

South Bank Multi Academy Trust

Trust Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 4th December 2023 1pm held at Woodthorpe Primary School

Present:	Donna Smith	Trustee
	Pat Boyle	Trustee
	Gemma Lowe	Trustee
	Bethan Ellis	Trustee
	Natalie Wong	Trustee
In attendance:	Mark Hassack	Chief Executive Officer
	Michael Gidley	Chief Finance Officer
	Zoe French	Executive Officer
	Katie Dent	Director of HR
	Sophie Triffitt	Clerk to the Board of Trustees

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 In the absence of the Chair Donna Smith chaired the meeting.
- 1.2 The CFO joined the meeting virtually.
- 1.3 Ms Smith 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 Ian Wiggins, Rob Bennett, Martyn Sibley, David O'Brien and Frankie Haynes.

Declarations of Interest

- 2.2 Trustees were reminded to keep their business interest submissions up to date throughout the year.

3 FINANCE UPDATE / FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT (previously issued)

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (previously issued)

- 3.1 It was reported that the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee had reviewed the accounts and were recommending them for Trust Board approval.
- 3.2 The CFO reported that the accounts reported a £146k overall deficit for the year which includes a £92k revenue contribution to capital so the revenue operating deficit for the year

was £54k which the auditors reported, to the FAR Committee, was close to a break-even position.

AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT (previously issued)

- 3.3 It was noted that the auditors were satisfied with the audit findings as reported to the FAR Committee.
- 3.4 The CFO informed trustees that a final auditors report will be added to Decision Time as irregularity items that no longer feature were incorrectly copied to this year's report.
- 3.5 The CFO confirmed that the Chair of Trustees has the correct copy from the auditors for signing.
- 3.6 A member of the FAR Committee reported that the auditors had no concerns to report regarding going concerns. There were some management actions within the audit which were small given the size of the MAT and FAR Committee had recorded thanks to the CFO and his team.

ANALYTICS REPORT (previously issued)

- 3.7 Trustees noted the analytics report that had been reviewed at the FAR Committee.

LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION (previously issued)

- 3.8 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the annual accounts, audit report, and agreed for the Chair of Trustees to sign the letters of representation and CEO to sign the regularity letter.

4 SEND AND SAFEGUARDING UPDATE (previously issued)

- 4.1 **SEND:** The CEO explained that the SEND Report provides current context across the Trust and details of the Trust CPD programme to support provision for SEND.
- 4.2 A Trustee asked where the SEND information sat as part of the journey for SEND. The CEO explained that the Director of SEND and Safeguarding had developed trust wide reporting and context information and is developing school specific provision to across Trust provision. The checkpoint one data at the end of term will provide a marker of how SEND children are progressing but it is early in the long term SEND plan. The data also provides like for like accurate monitoring across the schools.
- 4.3 **Inspire:** The CEO reported that the Inspire provision had opened to pupils on 27th November 2023 and gave an anecdotal example of the benefit the provision had on a particularly challenging pupil. Registration as a standalone provision will be submitted early in the Spring 2024 term.
- 4.4 A Trustee asked how reintegration was working. The CEO reported that the provision leader has confirmed that reintegration is going ok but with the most challenging children moving back in to mainstream there will understandably be some wobbles. Reintegration included close tracking and monitoring of the impact and checking transition is long enough and phased appropriately.
- 4.5 A Trustee noted that the parent survey was very promising.

- 4.6 The CEO reported that there had been three suspensions since September 2023 (children who were previously getting a significant number of suspensions) and the provision leader felt two would have been avoidable if not based in the portacabins.
- 4.7 The CEO explained that longer term there is a need to ensure the provision is teaching for the next destination and post 16.
- 4.8 A Trustee asked if the schools were seeing value in the provision. The CEO confirmed there had been a marked difference. The impact to York High School had been slower than they would like due to the restriction on numbers while building works were completed. Now works were complete all students planned to go in will be transitioned over the next few weeks.
- 4.9 **Safeguarding:** A Trustee asked if there had been an increase in reporting. The CEO explained that work had been to standardise reporting and refine categories including the inclusion of 'unkind behaviour' to differentiate between bullying and unkind behaviour and identify and pre-empt potential future bullying. The CEO noted that when there is work to raise awareness this tends to result in increased reporting.
- 4.10 The Executive Officer noted that the report for the same period last year had 403 incidents compared to 330 this year. The CEO noted that a comparison would not be accurate given the development of categories but was confident that the extensive training and new categories meant the data was as accurate as it could be.
- 4.11 A Trustee asked if the work of the Director of SEND and Safeguarding is communicated to LGBs. The CEO informed trustees that the Director of SEND and Safeguarding delivered a governor briefing to talk about these elements and local contextualised information and the ongoing work should be communicated through Headteachers.

5 CEO UPDATE (tabled)

- 5.1 The CEO presented his CEO Report and highlighted attendance, a significant risk area, which was reporting improvements from the work done across the Trust. The CEO noted that whilst there is still work to do the secondary data have reported some significant improvements.
- 5.2 The CEO made trustees aware of quality conversations taking place around attendance at York High School which demonstrated in depth knowledge of each child and individual actions.
- 5.3 The CEO explained that school improvement work at Millthorpe focused on personal development, behaviour and curriculum. There was a spike in suspensions which has reduced now the behaviour expectations and systems are embedded and behaviour and low-level disruption are improved. The SEND provision is now curriculum focused to support the pupils and their progression, robust curriculum is in place across all subjects and there is a robust personal development offer in place.
- 5.4 The Woodthorpe school improvement work has progressed very well and await their Ofsted.

- 5.5 The first two South Bank Reviews were completed for Science and RE and the Director of School Improvement has done a done great job with subject Heads / Leads with a developmental focus. The CEO provided the subject review reports and confirmed that each school has an individual report which will in time go to LGBs to support them in their questioning.
- 5.6 The CEO asked trustee views on how the Trust should respond to recent community challenge noting the concerns raised at a recent public meeting included that the Trust don't give reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, unhappiness about the joint LGB governance arrangements, Trust policy to arrange settlements with non-disclosure agreements, not recruiting for Head of School posts externally and that vulnerable pupils and families are poorly served. The local MP has also stated that she would be raising concerns about the Trust in Parliament.
- 5.7 The CEO felt that significant improvements for SEND provision had been made over the last year and reasonable adjustments are regularly made.
- 5.8 The CEO confirmed that the Trust do respond to questions, just not in a public forum and the process for raising concerns and complaints are published and established.
- 5.9 The CEO informed trustees that his CEO peers are supportive and feel that South Bank MAT are not operating unlike other MATs would and other CEOs would implement the same actions.
- 5.10 A Trustee noted that professional mediation would ask what the expectations and desired outcome were and questioned if there was a clear view on this from this group of parents beyond wanting a public meeting.
- 5.11 A Trustee felt that a public meeting was not an outcome or an appropriate forum and questioned the benefit of the MP raising this in parliament.
- 5.12 A Trustee questioned if some form of mediation forum / working group would be appropriate to understand what they are trying to get as an outcome.
- 5.13 A Trustee asked if there had been an impact on the children. The CEO did not think so but noted it was having an impact on some staff who feel the constant challenge / raising of concerns is unfair, damaging and inaccurate.
- 5.14 A Trustee asked the view of the previous interim Trust Principal. The CEO reported that he feels the concerns are inaccurate, the Trust have provided answers and there is lots of incorrect information out there and confusion over how MATs work.
- 5.15 A Trustee asked how the CEO and central team are. The CEO explained that there is frustration that there is more interesting work they could spend their time on for the benefit of the children's experience across the Trust when it feels there will never be a satisfactory resolution.
- 5.16 A Trustee asked what advice there had been from Impact. The CEO explained that their advice was to take a firmer stance and clearly state governance in a MAT and reiterate the appropriate channels to raise concerns.

- 5.17 A Trustee asked how much good news that trustees see is shared publicly on social media / in school newsletters. The CEO explained that there had been an approach to balance messaging between school and MAT focus and Impact think there is a nervousness from Headteachers around sharing good news in the Press given the negative focus in the Press. A Trustee suggested building in some Trust communication into school newsletters.
- 5.18 Trustees discussed the options for response and agreed for the Trust to issue a clear and concise response in the interim and revisit at the 29th January 2024 meeting.
- 5.19 **Action:** CEO to draft a communication in response to community concerns and circulate to trustees for input.
- 5.20 A Trustee asked how Ms Mitchell was being supported. The CEO assured trustees that Ms Mitchell has support within the Trust and received a communication from a parent who signed the letter to say that whilst they didn't agree that an internal process was appropriate, they gave her their full support.
- 5.21 The CEO noted that he is accountable to the Regional Director, and they have confirmed they are comfortable with the work being done in the Trust.
- 5.22 The CFO left the meeting at 2.20pm.
- 5.23 Governors took the opportunity to take a learning walk with Mr McGann and Ms Mitchell.

6 PAY PROGRESSION REPORT / LEADER PAY RECOMMENDATION (previously issued)

- 6.1 The Director of HR presented the summary of teacher progression across the Trust noting that there were no refusals for pay progression.
- 6.2 Policies put forward for approval proposed to decouple pay progression and performance which was well received by the unions.
- 6.3 The CEO noted that no Headteacher scales had been adjusted but two more salaries in the Trust will go above £100k.
- 6.4 The CEO and Director of HR have mapped leadership across the Trust as preliminary work to define the long term pay and leadership structure across the Trust.
- 6.5 In response to a Trustee the CEO confirmed that high leadership scales were a legacy.
- 6.6 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the pay progression recommendations in appendix 1.

7 OUTCOME OF REDUCTION IN PAN CONSULTATION – SCARCROFT (previously issued)

- 7.1 The Executive Officer reported that no comments had been submitted on the consultation.
- 7.2 It was confirmed that the reduction in Scarcroft PAN to 45 was approved at Trust Board subject to the consultation and will be implemented from admission 2025/26.

8 LGB BUSINESS

Matters from LGB

- 8.1 The CEO informed trustees that following feedback from governors a termly drop in for LGBs to connect with the central team, and open to trustees, will be implemented.

LGB Appointments and Resignations (previously issued)

- 8.2 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the governor and Chair appointments.

9 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (previously issued)

- 9.1 The minutes of the 9th October 2023 meeting were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and approved.

Matters Arising and Action Plan

- 9.2 The action plan was updated.
- 9.3 It was noted that the Trust Board no longer had interim governance responsibility of Scarcroft now that joint LGB arrangements were in place for Scarcroft and Woodthorpe.

10 POLICIES

SEND Policy (previously issued)

- 10.1 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the SEND Policy.

SEND Report

- 10.2 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the SEND Report for publishing.

Pay Policy

- 10.3 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Pay Policy.

Staff Appraisal Policy

- 10.4 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Staff Appraisal Policy.

Admissions Policy

- 10.5 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Admissions Policy.

Estates Policy

- 10.6 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Estates Policy.

Health and Safety Policy

- 10.7 **Resolution:** Trustees approved the Health and Safety Policy.

- 10.8 The CEO reported that all policies were properly consulted with Heads and unions where appropriate / necessary.

- 10.9 The CEO suggested including the policy dashboard on the next agenda for trustee information.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 The Director of HR and Executive Officer left the meeting at 3.11pm.

11.2 The CEO tabled a pay progression recommendation for the Director of HR and CFO.

11.3 **Resolution:** Trustees agreed and approved the salary proposals.

12 POST MEETING LEARNING WALK

12.1 During the meeting trustees went on a learning walk around Woodthorpe Primary School.

13 FUTURE MEETING DATES (previously issued)

Trust Board

Monday 29th January 9.30am - Scarcroft

Monday 11th March 1pm - York High

Monday 20th May 9.30am - Knavesmire

Monday 1st July 1pm - Carr Junior

The meeting closed at 3.18pm.

Meeting Decisions
Trustees approved the annual accounts, audit report, and agreed for the Chair of Trustees to sign the letters of representation and CEO to sign the regularity letter.
Trustees approved the pay progression recommendations in appendix 1
Trustees approved the salary proposal for the Director of HR and CFO
Trustees approved the governor appointments.
Trustees approved the 9 th October 2023 meeting minutes.
Trustees approved the following policies: SEND Policy SEND Report Pay Policy Staff Appraisal Policy Admissions Policy Estates Policy Health and Safety Policy

18th July 2023

Item	By	Action	Date
4.13	Clerk / EO	Clerk to liaise with the Executive Officer to develop a skeleton agenda / schedule of business. <i>Clerk sent Executive Officer with a skeleton agenda.</i>	Sep 2023
1.2 Conf	Chair	Develop a CEO performance and pay review framework and process for 2023/24. <i>9/10/23: To be included on the December meeting. 04/12/23: Carried over to the January meeting.</i>	Autumn 2023

9th October 2023

Item	By	Action	Date
3.16	CEO	Circulate additional reading material on attendance.	Oct 2023
4.8	Dir S&S	Run a SEND session for trustees and governors.	Autumn 2023
6.12	Rob Bennett	Develop a governance review working party and identify an external body / consultant to provide an external view.	Autumn 2023
9.2	Chair	Write to Chairs of Governors to ask for any potential governor representatives for committees.	Oct 2023
10.1	CEO	Run a trust data system information session for governors after checkpoint 1 data is submitted. <i>04/12/23: Will be scheduled in January 2024 after checkpoint 1.</i>	Jan 2024

4th December 2023

Item	By	Action	Date
5.19	CEO	Draft a communication in response to community concerns and circulate to trustees for input.	Dec 2023

Approved at Trust Board on 29th January 2024.

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Trust Board Approval