

# South Bank Multi Academy Trust

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## Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 6 July 2021

6.00 pm by Video Conference

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Present:	Ian Wiggins	Chair of Trustees
	Richard Milner	
	Edwin Thomas	Non-Executive Trustees
	Sue Laycock	
	Gemma Lowe	
	Rob Bennett	
In attendance:	Adam Cooper	Trust Principal
	Michael Gidley	Chief Finance Officer
	Sophie Triffitt	Clerk to the Board of Trustees

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### **1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

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

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO BUSINESS INTEREST FORMS**

#### 2.1 Absence

Apologies were received and accepted for Jill Donaldson Hodges, Pat Boyle and Martyn Sibley.

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

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

### **3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 18 MAY 2021 (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

3.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and approved.

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

4.1 Mr Bennett confirmed he had completed the unconscious bias training on 6 July 2021.

4.2 It was confirmed that Safeguarding will remain a standing agenda item at Trust Board but detailed scrutiny will sit with the Education and Standards Committee.

## **5 TRUST PRINCIPAL REPORT (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

- 5.1 The Trust Principal reported that hundreds of children are out of school as a result of being contacts.
- 5.2 The Headteacher Group (primaries) have met to review data and planning for next year.
- 5.3 A Trustee asked what has been done to assist secondary readiness given there have been no SATs or transition days. The Trust Principal explained that there was a city wide agreement on Year 6 assessments and secondary schools provided information on what information / practices would be useful to support secondary readiness. Feedback from primary level is that our secondary schools are very proactive with transition but primary Heads needed support accessing good transition arrangements to other secondary schools.
- 5.4 A Trustee congratulated schools on the great work around Everyone's Invited and proactive work to talk about this appropriately at both primary and secondary.
- 5.5 A Trustee asked about the impact of the government Covid announcement. The Trust Principal explained that schools will use any changes to do things that will really make a difference to wellbeing and transitions and not revert to full pre Covid operations for one week. North Yorkshire guidance will be provided for risk assessments ready for September.

## **6 MERGER UPDATE**

- 6.1 Mr Thomas noted that the merger working group continues to meet and Trustees met the consultant at the Scheme of Delegation session.
- 6.2 Mr Thomas explained that there was a meeting with the Regional Schools Commissioner and Education and Skills Finding Agency representatives. The RSC's officials were pleased with the direction of travel and whilst there are no rules on what steps must be taken they have strongly recommended a full consultation over four weeks of term time. Running a four week term time consultation will impact the planned timeline and eligibility for £50k TCAF finding to cover merger costs. The new aim would be for the application to go to the January Headteacher Board and if approved have a September 2022 conversion date.
- 6.3 A Trustee asked how developed the framework and language is noting the need to have a very positive stakeholder engagement experience. Mr Thomas explained that this is still being worked through but there will be an update before the end of term to communicate that the consultation will be happening from September.
- 6.4 A Trustee asked if there had been any feedback from the initial communication. Mr Thomas confirmed there had some governor feedback but nothing from the community.
- 6.5 Mr Thomas informed trustees that due diligence is ongoing and a report will be provided by the end of term. The Chair asked trustees to share any questions / concerns that arise from the due diligence report. A trustee noted the need to fully understand the process and ask all questions as a learning opportunity for future practice if government will be driving a merger agenda.
- 6.6 Mr Thomas explained that the ESFA will be looking closely at the application so will need to be able to explain plans in place to recover individual budgets.

- 6.7 A Trustee asked if the ESFA are working to a defined set of criteria. Mr Thomas explained that it would likely be more of a holistic judgement given the regional system.
- 6.8 A Trustee suggested the need to prepare for any requests to join the MAT during this process.
- 6.9 Mr Thomas explained that the Trust governance structure would be a board of nine trustees (1 foundation, 6 from existing Trust Boards and 2 externally appointed), 5 members (2 Diocesan, 1 York St John, 2 from the remaining 7 across the trusts) and LGBs will continue.
- 6.10 The Chair will e mail a survey from Avec for expressions of interest for the Trust Board.

## **7 SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

- 7.1 Mr Thomas shared the Scheme of Delegation session data analysis.
- 7.2 The Trust Principal felt that there is a desire to keep autonomy on school curriculum as this links heavily with the ethos of the school and having a school identity within the Trust but there is an understanding of the need for consistent / shared assessments and assessment points.

## **8 TRUST DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### 2020/21 Plan Review (previously issued)

- 8.1 The Trust Principal explained that there will be an impact review presented for the autumn term meeting.
- 8.2 A Trustee questioned the action linked to value for money exercise. The Trust Principal confirmed that the objective has been met but needs to be pulled together in a summary report.
- 8.3 A Trustee asked the Trust Principal to temperature check the 'smooth functioning machine' objective success with the Headteacher Group

### 2021/22 Plan Proposals (previously issued)

- 8.4 The Chair explained that recovery from Covid will be a priority and the following the merger process the Trust will know whether a post-merger preparation plan for success or strategic direction of South Bank is needed.
- 8.5 Trustees agreed the three proposed areas of focus; disadvantaged / vulnerable learners, bouncebackability and merger: structure, systems and processes.
- 8.6 A Trustee suggested specific focus on York High School / Carr Junior needs around Ofsted, PR, pupil numbers and finances.

## **9 FINANCE UPDATE (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

- 9.1 The CFO summarised the finance report.

### Finance and Audit Committee Report

- 9.2 The Committee Chair reported that the committee discussion focused on budget monitoring, budget forecasts, declining reserve and instructed the CFO to do some work on assumptions, Carr Junior, internal audit report, risk register, estate management which will be revisited following the merger decision, academy trust handbook changes and policies.
- 9.3 The committee approved £95k from SCA funding for Carr Junior capital works.
- 9.4 The CFO explained that the next audit will be the fifth year BHP have undertaken the external audit so will need to retender but there may only be one year before the merger. Trustees felt that noncompliance for a one year extension due to the merger should be acceptable but will revisit at the end of the calendar year.

#### Start Budget

- 9.5 The CFO confirmed the Interim Trust Principal is costed to Easter 2022 and assumes an appointment of a CEO from January 2022.
- 9.6 **Resolution:** The Trust Board approved the 2021/22 budget for submission to the ESFA.
- 9.7 **Resolution:** The Trust Board approved the forward plan for submission to the ESFA.
- 9.8 Trustees recognised that in the third year of the plan they have signed off a deficit budget but were confident recovery plans and robust monitoring were in place.
- 9.9 Trustees thanked the finance team for running the budget assumptions again following discussion at Finance and Audit Committee.
- 9.10 The CFO highlighted that the percentage of staff costs is high compared to national benchmark.

#### Scarcroft Capital Work Contracts (previously issued)

- 9.11 **Resolution:** The Trust Board approved contracts for the appointment of Everlast Group Ltd to the value of £362,523.93, LCC Restorations Ltd to the value of £152,404.75 and for professional fees of £41,194.29 to Eddisons Ltd as detailed in the proposal paper.

#### Catering Tender Proposal (previously issued)

- 9.12 **Resolution:** The Trust Board approved the appointment of Dolce for the school's catering service.
- 9.13 A Trustee noted that it was good that the panel focused on the interests of the children and the quality of the food.

## **10 EDUCATION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

- 10.1 The Chair reported that discussion focused on the robust GCSE grades process and Pupil Premium.

## **11 SAFEGUARDING AND SAFETY WORKING GROUP REPORT**

- 11.1 The meeting focused on the Health and Safety checks and reports, CPOMS report and provision for mental health and wellbeing.

## **12 SAFEGUARDING**

12.1 There was no update to report.

## **13 HEALTH AND SAFETY (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

13.1 A trustee questioned what the consequence or action is for a school with a high number of outstanding items. The Trust Principal explained that the process is still in development but the Trust Business Manager will contact schools.

13.2 **Action:** Chair and Trust Principal to agree where scrutiny of the Health and Safety actions sits.

## **14 TRUSTEE BUSINESS**

### Terms of Office

14.1 Trustees agreed to recommend the re-appointment of Ms Boyle and Ms Donaldson Hodges for Member approval.

14.2 Mr Milner informed trustees that he would be stepping down as a trustee due to work commitments. Trustees recorded their thanks to Mr Milner for his significant contribution to the trust.

### Finalisation of ERG Action Plan

14.3 **Resolution:** Trustees formally signed off the action plan noting that the Scheme of Delegation work is underway.

14.4 Trustees agreed that it was not the appropriate time to have a follow up governance review.

### Training Summary (previously issued)

14.5 The Chair thanked trustees for engaging in training.

14.6 The Chair has completed a CST training programme which covers a number of the module requirements.

## **15 LGB BUSINESS**

### Matters from LGB

15.1 The Chair informed trustees that Millthorpe are looking to make changes to their governance meeting structure and trustees delegated authority to the Chair and Trust Principal to take a decision on this.

### LGB Appointments and Resignations (previously issued)

15.2 Trustees agreed the appointments and noted resignations.

## **16 BURGUNDY AND GREEN BOOKS (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)**

16.1 The Trust Principal confirmed that the proposal is to approve the Burgundy and Green Books with some exceptions and this will be discussed with JNCC this week.

- 16.2 A Trustee asked if the proposal is to exclude 'payments to employees in the event of death or permanent disablement arising from assault'. The CFO confirmed so as this is covered in Pensions, there may be people who have opted out of the pension but the offer is available.
- 16.3 **Action:** CFO to confirm pension coverage for 'payments to employees in the event of death or permanent disablement arising from assault'
- 16.4 **Resolution:** Trustees accepted the recommendations in the Burgundy and Green Books paper.

## 17 POLICIES

### Financial Regulations

- 17.1 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Financial Regulations.

### Redundancy Policy (previously issued)

- 17.2 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Redundancy Policy.

### Absence Policy

- 17.3 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Absence Policy.

## 18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 18.1 There were no items for Any Other Business.

## 20 FUTURE MEETING DATES

- 20.1 Members – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

The meeting closed at 8.43pm.

<b>Meeting Decisions</b>
2021/22 budget for submission to the ESFA approved.
Forward budget plan for submission to the ESFA approved.
Approved Scarcroft capital works contracts for the appointment of Everlast Group Ltd to the value of £362,523.93, LCC Restorations Ltd to the value of £152,404.75 and for professional fees of £41,194.29 to Eddisons Ltd.
Approved the appointment of Dolce for the school's catering service.
Formally signed off the ERG action plan.
Agreed the adoption of the Burgundy and Green Books with the exceptions detailed in the proposal paper.
Policies approved: Financial Regulations Redundancy Policy Absence Policy



16<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Item	By	Action	Date
8.9	TP / CFO	Check the equal rate and equal pay element of the job evaluation system. <i>18.05.21: The Trust Principal explained that it is a significant piece of work and will be done as part of merger if this goes ahead.</i>	Oct 2021
8.11	Trustees	Have a conversation around nurturing talent, particularly with a view on diversity. <i>06.07.21: The Chair explained that this is a substantive piece of work to progress once a decision on the merger is made.</i>	July 2021

6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Item	By	Action	Date
13.2	Chair TP	Agree where scrutiny of the Health and Safety actions sits.	Sep 2021
16.3	CFO	Confirm pension coverage for 'payments to employees in the event of death or permanent disablement arising from assault'	Jul 2021

**Approved 19.10.2021**

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**Chair of South Bank Multi Academy Trust**