Meeting	Seaford Learning Trustees
Date	Wednesday 20th March 2024
Time	5pm – 7pm
Venue	Board Room, Seaford Head School, Arundel Road site
Trustees	Jacky Cross Jon Dilley Bob Ellis James Hollingsworth Chris Mercer Margaret Rooms Sarah Speedie
In attendance	Jane Branson (Guest) Gaynor Newnham (Clerk) Sally Laidlaw (CFO) Imogen Wallace (AHT and DSL)
Apologies	
Absent	

Minutes

Item	Item Outline
1.	**TRAINING: Safeguarding** Imogen Wallace, Assistant Head leading on safeguarding, gave a safeguarding update. A Trustee asked about filtering, and it was explained that Smooth Wall is used at SHS. It was explained, in response to a question, that Smooth Wall controls what is blocked for SHS, as an education setting. It was explained, in response to a question, that the system responds to the listed items, and the Trust meets its responsibility by paying for the service. A Trustee asked how the identification of a user or terminal is responded to, and it was explained that L5 alerts are 'phoned in and a DSL would find the pupil. This was confirmed, following an additional question, to be a real time alert written down as a protocol-based response. A Trustee asked if access is filterable, and it was explained that teachers have different level of access to students. Trustees asked if there is an equivalent service for parents, and it was explained that different platforms and providers have systems for use at home. E-Safety information is sent to parents. The filtering and monitoring for pupils taking IT home was queried, and it was explained that there are Securus alerts for laptops used at home, though not in real time. It was explained, following a further question, that the system does not work in the same way for the laptops brought into SH6, but devices can be identified as being logged on. It was asked if all devices are protected, and it was explained that Securus is installed but it is the parents' responsibility to monitor what their children are accessing. It was reported, in response to a question, that SHS provides fifty devices for SEND and PPG students. Trustees asked what is in place at Chyngton, and it was explained that there is a specialist IT teacher who is excellent on online safety. 123 parents attended a recent online safety meeting. There are also Digital Leaders (pupils) who take assemblies, and the children train each other. There are issues with WhatsApp bullying. It was confirmed, following a question, that Smoothwall is also in use at Chyngton. It was reported that students' 'phone use is challenging, and the Wi-Fi password is regularly reset so that students cannot attach personal devices to the school system, which impacts on teaching and learning.

	It was explained that safeguarding is a standing item at Trustee meetings, and safeguarding is strong across the Trust. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that CPOMS is used on both sites. CPOMS Staff Safe has also been purchased, to be used for recording low-level allegations. It can be used to track absence and sickness, CPD, etc. There can be issues caused by some primaries recording behaviour, as well as safeguarding, on CPOMS, which is then passed to the secondary schools. The Trust responsibility for staff safeguarding was queried, and it was explained that this falls to the Staff Code of Conduct or Grievance Procedures. IW reported that she has looked at the Safeguarding Adults at Work Policy, which addresses levels of vulnerability and whether they need additional protection. Significant concerns should always be reported to the LADO. Some concerns are raised that are below the LADO threshold. There are policies for dealing with bullying, etc. Low level concerns about the HT would be taken to the LGB. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that low - level concerns are recorded to ensure there is a paper trail in case of a later incident; as outlined in KCSIE Trustees asked if emerging trends will be discussed with the feeder schools, which was confirmed. The lessons learned will also be discussed. It was explained, in response to a question, that IWG does not have Trust-wide responsibility for safeguarding but the Safeguarding Leads for all the Seaford schools have calendared meetings to discuss town – wide trends. BE recorded thanks to IW and the safeguarding team. There are new structures in place, and the whole school response to a recent event was recognised to be excellent. **It was agreed that the Safeguarding Trustee will look at supervision.** It was confirmed, in response to a question, that the Safeguarding Trustee has not yet met Chyngton's link governor. *IWG left at 17.46.* ***Action:*** • ***Safeguarding Trustee to follow up with Chyngton's link governor..***
2.	**Welcome & Apologies for Absence** JD opened the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.
3.	**Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests in Proceedings** There were no changes to the previous declarations.
4.	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting, 31 January 2024** The minutes had been circulated.

	The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. **Actions:** The summary of actions was reviewed, and all were noted to be complete or on the agenda except adding trust reserves to the risk register. SS will action this. ***Action:*** • ***Add Trust Reserves to the Risk Register***
5.	**Finance and operations.** **Audit and Risk Committee minutes.** The Audit and Risk Committee minutes had been circulated. It was reported that there was a good meeting on the 8 March – the SH6 work is ongoing, and the feasibility study and consultation is underway. The School Resource management AP will be enacted. Internal auditors will be asked to look at finance elements only. The Risk Register was reviewed, and the committee discussed the harshness of judgements, which will be revisited at the next meeting. The Trust is in a stronger position around the possible LA bankruptcy issue and the auditors would be asked to support, if needed. **School Finance** The management report had been circulated. SL reported that the monthly report is useful and shows that there is fluctuation. The 5% teachers pension contribution has been confirmed. The GAG has been received and the budgets will be built accordingly. They will be approved at the June meeting. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that the GAG is as expected for both schools. It was explained, following a further question, that there is a separate GAG for Chyngton, Seaford Head, and SH6. Having three sites does not affect the GAG. Benchmarking for the school was circulated. SL explained that the detail of the benchmarking is not known, but questions could be pursued with the auditors, as the reasons for the findings are not clear. It was explained, in response to a question, that the reported income per pupil is an average and does not account for the different levels of funding across the schools. It was explained, following further questions, that it is not known if special schools are included, as the data reflects the auditors' client base. SL can find out if they could complete more focused benchmarking. It was explained, in response to a question, that Free Reserves Movement is money that is not ringfenced for something specific. It was agreed that the reports raise interesting questions and show the Trust is average for utilities etc. A Trustee asked what would cause some schools to have £3k capital income per pupil, and it was explained that this could be due to successful CIF bids, or they could be special schools. Further detail can be requested. A Trustee asked if the level of reserves is low. It was reported that it is only permissible to have reserves up to a certain level. The Trust is just below what is allowed, without having a plan for the money. There should not be high reserves, as the money is for the current students, unless the Trust is saving for something specific. Seaford Learning Trust is in line with other prudent trusts. A trustee asked if there is impetus to proceed with sports hall. SL explained that this will be budget dependent. There are already agreed priorities and the budgets have had to support staff pay increases. The classroom infrastructure needs to be considered.

	Trustees asked if expanding the Trust and bringing in two new schools would cost money, and it was explained that there could also be savings, as have already been identified. Trustees wished to know if there has been any work on this, or advice about the optimum number of schools. It was explained that some trusts have someone looking at income generation, but the aim is to keep things streamlined and remain cautious. Trustees asked if more infrastructure will be needed, and it was reported that there is some, but there needs to be capacity to grow. In addition, the aim of the Trust is to give the best offer to the children of Seaford. The community, vision and values would not support an unethically large development. It was reported, in response to a question, that the review related to the safeguarding bid is in process.
6.	**CEO Verbal Update – Trust Development and 5-year vision (paper attached)** The Trust Development and 5-year vision paper had been circulated. <u>Phase 1</u> It was explained that the first phase will be the academisation of Cradle Hill and Seaford Primary Schools. There have been meetings with Seaford Primary and the LA input has been discussed. The acting head at Seaford Primary will be acting up as Headteacher to the end of T2 and there has been no progress with appointing a Head. The LGB wants to recruit someone who is committed to their vision. The acting head has been offered support from the Trust, which will be assured to be meaningful. A Trustee asked if the lack of Headteacher at Seaford Primary might have an impact on their potential to join the Trust, and it was explained that the support from the Trust and joining the Trust will be kept separate. <u>Phase 2</u> The CEO explained that phase 2 will be autonomy with alignment around best practice. There has been positive engagement from all schools since Chyngton joined the MAT. There was concern about maintaining autonomy at Chyngton initially, but the next stage will be sharing best practice. The distinctive features of each school would be maintained. (e.g. PSHE at Chyngton has been developed around sharing practice). <u>Phase 3</u> By 2026 The Trust may need to consider approaching other schools, such as Alfriston and Denton. Alfriston has been invited to join the cluster, and there has been collaboration on PSHE and ICT. A Trustee raised a concern that this is beyond the original vision. BE explained that he does not see stage 3 as significant but some of the primaries have been concerned that Seaford Learning Trust is too small. It was also noted that stage 3 does not have to be about getting bigger, it could be about improving, refining, and personalising the local offer. BE added that the Trustees might only consider stage 3 once all schools are outstanding. By 2029, a potential phase may be joining another similar Trust. This could be interesting for the primaries, and their staff, around cross phase, and cross primary work. **The 5-year Vision was discussed, and it was agreed that, though it is a useful internal document, only the first-page summary should be published as a statement of ethos and values.** Trustees asked if there is a deadline for a school to have joined a MAT, and it was explained that this is dependent on external factors. The long-term capacity of the LA is diminishing, and small schools are currently finding themselves vulnerable. Schools may need to share capacity and

	resources, due to budgets, and due to changes in the STPCD which states, for example, that teachers should not be looking at attendance. BE reported that there has been work on a new logo, which will be launched soon along with the Trust website.
7.	**Standards across the Trust** The school dashboards and LGB meeting minutes had been circulated. The SHS had not changed since the last meeting. Trustees noted Chyngton's challenges, such as Y1 pupil numbers, and that a pupil has been excluded. Trustees asked where the 26 pupils recruited since September came from. It was explained that the low pupil numbers have made the school vulnerable to in-year-admissions, some of whom have been unable to attend their previous schools, and some who are new to the area. Having spaces means that the school must admit all pupils as directed, and some of the new pupils have additional needs. Trustees noted the positive shift in attendance. It was explained, in response to a question, that every child whose attendance is below 90% is individually tracked. Trustees noted that 30% of Chyngton pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM), but this does not correlate to the level of FSM at SHS. It was explained, in response to a question, that this is because the other schools are less deprived. The level of deprivation means that Chyngton may need additional specialist support, and things in place through the Trust are significant and will increase capacity. This will benefit SHS in the long run.
8.	**NLG Action Plan and Governance Review** The NLG Action Plan and Governance Review documents had been circulated. BE explained that he feels that many issues have been resolved, and the next review will demonstrate that. The potential conflict of interest, and governance, will be looked at, as well as governance since the last review. The reviewer was recommended by John Murray at the LA. JB asked for an amendment to the review document point 3e to say that she does not have a vote, as she is an observer. This was agreed. **It was agreed that the clerk will populate the review schedule.** The Clerk fed back that she has asked the LA about the Chair 360 review, and it was suggested that this is undertaken as part of the review - BE to follow up. ***Actions:*** • ***Amend review document point 3e to state that JB does not vote.*** • ***Populate review schedule for meetings with reviewer.*** • ***Follow up on Chair 360 review with the reviewer.***
9.	**Agenda items for next meeting:** NLG Action Plan – review progress Trustee Review SLT Action Plan 2024 – 25 (Trustee input)

	Plan Away Day.
10.	**Any other business** Youth Counselling Project paper had been shared, and the appropriateness of Trustee involvement was debated. It was confirmed that JD has no issue with a Governor becoming involved, but he would prefer the Trustees to remain at a distance. They are welcome for fundraising, and SHS previously held a recruitment drive. It was agreed to keep this under review. The use of Governor Hub was discussed, and it was explained by the CFO, the Clerk, and the Chair of the SHS LGB, that compliance documents are hard to manage when Trustees (and, henceforth, Members) have access to both schools' hubs, as well as the Trustee Hub. Some issues have arisen as a result, and the value of Trustees accessing all areas was queried. The Chair stated that this is how he wishes Governor Hub to be used. The use of school email addresses was discussed, as the Data Protection Policy states that governors should not use personal email addresses, but there are some governors at SHS who continue to use different email addresses. It was reported that all governors at Chyngton have school email addresses and use them, or their ESCC addresses. It was confirmed, in response to a question, that there will be the potential to set up Trust email addresses in the future. It was reported that guidance at the Chairs' Forum was that only school email addresses should be used. SS agreed to investigate this. ***Action:*** • ***Investigate whether governors must use school email addresses.*** **Next meeting: Wednesday 15 May 5-7pm** **There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.11**

No	Action	By	Notes
1.	Consider Supervision, re safeguarding	SS	
2.	Add Trust Reserves to the Risk Register	SS	
3.	Amend review document point 3e to state that JB does not vote.	BE	
4.	Populate review schedule for meetings with reviewer	GN	
5.	Follow up on Chair 360 review with the reviewer.	BE	
6.	Investigate whether governors must use school email addresses.	SS	

Draft Meeting Dates for 2023-24

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 January 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**