

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SAMWORTH CHURCH ACADEMY GOVERNING BODY HELD VIA CONFERENCE/VIDEO CALL ON TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2020 AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Nick Linney (NL) (Chair), Val Leivers (VL), Jane Lewis (JL), Lisa McVeigh (LM), Caroline Whitty (CW), Joanna Hall (JH), Jo Yardley (JY) and Craig Jones (CJ)

IN ATTENDANCE: Donna Barnes (DB) (Clerk), Chris Vallance (CV) Director of Student Experience, Chris Bury (CB) Kieran Walker (KW) and Millie Johnson (MJ).

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received from Michael Arlington (MA) and Stephen Garner (SG).

NL welcomed new parent governors JY and CJ to the meeting.
NL suggested inviting a parent to future meetings that would be selected at random. Governors were asked to consider to revisit at the next meeting.
OUTSTANDING as Parent attendance at GB mtgs - Governors.

NL advised that ML had resigned and noted a grateful thanks for his service on the governing body.

2. **Prayer:** JL opened the meeting with a prayer.
3. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** None.
4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** held on 7th October 2020 were accepted as a true record and were signed by DB on behalf of NL.
5. **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING:**

(a) **Governor School Visit:** LM confirmed that she remains in contact but due to the current situation, the proposed visit remains on hold. **OUTSTANDING LM.**

(b) **Project Portrush:** Governors deemed this item to be confidential.

CVA joined the meeting at 3.25pm.

(c) **Staff Pay:** Governors deemed this item to be confidential.

Chris Bury joined the meeting at 4pm.

(d) **Student Leadership, Development and Voice:** LM introduced Chris Bury to the meeting following his recent appointment to support student leadership at the Academy. Chris shared some insight into the work he has been doing with the student leaders and how he intends to develop this using the updated student leadership document that was shared with governors. KW and MJ raised an issue with not being able to email other students and it was requested that Chris fix this immediately. LM confirmed that regular updates will be shared as a standard item at future meetings. CW offered her support to help with the project.

Chris Bury left the meeting at 4.10pm.

OUTSTANDINGS (In Minutes order)

14/05/19	Governor School Visit LM
22/07/19	Project Portrush LM
13/05/20	SCAOT Structure and Funds MA/CW
14/07/20	Professional Fundraising CW/LM
14/07/20	IT Action LM
14/07/20	Finance Review (Due Jun 21) LM
08/12/20	Parent attendance at GB mtgs Governors
08/12/20	Share GKIT report LM
08/12/20	Early career framework CW/LM
08/12/20	Healthy Eating mtg and proposal NL/LM

CONCLUDED
Are listed on the last sheet
(In alphabetical order)

VL complimented CB on being the right person for the job and referred to recommendations from Zarina to look at online safety which she suggested could be an area of focus for the student leaders. MJ referred to wellbeing support and an interest in improving this by helping to signpost students to services they may not be aware of such as the peer mentor system. A discussion followed on the impact of surveys and low number of returns. It was agreed that they are more likely to be successful if feedback is shared to the right areas and acted upon. NL referred to developing leadership to a broader number of students and model at used at Gordonstoun which includes regular meetings with the Principal. LM agreed to highlight and discuss the work needed with Chris and that this would be a big focus this year. JL suggested that St Michael's Church of England School, who have a similar, student body to the Academy, may be worth contacting as their student leadership is exceptional. All agreed it was a complex problem and NL highlighted the need for strong leadership from LM and the executive team for this to change. LM and CV concluded that they were confident and happy to commit to making this happen. **CONCLUDED LM**

- (e) **SCAOT Structure and Funds:** NL provided a summary of the work taking place as a result of joining the MAT to establish the Opportunity Trust as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and how the funds are separate from the MAT and ringfenced for use only to the benefit of students at the Academy in line with the sponsors original concept. NL and CW confirmed that this work is close to conclusion and final sign off. **OUTSTANDING MA/CW.**
- (f) **Management Accounts:** **CONCLUDED.**
- (g) **Professional Fundraising:** LM reported that this remained work in progress and hopes to provide an update at or before the governors meeting in March. **OUTSTANDING CW/LM.**
- (h) **IT Action:** LM provided detail in relation to a Cap Ex proposal presented to governors for improvements to IT, including an update to the Wi-Fi. CW referred to the original plans for the system to be 'switchable' and questioned if the plans to upgrade had considered any potential health concerns. LM agreed to explore and find out what measures may need to be taken. **OUTSTANDING LM.**
- (i) **Finance Review:** LM confirmed that this action remains ongoing with a view to address concerns around finance capacity and absence management. Further review will be undertaken upon the return of the Finance Manager. **OUTSTANDING LM.**
- (j) **Covid Governance:** NL highlighted the difficulty of being able to monitor what is happening in school with the current situation and inability to visit in person. It was agreed to keep this under review if visits are not able to return to normality soon. It was recognised that there have been positive changes as a result of the situation, such as the move to year group leadership and monitoring. LM reassured governors that opportunities will not be lost and many of the positives will be retained when more normal practice is resumed and that many of the changes have become routine practice. CV identified some of the successful changes that are likely to be kept such as online tutoring online. VL referred to the positive comments received from parents and their appreciation for the level of work that is taking place. LM shared a proposal for monitoring the impact of Covid, most of which had already been actioned and governors were fully supportive of the proposal. **CONCLUDED.**
- (k) **Opportunity Trust Experiences and Insurance Quotes:** DB confirmed this work is underway and that some experiences will be ready to use in January at Founders' Day. CW confirmed that she had also discussed marketing of the trust with the MAT PR person. DB/CW are also in the process of securing insurance following agreement at the recent trust meeting. **CONCLUDED.**

6. **LEGAL MATTERS:** LM confirmed the two claims mentioned previously remain ongoing through the Academy insurers.
7. **SIGNING & SEALING:** None.
8. **MAJOR TOPICS:**
 - (a) **Mark 2 Budget:** LM referred to the management accounts for October and an update to the forecast, following a proposed Mark 2 budget which presents a £4,643 surplus. LM referred to the commentary document and explained the changes made since the approval of the original budget. NL proposed to adopt the Mark 2 budget with in years savings to be sought where possible, this was supported by the remaining governors in attendance.
9. **FINANCE REPORT:**
 - (a) **Financial Statistics** – NL queried the cash at the bank figure as this is no longer provided in the monthly report. LM reassured governors that opportunities to increase the in-year surplus will be taken and referred to overstaffing that will be managed throughout the year.
 - (b) **Cash Flow** – As per management accounts and above.
 - (c) **Capital Expenditure Requests and Pending** – Discussed under item 5(h).
10. **STANDARD ITEMS:**
 - (a) **Principal's Report:** As per the Principal's report for October. LM reported that attendance is good for students and staff with sixth form being above national average. A flexible approach to absence continues due to current circumstances and required periods of isolation. Recruitment is ongoing for vacancies in science and English. There is one long term sickness absence.
 - (b) **Student Leadership and Development:** Discussed under item 5(d).
 - (c) **People, Achievement & Standards Advisory Group Report:** VL referred to the PASAG dashboard and meeting notes of the 25th November. CV referred to the Year 11 achievement data for the autumn 1 half term and advised that additional data will be available after the Christmas break. He explained how the centre assessed grading process worked for the benefit of new governors. The progress 8 prediction should be more accurate than it has been in the past following changes to the process and how this helps to inform the intervention process. Catch up funding information is available on the website which explains how the funding is being spent. The year 11 average attendance has improved, along with behaviour and the year group are embracing the challenges, interventions and opportunities. The predicted progress 8 figure is still not where it should be. NL asked what else should be done to improve this figure. CV responded that plans are underway to evidence centre assessed grades if this becomes necessary. One to one provision is challenging as a result of all schools securing these services which has created a shortage, but some creative solutions are being sought.

VL referred to the quality assurance work that is taking place for teaching and learning. KW commented on the support he has experienced and found beneficial in year 13 in terms of revision and motivation. MS added that lessons continued through lockdown and felt nothing had changed regarding teaching and that she was progressing. KW is aware friends in other schools are frustrated with a lack of support to help them catch up and that they do not seem to be doing as well.

MS left the meeting at 6pm.

JL referred to the recent GKIT feedback and positive comments about the way the curriculum is developing. Zarina suggested using deep dives as a developmental exercise for themselves. LM to share the report with all governors. VL Pleased seem to be moving in the right direction. JL Impact of curriculum will take time continue to be rigorous around expectations and delivery. JH right CPD to support subject leaders and all staff held to account. **OUTSTANDING Share GKIT report LM.**

VL commented that CV has contributed to an article in teach secondary magazine. NL praised and added that it was a continuing journey with more work to do and he is keen to see the improvements. CV added that year 13 attendance is outstanding and was positive about their engagement which is a credit to the students.

The NQT Policy was proposed by VL and approved by all governors.
VL noted that the Children with Medical Needs Policy remains outstanding.

- (d) **Link Governors Reports:** CW commented on a new early career framework which is in pipeline and asked how the Academy were prepared. CW to share information with LM by email for her to respond with governors copied in and revisit at a future meeting if required. CW also queried information sessions where governors could be brought up to speed and if these could take place periodically. **OUTSTANDING as Early career framework CW/LM.**
- (e) **Opportunity Trust Performance:** Discussed under item 5(e).
- (f) **Christian Distinctiveness:** JL provided an update and commented on the supported provided by the Chaplain.

JL lost connection at 6.15pm.

LM continued to update on the work taking place and regular collective worship.

- (g) **Healthy Eating:** NL/LM agreed to organise a meeting with a contact. LM reported that a few members of staff are excited about being involved with a project. NL suggested that the proposal previously shared by TG be updated by the next governing body meeting. **OUTSTANDING as Healthy Eating mtg and proposal NL/LM.**

CV left the meeting at 6.20pm.

- 11. **MATTERS FOR THIS MEETING:** None.
- 12. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS:** Discussions about Portrush in item 5c and Staff Pay in 5d were considered confidential.
- 13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ MINOR TOPICS:** NL referred to recent email discussions around the clarify of the Academy's specialism and what it means. Part of this reasoning is to understand how the opportunity trust can support. NL suggested that CW/NL/LM revisit this to share with all governors.

JL re-joined the meeting at 6.26pm.

JL concluded updating governors on Christian Distinctiveness with mention of thought for the week, daily prayer, faith at home, the remembrance service and many other positive things

happening during this difficult time. JH complimented on the remembrance service as she was visited the Academy on the day.

NL thanked KW for his attendance at the meeting and reminded of the need to maintain confidentiality.

14. **DATE, VENUE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**
Tuesday 12th January at 1.00pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Tuesday 23rd March at 3.00pm

Wednesday 19th May at 11.00am

Tuesday 13th July at 3.00pm

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.