

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SAMWORTH CHURCH ACADEMY
GOVERNING BODY HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON
TUESDAY 7th DECEMBER AT 3.00 PM**

PRESENT: Nick Linney (NL) (Chair), Jane Lewis (JL), Lisa McVeigh (LM), Val Leivers (VL), Caroline Whitty (CW) Joanna Hall (JH), Jo Yardley (JY), Stephen Garner (SG) and Sharon Bassett (SB).

IN ATTENDANCE: Donna Barnes (DB) (Clerk), Ellie Slack (ES), David Broomhead (DBR) and Chris Bury (CB).
Guardian Team Leaders: Molly Greasby (MG) and Ashleigh Adams (AA).

- 1. Talk with Governors:** Melanie Humphries, a year 11 parent selected at random, was in attendance for this item of the agenda. Melanie was invited to ask questions, the issues raised and discussed included; the academy's decision to keep the staggered day in place, school uniform such as trousers and jewellery, PE kit and lack of positive communication with parents. LM provided a brief response to each issue and agreed to consider and provide a more detailed response after the meeting to governors and Melanie (agreed within 2 weeks). DBR responded to the issue of positive communication with parents and explained about the introduction of Satchel One, which is an app used to share positive feedback with parents, in addition to any sanctions or negative comments. NL thanked Melanie for her attendance and contribution to the meeting and assured her that all feedback and comments will be taken on board. **OUTSTANDING Talk with Governors response (Due 21/12/21) - LM.**

Melanie Humphries left the meeting at 3.27pm.

- 2. Prayer:** JL opened the meeting with a prayer.

SB introduced herself as the new staff governor and described her role at the Academy, as Educational Welfare Officer.

- 3. Apologies for Absence:** Apologies were received from Michael Arlington (MA). Caroline Whitty (CW) provided apologies in advance for any intermittent/lost connection due to travel. No apologies were received from Craig Jones (CJ) who was absent from the meeting. **OUTSTANDING Contact CJ re meeting attendance - NL.**

- 4. Declaration of Interest:** None.

11.

- (b) Student Leadership and Development:** Chris Bury was in attendance for this item of the agenda, it was therefore brought forward to allow him to leave once concluded. Chris Bury reported that the student share team has grown following the appointment of four student share representatives in each year group 7-10 with student leaders in Years 11 and Sixth Form overseeing weekly meetings. Guardian Team Leaders agreed that new appointments are a good addition to student share and a good way to get feedback and involvement from younger year groups. A date is still pending from Gordonstoun for a virtual meeting to link with them on student leadership. Year 8 duty students are in place and a sense of pride has been observed when carrying out their role on student reception. Other areas of progress include the LGBTQ group, eco group and anti-bullying group, as well as the recent success seen at the Children in Need event.

OUTSTANDINGS (In date order)	
14/05/19	Governor School Visit LM
13/05/20	SCAOT Structure and Funds MA/CW
12/01/21	Heatherdene Management LM
19/05/21	Fundraising/Alumni CW/LM
13/07/21	Cap Ex on horizon ES/LM
13/07/21	Early Career Framework Update (Due Oct 2022) LM/CB
13/07/21	Teams user friendly issues DB/NL
13/10/21	Code of Conduct NL
07/12/21	Talk with Governors response (Due 21/12/21) LM
07/12/21	Contact CJ re meeting attendance NL
07/12/21	Heatherdene Condition (Due 31 Mar) LM
07/12/21	Governor Training/NGA membership and skills audit NL
07/12/21	Update finance section of agenda DB
CONCLUDED Are listed on the last sheet (In alphabetical order)	

CB left the meeting at 3.410pm

5. **FINANCE REPORT:**

- (a) **Financial Statistics** – ES talked governors through the finance summary section of the November dashboard.
 - (b) **Cash Flow** – Overall spending is as expected at this time in the year with no concerns.
 - (c) **Capital Expenditure Requests and Pending** – None.
- ES was thanked for her attendance and presentation of the information.

ES left the meeting at 3.46pm.

6. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** held on 13th October 2021 were accepted as a true record and were signed by DB on behalf of NL.

7. **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING:**

- (a) **Governor School Visit:** LM advised this will happen as soon as possible. **OUTSTANDING LM.**

CW left the meeting at 3.49pm.

- (b) **SCAOT Structure and Funds:** NL updated in the absence of CW and advised the process to obtain Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status for the Trust, is continuing to move in the right direction. **OUTSTANDING MA/CW.**
- (c) **Heatherdene Management:** LM reported that regular visits have been implemented and progress is being made with regards to the works discussed previously. LM confirmed other discussions about the provision continue to take place. A timeframe was discussed for completion of the works, it was agreed they would be resolved by the end of March with the facility matching the ethos of the main building. The outstanding items are two separate issues management and condition. NL suggested governors visit Heatherdene at some point in the future. **OUTSTANDING LM and additional action Heatherdene Condition LM.**
- (d) **Opportunity Trust Annual Report:** It was discussed and agreed that the outstanding should sit with the Opportunity Trust and LM will provide a report by the end of December which can be shared with the original sponsors. **CONCLUDED.**
- (e) **Fundraising/Alumni:** LM thanked CW for organising the meeting which took place on 28th October and provided an update. Lots of ideas were shared and discussed and those who attended agreed to plan a first fundraising event to take place during the spring term. **OUTSTANDING CW/LM.**
- (f) **Cap Ex on horizon:** NL to contact ES to discuss. **OUTSTANDING ES/LM.**
- (g) **Early Career Framework Update:** The Academy continues to deliver sessions in collaboration with other secondary schools in the MAT. **OUTSTANDING LM/CB.**
- (h) **Teams user friendly issues:** Work continues to take place on improving the friendliness of systems. NL commented on issues experienced when switching accounts by those with more than one Office 365 account. DB to edit settings so governors can't edit documents. **OUTSTANDING DB/NL.**
- (i) **Code of Conduct:** NL is pending a discussion with Chris Moodie and will report back once this has happened. **OUTSTANDING NL.**

(j) **PR of SCAOT at Awards Evening:** The event has been postponed to 10th March due to the current Covid situation. Governors agreed it is a 'business as usual' item and can be concluded. **CONCLUDED.**

(k) **SNMAT Governor Training:** LM referred to the recent Headteacher/Governor Forum where local governing bodies were encouraged to use NGA membership which would be available at a discount through SNMAT who would purchase on behalf of the schools in the trust. JH explained what the membership offers, and that NGA are an independent organisation who provide advice, guidance and training. NL expressed concerns with the process and skills audit that had been shared. JL referred to some of the other matters discussed at the forum which included:

- termly on-line meetings for governors to meet together;
- publish terms of reference, making it clear what the roles of Chair and Vice Chair are to better support succession planning;
- establish a governance focus group so that MAT staff can listen to governors concerns;
- publish a termly governance newsletter;
- hold review meetings with governing bodies to enable sharing of good practice, issues/concerns re governance, review capacity etc;
- relaunch the programme whereby representative governors attend MAT Board of Director meetings. These would not be the same governors every time and would, over time, represent each academy.

Concerns were shared about additional workload this might create for governors. JH clarified some of the priorities are wider ones for the MAT to action rather than for each local governing body to complete. JL suggested involvement from governors would still be required, such as attendance at additional meetings, review meetings, board of director meetings and to be part of processes and respond to different initiatives. NL agreed to discuss with Chris Moodie. **OUTSTANDING Governor Training/NGA membership and skills audit NL.**

8. **LEGAL MATTERS:** None.

9. **SIGNING & SEALING:** None.

10. **MAJOR TOPICS:** None.

11. **STANDARD ITEMS:**

(a) **Principal's Report:** LM referred to the November report. JH has supported work looking to improve attendance and developing the Self Evaluation Form, SEF. DBR explained that attendance is a priority and thanked JH for her support which has helped to make changes and review processes. Action is taken based on categories which includes letters being sent to parents this week. It is anticipated this will create two-way communication with a view to improving attendance where there are concerns. JH confirmed that attendance at the Academy is above the national average and the rigour being put into place is impressive. VL is also meeting DBR this week to discuss work taking place. SB expressed that she was pleased to see attendance as a whole school focus. The reliability of statistics and impact of Covid was discussed. LM confirmed that the aspiration is for all students to achieve 95% attendance and all opportunities are being taken such as training, deep dives, executive team promoting but there is still work to do. Next week there an external audit of the SEN provision taking place. Contact and advice has been sought from the DfE when necessary, regarding new cases of Covid. LM said the advice has been consistent with what has already been implemented with the aim of reducing new cases. All students will be tested again on their return after the holiday and there are no concerns about implementing this. The daily updates continue to be useful to governors in being kept informed and motivating for staff. NL referred to the ongoing positive

work to improve the academic area of focus and the experience of JY and JH who joined the governing body to support this.

- (b) **Student Leadership and Development:** Refer to notes on page one. Governors commented on being pleased with the progress taking place and the benefit to students.
- (c) **Healthy Eating:** LM referred to the recent Y7 and Y9 events where students tasted vegan food and participated in a pop-up market where students sold produce using the skills and knowledge gained from the project day.
- (d) **People, Achievement & Standards Advisory Group Report:** VL reported there had been no meeting since the last governing body meeting.

The following policies were proposed by PASAG following review and were supported by governors:

- Appraisal and People Development Policy
- Coaching and Support Policy and supporting documents.

VL advised that the annual Safeguarding Audit is due to be signed off by the end of autumn term and encouraged all governors to complete their Safeguarding Training on Hays. If governors have problems accessing or completing by the deadline they should contact DB.

- (e) **Opportunity Trust Performance:** It was suggested the item move to the finance section of the agenda in future so that ES can provide an update at each meeting. DB to action. **OUTSTANDING Update Finance Section of Agenda DB**
- (f) **Christian Distinctiveness:** JL reported a meeting is scheduled for later in the week. LM agreed to share critical figure from dashboard with JL in future before it is shared.
- (g) **Link Governors Reports:** NL provided an update on the executive group meeting which he attended last week. DB referred to a gap with link governor for Health and Safety and JY volunteered to fill and be the link for that area.

12. **MATTERS FOR THIS MEETING:** None.

13. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS:** None.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ MINOR TOPICS:** NL referred to the great work, support and positives that come from being part of SNMAT.

15. **DATE, VENUE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

Tuesday 25th January at 11am to include a tour of the academy prior to the meeting at 1pm.

Dates of Future Meetings:

Tuesday 29th March at 3pm

Monday 9th May at 11am

Tuesday 19th July at 3pm

The meeting closed at 5.09pm.