

South Bank Multi Academy Trust

Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 11 July 2017

6.00 pm at York High School

Present:	Edwin Thomas	Chair of Trustees
	Reuben Barrett	
	Martin Frost	
	Nicki Mitchell	Non-Executive Trustees
	Andrea Preston	
	Helen Priestley	
In attendance:	Trevor Burton	Headteacher (Millthorpe)
	Adam Cooper	Headteacher (Knavesmire)
	Anna Cornhill	Trust Principal and Headteacher (Scarcroft)
	Rod Sims	Head of School designate (York High)
	Rebecca Guest	Chief Finance Officer
	Lesley Buckley	Clerk to the Board of Trustees

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees and introduced Rod Sims (Head of School designate at York High), thanking him for both hosting tonight's meeting and the earlier tour of his school.
- 1.2 Round the table introductions followed for Rod's benefit.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Absence

Andrea Preston had notified the Chair that she would be approximately half an hour late for the meeting.

2.2 Declarations of Interest

Martin Frost declared that his wife had become Joint Chair of Friends of Scarcroft School.



3 MINUTES OF THE TRUST BOARD MEETING

3.1 8 May 2017

Item 14.1

Final sentence, replace 'two' with 'three' weeks.

Item 14 in its entirety to be minuted under Confidential status.

All actions detailed in the minutes had been completed.

3.2 19 June 2017

Item 6.3

First sentence should read '... spending two days within the Trust's schools'.

Item 9.1

Third sentence to be removed.

Item 11.2

Sentence should read 'Trevor stated that we intended ...'

Subject to the above amendments, both sets of minutes were approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meetings.

4 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION PLAN

4.1 Action Plan (Carried forward from 19 June 2017)

Item	By	Action	Date
7.1	HTG	Action 1 Further work required on the MAT Development Plan. <i>In hand.</i>	September
7.2	HTG	Action 2 Look at strategy document and bring to July Trust Board. <i>Included in today's meeting.</i>	11 July
7.3	Anna	Action 3 SWOTs Analysis - gather stakeholder views. <i>Included in Action 1 above.</i>	September
8.2	Trevor	Action 4 Contact Browne Jacobson regarding York High contract. <i>Trevor had spoken to the Chair of York High's Governors, who was happy with the content of the contract. Trevor to progress, with an offer of input from Martin Frost if required. To be in place by September 2017.</i>	September
10.3	HTG	Action 5 Collaborative Working Model and Prospectus/Brochure. <i>A similar format would be fine, however it needed to be a separate document.</i>	September
13.1	Edwin	Action 6 Revisit performance management document. <i>On the agenda for today's meeting.</i>	11 July

4.2 Matters Arising

Edwin and Nicki had met with the Chair of York High's Governing Board (Tricia Miller) last week to talk through how governance worked at York High. It had been a very positive 'meeting of minds' and Tricia accepted there needed to be change. She would encourage her governors to look to the future and think about their roles and commitment levels. Nicki had been co-opted to the Board and would be attending a meeting on Wednesday 19 July.

An SLT Improvement Plan day had been scheduled for York High on Thursday 13 July. It would be the first time the Senior Leadership had been together as a group and it was considered a good step forward. Compared to the original plan, there would be one person less on the SLT, but advertising would commence immediately for an additional Assistant Headteacher. Consequently, York High would be one person down on the SLT for the Autumn term of the new academic year but it was hoped additional help from existing members of staff would be available until the post had been filled.

The Chair queried whether there was anything in hand in terms of budget software and were there any problems. Trevor responded that he was not aware of any particular problems. However, there would be risks in changing to PSF (as used by the Trust) in that we used an academy package. The Local Authority had a financial management software package but it could be very disruptive to York High's accounting system if they moved to the LA package. As CFO, Becky advised that the LA had a different structure to us as an academy. York High used Civica and a move at this time would be an unnecessary and unhelpful change. Rod confirmed that at this point in time Civica was working well.

Trevor commented that the accounts team were running a revised budget so that at any time they were aware of the most accurate prediction. They had monitoring reports, which were more trustworthy than the budgets.

5 CHAIR'S REPORT *(verbal)*

- 5.1 Edwin, Anna and Trevor had met with Darren Radestock at the DfE to update him on progress regarding York High. The DfE had wanted reassurance on the delay to 1 April 2018 and it proved a very constructive meeting. He also asked about Acomb Primary and they explained the eventual outcome.
- 5.2 Lord Nash had visited Millthorpe on Thursday 6 July. Edwin, Anna, Adam, Nicki, Trevor and Bill Schofield (Millthorpe's Chair of Governing Board) met with Lord Nash and students showed him around the school. Lord Nash was interested in seeing how Millthorpe had coped with the Manchester bomb attack. He was questioned about the challenges facing secondary schools and responded that the government was very keen to press forward with the national funding formula as soon as practical. He took notes throughout the meeting and the presentation and asked for a copy of the slides. He seemed happy when he left Millthorpe. In a small way, the meeting put us 'on the radar' and made a genuine difference. A press release had been sent out today.

5.3 Yesterday, Edwin had attended the National Schools Commissioners Conference (attended by CEOs and Chairs of all MATs in the North). Edwin met John Edwards, the Regional Schools Commissioner for East Midlands and the Humber, and when Edwin announced that he was from the South Bank MAT, John knew who we were, which felt very positive. Edwin took the opportunity to mention how helpful and approachable Darren and his team had been. Edwin also met the RSC for the North, Janet Renou, who said she wanted to meet us.

The main speaker at the conference was Daniel Moynihan, Chief Executive of the Harris Federation. The Harris Federation, and the CE's talk particularly, proved very interesting and there were elements that we could look at and learn from, perhaps at the Away Day, in terms of growth and ambition. Practical things picked up included:

- Regional Schools Commissioner and Headteacher Boards. The DfE recently announced the appointment of eight regional schools commissioners (RSCs), who would take on key decisions regarding academies and free schools in their regions on behalf of the Secretary of State. Each RSC would be advised by a headteacher board made up of four elected academy headteachers to provide expertise and local knowledge. The current round of elections required nominations by the 21 July. Edwin considered that the Trust should put up a candidate, with the HTG deciding who. Edwin to send out the web link to all attendees. **Action 1**
- Harris Federation's Chair of the Education Honours Committee stated that he would welcome nominations for any deserving members of staff, from 'lollipop ladies' to headteachers.

5.4 Edwin announced that he had been awarded a National Leader of Governance designation which as well as being good for Edwin's development, brought a sum of £2,000 for the Trust. Becky to be kept informed as to how the money would be received.

6 HTG CHAIR'S TERMLY REPORT *(paper previously issued)*

6.1 Anna's report had been included with the send out of meeting papers and asked whether attendees had any questions. Anna also informed the meeting that Scarcroft's Business Manager would be picking up Item 13.1 (wrongly numbered as 12.1 in the report) regarding a negotiated set of commercial discounts for MAT staff.

6.2 Becky commented that with regard to the interim package for joining schools (notably a partial levy prior to joining the MAT), a lot of expensive time had been spent during the unsuccessful pre-conversion stage of a primary school considering joining the MAT. Due diligence was a two-way process and until this phase had been concluded, expenditure should be monitored closely. Options to consider when schools were considering joining the MAT included:

- inviting the Headteacher to HTG meetings;

- a formalised letter of agreement from the Chair;
- Memorandum of Understanding;
- a document that indicated to interested schools, at the relevant point, costs were being incurred that potentially would need to be paid back if they subsequently decided not to join the MAT.

6.40 pm *Andrea joined the meeting.*

7 FINANCE

7.1 Budget Monitoring Process (*paper previously issued*)

Becky had presented her paper in draft format to the Finance and Audit Committee at their 12 June meeting. Amendments to the earlier draft were now shown in blue text. The process outlined needed to be practical and capable of highlighting variances to be addressed.

Becky explained that in essence there were three stages: budget setting; monthly detailed monitoring; overall look at where we were in respective budgets. The questions in green had been included following discussions with Anna and Reuben. It was important to note that the 'black action' was not automatic. This would trigger a meeting by the F&A Committee when a number of things would be discussed.

Edwin had circulated Becky's report to governing boards in advance of the meeting. An in depth discussion followed, with particular regard to the two key amendments at 2.4 and 2.7. It was agreed that the Trust needed to encourage good planning and that this was a document to avoid risk. We needed a robust early warning system. Conversations about budgets should happen and be scheduled into the calendar. Basically, this document would give total clarity to all schools and a process to follow. It protected autonomy rather than infringing it, by ensuring that no school would suffer financially because of overspending at another school.

Edwin asked the Trust Board to approve Becky's proposal to implement the outlined process with effect from 1 September 2017, to then be reviewed after six months initially for effectiveness and practicality.

Proposal agreed unanimously.

7.2 Update on Financial Centralisation (*verbal*) and Internal Audit Action Plan (*previously issued*)

Becky informed the meeting that the central finance team had been in place at Knavesmire for three weeks and they were working hard to make the processes work. Prior to working centrally, the team had met with school business managers at an 'away morning' to go through the new processes and emphasise the need for everyone to work across the MAT.

Manuals and flowcharts were distributed on how systems worked. The team would be working for the final two weeks of the Summer break in order to accommodate the year end, as well as working on the actions from the internal audit report included in today's meeting pack.

Trustees congratulated Becky for the work that she and her team had done. They recognised that centralisation involved significant work and change for the finance staff, and they wanted to record their appreciation for what had been achieved. Trustees asked the Chair to arrange to express their gratitude to finance staff for all their hard work.

Action 2

7.3 Considerations of cash investment (*tabled*)

Becky explained that last year the Board had approved an investments policy which stated that any investments needed to be low risk and maximise cash benefit to the Trust. Proposals 1 and 2 complied with the policy and Becky recommended that both be agreed. The cash could be accessed within 32 days and most invoices were paid within 30 days. Reuben queried the cost for administering the investments. Lloyds had reassured Becky that after an initial piece of work, it would be a monthly telephone call to the bank.

The proposals were agreed unanimously, with the proviso that if managing the investments proved too difficult in terms of time spent, we should cease the arrangement.

7.4 PSF Costs incurred for Acomb School (*tabled*)

Becky tabled a document giving background to why we were being asked to pay for a PSF licence fee which related to Acomb School when they were considering joining the MAT, but subsequently did not join. Becky had communicated with the business managers at both Acomb and Woodthorpe, who had given their approval to purchasing the PSF licences. Woodthorpe had paid, but Acomb's amount was still outstanding. As a next step, Nicki agreed to draft a letter to the Headteacher of Acomb Primary, which she would send to Anna for consideration. **Action 3**

8 APPROVAL OF 2017-18 BUDGET (*paper previously issued*)

8.1 Becky informed the meeting that as is normal in education finance, there were changes since papers had been presented to the Finance and Audit June meeting and included in the pack for today's Trust Board meeting. She therefore tabled a new set of start budget assumptions, consolidated start budget plus a reconciliation sheet. The three tabled documents replaced those included in the pack and included:

- minor staffing changes, mainly at Knavesmire;
- Knavesmire had decided to lease a minibus;
- finalised figures had been received from the ESFA on pupil numbers;
- neither York High or Woodthorpe had been included in the start budget assumptions.

8.2 Following detailed discussion, the start budget for 2017/18 was unanimously approved.

7.55 pm Becky left the meeting

9 STRATEGY DOCUMENT *(paper previously issued)*

9.1 At the June Trust Board meeting, the Headteacher Group had been tasked to look at the document again in terms of the three year plan. Changed sections had been typed in red, giving a more consistent approach, and covered discussions at the June meeting.

9.2 Following further discussion, it was agreed to make two further changes in the three year plan:

Objective 3 1st bullet point – change 4,000 to **5,000** pupils;

Objective 5 1st bullet point – change ‘... within York’ to within **the local area**.

The Strategy Document was unanimously approved subject to the above minor changes.

10 GROWTH STRATEGY *(paper previously issued)*

10.1 Anna explained that in producing this document she had looked at the strategy ratified at the Trust Board meeting in October 2016 and tried to encapsulate the shift over time in the current version. Section B was new, following discussions with Edwin and Helen, and they had tried to articulate where we were and where we wanted to be. The only thing missing was that Anna had tried to locate a map for inclusion in the document. Trevor suggested that he and Anna looked at providing a map. **Action 4a**

10.2 Anna asked the Board how they felt about the revised document. A discussion followed culminating in minor changes as follows:

- Item 5.2 change ‘6’ schools to **5**;

10.3 It was agreed that the Growth Strategy document be brought back to the Trust Board meeting on a termly basis. Trustees discussed different ways in which progress against the plan could be presented most clearly. Anna agreed to consider these suggestions and liaise with Edwin. **Action 4b**

11 COMMUNICATIONS *(to be tabled at a future meeting date)*

11.1 Helen advised the Board that she would roll this item over to the next Trust Board meeting.

12 REVISED MAT BROCHURE (*brochure previously issued*)

12.1 This version of the brochure was created in-house by Jon Deamer, which the Board felt was both extremely professional and impressive. Nicki offered to thank Jon on behalf of the MAT. **Action 5**

13 TRUST PRINCIPAL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (*verbal*)

Minuted under 'Confidential' status.

14 MEETING DATES 2017-18 (*paper previously issued*)

14.1 Anna to liaise with Trevor as some of the dates don't fit into the windows.

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 Fire Safety Return. Anna confirmed this had been completed.

15.2 Approval sought to reappoint Ann Cox for another term at Knavesmire School.
Appointment unanimously approved.

15.3 Today would be the final meeting that Lesley clerked. The Chair thanked her for the huge amount of time she had put in, and the high quality of the minutes she had produced. He presented her with a gift on behalf of all trustees. He also presented gift from the trustees to Trevor Burton, in recognition of the immense work he had put in as Trust Principal.

15.4 There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

ACTIONS

Item	By	Action	Date
5.3	Edwin	Action 1 Consider and decide whether the Trust should propose a candidate as an RSC elected academy headteacher. Edwin to send out web link to HTG.	21 July
7.2	Edwin	Action 2 Arrange 'thank you' for finance staff on behalf of the board	
7.4	Nicki	Action 3 Draft letter to the Headteacher of Acomb Primary and send to Anna for consideration.	September
10.1	Trevor, Anna & Edwin	Action 4a & b Look at map for inclusion in Growth Strategy, and consider best way to present information.	September
12.1	Nicki	Action 5 Thank Jon Deamer for his work preparing the prospectus	September

Carried forward from 19 June 2017:

Item	By	Action	Date
7.1	HTG	Action 1 Further work required on the MAT Development Plan. <i>In hand.</i>	September
7.3	Anna	Action 3 SWOTs Analysis - gather stakeholder views. <i>Included in Action 1 above.</i>	September
8.2	Trevor	Action 4 Contact Browne Jacobson regarding York High contract. <i>Trevor had spoken to the Chair of York High's Governors, who was happy with the content of the contract. Trevor to progress, with an offer of input from Martin Frost if required. To be in place by September 2017.</i>	September



Chair of South Bank Academy Trust

