Meeting	Seaford Learning Trustees
Date	Wednesday 19th April 2023
Time	4.30pm – 7pm
Venue	Chyngton School
Trustees	Jane Branson Jacky Cross Jon Dilley Bob Ellis James Hollingsworth Paul Holmes-Ling Margaret Rooms Susie Sylvester
In attendance	Gaynor Newnham (Clerk) Sally Laidlaw
Apologies	Chris Mercer
Absent	

Minutes

Item	Item Outline
1.	**Welcome & Apologies for Absence** JD opened the meeting Apologies were received from CM. Trustees recorded thanks to the Chyngton School (CS) Co-Heads, for taking the time to show Trustees the school; JD commented on the size of the building and the good access to outdoor space from every classroom. JH reported that he is taking a sabbatical for June/ July and August and will be out contact.
2.	**Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests in Proceedings** MR has asked JD to be a governor at St John's School until September. A governor asked whether they had to declare their interest at every meeting. GN confirmed that this was only necessary if the interest had not been declared at the beginning of the year. GN to check that all interests are declared and up to date.
3.	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting, 22nd February 2023** • **Approve Minutes** **The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.** • **Review Actions** The summary of actions was reviewed, and it was reported that: SS wrote a report on her visit to CS, which was shared with Bob and Amy – this will be circulated to the Trustees. SS confirmed, in response to a question, that she intends to complete regular visits to the school. She noted, from reading the CS LGB minutes, that there is a concern about writing in Y5, which she would like to monitor. JB declared an interest, at this point, as she is offering writing support to CS for the next 2 years. After a brief discussion**, it was agreed to add SS to the CS Governor Monitoring Schedule.** ***Action:*** • ***Add SS to the CS Governor Monitoring Schedule (JB)*** • ***Ensure SS and JB link by email, regarding monitoring at CS (GN)*** A draft opening paragraph for policies was added to governor hub. **Trustees approved the**

	following statement: ***The Seaford Learning Trust's vision is for all members of the Seaford Community to be supported, challenged, and inspired to be the very best that they can be. The Trust aims to deliver an all – through education of the highest quality in a community where learning is for everyone.*** ***Prior to joining the Trust, the two schools that are founding members, Chyngton Primary and Seaford Head School, were successful LA schools. The Trust will continue to adopt and adapt ESCC policies during the period of transition and harmonisation. The Local Governing Boards have the responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the impact of school policies.*** It was explained that CS LGB are concerned about the implication that CS governors are employers, as this is not the case. The Chair of Trustees suggested adding a statement to the schools' websites to state that some phrases (such as East Sussex County Council/ ESCC and Seaford Learning Trust/SLT) are interchangeable until the policies can be reviewed according to the agreed cycle. BE also reassured Trustees that there are no plans to move away from ESCC policies, as both schools previously operated on ESCC models and will continue to do so. SL explained that she will discuss policies with Brown Jacobsen, so that a suitably worded statement can be agreed. The auditors acknowledge that there is a period of transition in process, meaning that there is no rush to change the policies, though it was noted that some may be a greater priority. SL will also provide operational support with policies to CS, during this period of transition. ***Action:*** • ***Policies – discuss with Brown Jacobsen and provide operational support to CS during the period of transition*** • **Matters Arising** There were no matters to discuss
4.	**School Updates** LGB minutes and dashboards had been circulated with the agenda • **Chyngton** JB highlighted the following: ○ Staff absence is an ongoing issue, and long-term absence of key people is a challenge. ○ The DSL is on long term sick leave and the DSL role will be transitioned ○ Pupil recruitment is being addressed proactively, and leaflets will be delivered to local locations, targeting Newhaven nurseries, and family attractions. The draft leaflet was tabled. Trustees suggested other possible locations for leaflet-drops, such as Peacehaven and East Dean, though it was noted that there are not many families in East Dean and many go to private schools, St John's Meads, and Gildredge House. BE commended the poster, which sends a good message, and explained that there has been outreach to Denton School, as they are oversubscribed, and would be happy to share it. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that parents have given their permission for their children's images to be used on the document. ○ Policies has been raised as a concern for the LGB, as discussed under agenda item 3. Trustees discussed the reference to CS pupils being guaranteed places at Seaford Head School (SHS) on the poster. There are 34 pupils confirmed to be joining Reception in September, which is disappointing. It is hoped that there are other attractions to CS, but the link to SHS is positive and must be emphasized. Last year, 47 pupils joined Reception in September, but the class-sizes have increased through the year.

It was explained, in response to a question, that pupil admission data for local schools is not available.

Trustees noted that the current number on roll is pleasantly surprising, though having a full year-group between 2 emptier years means it is not possible to be creative with staffing. The Chair asked if advertising on Facebook and Instagram has been considered, and JB agreed to raise this with AC. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that there were positive Open Days, though this did not translate into actual admissions.
A Trustee asked if it might be possible to establish a nursery at CS. It was agreed that this would be a good option which would encourage natural progression into Chyngton, but costs can be prohibitive. It was then asked if it might be possible to bring a local nursery into the trust, though it would not be possible to join with an existing private business. It may be possible to host events for Micklefield Nursery School, and there are around 4 other nurseries in the area.

It was confirmed, in response to a question, that advertising has been aimed at the Newlands Estate, but it can take 2-3 years for a new estate to produce school-age children. Churches and toddler groups were also suggested as good places to promote the school.

Trustees asked if the local population is transient, and it was explained that there is minimal mobility.

It was noted that low numbers leave CS vulnerable to in-year-admissions, which impacts on other aspects of children's education. The ideal would be to be full, from Reception.

A Trustee asked if 34 YR pupils will mean there will be 2 classes. It was explained that YR classes may only admit up to 30 pupils. PAN is 60, and 2 classes will be needed. Reducing PAN has been resisted, due to the potential impact on staff and pupils.

The possibility of attracting siblings was discussed, in response to a question, but some year groups are full.

A trustee queried ongoing sustainability while pupil numbers are falling. BE explained that the budget is based on conservative predictions, and there have been improvements due to increasing numbers in some years. The demographics are concerning and will need to be a priority for this group. The LA encouraged an extra class in another local school, which is impacting on CS.

Possible future expansion of the Trust was briefly discussed. BE explained that there is ongoing positive work across the Seaford primary schools. More formal partnership would be positive, providing collective decision-making, and good opportunities for staff, in terms of career progressions and developing specialisms. Staff could be moved between schools.

JD explained that this is the forum for strategic discussions, while LGB's focus on delivery. Things need time to improve and there is no immediate need to make changes.

The format of the dashboards was discussed, and a list of acronyms was requested for future meetings. It was explained that it would be difficult to achieve consistency across the 2 reports, as there are different systems in use in each school. JD requested information on staff absence, for future meetings.

Actions:

- ***Add a glossary and staff absence data to the dashboards for future meetings.***
- ***To use social media (facebook) to develop a more targeted and focused recruitment strategy for CS***

The number of parental concerns was queried, as 289 seems high. It was explained that concerns can be very minor, but there have been no complaints escalated beyond HT level.

Absence was discussed and BE explained that ESBAS feel the school is doing all it can, on a child-by-child basis. High absence in Y4 is likely to be related to a small number of families. Attendance remains vulnerable since the pandemic. ESBAS' previous clear hard line on poor attendance is no longer adopted.

	Access to Governor Hub was discussed, **and it was agreed that Trustees should be able to access the LGB papers if they wish,** while noting that the minutes circulated for the Trustee meetings represent the LGB conversations. ***Action:*** • ***Amend Governor Hub access so that Trustees have access to the LGB meeting papers*** • **Seaford Head** MR reported that: o 3 Assistant Headteachers have been appointed o There has been a good field of applicants for the teaching posts. A Trustee queried the waiting list in Y9, though the cohort is under PAN, and it was explained that some families have moved but the places have not yet been filled. *18.16 JB left* Trustees asked if the safeguarding figure is low, and it was explained that there is no universal measure. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that Y7 is over PAN with waiting list. BE explained that the PAN will be reduced in the longer term. It was explained, in response to a question, that a reduction to 232 has been requested, though next year's PAN will increase to 260, following a request from the LA. *18.17 JB returned*
5.	**CEO Update** BE explained that: • there has always been a clear vision for collaboration across Seaford, and there has been exciting work with the other primaries. A formalised arrangement will make the partnerships stronger. • There was a successful bid for a transition project and the Trust was awarded £270k • The Intensive family support practitioner remains in post • Middle leaders and staff have worked well across the Trust in a range of subjects (modern foreign languages, art, PE, maths) • CS staff are keen to collaborate further with SHS staff, according to a recent staff survey • A peer review of English is planned • There was a joint music event last term JH fed back on ongoing collaborative work on the new RE curriculum across the schools. The new School Improvement Plans (SIP's) will reflect the collaboration. BE stated that it is important for trustees to recognize that the last few years have been extremely challenging and the education system has not returned to pre – covid "normality". After the pandemic, schools are now facing . Community/ parental engagement is an ongoing challenge, as is the reduced capacity of external agencies such as the Police. Trustees must celebrate the successes of the schools within the Trust. Chyngton's positive Ofsted and SHS's consistently improving outcomes are particularly impressive against this backfdrop. BE informed Trustees that it will be important to maintain relationships with the primary schools, with the aim of the local schools working together for the good of the local community. Cradle Hill has indicated that SHS, and other Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT's) will be invited to talk to their governors. The large trusts will be keen to expand, in the current culture of acquisition, which may make SHS less attractive to the primaries that the larger operations. However, Trustees pointed out that SHS has the benefit of local

	expertise, and schools joining a young trust will have a part in shaping its future. The importance in SLT and staff views in choosing a MAT was emphasised by JB; the influence of governors in the decision-making process could be a concern, and how well informed they are. The continuing role of the LA in school improvement was discussed, and SL explained that the LA would maintain an overview and responsibility to the schools, though statutory roles may be changed. BE explained that the LA is supportive of a community-based trust system. The reason for this was challenged and BE explained that it is in response to the white paper.
6.	**Finance** **CS** SL explained that: • A small end-of-year surplus is predicted • There was unplanned expenditure of £10k over Easter, due to emergency works needed to some trees. • There have been changes to personnel which have been accounted for. • There are many unknowns, and the budget is based on what she has been given to profile. SL and AC will meet regularly so that AC also has some ownership of what goes on at the school. **SHS** SL explained that: • There will be in-year deficit, as the reserves are being used to fund large projects. • There have been adjustments for gas and electric based on the LA recommendation though there is still movement post-COVID It was confirmed, in response to a question that without the big projects the budget would be close to being balanced. It was also reported that the Trust has received TCAF funding for around £100k for computer infrastructure, IT, etc. The Chair asked when the move from East Sussex email addresses is planned. This should be actioned by September. The Chair asked if the CS LGB is happy with the financial information it receives, which was confirmed. Current ways of working are positive, and governors are confident they are receiving the information they require. The regular meetings between SL and AC will continue to move this forward
7.	**Premises/ Health and Safety** **CS:** SL reported that various Health and Safety (H&S) concerns (tree work, water stoppages and gas leaks) have occurred and show that processes are working well, and situations were dealt with effectively. Trustees asked if a Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) bid could be submitted for the Crittall windows, and it was explained that the amount and condition of the windows means that would not be possible, though there is additional capital funding available for ECO projects which could be explored. **SHS:** SL reported that: • One Health and Safety incident at SHS was referred to the H&S Executive. The site team and first aid dealt with the incident, and there was support from ESCC. The student involved is now recovered. • The new entrance is progressing and will be potentially handed back in the last week of term, to be open for September. • Work to the toilets has been quoted for. • A Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) bid has been submitted for fire doors, which will cover the cost of the work at the Arundel Road site. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that an additional

	bid may be submitted for the work at Steyne Road, due to increased costs. A fire risk assessment will be completed. • A planning appeal will be submitted in relation to the safeguarding fence. There have been conversations with Bailey Garner and any additional supporting evidence will be included. The councillor concerned has issued a formal apology to SL. • The town council has been approached about funding available for football facilities, which were impacted by the Newlands estate. There have been discussions about changing this to a sporting facility, in the form of a sports hall that could be let to the community and an additional pitch, and the council has shown interest. Temporary and permanent structures can be considered. The funding amounts to £350k + £30k for maintenance. Local football, netball and basketball groups have shown interest in using the school's facilities. • The possible location was queried, and it was explained that there could be a closed facility with changing rooms at Arundel Road, in front of the new entrance, and an open-air pitch over the road. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that other parties could also bid for the funding, though SHS has a good chance as it owns the land. Seaford Town Council has no additional green space to develop. Trustees asked if the planning appeal might jeopardise the application, and it was explained that Lewes District Councill has oversight. The timeline was queried, and it was explained that Lewes council will be asked to change the wording from football to sporting, in May. Proposals will be requested In August/ September. Before then, there will be discussions around the vision for the project, such as whether a 3G MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) should be installed. The grant would not cover the entire cost of the project. A Trustee noted that this investment would reduce the student movement between sites.
8.	**Governance Framework:** • **Non-financial Scheme of Delegation – to be approved** **The Trust Vision was slightly amended, and approved, as follows:** ***We achieve excellence together by working collectively to ensure that everyone in the Seaford Community is supported, challenged, and inspired to become the very best that they can be.*** ***We deliver an all – through education of the highest quality in a community where learning is for everyone.*** BE explained that there is not yet a Risk and Audit Committee or a Trust website, though there are dedicated Trust pages on the school websites. It was explained, in response to a question, that a Trust Risk and Audit Committee in not currently needed, and auditors would ask how things are being managed during this period of transition. As the trust expands, there will be a core group looking at audit and risk. It was agreed, following a question, that the Scheme of Delegation should show roles rather than people. **The Non-financial Scheme of Delegation was approved, subject to the removal of names, and the vision being amended, as shown above.** ***Action:*** • ***Remove names and amend the Trust Vision in the Non-financial Scheme of Delegation*** • **Local Governing Board Schemes of Delegation** **The LGB Schemes of Delegation had been approved by email since the last meeting.** • **LGB Terms of Reference** **The LGB Terms of Reference were approved**

- **Risk Registers**

  Trustees approved the Trustee Risk Register framework.

  It was agreed that the Trustee Risk Register should be a standing agenda item at Trustee meetings.

  It was agreed that schools' LGBs can decide whether they need their own registers and how often these should be monitored.

  Action:

  - ***Review of the Trustee Risk Register to be added as a standing agenda item***

- **Meeting Dates for 2023-24**

  Meeting Dates for 2023-24 were approved, as follows:

Term	LGB SHS	LGB CS	Trustees	Members
1	Tuesday 26 September 8-10am	Thursday 28 September 9-11am	Wednesday 11 October 5-7pm	
2	Tuesday 21November 8-10am	Thursday 23 November 9-11am	Wednesday 6 December 5-6.30pm	Wednesday 6 December 6.30-7pm
3	Tuesday 16 January 8-10am	Thursday 18 February 9-11am	Wednesday 31 January 5-7pm	
4	Tuesday 5 March 8-10am	Thursday 7 March 9-11am	Wednesday 20 March 5-7pm	
5	Tuesday 30 April 8-10am	Thursday 2 May 9-11am	Wednesday 15 May 5-7pm	
6	Tuesday 25 June 8-10am	Thursday 27 June 9am-3pm	Wednesday 12 June 5-6.30pm	Wednesday 12 June 6.30-7pm

It was noted that the LGB dates may be amended, to suit the requirements of the academies.

SL confirmed that she will attend the LGB meetings in T6, to present the budgets.

9. **MAT Policies and Procedures**

- **MAT Policies**

  This was covered under agenda item 3.

- **Trust Complaints Policy**

  This was deferred to the next meeting.

- **Use of Governor Hub**

  It was agreed that documents for LGB meetings will be shared on Governor Hub, and that Trustees will have oversight of the LGB sites.

10. **Trust Vision, Strategy and Priorities**

This was covered through item 5.

11. **Agenda Items for next meeting:**

Trustee Risk Register

	Complaints Policy
12.	**Any other business** JB asked if there could be more connection between the children at both schools e.g. Digital leaders, and online safety. BE explained that the Y11 prefects, including former CS students, will be delivering an assembly at CS and could do it on online safety. Other links will be in the SIP from September. JB explained that CS requires lifeguards to be able to provide swimming lesson in the summer, for 3 days a week for 6 weeks. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that this would be a paid role, and may suit 6th Form students. BE agreed to add this to the SHS weekly newsletter. ***Action:*** • ***Advertise for lifeguards at CS in the SHS newsletter*** **Next meeting Wednesday 7 June 2023 5-7pm – invite members**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19.06

Meeting dates for 2022-23

	FGB SHS	LGB SHS	FGB CS	LGB CS	Trustees	Members
Term 1	Tuesday 27 September 8-10am		Thursday 29 September 2-4pm		Wednesday 5 October 5-7pm	TBC
Term 2		Tuesday 29 November 8-10am		Thursday 1 December 9-11am	Wednesday 7 December 5-7pm	TBC
Term 3		Tuesday 7 February 8-10am		Thursday 9 February 9-11am		TBC
Term 4		Tuesday 28 March 8-10am		Thursday 30 March 9-11am	Wednesday 22 February 5-7pm	TBC
Term 5		Tuesday 23 May 8-10am		Thursday 25 May 4-6pm	Wednesday 19 April 5-7pm	TBC
Term 6		Tuesday 11 July 8-10am		Thursday 13 July 9am-3pm	Wednesday 7 June 5-7pm	TBC

Attachments

No	Action	By	Notes
1.	Add SS to the CS Governor Monitoring Schedule	JB	
2.	Ensure SS and JB link by email, regarding monitoring at CS	GN	✓
3.	Policies – discuss with Brown Jacobsen and provide operational support to CS during the period of transition	SL	
4.	Amend Governor Hub access so that Trustees have access to the LGB meeting papers	GN	Reque 21/04/
5.	Remove names and amend the Trust Vision in the Non-financial Scheme of Delegation	BE	
6.	Review of the Trustee Risk Register to be added as a standing agenda item	GN	

7.	Advertise for lifeguards at CS in the SHS newsletter	BE	