

**Minutes of the meeting of the South Bank Academies Board
held at 4.00 pm on Thursday, 1 October 2020
MS Teams**

Present

Hitesh Tailor (Chair)
Richard Flatman (Vice-Chair)
Tony Giddings (*for minutes 1 - 9*)
Nicole Louis (*for minutes 1 - 8*)
Hilary McCallion
Chris Mallaband (*for minutes 1 - 9*)
Fiona Morey
Lesley Morrison
David Phoenix (*for minutes 1 - 10*)

In attendance

Michael Broadway
Ciara Carroll
Dan Cundy
Helena Abrahams

1. Appointment of SBA Chair and Vice Chair

Hitesh Tailor and Richard Flatman left the meeting for the duration of this item. As Secretary, Michael Broadway conducted the vote for Chair and Vice Chair.

Under article 82, the Board is required to elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Board on an annual basis.

The Board approved:

- (i) Hitesh Tailor as Chair for the next school year, 2020-21, and
- (ii) Richard Flatman as Vice Chair for the next school year, 2020-21.

2. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed trustees to the meeting and noted that there were no apologies.

3. Declarations of interest

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

4. Minutes of last meeting

The Board approved the minutes of previous meetings held on 7 July and 27 July 2020, and their publication as redacted.

5. **Matters arising**

7 July 2020

Agenda item 4

Circulate three-year staff investment plan – this has not yet been completed. It will be done for the next Board meeting in December 2020.

Agenda item 9

Circulate June 2020 management accounts – this is superseded by the August management accounts circulated with the papers for this meeting.

27 July 2020

Agenda item 4

Reserves policy – draft policy is on this meeting's agenda.

Report on November 2020 budget review following pupil number confirmation to be discussed at the next Board meeting.

Agenda item 5

Equality Impact Assessment on new Pay Policy – to be noted at the next Board meeting.

August 2020 management accounts, cash flow and balance sheet – on this meeting's agenda.

6. **Chair's business**

The Chair explained that he had been in extensive contact with the CEO during the time since the last meeting and everything they had discussed was contained within the agenda for the meeting.

7. **CEO's Report**

The CEO confirmed that both schools are open and functioning well. This is due to the tireless work put in by the staff to ready the schools for September. The Board expressed its appreciation for these efforts and was mindful of the pressure felt by all staff during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Board discussed the student recruitment update for both schools. The Board noted the positive recruitment figures for year 12 at both the UAE and UTC.

The Board noted the challenges in recruiting to year 7 at the UAE and year 10 at the UTC. The Board requested that further work is done on publicising the successes of the schools, and the additional value of the non-curriculum offer and the group structure to potential year 7 and year 10 applicants.

The UTC is planning to promote a five-year pathway from Year 10 through to the new Year 14, which is an applied learning HNC program. It has been difficult to target the Year 10 intake this year in the normal way, due to the curtailment of physical access to schools, which prevented assemblies going ahead.

The Board considered the latest update on Sir Simon Milton Westminster UTC (SSMW) Engagement from the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) has increased over the past month. Management have been able to respond to questions from the RSC. The Head Teacher Board (HTB) met on 30 September 2020 and an decision is expected by the week commencing 5 October 2020. The Board would be notified of the decision when known.

The Board agreed that, if SBA was the preferred partner, a working group is set up to review the transaction in detail including the due diligence report. Approval to proceed will be given by the SBA Board of Trustees, with consent required from LSBU, as the parent company, under the Governance Agreement between LSBU and SBA.

The Board noted that there was another bid under consideration; however, that bid was likely to focus on the 6th Form offer, rather than the UTC as a whole.

8. **Education update**

The Executive Principal highlighted the key points in his report and took questions on each section.

Reopening preparations

The Executive Principal explained that both schools had scheduled a longer than normal INSET session at the start of term to foster staff's confidence in re-opening preparations. Management is concerned about staff wellbeing due to their increased workload and potential feelings of isolation due to the required measures.

[The Board queried what support was in place for staff members and senior leaders.](#) The Trust's HR manager is working with the wellbeing coordinators at both schools; there is currently one mental health first aider in each school, and more are being trained. An Employee Assistance Program has been implemented this year, a service independent of the Trust.

The Board acknowledged that there was a significant amount of pressure on staff, particularly senior leaders on whom staff members rely to know how to proceed. The CEO would review whether it was possible to invest in resources now to support senior leaders and prevent greater issues developing further down the line. The Board recognized that this need would have to fit in with the requirement for a balanced budget.

Quality of education

The Executive Principal explained that the Trust was using its experiences during the enforced distance learning of the pandemic to investigate how to permanently integrate its curriculum into a cloud-based environment.

The Board noted that the extended A-level curriculum and the UTC health offer have improved retention and driven a higher level of applications for 2020-21. Further innovations, including the new Year 14 offering at the UTC are also proving popular. [The Board queried whether there is a formal transfer link to an LSBU undergraduate course.](#) The Executive Principal explained that this is under development, with the main focus on the necessary content to enable transfer into the second year of a degree course, particularly in engineering and health courses.

The new Health strand has been well received by university staff as well; the Board were pleased to hear that the new suite at Tabard Street would be open to primary and secondary children, which would fit well into the Chief Nurse's strategy to promote the nursing profession to younger children.

Attainment and progress

The Board discussed the improvement seen from last year to this, in the context of centre-assessed grades. There was a 100% pass rate for A-levels and improvements at GCSE across every metric. Individual school figures will be discussed in greater detail at the upcoming SAB meetings.

The Board discussed the awarding gap between different types of students which was a priority for management. The Academic Quality and Improvement Committee would consider this area in detail.

LSBU group link

[The Board queried how the Trust is maintaining the links between the schools and the University at this time.](#) The Executive Principal reported that this had proved difficult as many link activities require in-person attendance. As much as possible is being done online.

Safeguarding

The Board discussed the safeguarding update. The format of the safeguarding report is being updated to provide more detail.

The Board reviewed the school safeguarding policies for the UAE and the UTC. and discussed whether one overarching policy would be more appropriate, alongside individual annexes for each school. At the next review point, the Executive Principal will look at harmonizing the policies into one overarching policy for the Trust.

Following a request from the Board, the Executive Principal will produce a report on the differences between each policy for the next meeting.

The Board approved the Safeguarding Policies for UAE and the UTC.

Nicole Louis left the meeting.

9. **Financial reports**

The Board discussed the financial update; the consolidated accounts to 31st August 2020 showed a surplus before depreciation of £113k and a deficit of £400k when allowing for £513k of depreciation.

The Board queried the treatment of depreciation, which would be reviewed as part of the audit process.

The Board discussed the need to have a rolling programme to replace equipment in the schools and requested a capital investment plan for the next meeting.

The Board supported the recommended 2.75% cost of living pay award to teaching staff with staffing up to 70% of expenditure.

The Board requested that a review of the 2020/21 budget is brought to its December 2020 meeting with the aim of producing a balanced budget and achieving a surplus going forward.

Tony Giddings and Chris Mallaband left the meeting.

10. **Policies**

Reserves

The Board discussed the draft reserves policy.

The Board agreed with the proposed target for reserves to be 3-5% of recurrent funding.

The Board approved the policy subject to a minor amendment: the removal of the first sentence of paragraph 6.1 to ensure that the policy accurately reflected the reality of the finance policies in the trust.

Safeguarding

These two policies were approved under the Education update (minute 8 refers).

David Phoenix left the meeting.

11. **Formal approval of Academic Quality and Improvement committee**

The Board approved the establishment of the Academic Quality and Improvement Committee as a sub-committee of the Board and the Terms of Reference (ToR).

Lesley Morrison left the meeting.

12. **MAT Risk register**

The Board noted the updated MAT Risk Register.

13. **Academies Financial Handbook 2020**

The Board noted the paper on the 2020 update to the Academies Financial Handbook. A more detailed paper reviewing the Trust's compliance with the handbook will be presented at the next Board meeting.

14. **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 update**

The Board noted the 2020 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) update and further the requirement to confirm that all trustees had read Part 1 of the updated guidance at a minimum.

15. **Draft Public Benefit statement**

The Board noted the charity commission guidance on public benefit and the draft Public Benefit statement which would be included in the Annual Report.

16. **Membership of SBA Board and School Advisory Boards**

The Board noted that the Chair is looking to recruit up to two new trustees. A skills audit of trustees will be carried out to help identify skills gaps on the Board.

The Board approved the re-appointment of Tony Giddings for a second term, to finish on 3 June 2022.

Date of next meeting
4.00 pm, on Tuesday, 15 December 2020

Confirmed as a true record



..... (Chair)