

# South Bank Multi Academy Trust

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## Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 May 2017

6.00 pm at Knavesmire School

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Present:	Edwin Thomas Reuben Barrett Martin Frost Nicki Mitchell Helen Priestley	Chair of Trustees  Non-Executive Trustees
In attendance:	Trevor Burton Adam Cooper Anna Cornhill Rebecca Guest Lesley Buckley	Headteacher (Millthorpe) Headteacher (Knavesmire) Headteacher (Scarcroft) Chief Finance Officer Clerk to the Board of Trustees
Guest:	Bill Schofield	Chair of Governing Board (Millthorpe)

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## 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees, especially the first guest to attend a Trust Board meeting, Bill Schofield. A former Chair of Governors at Knavesmire Primary, Bill was now Chair of Millthorpe's Governing Board and joined the meeting in order to contribute to the discussions around York High (Item 8) in respect of the potential effect on Millthorpe. Bill confirmed his awareness of Governor confidentiality protocols.
- 1.2 Round the table introductions followed for Bill's benefit.

## 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

### 2.1 Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Andrea Preston due to hospitalization of a family member.

### 2.2 Declarations of Interest

Becky declared an interest in Support Staff Pay (Item 7).

### **3 MINUTES OF THE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD 14 MARCH 2017**

3.1 Item 5.4: Proposal carried unanimously to be inserted.

Item 7.6: Paragraph one to be deleted.

Item 7.8: Second sentence, 'LA' to be replaced by 'EFA'.

3.2 Subject to the above changes, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 March 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **4 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION PLAN**

4.1 Action Plan (Carried forward from 14 March 2017)

Actions 1, 2, 6 and 7 had been completed.

4.2 Action 3 (*outstanding*)

Edwin reported that the recruitment round for three additional Trustees had not produced candidates with the required skills set. Headteacher Group (HTG) to consider how to progress.

4.3 Action 4 (*outstanding*)

Edwin, Helen and Trevor had met with Jonathan Deamer but to date, there had been no further progress with regard to the prospectus. Trustees discussed formalising arrangements for work carried out by Jonathan for the MAT, ie prospectus and bulletin. Whilst Jonathan was ultimately a MAT employee, it was important to have an equitable method of commissioning work, acceptable to both Millthorpe and the MAT. An hourly rate and scope of work, allowing Jonathan to estimate how much time a project would take, was discussed and seen as a possible way forward. Edwin to liaise with Trevor and Anna with regard to the HTG commissioning work. **Action 1**

Anna and Helen to agree a scope of work and hourly rate and discuss further with Trevor.  
**Action 2**

4.4 Action 5 (*complete*)

Trustees had previously been informed via email that it would be very easy and cheap to amend the MAT website address to 'South Bank Multi Academy Trust'. Trustees had responded positively and it was therefore **unanimously agreed** that Trevor progress the change.

## **5 APPOINTMENT OF TRUST PRINCIPAL** *(verbal)*

- 5.1 The Chair reported that following internal advertising for the post of Trust Principal, one application had been received, from Anna, in which she presented her vision for the MAT's future with enthusiasm and passion. Interviewed by Martin and Edwin, Anna was duly appointed as Trust Principal, initially for one year, with effect from 1 May 2017. Edwin congratulated Anna on behalf of all present.
- 5.2 Trustees discussed the need for a performance panel of three volunteers to set the Trust Principal's objectives for the forthcoming year. Andrea, Helen and Edwin offered to form a panel and agreed to meet with Anna to produce performance management objectives. Anna to send possible meeting dates to the panel for consideration. **Action 3**

## **6 HEADTEACHER GROUP REPORT** *(tabled and verbal)*

- 6.1 Anna tabled the Headteacher Group's (HTG) report with apologies that it had not been ready for inclusion in the agenda pack. In summary, the report updated the Board as follows.
- HTG had met four times since the 14 March Trust Board meeting.
  - The four primary Headteachers (Knivesmire, Scarcroft, Acomb and Woodthorpe) met to look at and agree a testing mechanism on performance comparisons in reading, maths and SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) in Years 3, 4 and 5 as there was currently no statutory setting in those years (only in Years 2 and 6).
  - Agreed that end of term and end of school year spreadsheets were useful to facilitate comparisons and benchmarking.
  - Looked at the Autumn Trustees' report with a particular focus on the need for more PP information in Years 2 and Y6; Family Early Help Assessment and the need for a user-friendly South Bank MAT version (Scarcroft's inclusion lead would be contacting other Trust inclusion leaders to look at in detail); the exclusion process - how it was used and the triggering of external support.
  - Agreement by HTG to use one strapline only 'Great schools working together'.
  - Discussed the role of the Trust Principal and attended meetings with Edwin and Andrea to give input to the Job Description and Person Specification.
  - Attended Chief Finance Officer' briefings.
- 6.2 The Chair thanked Anna for her report.

## **7 SUPPORT STAFF PAY** *(paper previously issued)*

- 7.1 Becky gave background to her paper, seeking approval to the proposal to adopt City of York Council's support staff salary scales dated 1 April 2017, which included a 1% salary increase, backdated to the 1 April 2017.

- 7.2 If adopted, the 1% increase, would have an impact of £26k on the budget across the MAT, which had already been built in.
- 7.3 The Chair requested that Becky leave the room (6.35 pm). The Chair asked the Board whether they were happy to approve Becky's proposal. **Proposal unanimously agreed.**
- 7.4 Becky returned to the meeting (6.37 pm) and informed of the Board's decision.

## **8 APPRENTICESHIP LEVY** *(verbal)*

- 8.1 Becky informed the Board that with effect from 6 April 2017, employers with a salary bill exceeding £3m per annum must pay the apprenticeship levy (the MAT's salary bill is in excess of £3m). The levy would be paid directly to HMRC and would then sit in our specific account, which would effectively be the MAT's digital apprenticeship service account, from which vouchers could be drawn for apprenticeship training. The vouchers could only be used for training and there would be a cap on each apprentice (ie you could not provide in-house training to keep the levy within the MAT, it needed to be an approved outside supplier).
- 8.2 Within the MAT, apprentices could work: supporting teaching and learning; early years' education; food production and cooking; library and science technicians; business and administration.

## **9 YORK HIGH** *(paper previously issued)*

- 9.1 Edwin informed the Board that the main purpose of convening today's meeting was to discuss the sponsorship of York High and to consider whether the financial risks were sufficiently well mitigated to allow the Trust to continue with the appointment process for Heads of School at both Millthorpe and York High. The close off for receipt of applications fell within seven days, prompting decisions on the following two major points:
- if the Trust considered there were any doubts regarding financial viability, this was the last opportunity to halt the process;
  - assuming sponsorship of York High was financially viable, a second decision would need to be taken following the interview process at both schools, as to whether satisfactory appointments could be made.

These decisions formed part of the sponsorship evaluation and represented a huge amount of work and time invested by Trevor, supported by Reuben, Nicki and Edwin, including meetings with the DfE and CYC.

- 9.2 Trevor tabled a draft letter received from CYC giving their response to the Trust's proposed support plan for York High and gave an overview of the financial implications to the MAT. An in-depth discussion followed addressing concerns and comments raised, particularly:

- the underlying budget deficit at York High;
  - National Funding Formula;
  - conversion date of York High;
  - reputational damage if we did not sponsor York High;
  - the Trust's growth strategy;
  - sponsorship should not disadvantage other schools within the MAT.
- 9.3 Towards the end of the discussion, Trustees were asked individually for their thoughts prior to coming to a decision. The general response was that whilst they accepted there were risks, the MAT had assured good safeguards for mitigating them. Attendees were also heartened by the fact that the subject had been discussed at such length, over a six month period, including conversations with all schools' governors and with Millthorpe staff to understand the risks to our existing schools.
- 9.4 Edwin proposed that the Trust agree to the sponsorship of York High with the following caveats:
- 1 April 2018 confirmed as the date York High joined the South Bank MAT;
  - CYC confirm they recognise that the costs of school-to-school support from 1 September 2017 to 1 April 2018 will add to York High's deficit;
  - the draft letter from CYC tabled by Trevor be received officially;
  - the final decision be made once the Trust considers they have suitable candidates to appoint to the positions of Head of School at Millthorpe and York High.

**Proposal unanimously agreed.**

- 9.5 Edwin thanked Bill Schofield for both his attendance and input to the meeting.

8.25 pm Bill Schofield left the meeting and a refreshment break followed.

8.35 pm The meeting reconvened.

**10 ACOMB AND WOODTHORPE DUE DILIGENCE** *(paper previously issued)*

- 10.1 Anna requested that the Board discussed Acomb's due diligence after Woodthorpe.
- 10.2 Anna summarised her report on Woodthorpe Primary and commented that she had very much enjoyed her time working with them. The school had been well prepared and had all the relevant information to hand. Learning walks had taken place in July 2016 and March 2017 and the difference in the atmosphere within the school was quite marked; you could see the journey the school had been taking. A key area for improvement was Performance at KS2 (below national average) but this was not sufficient to be a major concern. The Headteacher was already writing a SIP from 'good' to 'outstanding'.

- 10.3 From a finance point of view, Becky reported that the school appeared to have historically managed their revenue and capital balances adequately to maintain a surplus carry forward for the past 5 years. Woodthorpe's SBM left fairly recently and in the interim, a CYC bursar had been employed for one day per week. The bursar would be leaving CYC in June 2017 to join Woodthorpe as their SBM, working three days a week. The biggest financial concern at present was the capital work to be done.
- 10.4 Woodthorpe's Headteacher had received the approval of his governors to provide space for the MAT's central finance office at Woodthorpe. It would be a larger floor space than currently available at Knavesmire, with the potential to grow the team.
- 10.5 The recommendations were:
- request Woodthorpe to carry out work over the summer break to facilitate the central finance team to be located at Woodthorpe, with the rental charge to run from the date of occupation;
  - agree that any costs incurred by the MAT in the works, to be reimbursed if for any reason Woodthorpe's governors subsequently decided not to join the MAT;
  - Woodthorpe be invited to join South Bank MAT.

**Recommendations approved unanimously.**

- 10.6 Anna to write to Woodthorpe's Headteacher informing him of the MAT's decision. In addition, request that the next Trust Board meeting be held at Woodthorpe, with a tour of the school half an hour earlier. **Action 4**
- 10.7 With regard to Acomb Primary, the Headteacher of Acomb had sent an email to Anna over the Bank Holiday weekend explaining that he and his governors were questioning the process of conversion and joining the South Bank MAT. He had sent a list of 25 questions for return by Thursday 4 May, when he was holding an extraordinary governing body meeting to discuss the situation. The questions had been answered and submitted within the requested timeframe and Anna and Edwin attended the meeting to talk to Acomb's governors in an effort to discuss, reassure and allay any of their concerns. Subsequently, Anna had been informed by the Headteacher that the same questions had been sent to two other MATs in York.
- 10.8 The Board discussed potential next steps. They considered they had been open, transparent and rigorous in all discussions with Acomb and that nothing had been raised during due diligence to prevent Acomb joining the MAT. Edwin and Anna to compose a letter to Acomb's Headteacher confirming the outcome of due diligence. **Action 5**

9.25 pm *Becky left the meeting.*



**11 STRATEGIC PLAN** *(verbal)*

Edwin informed the Board that he would email his thoughts on strategic planning, to be discussed at the next meeting.

**12 LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES** *(verbal)*

- 12.1 Edwin reported that Knavesmire School sought approval to increase their current governor number from 13 to 14, with the appointment of co-opted member, Rupert Bloxwich. His term of office would run from February 2017 to February 2021.

**Proposal unanimously approved.**

**13 TRUSTEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT** *(verbal)*

- 13.1 Edwin informed the Board that as and when he received details regarding training opportunities, he would circulate them via email.
- 13.2 He was aware of a National Leader of Governance designation, for which you could apply, and a recruitment round was due to close in one week's time. Edwin wished to apply and needed to have the Board's approval to do so. Edwin considered it would be good for his development to see other governing bodies in action as well as useful for building relationships with other schools and the Trust's visibility. A reference would also be required from a Board member.

**Approved unanimously.** A Trustee to provide the reference on request.

**14 CFO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT** *(verbal)*

Minuted under 'confidential' status.

**15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS** *(verbal)*

- 15.1 Edwin to send out a Doodle Poll with suggested dates for a June Board meeting.
- 15.2 Reuben raised the question of Trust Board representation at the interviews for Head of School at Millthorpe and York High, particularly bearing in mind that they were such critical decisions. Trevor to send dates of interviews to Board members for their availability. **Action 6**
- 15.3 There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.45 pm, with apologies for the length of the meeting.

**ACTIONS**

Item	By	Action	Date
4.3	Edwin	<b>Action 1</b> Liaise with Trevor and Anna with regard to the HTG commissioning work for Jonathan Deamer.	ASAP
4.3	Anna Helen	<b>Action 2</b> Agree a scope of work and hourly rate for Jonathan Deamer's work and discuss further with Trevor.	ASAP
5.2	Anna	<b>Action 3</b> Anna to send possible meeting dates to the Performance Panel for consideration.	ASAP
10.6	Anna	<b>Action 4</b> Write to Woodthorpe's Headteacher informing him of the MAT's decision. In addition, request that the next Trust Board meeting be held at Woodthorpe, with a tour of the school half an hour earlier.	ASAP
10.8	Edwin Anna	<b>Action 5</b> Compose a letter to Acomb's Headteacher confirming the outcome of due diligence.	ASAP
15.2	Trevor	<b>Action 6</b> Send dates of interviews for Millthorpe and York High Heads of School to Board members.	ASAP

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**Chair of South Bank Academy Trust**