meeting.

Ensure Heads of Department address the issue of inclusivity in assemblies

This action was complete.

Trustees to email clerk with chosen policy / policies

This action was complete.

Training session on data to be delivered to Trustees in the Autumn term

This action was complete.

Reschedule October development session and schedule training session on data

This action was complete.

6. Chair's report

Susan Hayday presented the report detailing the activities and actions which were taken in her role as Chair, and on behalf of the Trustee Board.

An update was given on the outcomes of the Trustees development session which took place in October.

	Outcome	Update
1	The Academy clarifies their strategic plan and vision for the next 3+ years and sets clear strategic priorities for Trustees to consider.	A draft strategy had been tabled and it was <u>agreed</u> to discuss it in more detail in the January development session
2	Opportunities to replicate the good practice of the strategic discussion concerning the proposal to become a MAT are sought.	Action complete
3	The Trustee board agenda includes a Chair's report to include any actions or decisions taken on behalf of the Board.	Action complete
4	The principles to be used by the Academy to set policies is set out for agreement.	More detail was sought on this action and the Chair <u>agreed</u> to send an example. It was also <u>agreed</u> that it would be useful to work through a policy as a practical example
5	Consideration to be given to providing a brief "Executive Summary" at the head of any Board paper of length to indicate substantive points trustees need to agree or consider	Action outstanding. The Clerk <u>agreed</u> to remind the Principal and Headteacher in advance of the next meeting.
6	Committee Meeting minutes to be headed by a summary of any actions or decisions taken on behalf of the Board and this summary to be included in the Board papers and forms the Chair of the Committee's report.	Action complete.
7	Committee minutes are circulated to all Trustee Board members as soon as available	Action complete
8	The template for Trustee visits is amended to allow more flexibility in reporting whilst indicating key points to include.	Action was ongoing
9	A survey of Trustee availability is carried out ascertaining evening, daytime and computer based availability.	The clerk was asked to complete this action by the end of January
10	Consideration is given to determining once or twice a year well in advance Trustee week / fortnight to cluster Trustee visits and increase staff and student awareness of Trustees.	Margaret Breen was organising a Trustee week/fortnight. Trustees were encouraged to visit the Academy during this period if possible.

7. Strategy

Jackie Valin advised that the application to become a MAT had been approved following receipt of a letter from the Regional Schools Commission (RSC). The letter

had confirmed that the Academy could become a sponsor and/ or set up a free school .

Jackie was co-leading the MAT Leaders Programme and explained that there were lots of good practice documentation and sharing happening between schools, which included strategic plans and governance templates.

A meeting had been organised with the DfE in early January to discuss next steps. Trustees were pleased to note that there was funding available to amend the Articles.

The name of the MAT had yet to be decided and needed to reflect the vision, aims and objectives of the schools which were inclusivity, diversity, equality, aspiration and success (IDEAS). It was likely that assistance with branding would be needed. Verity Pillinger-Cork agreed to see whether she could find someone to help with branding on a pro bono basis.

Action: Pillinger-Cork

There was some interest expressed in joining the MAT from two local primary schools and a special school, all of whom were feeder schools to Southfields. Trustees queried whether it was still the intention to move forward incrementally, and were advised that this was still the case. It was explained that consideration was being given to converting the Excel provision into a free school, and would be discussed in more detail with the DfE in January.

Trustees noted that lots of work would be required to set up the MAT and asked if there was any funding available. Jackie advised that there was lots of guidance and support from other schools. Potential sources of funding would be discussed with the DfE in January.

Lord Nash's letter of 21 October 2016 was noted. Trustees asked whether the Academy would make use of the financial bench marking data, and were informed that the data was two years old. Benchmarking data was not always helpful as not all academies accounted in the same way. Cross comparisons were also difficult to make due to a number of external factors which included geographical location.

Trustees asked about the role members would play in the MAT, and were advised that they would play a more active role under the proposed new structure.

Trustees asked whether an audit committee was needed, and were advised that one was not required. Finance and audit sat with the Policy, Finance and Premises committee.

The Chair encouraged Trustees to attend the workshop.

8. Principal and Headteacher's Termly Report to Trustees

The previously circulated report was noted.

Jackie Valin advised the Board that staff had worked exceptionally hard and were working with new schemes of work, covering sickness, an extra period (period 6), as well as covering classes because of a shortage of cover supervisors. Staff were commended by Jackie and the Board in this regard. Two new cover supervisors had been recruited alongside an English teacher. There were still difficulties recruiting to

two vacant science posts. There was also an unexpected resignation in the maths department.

Trustees asked what was in place to support staff during these difficult times and were advised that staff had been asked to create capacity but not overmarking. A curriculum planning day had been scheduled in December and an inset day in January. Christmas lunch had also been personally funded by the Principal.

Trustees asked whether the Academy now had a staff room and were pleased to note that there was one.

Trustees asked about homework negatives and whether alternative strategies had been considered, and were informed that homework was regularly set for all pupils. Homework was essential to enable students to prepare and compete in exams. Some teachers were running homework clubs for students who were unable to complete the work at home.

Trustees asked about the tone of the report, as there was a focus on rudeness and behaviour, and were informed that the Autumn term report was an evaluation report. The Summer term report would be more focused on positives, and would be a celebration of the year. Trustees were pleased to note that there had been a reduction in rudeness and lesson disruption. Results had improved in subjects which had a factual content e.g. economics.

Trustees enquired about the humanitarian subjects where students (including HPA students) performed less well, and asked whether there were reasoning problems. Trustees were advised that the problem related to academic literacy. Staff had recently received training in this regard, and students encouraged to read non-fiction books.

A discussion was had about vocational BTECs and the dropout rates. The Chair of the Every Child Matters committee asked if James Draper, Associate Assistant Headteacher, Organisation and Vocational, could attend the next committee meeting. Jackie explained that some students may have dropped down rather than out of courses, and agreed to speak with the Headteacher to get further details.

Action: Jackie Valin

Questions were asked about the effectiveness of early detentions and it was explained that it was being trialled and had shown signs of success.

Trustees enquired about the business and marketing group and were advised that regular reports would be presented at the Policy, Finance and Premises committee.

Trustees recognised the amount of time and effort it took to produce the report and thanked Wanda and the team.

9. Finance Management

2015 / 2016 Finance Report

The 2015/16 accounts had been circulated to the Board and scrutinised in detail at the Policy, Finance and Premises committee. The Board were pleased to note that the year had ended in a breakeven position. The Trustee Report and Financial Statements was approved by was approved by the Board, and signed by the Chair and Principal.

Trustees were pleased to note the results of the audit and thanked the finance team for an excellent result.

Revised 2016/17 Budget

Trustees noted that the revised budget indicated a breakeven position due to the termination of the VLUK contract. The revised budget was approved by the Board.

Letter from the Education Funding Agency

The letter from the EFA was noted.

10. Safeguarding

Trustees noted the previously circulated report and confirmed their understanding of the responsibilities listed in Part 2 of the guidance.

Trustees asked about the procedure for dealing with concerns relating to the Principal and Headteacher, and were advised that it would be managed by the Director of HR, Finance Director and the Chair, in conjunction with the LADO at the local authority. In response to a follow up question, it was confirmed that staff were aware of the procedure.

11. Committee Reports

The committee report was noted.

12. Trustee Visit and Reports

The Trustee visit reports were noted.

13. Trustee Training

There was a scheduled development date each term.

Trustees confirmed they had all attended the introductory governors course run by the local authority.

Trustees asked whether there was a requirement to attend the safer recruitment course, and were advised that they did not need to as they would sit on panels with staff who had been trained.

The Trustee Board resolved to discuss training in more detail as part of the transition to becoming a MAT.

14. Any other urgent business

There were no matters for discussion under this item.


15. Confidential Items of Business

There were no matters for discussion under this item

16. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as 6pm on Wednesday 22 March 2017.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's signature	
Chair's name	SUCAN HAYDAY
Date	22.3.17

