

# South Bank Multi Academy Trust

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## Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020

6.00 pm by Video Conference

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Present:	Edwin Thomas	Chair of Trustees
	Rob Bennett	
	Michelle Blake	Non-Executive Trustees
	Pat Boyle	
	Jill Hodges	
	Andrea Preston	
	Richard Milner	
Ian Wiggins		
In attendance:	Jo Edwards	Trust Principal
	Michael Gidley	Chief Finance Officer
	Adam Cooper	Deputy Trust Principal
	Sophie Triffitt	Clerk to the Board of Trustees

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### **1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO BUSINESS INTEREST FORMS**

1.1 For the record of the minutes the meeting took place virtually.

1.2 The Chair welcomed attendees

#### 1.3 Absence

There were no apologies.

#### 1.4 Declarations of Interest (previously issued)

Trustees were asked to inform the clerk of any updates to their Business Interest Forms.

#### Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

1.5 It was confirmed that in order for Trustees to approve the Millthorpe Applefields build Trustees wanted; assurance on cost overrun liability, a project management framework for effective management, signed licence to occupy or an understanding that Applefields can't occupy until it is signed, evidence the proposal has been fully considered, challenged and approved at LGB and consideration of all risks.

1.6 The Chair provided an update on the Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, meeting with attendees invited 'because you are the very best at what you do'. Growth for similar sized trusts was discussed and South Bank MAT pushed the need for money to develop services to make Trusts attractive and that without schools in the pipeline there is no funding to develop central services to become more attractive to schools. The general

message was that there are plans for a general push on academisation and there is a desire to include small trusts within that growth. The Trust Principal reported that there was a follow up call from Lisa Beadle from the Regional School Commissioners Office.

## **2 COVID-19 SCHOOL REOPENING**

- 2.1 The Trust Principal recorded thanks to the primary leaders for their hard work in developing plans and risk assessments.
- 2.2 The Trust Principal explained that schools have remained open throughout COVID-19 for key workers and vulnerable children. The wider reopening is focused on primary schools as the secondary dates are later.
- 2.3 The Woodthorpe plan is to open for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 2<sup>nd</sup> June with four days in school per week (full time for key worker and vulnerable children) using a bubble model.
- 2.4 The Scarcroft plan is to open for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 2<sup>nd</sup> June with two days in school per week (full time for key worker and vulnerable children) using a bubble model.
- 2.5 The Carr Junior plan is to open for Year 6 from 4<sup>th</sup> June with four days in school per week (full time for key worker and vulnerable children).
- 2.6 The Knavesmire plan is to open for some Nursery, Year 1 and Year 6 from 4<sup>th</sup> June with four days in school per week (full time for key worker and vulnerable children). Nursery reopening will be from 8<sup>th</sup> June and Reception will not be open due to staffing for that year group.
- 2.7 A Trustee asked how the vulnerable and key worker children will be impacted by the bubbles. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that at Knavesmire bubbles will be across year groups who will be spread across the school site to prevent bubbles from mixing. Parents will need to decide if their child attends full time in the key worker / vulnerable bubble or join the year group bubble and attend four days.
- 2.8 A Trustee asked what the limiting factor is for Scarcroft offering two days in school compared to other primary schools offering four days. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that there are differing complexities in terms of staffing and the number of children planning to attend and Scarcroft are offering days for Reception. Woodthorpe have all their staff coming back and Carr Junior only have a quarter of the school to be attending. There are no Reception staff in at Knavesmire but this does enable each bubble to have their own set of toilets and if Reception were in this would not be possible.
- 2.9 A Trustee asked what the reasons are for teachers not returning to school. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that at Knavesmire some staff are shielding but the level of vulnerability has not been reviewed against the shielding criteria as the capacity fits with the building capacity and balance of those in and at home supports the home learning delivery. Schools could potentially challenge more in terms of HR but this is not needed at this time. The Trust Principal added that there are a number of staff in a grey area of vulnerable and interpretation of the guidance. A staff information request form was issued but nationally unions are not supporting the information gathering process. The Deputy Trust Principal reported that less than a third of Knavesmire staff have completed the form.

School Risk Assessments (PAPERS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 2.10 The Trust Principal noted that the time frames are tight and there is a risk the work will not be completed due to input out of the Trusts control for Friday for Trustees to make a decision. The Risk Assessments went to HANDS North Yorkshire Health and Safety and Headteachers have responded to feedback today. Once Health and Safety sign off is in place they will be issued to First Law North for legal sign off. Headteachers have been asked to liaise with school based union reps and the Trust Principal is working with regional reps. Once Risk Assessments are completed they will be published on the Trust website.
- 2.11 The Trust Principal noted that further government guidance will be issued on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and the Trust Principal and CFO will review the CST Framework on Friday morning.
- 2.12 In response to a Trustee the Trust Principal confirmed that LGB input to Risk Assessments would happen after legal input but Heads are working closely with Chairs of Governors.
- 2.13 **Action:** Deputy Trust Principal to remind Heads that LGBs need to be included in the Risk Assessment process.
- 2.14 A Trustee asked what feedback had come from Health and Safety. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that there was a column for additional information that was not clear that it was to be completed but this has now been done. The Deputy Trust Principal informed Trustees that he had removed reference to social distancing as he cannot guarantee this in a school setting and replaced with practical spacing and there could be Health and Safety challenge on this.
- 2.15 A Trustee asked what elements of social distancing cannot be delivered. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that the requirement to keep two metres apart at all times is unmanageable. The emotional impact of the children needs to be considered and an adult may need to put their arm around a child. The children will be spaced out for long periods in the classroom.
- 2.16 A Trustee asked what teaching would look like. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that if hearing a child read or giving feedback the teacher would do this over the shoulder and not face to face.
- 2.17 A Trustee asked if break times will be in bubbles. The Deputy Trust Principal confirmed that at Knavesmire children will have lunches in the classroom in their bubble but will have the breaks together in their year group bubble but in a large playground for 30 children. Carr Junior will be able to operate differently only having Year 6 in but they may have different behavioural challenges.
- 2.18 The Deputy Trust Principal noted that there are huge pressures on Headteachers from unions and Heads want to be clear and open about how the school can operate in reality in as safe a way as possible.
- 2.19 A Trustee questioned why the 'The same teacher(s) and other staff are assigned to Year Group "bubble" and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days.' question in the risk assessment was not completed for both Knavesmire and Woodthorpe. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that this question has been updated in the revised version.

- 2.20 In response to a Trustee the Trust Principal confirmed that the impact of not completing the Risk Assessments and CST Framework for the Trust Board on Friday will impact when schools can open. The Deputy Trust Principal added that schools can't ask parents to plan until the decision is made.
- 2.21 A Trustee asked how bubbles are selected. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that for Knavesmire there are Year 6, Year 1, Nursery and key worker and vulnerable bubbles and parents can choose if they go into their year group bubble but they will then only be in for the four days.
- 2.22 A Trustee questioned if there is a vertical impact to bubbles of family groups. The Deputy Trust Principal explained that Headteachers have worked hard to control what is going on in school and can only manage risk not remove it.
- 2.23 The Trust Principal noted that the office of national statistics have said that for those age 44 and under there is a much lower risk.

CST Framework (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 2.24 A Trustee asked what areas the Trust Principal is most concerned about. The Trust Principal noted that there are shifting government messages but is confident in the work of the schools and processes in place. There is a need to clarify a critical path decision process that if someone presents with COVID-19 symptoms the Headteacher has authority to address swiftly informing the Trust; or if the R Rate increases locally / nationally there is a mechanism for the Trust Principal to direct schools to shut with Trust Board support.
- 2.25 A Trustee asked if the Risk Assessments and controls need publishing on the website. The CFO reported that the advice from Browne Jacobson is that the Trust do not have to but the gov.uk website states that there is an expectation Risk Assessments should be published as a place of work employing more than 50 people.
- 2.26 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed for the Risk Assessments to be published on the Trust website.
- 2.27 The CFO confirmed schools are submitting budgets this week with an assumed closing position so expects the financial element of the framework would be amber. Trustees agreed that financial impacts will be addressed longer term and as part of the budget process at Finance and Audit Committee.
- 2.28 The Trust Principal and CFO will review the CST Framework on Friday and Trustees confirmed they do not expect all of the framework to be green in order to make a decision to reopen schools more widely.
- 2.29 A Trustee questioned what consideration had been given to address practice not in line with the agreed school plans. The Trust Principal explained that there would need to be monitoring and a process of addressing if plans are not being followed.
- 2.30 Trustees noted that there is a need for a process if the schools can't operate safely and agreed that if the risk assessments are not working in practice then there should be an operational decision in order to keep children and staff safe and informing the Trust Principal, CFO and Trust Board. A Trustee noted the need for consistency across schools.

- 2.31 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed that Headteachers are empowered to suspend extension of opening based on unworkable elements of the risk assessment to then be referred to the Trust Principal to ensure consistency across the Trust.
- 2.32 **Resolution:** Trustee agreed that Headteachers are empowered to respond if someone within a bubble falls ill / tests positive for COVID-19 in line with government guidance.
- 2.33 A Trustee suggested communicating to parents that if there is a suspected or confirmed case X action will be taken.
- 2.34 A Trustee asked at what point the Trust would decide to close based on R rate. The Trust Principal explained that through YSAB there is Public Health representation for updates and the Trust need to be responsive to government information and guidance.
- 2.35 Trustees discussed aiming for a 4<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> June extended opening in order to have clear communication with parents and give more planning time to parents and teachers. It was noted that a commitment had been made to parents and LGBs that Trustees are meeting on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May to make a decision.
- 2.36 Trustees agreed to keep the Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 meeting date but were aware it may need to be rescheduled.
- 2.37 In response to a Trustee the Trust Principal confirmed that she is most concerned about receiving Health and Safety and Legal sign off for the risk assessments by 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
- 2.38 The Trust Principal, CFO and Deputy Trust Principal left the meeting.

### **3 SUCCESSION PLANNING (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

- 3.1 Trustees discussed the Trust priorities and the best interim approach to drive these forward.
- 3.2 A Trustee noted the uncertainties for the next academic year due to COVID-19 and suggested there could be the opportunity to appoint an interim leader for one year who is skilled in change management to see the Trust through these uncertain times and implement any changes the Trust feels are required. This skillset is different to that of an educational Trust Principal and it may not be right for this Trust to bring in a non-educationalist but there may be someone who has experience in change and development within a MAT.
- 3.3 A Trustee noted that Trust Board decision on priorities will drive the core elements of the job description and that line management needs to be part of any arrangement to ensure effective management in the Trust.
- 3.4 A Trustee felt it was important for the Trust Principal to have an educational background otherwise it would change the nature of the Trust.
- 3.5 A Trustee suggested a Chief Operating Officer post to sit alongside the Trust Principal role and noted that facilities management is a key area of need.
- 3.6 A Trustee suggested utilising a current Headteacher on a short term interim basis to deliver Trust priorities utilising their strengths without putting them in a difficult position to manage their peer leaders across the Trust and then returning to lead a school.

- 3.7 A Trustee noted the need for an effective medium term online learning provision across the Trust and this will need strong leadership.
- 3.8 **Resolution:** Trustees accepted Jo Edwards' resignation as of 31st August.
- 3.9 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed an interim one term appointment from the Headteacher group.
- 3.10 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed to start scenario planning to recruit for January 2021.
- 3.11 It was noted that a school budget should not suffer for any support a Headteacher provides the Trust.
- 3.12 **Action:** Rob Bennett and Ian Wiggins to produce a recruitment workshop timeline and circulate to Trustees.
- 3.13 **Resolution:** It was agreed to inform Headteachers of the interim Trust Principal proposal and invite expressions of interest.
- 3.14 **Action:** Chair to write to Headteacher Group for Trust Principal expression of interest with a deadline of the end of next week.
- 3.15 The Chair invited Trustees to consider taking on the Chair post at the end of his term in March 2021 and to inform him by the end of Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
- 3.16 A Trustee noted that having a full time Trust Principal / CEO post may reduce the level of time commitment of the Chair.
- 3.17 A Trustee suggested that there is need to consider resources and workload of Trust senior management and review the top slice and central function.
- 3.18 *Post meeting note:* **Resolution:** It was agreed via e-mail that the interim Trust Principal post should be full time.
- 3.19 The Trust Principal, CFO and Deputy Trust Principal returned to the meeting.

#### **4 CAPITAL PROJECTS – ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCH (PAPERS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

- 4.1 The CFO explained that the request is for approval of a contractor that has been through a selection process. There is a professional project manager in place, £1m of funding confirmed, CYC have been making payments against that funding, there is contingency in the project and there was a thorough tender process.
- 4.2 The CFO confirmed the tender process has been robust and in line with Trust processes and the LGB established a steering group so have had monitoring of the process.
- 4.3 Trustees wanted to ensure as the project progresses there is regular oversight from the LGB and clear instruction to governors and the project manager that if anything with the project changes or issues arise the CFO is informed.
- 4.4 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the appointment of Cleveland Land Services in line with the tender documentation.

## **5 FINANCE MONITORING (PAPERS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

- 5.1 Trustees had no questions on the monitoring report.
- 5.2 The CFO reported that the April accounts are showing the impact of COVID-19 and this will be monitored going forward.

### RISK REPORTING BY EXCEPTION

- 5.3 The CFO reported that COVID-19 is the major risk at present and the Risk Assessments will feed through to the Risk Register.

## **6 LGB BUSINESS**

### LINK TRUSTEES (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 6.1 Link Trustees joined LGB meetings for York High School, Millthorpe and Knavesmire. The Chair made Trustees aware that in a successful Trust with similar delegations a member of Trust senior management joins each LGB meeting.
- 6.2 A Trustee suggested the link trustee joins the LGB meetings more than once a year.
- 6.3 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed to adopt the Link Trustee proposal and review in one year.

### MATTERS FROM LGBS (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 6.4 The Chair noted that the Trust Board should have consulted on the change to the Trust central contribution but in light of the Trust Principal recruitment the top slice contribution will be reviewed and any proposal consulted on.
- 6.5 Trustees agreed that finding more opportunities for communication is an important part of the Trust Board agenda.
- 6.6 **Action:** Michelle Blake to respond to the Millthorpe Chair of Governors letter.
- 6.7 A Trustee noted that the Trust have no system to benchmark roles and pay grades. The Trust Principal thought that the Trust Business Manager had established a process for reviewing this and will confirm.
- 6.8 **Action:** Trust Principal to confirm if there is a Trust job role evaluation system.
- 6.9 A Trustee suggested an exploratory conversation around home learning platform with secondary Heads and the possible opportunity for support that could be provided from the University of York.
- 6.10 The CFO reported that a small amount of funding has been released to support home learning provision.
- 6.11 **Action:** Michelle Blake to contact the secondary Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and Trust Business Manager to discuss home learning development opportunities.

### MILLTHORPE REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 6.12 The LGB and Trust Action Plan have been delayed due to school closures.

### LGB APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 6.13 Trustees agreed the LGB appointments.

## 7 POLICIES

### STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT ADDENDUM – USE OF STAFF MOBILE PHONES (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

7.1 It was noted that the policy had been approved by e mail.

### VIRTUAL MEETINGS GUIDANCE (PAPER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

7.2 It was noted that the policy had been approved by e mail and it was agreed to include in the governance handbook.

## 8 SCOTT BUTTERWORTH RETIREMENT

8.1 The Chair made governors aware of the retirement of Scott Butterworth, Deputy Headteacher, at Millthorpe School. Trustees felt it was appropriate to recognise Mr Butterworth's contribution to Millthorpe and the Trust.

8.2 A Trustee raised concern at the finances at Millthorpe and the impact of any potential recruitment. The Trust Principal explained that she had discussions with the Head of School around recruitment, finances, provision for the students and advised caution but the delegation sits with the school.

## 9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 There were no items for discussion under AOB.

The meeting closed at 9.32pm.

<b>Meeting Decisions</b>
Agreed for the Risk Assessments to be published on the Trust website.
Agreed that Headteachers are empowered to suspend extension of opening based on unworkable elements of the risk assessment to then be referred to the Trust Principal to ensure consistency across the Trust.
Agreed that Headteachers are empowered to respond if someone within a bubble falls ill / tests positive for COVID-19 in line with government guidance.
Accepted Jo Edwards' resignation as of 31st August.
Agreed an interim one term appointment from the Headteacher group.
Agreed to start scenario planning to recruit for January 2021.
Agreed to inform Headteachers of the interim Trust Principal proposal and invite expressions of interest.
Agreed that the interim Trust Principal post should be full time.
Approved the appointment of Cleveland Land Services in line with the tender documentation.
Agreed to adopt the Link Trustee proposal and review in one year



**ACTIONS**

 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019

Item	By	Action	Date
6.11	TP	Review website efficiency / commonality across the trust.	Sep 2020
8.2	JH	Schedule a Pupil Premium Link Governor meeting to understand strategies and best practice. Was scheduled for 31 <sup>st</sup> March but is now postponed	Jul 2020
14.7	Chair	Develop Collaboration Guidance.	May 2020
14.8	TP	Communication Plan to address the high power high impact quadrant to be included in the Strategy Plan. The Trust Principal has applied to the University of York for a suitable intern.	Jul 2020

 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Item	By	Action	Date
8.6	Trustees	Revisit the growth strategy at the July meeting, in the context of the Trust's priorities for next year	Jul 2020

 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Item	By	Action	Date
6.7	TP	Provide a timetable for a consistent MIS System at the May meeting.	Sep 2020
8.7	Chair	Discussion of the ethos of autonomy to be part of the next away day.	Sep 2020
8.15	Chair	Source training on how to be a good director and asking the right questions.	Jul 2020

 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Item	By	Action	Date
18.2	TP	Review what is in place for personal development as part of the performance management process and discuss with the Headteacher Group if changes are needed.	Sep 2020

 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Item	By	Action	Date
5.8	Chair	Issue governor communication that Trustees are reflecting on feedback and are considering how to develop the relationship with LGBs and the Trust and defining what the Trust is delivering for the schools across the Trust.	May 2020
5.9	IW/RB	Sketch a Trust structure timeline to ensure consultation.	May 2020
6.38	TP / CFO	Confirm if the Trust have to publish a COVID-19 Employer Risk Assessment on the website.	May 2020

6.40	Chair	Communicate with LGBs and Heads that the Trust Board will take the decision on reopening and that Headteacher input, risk assessments and CST framework checklist will inform this decision.	May 2020
7.24	TP	Review if there is a need to undertake a disciplinary investigation	May 2020
7.25	Chair / R Milner	Review what would be wanted from the LGB and communicate that to them.	May 2020

26<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Item	By	Action	Date
2.13	Dep Trust Principal	Remind Heads that LGBs need to be included in the Risk Assessment process.	May 2020
3.12	RB/IW	Rob Bennett to produce a recruitment workshop timeline and circulate to Trustees.	Jun 2020
3.14	Chair	Chair to write to Headteacher Group for Trust Principal expression of interest with a deadline of the end of next week.	May 2020
6.6	MB	Michelle Blake to respond to the Millthorpe Chair of Governors letter.	May 2020
6.8	TP	Trust Principal to confirm if there is a Trust job role evaluation system.	May 2020
6.11	MB	Michelle Blake to contact the secondary Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and Trust Business Manager to discuss home learning development opportunities.	Jun 2020

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**Chair of South Bank Multi Academy Trust**