

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SAMWORTH CHURCH ACADEMY GOVERNING BODY HELD VIA CONFERENCE/VIDEO CALL ON TUESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021 AT 1.00 PM

**PRESENT:** Nick Linney (NL) (Chair), 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), Kieran Walker (KW) and Millie  
Johnson (MJ).

1. **Prayer:** JL opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received from Val Leivers (VL),  
Michael Arlington (MA) and Stephen Garner (SG).
3. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** The Articles of Association require that the  
governors shall each year, elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among their  
number. Nick Linney was unanimously elected as Chair and Jane Lewis was  
unanimously elected as Vice-Chair.
4. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** None.
5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
were accepted as a true record and were signed by DB on behalf of NL.
6. **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING:**

- (a) **Governor School Visit:** LM confirmed that due to the current situation, the proposed visit  
remains on hold. **OUTSTANDING LM.**
- (b) **Project Portrush:** Governors deemed this item to be confidential.
- (c) **SCAOT Structure and Funds:** CW confirmed a meeting had taken place with Browne  
Jacobson since the last governing body meeting to continue with the plans to change the  
Opportunity Trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and that this work is close  
to conclusion. **OUTSTANDING MA/CW.**
- (d) **Professional Fundraising:** LM reported that this remained work in progress and an update  
will be shared with governors at the next meeting. **OUTSTANDING CW/LM.**
- (e) **IT Action:** LM referred to the email shared with governors on 6<sup>th</sup> January in response to  
queries raised at the last meeting about the Wi-Fi being 'switchable' and potential health  
concerns. The MAT IT Director confirmed that the system would be switchable and also  
shared his confidence in the proposed systems that will use two frequency bands (2.5 and  
5mhz) both of which have been used for 30 years worldwide with no known side effects.  
Governors were satisfied with this feedback and approved the capital expenditure request  
for IT improvements with associated costs of £25,103. **CONCLUDED.**
- (f) **Finance Review:** The action remains ongoing with a view to addressing concerns around  
finance capacity and absence management. Further review will be undertaken upon the  
return of the Finance Manager. **OUTSTANDING LM.**

## OUTSTANDINGS (In Minutes order)

14/05/19	Governor School Visit <b>LM</b>
13/05/20	SCAOT Structure and Funds <b>MA/CW</b>
14/07/20	Professional Fundraising <b>CW/LM</b>
14/07/20	Finance Review (Due Jun 21) <b>LM</b>
08/12/20	Parent attendance at GB mtgs <b>NL/JY</b>
08/12/20	Glide Path to ECF <b>CW/LM</b>
12/01/21	Heatherdene PR <b>LM</b>
12/01/21	Share strategies for Emergency Plan and Risk Management docs <b>LM</b>
12/01/21	Cameras <b>LM</b>
12/01/21	Exec member at Governor mtgs <b>LM</b>
12/01/21	Trust Annual Report <b>CW</b>

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

- (g) **Parent Attendance at GB Meetings:** JY suggested that both parent governor emails could be shared as a first point of contact with parents to feedback into the meetings. NL suggested a slot on future agendas would be preferable and give greater transparency. Further feedback or suggestions on this to be shared with NL/JY so that together they can agree a proposal for this item. **OUTSTANDING NL/JY.**
- (h) **Early Career Framework:** LM confirmed that she had liaised with CW since the last meeting and that Carl Bennett is responsible for oversight of this area and is aware of the changes. It was agreed that regular updates will be shared with governors at future meetings. **OUTSTANDING updated to Glide Path to ECF LM/CW.**
- (i) **Healthy Eating Meeting and Proposal:** The aspiration to be an exemplar school in this area was discussed and how the Welbeck Estate may be able to assist with this. JH shared positive feedback about their courses and queried how this would be financed. NL suggested there may be a possibility of some assistance. NL and LM to meet with the School of Artisan Food to explore and develop a proposal. Governors will be updated regularly in future under the standard item on the agenda. **CONCLUDED.**

JH gave apologies and left the meeting at 1.55pm.

- 7. **LEGAL MATTERS:** DB confirmed the two claims mentioned previously remain ongoing through the Academy insurers and an update will be sought prior to the next meeting.
- 8. **SIGNING & SEALING:** None. The purchase of Heatherdene by the trust was discussed and it was confirmed completion is due to take place this month. LM confirmed the centre is fully staffed and that the situation with Covid may have an impact on the proposal for income. The perception of the facility was discussed, it was suggested a proposal from the executive team on how this could be improved with input from CW, MJ and KW. **OUTSTANDING as Heatherdene PR LM.**
- 9. **MAJOR TOPICS:** None
- 10. **FINANCE REPORT:**
  - (a) **Financial Statistics** – As per December dashboard. LM confirmed that a claim will be made for any eligible Covid expenditure such as testing and free school meals. It was noted that the bank balance is now included on the additional information section of the Principal's report. CW to prompt MA to fix the outstanding Opportunity Trust funds.
  - (b) **Cash Flow** – As per management accounts and above.
  - (c) **Capital Expenditure Requests and Pending** – The IT request (£25,103) was discussed and approved under item 6(e).
- 11. **STANDARD ITEMS:**
  - (a) **Principal's Report:** As per the Principal's report for December. LM provided an update on the current situation following the lockdown announcement. There are approximately 66 students on the key worker and vulnerable provision register that varies on any given day dependant on individual needs. Heatherdene has remained open. Remote learning is in place with students in Year 7 to 11 receiving 15 hours of lessons per week with a further 10 hours work provided using Show My Homework. There have been teething issues and the team are being creative in resolving these and keeping processes under continuous review. Sixth form students are receiving their normal timetabled lessons via Teams and additional work using Show My

Homework. The DfE announced recently that schools could choose to continue with January BTEC exams or cancel them. A decision was made the executive team to cancel them. Exams have been delayed by one week and the practicalities of setting remote assessments is being planned. The summer public exams have been cancelled. Mocks will help to keep students motivated and may be used to inform centre assessed grades.

MJ and KW commented on remote learning so far and their own positive experiences. CW referred to the possibility of exam boards setting tests to be moderated by schools to give a standardised approach.

LM reported that wellbeing checks are in place and this may include home visits if there is no engagement at all. A lengthy discussion around the use of cameras during online lessons took place, including benefit of checking wellbeing of students and some of the barriers that may prevent such as lack of equipment. LM will clarify and communicate expectations for use of cameras. It was noted that over 100 devices have been delivered and additional equipment such as headphones and webcams have been ordered. CJ shared some positive feedback from his own experience of remote learning. **Outstanding Cameras LM**

CW queried any updates to the National Tutoring Programme. LM advised that the Academy unfortunately had not been matched and there was a lack of tutors available.

LM advised that the testing centre is up and running and that approximately 100 lateral flow tests have been done so far all of which have been negative. Staff have moved mountains in the last week and have been very flexible, students have also been fantastic during the process. JL expressed thanks and appreciated to staff for all their efforts. NL echoed this and said he was encouraged by the actions taking place and positive feedback. NL stated that the Principal's report for the previous month must be available for future governing body meetings.

- (b) **Student Leadership and Development:** It was agreed this is on hold due to the current situation and students not attending school.
- (c) **Healthy Eating:** Discussed under 6(i).
- (d) **People, Achievement & Standards Advisory Group Report:** DB confirmed there has been no meeting since the last governing body meeting and no update from VL in her absence. NL referred to the policies recently circulated by DB and LM was asked to confirm what strategies are in place for the emergency plan and risk management documents. Governors supported the policies. **OUTSTANDING Share strategies for Emergency Plan and Risk Management docs LM**
- (e) **Link Governors Reports:** NL commented that despite governors not being able to visit as they usually would, he felt more in touch now due to frequent contact with LM. Executive team member attendance at the meeting was queried and LM explained the reason for Chris Vallance's absence. It was agreed the person should be rotated at future meetings, DB/LM to action. **Outstanding Exec member at Governor meetings LM**
- (f) **Opportunity Trust Performance:** CW referred to progress being made with publicity of the trust and the suggestion of an annual report which CW will discuss at the next trust meeting. NL referred to a two-page document that LM is producing to share with Sir David, and possibly the Bishop, to report on the trust's performance and how it has benefitted students. CW offered her support. **Outstanding Trust Annual report CW**
- (g) **Christian Distinctiveness:** JL reported there was little to update on since the last meeting. LM shared positive feedback about the Christmas service which had taken place by live link.

12. **MATTERS FOR THIS MEETING:** None.
13. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS:** The discussions about Portrush in item 6(b) and Performance Management under item 14 were considered confidential.
- LM, MJ and KW left the meeting at 3.30pm.
14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ MINOR TOPICS:** Governors deemed this item to be confidential.
15. **DATE, VENUE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 3.00pm

**Dates of Future Meetings:**

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00am

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July at 3.00pm

**The meeting closed at 3.40pm.**