

South Bank Multi Academy Trust

Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 14th March 2023 6pm held at the Trust Office

Present:	Ian Wiggins Bethan Ellis Martyn Sibley Rob Bennett Natalie Wong Donna Smith Pat Boyle	Chair of Trustees Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee
In attendance:	Mark Hassack Michael Gidley Katie Dent Zoe Pickard Sophie Triffitt	Chief Executive Officer Chief Finance Officer Director of HR Executive Officer Clerk to the Board of Trustees

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO BUSINESS INTEREST FORMS (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

Absence

2.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Laycock.

Declarations of Interest (previously issued)

2.2 Trustees were reminded to keep their business interest submissions up to date.

3 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

3.1 Ian Wiggins and Martyn Sibley left the meeting.

3.2 **Resolution:** Ian Wiggins was elected as Chair for a term of one year. Trustees noted that Mr Wiggins had the support of trustees and was doing a great job for the Trust.

3.3 **Resolution:** Martyn Sibley was elected as Vice Chair for a term of one year.

3.4 Ian Wiggins and Martyn Sibley returned to the meeting.

4 CEO UPDATE (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 4.1 The CEO reported that the new Regional Director was scheduled to visit the Trust on 21st March 2023 which will include a visit to Millthorpe.
- 4.2 The trust improvement work with the North East Learning Trust has started with the CEO meeting with the Trust Improvement Officer to agree the scope of support and the TIO provided positive feedback on the school improvement and central team provision.
- 4.3 The Heads met on 14th March 2023 at Woodthorpe Primary School and identified no areas for improvement from their walk around school, despite this being a key part of the peer review process, so discussion focused on the Ofsted outstanding framework. The CEO will have dedicated weekly time with the Woodthorpe Headteacher to prepare for the Ofsted visit. The CEO noted that Woodthorpe has strong parental support and admissions remain strong.
- 4.4 The York High School Headteacher appreciated the support from the Trust to recover and the Interim Head of School had settled in well.
- 4.5 Knavesmire Year 6 returned from Barcelona yesterday and the CEO informed trustees of a child who was not able to board the flight out to Spain as they did not have a Schengen Visa as the North Yorkshire Evolve service had given the incorrect advice. The CEO confirmed that he had spoken with the child's parent and would be making a visit to the pupil at school.
- 4.6 Strikes will be going ahead on 15th and 16th March 2023 with broadly similar numbers taking strike action as previous strike days.
- 4.7 Unison balloted for strike action on the Teaching Assistant restructure but did not meet the threshold for action.
- 4.8 The CEO attended Scarcroft and York High School LGB meetings to discuss the LGB role in the Trust, relationship with the Trust Board, reporting to trustees and an update on the TA restructure.
- 4.9 The Chair reported that admissions at York High School are strong with 185 pupils allocated a place (including 160+ first choices) against a PAN of 180 noting that the admissions deadline was before the Ofsted report was published. Appeals run to July so there may be some movement. The plan is still to reduce to a 150 PAN for 2024/25.
- 4.10 Millthorpe admissions remain strong at capacity of 212.
- 4.11 A Trustee asked if the Millthorpe deep dive process will be replicated at other schools. The CEO explained that the plan had been to focus on Millthorpe once the central team was in fully place. There were not plans to do this as standard process but instead focus on where the central team could have the most helpful impact. There will be a three-day process at Carr Junior School with focus including estates and staffing structure.
- 4.12 A Trustee asked if the improvement needed at Millthorpe was due to skills gap or culture. The CEO explained that it was an equal need and often intertwined. There were elements for immediate fix by the central team and then medium to longer term improvements such as curriculum for KS4, developing a strong culture of quality assurance, a higher level of accountability and expectations, developing the leadership structure, and the Director of

Estates to progress estates work. The CEO noted that the increased level of accountability has resulted in some staff taking the decision to leave.

4.13 Bethan Ellis joined the meeting at 6.29pm.

4.14 The CEO had seen significant improvements in the middle leadership team who have worked well with new Deputy Head and Director of School Improvement, and they are engaging in ongoing regular training. There had been some interest from staff wanting to progress into middle leadership roles and developmental roles have been built into the structure so staff can apply for project based annual roles.

4.15 The CEO confirmed that the Trust training day went well, it was good to have everyone in the same building and being on site at York High provided the opportunity to celebrate their success.

5 STAFFING UPDATE (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

5.1 The Director of HR provided an update on the contract changes and restructure reporting that there had been a positive update meeting with the NEU Regional Official and Unison Branch Secretary. 34 contracts have been issued and 15 have been returned signed and as communicated to union representatives the process of potential dismissal and reengagement may be needed for some of the 19 staff who have not returned signed contracts.

5.2 Commenting on the previously circulated paper, a Trustee suggested that it would be useful to have similar data for successful appointments as there was for applications.

5.3 The Director of HR noted that the HR Assistant is developing a form to collect data across the staff body.

5.4 A Trustee suggested making links with the local universities who are held against employment data x months after graduation and that there may need to be a more proactive approach to secure a more diverse workforce.

5.5 A Trustee noted that there is a wider range of diversity beyond the nine protected characteristics and the Trust could gather more data and look at different ways and opportunities to better serve the students and add richness to the schools.

6 COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

6.1 A Trustee provided feedback that; there is a need to align the communication and engagement strategy with the growth strategy, be clear and capture where the Trust wants to be in the future, recognise the stakeholder groups and what they need from communications, and the importance of engaging the wider community to be bought into and be advocates of the Trust.

6.2 The CEO noted that the Trust Development Day was positive for staff engagement and communication and another one is planned for December 2023.

- 6.3 A Trustee noted that there may be some circumstance where the Trust need to engage the support of a communications specialist.
- 6.4 A Trustee noted that schools are doing lots in their community and the MAT can provide a platform for them to share their great work. The CEO informed trustees that schools are being supported with the tools to generate social media communications and there is a desire to get communication right for the benefit of the children in the Trust schools.

7 TRUST IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 7.1 The CEO reflected on the significant amount of work done across the trust and a need to embed this work and make tweaks where needed.
- 7.2 A Trustee asked what plans were in place to monitor changes. The CEO explained that once exams are over in July a full day meeting with Heads and the central team was scheduled to review the year, reflect on current position and consider where they want the Trust to be in 12 months' time and what needs to be done to get there.
- 7.3 A Trustee noted the amount of work done in a short amount of time and asked if the CEO felt fully supported by the Board and had everything he needed. The CEO confirmed he appreciated the support and challenge from the Board and his excellent colleagues in the central team to help drive the pace of change.

8 GENDER PAY GAP INFORMATION (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 8.1 The Director of HR confirmed that the data had been reported on the government portal and a supporting narrative report will be published on the website. The report will also feed into the people strategy.
- 8.2 A Trustee noted the positive trend in direction.
- 8.3 A Trustee suggested that information may be more easily digestible in graph / visual format.

9 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 9.1 A Trustee questioned the areas with nothing reported. The CEO explained that expectations of thresholds need to be clear across the trust and safeguarding reporting is in development in terms of comparable trends across schools and the Director of SEND and Safeguarding is working on this with Designated Safeguarding Leads across schools.
- 9.2 Trustees noted appreciation for the Director of SEND and Safeguarding role and the support the Director provided to schools.

10 SEND REPORT (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 10.1 The CEO reported that the Director of SEND and Safeguarding had completed SEND and Safeguarding audits across the schools.

- 10.2 In response to a trustee the CEO noted that the use of part time timetables was too high and there will be a review of any child not attending school full time and an alternative provision and part time timetable protocol put in place for the Trust.
- 10.3 The CEO emphasised the importance of accurate attendance and register marking and reporting. A Trustee expressed the need for a supportive and constructive challenge approach for rigour of reporting and a supportive network for teachers identifying problems with support to address.
- 10.4 A Trustee noted that it was positive to see coaching and support for SENCOs.
- 10.5 A Trustee asked how parents' feedback if they think their child has SEND. The CEO explained that Millthorpe are implementing a SEND newsletter and plan, so parents understand the provision and approach for SEND. Parent and pupil views for SEND children are taken at Education Health Care Plan reviews.

11 ESTATES AND HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 11.1 The CEO reported that the Director of Estates had brought a refreshing approach to estates and a strong level of expertise.

12 SCHOOL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

- 12.1 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed the School Resource Management Self-assessment for submission to the DfE.

13 FINANCE UPDATE

Monitoring Report (previously issued)

- 13.1 The CFO noted that the monitoring report is against start budget and is reporting as expected. The 2023/24 budget will be presented to the Finance and Audit Committee in June 2023 and at the Board meeting in July 2023.

Reserves Proposal (previously issued)

- 13.2 The CFO summarised the proposal for reserves pooling for the 2023/24 budget planning process and in the 2022/23 annual accounts.
- 13.3 A Trustee asked why the reserve was set at 4% and what the ideal reserve level would be. The CFO explained that trustees agreed the Trust Reserves Policy which set the reserve at 4% (circa half a month's costs) and 8% (a month's costs) would be a more comfortable position.
- 13.4 The CEO noted that the pooling approach would mean that there could be individual targets based on school circumstance and strategically allocate any funds above the level set.
- 13.5 A Trustee noted the importance to clearly articulate the strategic purpose of reserve pooling and suggested engaging LGBs.
- 13.6 A Trustee highlighted that School Condition Allocation is already pooled and suggested pooling assets including the income generated.

13.7 Trustees supported the proposal of reserve pooling but noted the need to discuss it with Heads and LGBs.

13.8 **Action:** Chair, CFO and CEO to agree how to engage with Heads and LGBs in the discussion around a move to reserves pooling.

Risk Register (previously issued)

13.9 There were no questions on the risk register.

14 TRUSTEE BUSINESS

Recruitment

14.1 The Chair informed trustees that the trustee recruitment pack was on the website and will be advertised through schools with interviews to take place after Easter.

14.2 Trustees were in agreement to hold an informal recruitment process for a previous trustee who may be in a position to return to the Board.

14.3 Trustees noted finance, HR and legal as skills areas for recruitment. A trustee suggested reviewing the trustee skills audit and accessing training for the board to upskill on finance.

Ian Wiggins Re-appointment

14.4 **Resolution:** Mr Wiggins was re-appointed as a trustee for a term of four years.

14.5 The Chair noted the need to consider succession planning for Chair of Trust Board and Committee Chair posts.

Role of Link Trustee

14.6 Following conversations with LGBs and Chairs on governance in the Trust the Chair reflected on the need for process around communication including chair meetings, governance evenings and link trustee roles.

14.7 The Chair asked trustees their view on moving meetings to the school day to enable meeting at different schools to see them in action and trustees were supportive of this approach.

15 LGB BUSINESS

Governance Evening Update

15.1 Discussed as part of the link trustee item.

Matters from LGB

15.2 Discussed as part of the link trustee item.

LGB Appointments and Resignations (previously issued)

15.3 **Resolution:** Trustees noted the governor movements and approved the Governor, Chair and Vice Chair appointments.

16 MINUTES OF TRUST BOARD MEETING 31ST JANUARY 2023 (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

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

17 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION PLAN

17.1 Both outstanding actions were confirmed as complete.

18 POLICIES

Accessibility Policy (previously issued)

18.1 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Accessibility Policy.

SEND Policy (previously issued)

18.2 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the SEND Policy.

Complaints Policy (previously issued)

18.3 **Resolution:** Trustees ratified the approval of the Complaints Policy that had been approved by e mail.

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (previously issued)

18.4 **Resolution:** Trustees ratified the approval of the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy that had been approved by e mail.

Bereavement Guidelines (previously issued)

18.5 **Resolution:** Trustees ratified the approval of the Bereavement Guidelines that had been approved by e mail.

19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 There were no items for discussion under AOB.

20 FUTURE MEETING DATES (PREVIOUSLY ISSUED)

Finance & Audit Committee – 21st March 2023

Member – 27th March 2023

Education & Standards Committee - 25th April 2023

Trust Board – 16th May 2023

Education & Standards Committee – 20th June 2023

Finance & Audit Committee – 27th June 2023

Trust Board – 4th July 2023

The meeting closed at 8.46pm.

Meeting Decisions
Ian Wiggins was elected as Chair of Governors.
Martyn Sibley was elected as Vice Chair.
Trustees agreed the School Resource Management Self-assessment for submission to the DfE
Ian Wiggins was re-appointed as a trustee for a term of four years.
Trustees approved the Governor, Chair and Vice Chair appointments.
Trustees approved the previous meeting minutes.
Trustees approved the following policies: Accessibility Policy SEND Policy Complaints Policy Support Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy Bereavement Guidelines

14th March 2023

Item	By	Action	Date
13.9	Chair, CFO, CEO	Agree how to engage with Heads and LGBs in the discussion around a move to reserves pooling.	March 2023

Approved at Trust Board on 16 May 2023

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Trust Board Approval