

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SAMWORTH CHURCH ACADEMY GOVERNING BODY HELD VIA CONFERENCE/VIDEO CALL ON WEDNESDAY 7TH OCTOBER 2020 AT 11.00 AM

PRESENT: Nick Linney (NL) (Chair), Val Leivers (VL), Jane Lewis (JL), Lisa McVeigh (LM), Caroline Whitty (CW), Stephen Garner (SG), Michael Longdon (ML) and Joanna Hall (JH)

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received from Michael Arlington (MA), Tiffany Gorski (TG), Jane Lewis (JL) (for part of meeting) and Sam Sykes (SS) (from 11.50am).
2. **Prayer:** JL opened the meeting with a prayer.
3. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** None.

JL left the meeting at 11.05am

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** held on 14th July 2020 were accepted as a true record and were signed by DB on behalf of NL.

NL referred to the recent resignation of TG and thanked her for her contribution during her time on the governing body. Governors approved for DB to proceed with the process for appointing a new staff and parent governor. Post the meeting: NL wanted to thank SS for her contribution and wish her well.

NL welcomed student leaders KW and MJ to the meeting and informed them they form part of the governance at the Academy and that they should feel free to contribute to discussions. They were advised to treat meeting content as confidential and to discuss any matters of concern with LM.

5. **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING:**

- (a) **Community Use:** LM reported that visitors are being kept to a minimum due to Covid restrictions. Once things change the aspiration for community use of facilities is to look at maximising five key areas which should bring in a revenue of approximately £10,000 a year. NL suggested this could now be included and monitored via the dashboard. **CONCLUDED.**
- (b) **Governor School Visit:** Due to the current situation, the proposed visit remains on hold. **OUTSTANDING LM.**
- (c) **Project Portrush:** Governors considered this item to be confidential. **OUTSTANDING LM.**
- (d) **Staff Pay:** LM continues to review staff pay looking at harmonisation and proposed pay awards. It is work in progress and anticipates completion in time for the mark 2 budget for governors to approve. NL provided some context to the issues that have arose as a result of joining the MAT. LM will share a proposal electronically for approval outside of the meeting. **OUTSTANDING NL/LM.**

OUTSTANDINGS (In Minutes order)

14/05/19	Governor School Visit LM
22/07/19	Project Portrush LM
10/12/19	Staff Pay NL/LM
30/03/20	Student Leadership, Development and Voice LM/SS
13/05/20	SCAOT Structure and Funds MA/CW
14/07/20	Management Accounts LM/NL
14/07/20	Professional Fundraising CW/LM
14/07/20	IT Action LM
14/07/20	Finance Review (Due Jun 21) LM
07/10/20	Covid Governance LM
07/10/20	Opportunity Trust Experiences and Quotes DB

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

- (e) **IT Development Group:** LM reported that the group continue to meet and as a result, costings are being explored to invest in hardware for students and to upgrade to Wi-Fi and telephony. A proposal and bid are being developed and will be shared soon. NL asked for the views of KW and MS who responded IT was functional but not as good as it could be with room for development. They both confirmed they form part of the group and will be involved in the future development of this area. **CONCLUDED replaced with IT Action LM.**
- (f) **Student Leadership, Development and Voice:** LM explained that Chris Bury is now involved with supporting students and providing leadership and there are hopes to expand this with his help to lead with Round Square. A proposal has been circulated by email and was supported by all governors. NL talked about the effective use of student leaders at Gordonstoun and other Round Square schools and suggested this is an area that needs further development. CW queried who will drive this and referred to the feedback gathered from the previous student leaders who felt powerless. LM referred to the Christian Ethos approach which was driven by leadership and agreed this is what is required to embed it at the Academy. The agreed new system will now help to drive this, and she is confident that change will be seen. It was agreed the standard agenda item should be changed to 'Student Leadership and Development'. Governors requested that Chris attend for the first 5 minutes of future meetings and the potential for him to visit Gordonstoun. LM agreed that staff need to drive the cultural change and a visit will be planned when possible. SS volunteered to try and set up a meeting with the students from Gordonstoun and student leaders at the academy. CW commented that branding may be useful, but NL suggested that the branding already exists and is the Academy logo and it's the culture that needs to be developed. **OUTSTANDING LM/SS.**

SS left the meeting at 11.50am.

- (g) **Healthy Eating:** LM referred to a potential project working with Samworth Brothers and she has already engaged two other key staff who are keen to get involved. NL suggested utilising other sources available to us to develop health eating.

JL re joined the meeting at 11.55am.

LM advised that the curriculum has been reviewed as mentioned previously and the number of lessons for students has increased. CW praised the work taking place with the kitchen garden. CV confirmed that sixth form students will also be participating in food lessons as part of their curriculum this year. NL asked JH if this was a priority with SNMAT, she stated it wasn't at the moment due to Covid and student attainment being high on the agenda. JH referred to a previous focus on this topic from the local authority and suggested the healthy family team may be a good source to go to.

KW and MJ left the meeting at 12.00.

LM/DB were asked to arrange for KW/MJ to remain for the whole meeting in future.

LM referred to the joint work that the academy has been doing with another secondary and primary school in the MAT. NL agreed the technical delivery may be in place but there remains a lack of passion with delivery. It was suggested that Healthy Eating become a standard agenda item. **CONCLUDED LM.**

- (h) **Covid Impact:** NL shared praise for the work taking place at the Academy since the reopening of schools, and in particular the handling of positive cases. CW asked about the valuable lessons learned and how practices have changed to capture the good elements and what has worked well and would be interested to hear more about this. VL commented on opportunity to focus on behaviour with a fresh start and that more would come on this

under the PASAG item on agenda. NL agreed that without doubt many businesses will be better now than what they were at the start of the year and will have benefitted from rethinking how they work. LM recognised there were opportunities, some came as a result of the staff surveys such as improvements to communication. She also felt that the Academy is far better now than it was before closure and has taken this opportunity to review areas such as meeting structure which have much more of a strategic focus. LM feels optimistic and that to now the risk assessment has proven to be effective and talked through the recent experiences of positive cases and the provision put together at short notice for those students who are learning from home. They have been provided with most of their lessons face to face with the remaining work available on Show my Homework. This was turned around in 24 hours, which LM explained is not easy to do when you don't know which students will be affected in advance. Based on this experience she suggested that the Academy could manage a couple more groups of students in this way if necessary. LM noted that there are likely to be more experiences to come but that she is ready to manage them and is currently preparing specific step by step instructions for the exec team to follow if she is not available. **CONCLUDED.**

- (i) **SCAOT Structure and Funds:** CW provided an update following the trust meeting that had taken place today. She anticipates that a draft document will be ready to share this week following work with a solicitor to continue with the set-up of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). CW explained the key change that has been made to the document is the introduction of members in addition to trustees. CW clarified the difference between a trustee and a member and who the trustees are. The next step will be to make the formal application. CW/MA will present a final draft of the CIO document to trustees at their next meeting. **OUTSTANDING MA/CW.**
 - (j) **Management Accounts:** NL suggested a meeting with SP would be necessary, possibly with another governor to discuss aligning the financial reporting to how the MAT present their data. LM agreed this change would make sense and would save the Academy time in having to prepare a further dashboard and leads to possible discrepancies with data. LM will be involved and feedback on this. **OUTSTANDING updated to LM/NL.**
 - (k) **Professional Fundraising:** LM reported that she had undertaken some preliminary investigations which were quite expensive on a daily rate. LM to pursue further and find out if it would be feasible and what other success they have had with schools and to try to find other companies that operate with no upfront costs. **OUTSTANDING CW/LM.**
 - (l) **Finance Review:** **OUTSTANDING.**
 - (m) **Grievance:** Governors approved the changes to this policy by email. **CONCLUDED.**
 - (n) **Capability Policy:** DB confirmed that the appeals timeframe had been checked and was within guidelines but that there was a proposal to increase the timeframe to submit an appeal from five days to ten. This change was approved by governors. **CONCLUDED.**
 - (o) **Policies:** VL advised that a policy for Children with Additional Health Needs was underway and that the Exclusion Policy had been approved at PASAG and would be on the agenda later for approval. JH confirmed that an NQT policy was also work in progress and that the next step was for LM to review it before submitting for approval. CW asked to look at the NQT policy to for possible input. **CONCLUDED.**
6. **LEGAL MATTERS:** LM confirmed the two claims mentioned previously remain ongoing through the Academy insurers. There was a recent tribunal case which the Academy are waiting to hear of the outcome which is due imminently.

7. **SIGNING & SEALING:** None.

8. **MAJOR TOPICS:**

- a) **Exam Results – Predictions for 2021 and changes needed:** CV provided an update on the recovery plans which are primarily for years 11 and 13 using knowledge from lockdown, prior to and will also take into consideration their mock results which are underway and will help with further assessment. The primary focus of the two inset days which take place before and after half term, will be focussing on the effectiveness of the curriculum. One to one tutoring and small group tutoring is being used to plug any gaps using resources that are already in place with a plan to extend this across other subjects using the government catch up fund to as many students as possible. The government are running a national tutoring service which is based on the level of deprivation and we are eligible to request two tutors through this scheme and plan to implement for science and humanities.

NL asked about the predictions and security of performance for this year. CV responded that he will be in a better position to answer this following the mock exam period and analysis of that data, but he anticipates it to be positive as a result of better behaviour, prior attainment and focus in lessons but will wait until there is more tangible evidence. He explained that the current year 8 will need some targeted resources.

LM explained that CV has Dan Preece supporting him with this process this year focussing on catch up and that he is already making a fantastic contribution and being proactive.

VL thanked CV and his team for the work that had been done on centre assessed grades this year to ensure results in summer were as accurate as possible.

CV confirmed that the tutoring match is due to take place in November but that it is likely the actual tutoring may still take time to kick in. NL referred to operating in unusual times and the need to do all we can and extra steps that may be needed. NL suggested utilising the academic experience on the governing body such as JH, JL and VL. He proposed LM/CV form a Covid body who report and update at each meeting on Covid and the impact on education. CV agreed this would be useful if the purpose was to share good practice and develop what we are doing and not just with a view to scrutinising. LM explained the work Zarina does with the Academy and how this fed into the GKIT meetings with governors. She also explained the recent changes at Magnus and the work they are doing to support another academy that has joined the trust. NL asked if Zarina linked with PASAG and it was proposed that JL, JH and VL view the report from Zarina and go from there with LM to close the gap with GKIT, Zarina and PASAG. **OUTSTANDING Covid Governance LM.**

JH and CV left the meeting at 1.15pm.

9. **FINANCE REPORT:**

- (a) **Financial Statistics** – LM confirmed that the mark two budget is expected for Nov and the proposal for staff pay will also be circulated as agreed.
- (b) **Cash Flow** – As per dashboard and above.
- (c) **Capital Expenditure Requests and Pending** – There are no requests pending.

10. **STANDARD ITEMS:**

- (a) **Principal's Report:** As per the Principal's report for August.

- (b) **6th Form Leadership and Development:** Discussed previously and standing item to be updated to Student Leadership going forward.
- (c) **People, Achievement & Standards Advisory Group Report:** As per the notes of the 23rd September. VL referred again to the improvement with behaviour and some small concerns with specific students. She confirmed it had been useful to rethink and look at the best bits and what needs to change. Attendance has been difficult, it was good when the Academy reopened but has dropped recently due to the time of year. The education welfare officer was able to get out more and build relationships with families which has had a positive effect. The care of vulnerable children has also been amazing and has had a knock-on effect. Staff are working well as a team and she believes it will make a big difference. NL referred to leadership style and the ability to persuade staff to do what is needed which has been evident throughout this period. VL commented on the care of staff and the emphasis of team effort which she believes is one of the best outcomes to come from this year. It was acknowledged that results are still not good enough but are better and staff recognise there is more work to do.
- (d) **Link Governors Reports:** As referred to throughout the meeting.
- (e) **Opportunity Trust Performance:** CW referred to the Academy's unique selling point and asked if this should be promoted and celebrated more through case studies or an alumni. NL referred to the links that exist with staff and their personal experiences. NL suggested DB/NL could help to obtain some personal experiences for the trust. CW also confirmed that she had requested DB obtain some insurance quotes for the trust. **OUTSTANDING Opportunity Trust Experiences and Quotes DB**

CW left meeting at 1.30pm.
- (f) **Christian Distinctiveness:** JL has no concerns and the group have not met since the end of the summer term. JL stated that all the positive things that had been discussed today and what Covid has taught us, the leadership and support are all examples of our Christian Distinctiveness and values in action. LM referred to a phrase heard recently 'when you don't know what to do, do the right thing' which she has found to be very pertinent.

11. **MATTERS FOR THIS MEETING:**

GDPR: JL explained that training is planned for staff and is also a requirement for governors. DB will be sharing a link to two brief videos and asked governors to complete asap.

VL reminded governors to complete their safeguarding training as soon as possible as she would be conducting a safeguarding audit.

Policies: The following policies were reviewed and submitted to the Governing Body for approval:

First Aid
Sex Relationship
Exclusion Policy

All were approved.

- 12. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS:** Discussions about Portrush in item 5c was considered confidential.
- 13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ MINOR TOPICS:** None.

14. **DATE, VENUE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**
Tuesday 8th December at 3.00pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Tuesday 12th January at 1.00pm

Tuesday 23rd March at 3.00pm

Wednesday 19th May at 11.00am

Tuesday 13th July at 3.00pm

The meeting closed at 1.40pm.