

**Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting held on Tuesday 7 May 2019
at 5.30pm in the Board Room, Silverstone UTC**

Present: Doug Newman (DN) Chair
Paul Atkinson (RB)
Stuart Banks (SB)
Mark Cusiter (MC)
Julie Dark (JD)
Jenny Harte (JH)
Becky Midgley (BM)
Julie Muscutt (JM)
Neil Patterson (NP) Principal
Crispin Robinson (CR)
John Sinclair (JS)

In attendance: Miriam Lakin (ML) Clerk
Vanessa Stanley (VS) Deputy Principal

Apologies: Ray Brooks

1. Welcome and Apologies and Quorum

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present, noted apologies and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 JM reported that on an English department trip to Whitby, accommodation would be provided in a hotel owned by her husband. A competitive rate had been negotiated.

2.1 There were no further declarations of interest in addition to those already submitted.

3. Safeguarding

3.1 The Principal stated that there were no new incidents to report.

4. Health and Safety

4.1 The Principal reported that there was no update since the report given at the previous meeting. There had been no significant incidents or matters of concern since then.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5.1 The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2019 as a true record of that meeting.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Mental Health Training (Minute 6.1 refers)

There was no update on this action as the cost of the training was still to be confirmed. It was reported that a Staff Wellbeing Committee was being formed, and trained mental health first-aiders would be a useful addition.

6.2 Skills Matrix (Minute 7 refers)

A self-evaluation had been distributed to trustees for their input.

6.3 Insurance Quotations (Minute 7 refers)

A second quotation was awaited. This would allow a comparison. It was agreed that the next Audit Committee meeting should consider this.

6.4 School Evaluation Form and School Development Plan (Minute 9.4 refers)

Both documents were now on SharePoint in the governors' area. The Principal explained how to make comments on the document. Using @ plus a name in the comments would send an email to the person mentioned in order to ensure they had seen the comment.

6.5 Circulation of Report from Careers Leader (Minute 9.5 refers)

The report was available as part of the papers of the previous meeting.

BM joined the meeting

6.6 Circulation of Link Governor Report (Minute 10.3 refers)

It was confirmed that the report had been circulated to governors and formed part of the papers for the current meeting.

7. Risk Register

7.1 The Principal reported that there were no changes to the risk register since the previous meeting. He gave assurance that the risk register was reviewed by the senior team in advance of every Board meeting.

CR joined the meeting

8. Governance Matters

8.1 Membership of the Academy Trust

The Board received and accepted the resignation of Corrie Harris as a trustee as she was moving on from Bedford College. The Board thanked Corrie Harris for her contribution and wished her well. Bedford College would be asked to appoint a further trustee.

8.2 It was noted that Silverstone Circuits intended to appoint a trustee to the Board, and this person was due to start from the new academic year.

8.3 PA reported that he was struggling with work commitments and the amount of travel he did made it very difficult to attend Board meetings regularly. With regret, he had decided to step down from the Board. He would wish to continue to support the SUTC and to play an active role where possible.

8.4 On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked PA for his invaluable support and the key role he had played as part of the Board and of the Audit Committee and stated that it was hoped a way could be found of keeping him involved.

VS joined the meeting

8.5 It was noted that PA had been sponsored by the University of Northampton as a trustee, and they should therefore seek a replacement.

8.6 **Partnership**

Minutes 8.6 to 8.13 are in the confidential section of these minutes

8.14 The trustees affirmed that they supported the direction of travel, although questions remained over the structure it would take. DN agreed to continue his work on the project as discussed, and to draw on the experience of academy trusts and members of the SUTC Board.

8.15 In this context, the admissions policy was discussed. The Principal confirmed that whilst the SUTC had control of its admissions, this was subject to the law which stated that where a student applied and the SUTC had a place, there was an obligation to admit that student. If a school was over-subscribed, there had to be random allocation of places within regional zones. Selection was not permitted on any other criteria.

8.16 **Trustee Self-Evaluation**

The Principal thanked the trustees for completing the self-evaluation and showed an overview of the results. In general, the results looked strong. Some areas with less strong results indicated further training or presentations, either to the full Board or for individual trustees.

8.17 It was confirmed that answers were given from a personal point of view, and therefore all green ratings were not desirable. An amber rating did not necessarily mean that a trustee did not understand that area, but rather that they wished to challenge themselves.

8.18 On the question of benchmarking, the Principal showed trustees the [Schools Financial Benchmarking](#) website on gov.uk

9. Principal's Report

9.1 The Board received and noted a report from the Principal. In particular the following matters were raised.

9.2 Compliments, Comments and Complaints

A report was received.

9.3 General Data Protection Regulation

No updates

9.4 Inspection Data Summary Report

The Principal had circulated the report along with his comments. The trustees stated that this had been very helpful.

9.5 Trustees asked if the Principal was comfortable that all necessary actions had been taken as a result of the report. The Principal stated that he was, although it was noted that there were disadvantaged students with lower attendance than the benchmark. He had asked the Assistant Principal to consider this further, and also noted that in a small cohort, the statistics could be affected by one or two particular cases.

9.6 The trustees discussed benchmarking of levels of progress and the best assessment of prior and predicted attainment. It had been accepted nationally that Progress 8 measures did not apply to UTCs. The SUTC therefore undertook a GL assessment of all students on entry. This measured their level of attainment and predicted attainment. The SUTC then benchmarked progress and achievement against predicted attainment on entry. Trustees noted that this was an internal measure rather than an external benchmark. The Principal noted that effectively other UTCs carried out a similar measure to the GL assessment, but that it was difficult to benchmark against them as there was a small number and a wide variety of different characteristics.

9.7 The Principal noted that it was possible to make a more direct comparison with Sixth Form progress. Some courses equated to a lower number of A-levels and therefore compared badly. Because the UTC had remained with the QCF version of the Engineering BTEC, these results were not reflected in the report. Trustees asked if it was better to target particular students with academic or vocational qualifications depending on their ability and aspirations. It was reported that in some cases a mix of academic and

vocational qualifications could benefit the student, although this affected the SUTC's benchmarking data negatively.

9.8 Trustees asked if lower prior attainment on entry to Sixth Form was driven more by internally or externally recruited students. It was reported that there was no particular pattern, and further that lower qualifications on entry allowed the SUTC to support and enhance the social mobility of students.

9.9 In terms of destinations of students, the Principal noted that the measure was of a sustained destination over two terms or six months. This meant that students who started a university course but then withdrew and began a new course would negatively affect a school's data, as would students travelling after study, or beginning a job in December.

9.10 **Educational Advisor Report**

It was confirmed that the report and the Principal's responses had been shared.

9.11 **Pupil Premium Review Report**

It was confirmed that the report and the Principal's responses had been shared. The Chair reported that he had agreed to act as the dedicated Pupil Premium representative on the Board for the short term. Volunteers from the Board were sought to take over this responsibility.

9.12 **Key Performance Indicators**

As part of the Principal's report, the Board received the latest statistics on performance on a set Key Performance Indicators. In particular, comments were received on the following:

- Attendance – some Pupil Premium students had lower attendance, and this may be reported on a more regular basis in future. Background notes had been given to the Board to aid their understanding of the statistics
- Behaviour – a general improvement had been seen following the restatement of expectations. Background notes had been given to the Board to aid their understanding of the statistics
- Student Numbers – in line with the previous year
- Health and Safety – there had been a higher number of incidents in March. RB had reviewed the accident book during his Health and Safety walk and, as reported previously, had not identified any particular pattern
- Parents' Evening Attendance – attendance was good, although it would be desirable to have more attendees in KS5. The Parent Forum would help to improve engagement

- Applications – overall slightly higher compared to the same time last year. Internal applications had decreased. This was possibly due to a wider awareness of the SUTC and more entrants who did not wish to continue with the SUTC's specialisms and therefore moved on to different types of provision or vocations
- Staff Absences – a Staff Wellbeing Committee was to be formed.

10. Link Governor Reports

a. Parent Forum Update

10.1 A Parent Forum took place on 1st April. One of the main messages was that parents would like improved communications. JD and RB who ran the Forum would do further work at the next meeting to address the reasons the Forum existed to ensure that it was a positive and supportive group.

b. Audit Committee

10.2 No update as no meeting had taken place.

c. Finance and Remuneration Committee

10.3 No update as no meeting had taken place.

d. Achievement, Learning and Teaching Committee

10.4 The Committee had met on 25 April.

10.5 The Committee had received a detailed report from James Cleave, the Head of Engineering. This had been extremely useful. The Committee had received further details on the use and impact of Google Classrooms.

10.6 The Committee had noted that as more material was online, this put additional pressure on Wi-Fi bandwidth, which had the potential to become a problem and therefore should be monitored.

10.7 The Committee had agreed to meet again before the end of the academic year.

e. SENCO Update

10.8 There was no further update.

10.9 The Achievement, Learning and Teaching Committee had received a report and saw in detail in anonymised form the impact of interventions on individual students. The Chair asked if the Committee had been satisfied with the level of work done. The Chair of ALT stated that the Committee was reassured by what they had seen. The Committee had also requested a report on the impact of the SEN deputy post.

11. Policies for Approval

11.1 Vexatious Complaints and Harassment Policy

The Principal reported on the background to the creation of this policy which was to ensure that complaints were dealt with in a fair, proportionate and rational way.

11.2 The Board agreed the policy as a working document which would be effective until a final version was approved.

11.3 The Board agreed that the policy should be amended so that the final decision on whether a complaint was vexatious should be taken by a panel of 2 or 3 governors who could not then be involved in hearing the complaints at a later date. A final version of the policy would be approved at the next meeting.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 9 July at 5.30pm.

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Chair
Signed

Date