



# Swift Academies

*Success will inspire future triumphs*

**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
**2pm, Friday 10 December 2021**

**held at Longfield Academy**

Present

- **Directors**

Derek Bell (Chair), Stuart Hargrove, Michael Garmston, Tim Fisher, Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer)

- **also**

Keith Bernstone (Member, Swift Academies)  
 Laurence Job (Member, Swift Academies)  
 John Armitage (Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy)  
 Nick Lindsay (Head of School, Longfield Academy),  
 Sarah Jones (Trust Business Manager, Swift Academies)  
 Beth Wright (Swift Academies)

<b><u>Item:</u></b>	<b><u>Description of discussion:</u></b>	<b><u>action by:</u></b>
1	<p><b>Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present</b>            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. Five (5) Directors were present.</p>	
2	<p><b>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</b>            Apologies for absence had been received from Sam Hirst, Geoff Liddle, Chris Carr, Julie Cornelius and Glen Hart.</p>	

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denotes support and challenge offered by Directors

Directors RESOLVED that the apologies for absence received were accepted.

**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

EBACC was identified as an urgent item of other business.

**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**

- Board of Directors' of Swift Academies, Friday 9 July 2021

Directors RESOLVED that the minutes from the last meeting were approved and accepted as an accurate record.

**6 Report of delegated duties**

- Chairs report

The Chair reported that the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) enquiry into the Chief Executive salary had had been answered, the matter now closed.

The Chair reported that the MAT Development Session held on the 21 October 2021 was a very interesting and a successful evening.

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### **Review of Membership Document**

- a) Hurworth School  
Appointment of Yvonne Hancock with effect 13 October 2021
- b) Rydal Academy  
Appointment of Sarah Newrick with effect from 9 November 2021
- c) Longfield Academy  
Appointment of Liam McCavanagh with effect from 27 September 2021

Directors APPROVED the appointments of Yvonne Hancock, Sarah Newrick and Liam McCavanagh.

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### **Approval of Annual Accounts and Financial Statements for the period ended 31 August 2021**

- a) Audit findings report period ended 31 August 2021
- b) Annual Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021

In Glen Hart's absence, the Chief Executive Officer asked Director Stuart Hargrove to talk through the annual accounts. The accounts were subject to minor changes made at the Finance Committee, the Directors recommended that the accounts were to be approved.

A Member noted the increase in the overall reserves position and sought clarification. The Trust Business Manager clarified owing to an in-year surplus the increase reserves to be circa £500,000 as of 31 August 2022. Director Stuart Hargrove confirmed that Chris Beaumont from Clive Owen was comfortable with the reserve levels, stating that it is a very stable with no issues forecast.

Directors RESOLVED that Swift Academies financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 were APPROVED.

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### **Longfield Trading, Report of the Directors and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2021**

The Chief Executive Officer reported that the Longfield Trading accounts had been approved by the Directors of Longfield Trading at the annual general meeting prior to the Board of Directors meeting.

A member commented positively on the £22k profit that Longfield Trading produced despite the pandemic.

Directors RESOLVED that the Longfield Trading Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 were APPROVED.

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**10 Chief Executive Officer Report**

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

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 Officer reported to Directors that it was good to see that staff and pupil absence was low and that attendance was tracking above the national average. The Chief Executive Officer admitted that the aftermath of Covid-19 would stay with the Schools for a long time after affecting staff and pupil mental health as well as the disruption to pupil's education, creating a strange start to some pupil's primary and secondary education. The Trust has dealt very well with another difficult year.

Due to housing being built in Hurworth village, Hurworth School will receive S106 funding of £218k. This funding will be used on various IT projects to enhance the curriculum offer of the School.

**11 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.

The Trust Business Manager reported to Directors that the Trust is dealing with delayed CIF projects due to Lockdown. The Trust had 3 (three) successful CIF Bids and the Trust Business Manager informed Directors that the deadline for the next round of CIF Bids was 16 December 2021, the Trust could submit a maximum of 2 (two) projects per School.

**12 Management Accounts**

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

The Chief Executive Officer reported to Directors the current forecast position was in line with the budget.

A Director queried supply costs for each school. The Chief Executive Officer reported that the costs for supply staff were different in each School due to the impact of staff isolating due to COVID; Hurworth had low supply costs however they were currently rising, Longfield had high supply costs that were stabilising, and The Rydal Academy supply costs were stabilising as well.

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

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### **Trust ICT Manager Update**

- 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.

The Chief Executive Officer reported to Directors that the Trust has introduced a rolling process to upgrade the ICT infrastructure in each school.

A Director commented positively on the IT Development Plan and Trust Assets ICT Overview.

Directors RESOLVED that the information presented in the ICT Development Plan and Trust Assets ICT Overview had been noted.

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### **Head of School/ Head Teacher Update**

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

The Hurworth School EDP Report had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Chief Executive Officer (Hurworth Head Teacher) reported to Directors that he was pleased with Hurworth's EDP Report, showing Hurworth as top end of good, moving towards outstanding. Hurworth has made significant progress over the last fifteen weeks.

A Director agreed that Hurworth has made significant improvements and that it was a pleasure to read the report.

A member queried whether the Trust would be looking internally for the new Head of School. The Chief Executive Officer clarified that the advert would be advertised externally but internal candidates across the Trust were welcome to apply.

### **Longfield Academy**

The Head of School reported that Longfield Academy had not had an EDP report due to Covid-19. The Head of School reported that Longfield have employed two staff members to help promote Reading within the School. The Head of School reported to Directors that Attendance was tracking remarkably high at 94.5%.

A Director thanked the Head of School (Longfield Academy) for the update and thanked them for the invitation to Longfield Academy's Awards Evening, stating that it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

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## **The Rydal Academy**

The Head Teacher reported to Directors that The Rydal Academy that the student population has grown since September now with 573 pupils on roll. The Head Teacher also reported that the numbers of pupils in Nursery are back to pre-pandemic numbers, despite the low birth rate in Darlington. Attendance was tracking at 92.8%, sounds low but above national average. The Head Teacher informed Directors that Rydal has appointed a Catering Officer, appointed two more teachers and appointed a new Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to start in Easter as the current DSL is due to retire in the Summer, so the Summer Term will serve as a handover period so the new DSL can learn about the community and families at The Rydal Academy.

A Member queried if the Head Teacher was happy with the staffing structure following on from recent appointments. The Head Teacher confirmed that he was very pleased with the new appointments and was looking forward to them starting their tenure at the school.

Directors RESOLVED that the information presented in the Head of School / Head Teacher updates had been noted.

### **15 Head of School/Head Teacher Report**

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

The Head of School/ Head Teacher Reports for Hurworth School, Longfield Academy and The Rydal Academy had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the Head of School/ Head Teacher's Reports had been noted.

### **16 Risk Registers**

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

The Risk Registers were shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Chief Executive Officer also reported to Directors that an amendment needed to be made to the Risk Registers to note The Chief Executive's two roles as both Chief Executive Officer and Head Teacher of Hurworth.

Directors RESOLVED that the Risk Registers and information presented had been noted.

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**Covid-19 Risk Assessments**

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

The Trust Business Manager informed Directors that the Covid-19 risk had been escalated again to reflect the current Covid-19 restrictions.

Directors RESOLVED that the Covid-19 Risk Assessments had been noted.

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**Policies for approval / review / information**

- a) For information: Risk Policy, Complaints Procedure, Business Continuity Strategy, Online Safety Policy

The Policies had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Chief Executive Officer advised Directors that the Policies were just for information with any changes highlighted in yellow, vast majority of changes were to national guidance.

Directors RESOLVED that the policies were noted.

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**Any urgent other business raised under Item 3**

The Chief Executive Officer reported to Directors that there been no decisions nationally regarding the English Baccalaureate (EBACC). The Board of Directors recommended that decision regarding whether to prescribe EBACC, should be kept under review until the next meeting of the Directors at the Standards Committee on 16 March 2022.

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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.

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**Time and date if future meetings (all from 2pm)**

- Friday 1 April 2022
- Friday 8 July 2022

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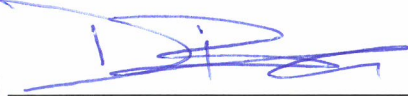
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These minutes were approved by the Board of Directors of Swift Academies as follows:

1st April 2022 (date)

signature (chair):



Approved

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