

Swift Academies

Success will inspire future triumphs

Board of Directors
2pm, Friday 8 November 2019

Longfield Academy, Longfield Road, Darlington DL3 0HT

Present

- **Directors**

Stuart Hargrove, Tim Fisher, Julie Cornelius, Derek Bell (Chair),
Dean Judson (Chief Executive Officer)

- **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)
Andrew Hutton (Trust ICT Manager, Swift Academies)
Tracey Curtis (Governance Partner, Avec Partnership)

Item:

1

Description of discussion:

Welcome, introductions and confirmation quorum present

A round of introductions took place for the benefit of the most recently appointed Directors of Swift Academies, Julie Cornelius and Tim Fisher.

The Governance Partner confirmed 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. Three (3) trustees were present.*

2

Apologies for absence and their acceptance

Apologies for absence had been received from the following Directors:

- Keith Bernstone
- Ian Black

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: volume of supporting documents for meetings of the Board of Directors of Swift Academies.

Directors discussed the number of supporting documents shared in preparation for meetings of Swift Academies, including documents shared over a number of meetings. The Chief Executive Officer reported that some documents may have changed between meetings, for instance the School Self-Evaluation Plans and respective Action Plans. However, other documents were shared repeatedly for information to ensure that all information was shared with all Directors. The Chair raised concern that for instance the termly Head of School / Head Teacher reports were presented in several committee meetings, including the Local Governing Body, Standards Committee and Board of Directors' meetings. Directors commented that Executive Summaries could be prepared and would be helpful for Directors.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted and that the content of future agendas would be reviewed to identify where documents had been shared previously and where new information was being shared. In addition, a single document would be prepared for each meeting which would simplify the reading of documents when using a device during a meeting.

The Governance Partner queried whether consideration had been given to the development of a web based 'platform' which could be used to store governance documents. The 'platform' would only be accessible with log in details and passwords.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted. Stuart Hargrove would share information in respect of a 'platform' used by Darlington Sixth Form College with the Trust ICT Manager for consideration.

Chief Executive Officer / Chief Finance Officer / Governance Partner

Stuart Hargrove / Trust ICT Manager

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.

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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, Friday 12 July 2019
Draft minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting of Swift Academies held on Friday 12 July 2019 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the circulated minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting held on Friday 12 July 2019 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.

Chair /
Trust
Business
Manager

6 Report of delegated duties

Finance & Resources Committee of Swift Academies

Directors were reminded that the next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee of Swift Academies would take place on Thursday 21 November 2019. Clive Owen LLP would present the audit report, annual report and financial statements for Swift Academies (to 31 August 2019) to the Finance & Resources Committee.

Standards Committee of Swift Academies

Draft minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Swift Academies held on Wednesday 2 October 2019 had been circulated to Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Directors RESOLVED that the content of the draft minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Swift Academies held on Wednesday 2 October 2019 were noted.

Local Governing Bodies

Hurworth School: Tuesday 1 October 2019

Draft minutes of the Hurworth School Local Governing meeting held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 had been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated minutes was noted.

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Longfield Academy: Monday 30 September 2019

Draft minutes of the Longfield Academy Local Governing Body meeting held on Monday 30 September 2019 had been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated minutes was noted.

The Rydal Academy: Monday 30 September 2019

Draft minutes of The Rydal Academy Local Governing Body meeting held on Monday 30 September 2019 had been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated minutes was noted.

7 Governance arrangements

Directors RESOLVED that the elected chair and vice-chair of the respective Local Governing Bodies were approved with immediate effect as follows:

Hurworth School

Chair- Jane Hodgson, Vice-Chair - Louise Johnson

Longfield School

Chair- Bob Bell, Vice-Chair - Rachel Peart

The Rydal Academy

Chair - Mark Gray, Vice Chair - Michael Jeffries

8 Chair's report

- a) action taken including Governors, Directors Members Monitoring Forms, attendance at LGB's by Directors
- b) correspondence received

Monitoring Forms for use by Governors, Directors and Members of Swift Academies had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Chair reported that as this was the first substantive meeting of the Board of Directors of Swift Academies, there were no actions to report.

Directors RESOLVED that the information was noted.

9 Hurworth School update including SEF/Action Plan, EDP report, Head of School Report, Results 2019, Admissions arrangements 2021-2022

The SEF / Action Plan, EDP Report and Head of School Report in respect of Hurworth School had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Head of School discussed with Trustees the information contained in the circulated SEF / Action Plan, EDP Report and Head of School Report, drawing Trustees' attention to the following specific information:

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It was reported that pupil's educational outcomes had dipped in some subject areas (in the main, English results) in Summer 2019 and led to progress of the school to be negative. The performance of Science although improving still required support and monitoring. Geography and Business Studies had been identified as areas to monitor, as expectations had not been reached for two years. The recruitment to EBacc remained below national levels but there had been an upward trend again for the cohort in 2019-2020. Governors' attention was drawn to the circulated Head of School's report for further information in respect of pupils' education outcomes.

Data had been verified and meetings with Heads of Department taking place to analyse the data. Further data captures were planned in order to ensure that attainment continued to be tracked and appropriate interventions put in place where necessary.

Trustees were informed that an appeal had been lodged with Edexcel in respect of concerns around the marking of English exam papers and the number of papers where adjustments had been made to exam results following requests for remarking.

The Head of School reported that a range of adjustments had been made to internal processes and procedures as a direct result of the summer 2019 exam results. Measures were in place to ensure a consistent approach from staff, including checking and monitoring arrangements, regular data meetings, triangulation of information, book scrutiny and data tracking. A 'show me' approach had been adopted to ensure that information could be evidenced.

The Head of School stressed to Trustees the importance of the SEF / Action Plan for Hurworth School which identified the key priorities for Hurworth School in 2019-2020.

The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that the Senior Leadership Team at Hurworth School were working with departments to ensure attainment was on track in summer 2020. Trustees were reminded that at the time Longfield Academy became part of Swift Academies, that he (Chief Executive Officer) and Nick Lindsay had been involved with Longfield Academy as a sponsored academy to the multi-academy trust. Early interventions at Hurworth School were reported as promising, although some cohorts continued to be challenging.

Admission arrangements 2021-2022

Directors were asked to consider the recommendation made by the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School to approve the Admissions Policy 2021-2022, following a number of meetings which had been called by the Hurworth School Local Governing Body to consider the criteria contained in the Admissions Policy for 2021-2022.

Trustees were reminded that Hurworth School continued to be oversubscribed with applications for Year 7 places exceeding the Pupil

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Admission Number (PAN). The Head of School discussed with Trustees the impact of adjustments to the criteria, particularly in respect of distance, associated areas, feeder schools and transport arrangements.

The Hurworth School Local Governing Body had recommended that the criteria contained in the Admissions Policy 2021-2022 remain unchanged and that data was gathered for two years to identify the home location of students attending Hurworth School, in order that an informed decision could be taken in respect of the Admissions Policy beyond 2021-2022.

The Head of School reported that the Year 7 cohort, admitted to Hurworth School in September 2019 had settled well but that a range of support had been put in place in order to support a range of special educational needs (SEN) across the cohort.

Trustees RESOLVED that the Admissions Policy 2021-2022 for Hurworth School was approved and adopted with immediate effect.

10 **Longfield Academy update including SEF/Action Plan, EDP report , Head of School Report, Results 2019, Admissions arrangements 2021-2022**

The SEF / Action Plan, EDP Report and Head of School Report in respect of Longfield Academy had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Head of School (Longfield School) discussed with Trustees the content of the circulated SEF / Action Plan, EDP report, Head of School Report and Results 2019.

Admission arrangements 2021-2022

The Head of School confirmed that the Admissions Policy for Longfield Academy remained unchanged for admissions in September 2021.

Trustees RESOLVED that the Admissions Policy 2021-2022 for Longfield School was approved and adopted with immediate effect.

11 **The Rydal Academy update including SEF/Action Plan, EDP report, Head of School Report, Results 2019 (including ISDR attached); Admissions arrangements 2021-2022**

The SEF / Action Plan, EDP Report and Head of School Report in respect of The Rydal Academy had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

The Primary Inspection Data Summary Report (ISDR) was shared with Directors during the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Head Teacher discussed with Trustees the content of the SEF / Action Plan, EDP Report, Head of School Report and Primary Inspection Data Summary Report.

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The Head Teacher reported that staff had explored the Ofsted inspection framework effective from September 2019. The Leadership Team and subject leaders had reviewed the framework to ensure that The Rydal Academy was well prepared for an Ofsted inspection.

The Head Teacher discussed with Trustees the budget position for The Rydal Academy. Trustees were reminded that The Rydal Academy had become part of Swift Academies part-way through an academic year and that currently reserves were being used to ensure a balanced in-year budget position. However, the position in respect of reserves when compared to 2017-2018 was similar to 2018-2019. One-off grants had been identified, along with streamlined spending following access to the Central Services Team of Swift Academies and known information included in budget projections.

Trustees' attention was drawn to attainment and progress information contained in the Primary Inspection Data Summary Report. The Head Teacher reported that the strengths identified in maths are to be replicated across The Rydal Academy. The Senior Leadership Team were reported to be confident in respect of the intent of the curriculum and the current Ofsted inspection framework, but that evidencing the impact continued to be work in progress.

Admissions arrangements 2021-2022

Trustees were informed that the Admissions Policy for The Rydal Academy had been reviewed and no changes had been proposed for inclusion the 2021-2022 admissions policy.

Trustees RESOLVED that the Admissions Policy for The Rydal Academy was approved and adopted with immediate effect.

12

Chief Executive Officer's Report

The Chief Executive Officer's Report had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that the Chief Executive Officer's Report remained unchanged: the report had previously been shared with Trustees during the Standards Committee meeting of Swift Academies (Wednesday, 2 October 2019).

Trustees challenged information contained in the circulated report in respect of risks across Swift Academies related to staff absence and what arrangements were in place to cover staff absence, including shared resources. The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that discussions had taken place during summer term 2019 regarding supply costs. Consideration would continue to be given to options to cover staff absence, including cover supervisors and absence insurance. The Chief Finance Officer reported that a summary of costs incurred involving staff absence would be available at the next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee of Swift Academies. The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that where possible internal cover was

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Finance
Officer /
Governance
Partner

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arranged during periods of staff absence. Whilst there was little capacity with staff at Hurworth School to provide capacity, some capacity was available across the trust. Trustees were informed that Swift Academies had access to a pool of supply teachers without supply agency involvement and associated costs: long term absence normally required expertise in a specific area.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Chief Executive Officers Report and information presented was noted.

13

Trust ICT Manager Action Plan and Report

The Trust ICT Manager Action Plan and Report had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

Trustees' attention was drawn to the circulated ICT development plan and areas where activities had progressed.

The Trust ICT Manager reported that in excess of 1,000 machines had been migrated to Windows 10; work at The Rydal Academy in this respect, continued to be work in progress. The ICT Team had also been involved in the removal of RM network software at Longfield Academy, the preparation of 30 laptops for pupil use at The Rydal Academy, introduction of remote desk top arrangements across the Trust, catering tills upgraded to ensure they continued to be compliant, installation of anti-virus software, website compliance checks and upgraded visitor log-in system introduced at Longfield Academy.

Trustees RESOLVED that the contents of the Trust ICT Manager Action plan and Report were noted.

14

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 discussed with Trustees the content of the circulated Trust Business Manager Action Plan. It was reported that work had commenced on larger projects in preparation for Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) applications, handling catering staffing vacancies, and development of Health and Safety policies in conjunction with Avec Partnership. In addition, premises inspections had taken place at all locations across Swift Academies.

It was reported that a company had been engaged to submit applications to the Condition Improvement Fund on behalf of Swift Academies, on a no win, no fee arrangement. Two applications would be made per school within Swift Academies, for instance in respect of boiler replacement at Longfield Academy. The Trust Business Manager reported that the boiler had major issues involving both heating and hot water with a number of parts replaced to date which had cost circa £100,000. A replacement boiler was reported to be in the region of £400,000. The situation was similar with a boiler at Hurworth School.

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Other applications to the Condition Improvement Fund were related to alarm systems with many sensors across the schools past their anticipated shelf life. Approximately 600 sensors needed replacement. Trustees were informed that the application for Condition Improvement Funding required a monetary commitment to the project from Swift Academies: it was reported that 5% had been included in the applications made in December 2018. The Trust Business Manager and Chief Finance Officer would work together to identify an affordable contribution to be included in the Condition Improvement Fund Applications to be submitted in December 2019.

Trustees queried progress with the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme: it was reported that a contribution was required to Salix and that further information was anticipated in respect of the application submitted during 2018-2019.

Trustees sought clarification in respect of flat rooves at The Rydal Academy. It was confirmed that a roofing company had been requested to make a site visit and provided quotations for the replacement of the flat rooves.

The Trust Business Manager further reported that contracts are regularly reviewed to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose and provide value for money. Contract adjustments to date had identified savings in the region of £4,000. Electricity providers had been aligned for renewal in December 2019. Tenders had been submitted to the School Switch service with an outcome available during a four hour window on Thursday 21 November 2019. In addition, an external provider had been contacted to provide comparisons with the School Switch service. Trustees were assured that all providers identified by the Trust Business Manager were compliant.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated Trust Business Manager Report and information presented was noted. Stuart Hargrove agreed to be on site during the four hour window from 12 noon on 21 November 2019 to review the information received in respect of potential energy suppliers.

15

Trust Chief Finance Officer Report

The Chief Finance Officer Report in respect of the Academies Financial Handbook (September 2019) had been shared with Trustees prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Trustees were reminded of the decision taken during the Board of Directors' meeting held on Thursday 17 October 2019 to apply the recommendation made in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (September 2019) to apply a 2.75% pay uplift across all teaching grades and allowances. A grant would be received to support the 0.75% element of the pay uplift.

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Information was shared with Trustees in respect of options identified by the Local Authority in respect of school funding in 2020-2021. It was reported that four options had been provided as follows:

- A. Implement all revised National Funding Formula unit values, 0.5% MFG, Primary Prior attainment weighted
- B. 1.84% MFG, revised National Funding Formula unit values implemented as far as affordable, Primary Prior attainment weighted
- C. Implement all revised National Funding Formula unit values, maximum MFG affordable (1.72%) MFG, Primary Prior attainment weighted
- D. No Primary prior attainment weighting, 0.5% MFG, implement revised National Funding Formula values as far as affordable

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the circulated report in respect of the Academies Financial Handbook (September 2019) and information reported was noted. Trustees expressed a preference with option B or C (above) in respect of future school funding arrangements.

16 School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool

The School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Trustees were informed that the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool had been introduced as mandatory for academies. The Chief Finance Officer, Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Board of Trustees had completed the self-assessment tool. It was confirmed the completion of the self-assessment had not highlighted any areas of concern.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool was noted and approved with immediate effect. The Chief Finance Officer would revisit the self-assessment tool with the Senior Leadership Team, during monthly meetings in order to attach RAG ratings.

17 Letter to all Academy Trusts from Eileen Milner (ESFA) – 19 July 2019

The Education and Skills Funding Agency communication dated 19 July 2019 and addressed to all Academy Trusts had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting. A copy would be retained on file.

Trustees RESOLVED that the content of the Education and Skills Funding Agency communication dated 19 July 2019 was noted.

**18 Standing Items
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.

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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.

19

Trust Development Plan

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

No changes had been made to the Trust Development Plan since it was previously shared with Trustees.

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

20

Risk Registers

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

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 Rydal Academy Risk Register had been updated to reflect the Ofsted inspection framework (September 2019) and changes to thresholds / floor targets.

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

21

Feedback from MAT Development Sessions & Chair and Vice-Chair Briefings

22

Concluding items

Policies for publication

- a) Pay Policy 2019-2020
- b) Substance Misuse Policy (replaces Alcohol at Work Policy)
- c) Flexible and Phased Retirement
- d) Biometric Data Policy
- e) Equality Information & Objectives
- f) Asbestos Plan – Hurworth
- g) Asbestos Plan – The Rydal
- h) Asbestos Plan – Longfield
- i) Asbestos – Trust Statement of Intent
- j) Swift Academies Risk Policy

The Swift Academies policies listed above a) to j) had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. Copies would be retained on file.

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Trustees RESOLVED that the Pay Policy 2019-2020, Substance Misuse Policy (replaces Alcohol at Work Policy), Flexible and Phased Retirement, Biometric Data Policy, Equality Information & Objectives, Asbestos Plan – Hurworth, Asbestos Plan – The Rydal, Asbestos Plan – Longfield, Asbestos – Trust Statement of Intent were approved and adopted with immediate effect.

23 Any urgent other business raised under item 5

One item of urgent other business had been notified for consideration. Refer to agenda item 3 for information.

24 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.

25 Time, date and venue of future meetings

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

- 2pm, Friday 13 December 2019 at Longfield School
- 2pm, Friday 20 March 2020 at The Rydal Academy
- 2pm, Friday 10 July 2020 at Hurworth School

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

13.12.19 (date)

signature (chair):



name:

DEREK BELL

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