Meeting	Seaford Learning Trustees
Date	Wednesday 9th October 2024
Time	5pm – 7pm
Venue	Board Room, Seaford Head School, Arundel Road site
Trustees	Jon Dilley Jacky Cross Bob Ellis James Hollingsworth Chris Mercer Margaret Rooms Sarah Speedie
In attendance	Jane Branson (Guest) Sally Laidlaw (Chief Finance Officer) Gaynor Newnham (Clerk)
Apologies	
Absent	

MINUTES

Item	Item Outline	Action
1.	**Welcome & Apologies for Absence** JD opened the meeting	
2.	**Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests in Proceedings** Trustees confirmed that they had renewed their declarations on Governor Hub and there was nothing to note.	
3.	**Minutes of the Previous Meetings:** **12 June 2024** **The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.** The summary of action was reviewed, as follows: • Circulate the LA model and the version supplied by JB, as soon as possible – complete • CEO to talk the Denton chair of governors about support the Trust might provide – BE explained that he has approached the Acting HT and will visit next week • Circulate online seminar to Trustees – carried forward • Add 'Scheme of Delegation' column to policy list – this work has been delegated to Robin Tollyfield • Review list of statutory policies before the Away Day, to approve delegating authority at the Away Day. – this work has been delegated to Robin Tollyfield **Action: Circulate online seminar to Trustees (SL)** **Away Day** **The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.** The summary of action was reviewed: • Conduct Chair/ Vice Chair Election – complete • Hold parent governor election at Chyngton in September – CM updated Trustees on the recruitment discussions at the Chyngton Committee, aimed at improving diversity	**3.1**

	by using a more user-friendly template. JB also explained that the standard letter is not fit for purpose for committees recruiting members. Trustees asked to see the proposed template and revisit this at the next meeting. • Update agenda cycle to show training and safeguarding reports – complete **Action: Share sample recruitment template with Trustees, for further discussion at the next meeting**	**3.2**
4.	**Feedback from the Audit and Risk (A&R) Committee:** The Committee Chair fed back on the meeting of the 20 September and confirmed that these are productive meetings with robust processes. The meeting discussed: • Safeguarding Reports, and a standardised report format has been agreed • Policies and how the Trust and LGB's are overseeing them - RT covering as part of his Trust role • The Risk Register • Agenda schedule for the year, which is in the hub. • The Nursery proposal, which will be part of the (Published Admission Number) PAN consultation. Trustees discussed whether a Trust Attendance Report would be useful, to include data on Elective Home Education (EHE), Persistent Absence (PA) and severe absence. Trustees asked: • What constitutes good attendance, and SS explained that 90% attendance equates to 19 days' absence. There are 16,000 PA children in East Sussex. Habits become embedded at Primary school, so work with the primaries will impact on Seaford Head School (SHS). • Whether the attendance report would come from the national data, and SS explained that the narrative would come from the schools. • About the attendance levels at the local primaries, and BE explained that progress has been made at Chyngton School (CS), with a 3% increase. East Sussex overall attendance is 1.5% higher this year. The other Seaford Primaries are less positive. SS will draft an attendance report for the next meeting. Trustees discussed preparation for the audit and agreed, following the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO) recommendation, to request an audit of Information Technology (IT). As IT has been outsourced it is worth obtaining an overview of the structures in place. There were no issues with the financial audit. Trustees noted the Trust Action Plan, which had been circulated and will be RAG-d in Term 2. **Trustees approved the A&R Committee Terms of Reference.** **Action: Add Trust logos to the Terms of Reference** **Trustees agreed that there will not be a Deputy Chair for the committee, which will not meet if SS is not available.** SS invited other Trustees to join.	**4.1**

5.	**Safeguarding:** ****This was covered after item 3**** *IW joined at 17.08* IW updated Trustees on KCSIE updates in September 2024. Trustees asked: • How many SHS students attend alternative provision (AP), and IW explained that there is one Y11 student in full-time AP, some in part-time AP or workplace provision, and one full time in the workplace. SHS completes termly monitoring visits. • If there are sanctions if SHS is not satisfied with the provision, which was confirmed. • If there is an approved list of AP providers. IW confirmed that there is an LA directory which the LA tendered on which should reassure schools. • If there is ongoing LA monitoring of providers, and IW explained that there were LA checks before providers were added to the directory, and the schools complete the regular monitoring. Sam Whittaker quality assures for SHS. Concerns are logged on CPOMS. • About the checking of professional qualifications. IW explained that prospective employees show their certificates, and the school completes DBS checks. • If a professional register would be better than seeing certificates, as these could have been faked. IW confirmed that there is a register of those with Qualified Teacher Status and safer recruitment procedures are followed. • If reasons why referrals do not meet threshold are documented. IW explained that they would be logged on CPOMS. • If making referrals is a team decision. IW explained that she works with the Safeguarding Manager on this, and referrals are made, even if both do not agree. • If the Trustee for safeguarding will attend the same training as the safeguarding governor, which was confirmed. The SHS lead governor is due to attend training in January 2025. • If DSLs are trained in the manner of recording concerns. IW explained that this is covered in the DSL training which is completed every 2 years. The DSL and Deputy DSL take the same training. This is disseminated to staff in the September update. Entries can be revised if necessary and the member of staff is spoken to. The use of CPOMS has improved and it is set up so that no sections are missed. • How the Trust looks after its DSL's? IW explained that she feels well looked after. The school has access to counselling self-referral, and group supervision through the LA. The team meets weekly, and there is separate line management to discuss concerns and triggers. • If DSL workload is manageable? BE explained that SHS has built capacity to 11 DDSL at SHS and employed a student receptionist to relieve pressure on the assistant heads of year. • Whether expanding the DSL team was a response to a situation, which was confirmed. • If there was a positive impact from expanding the team, which was confirmed. • If there has been any Cross-trust work. IW explained that the safeguarding manager has done some work at CS, but nothing strategic. The primary cluster DSLs met at SHS, and this will be embedded. The CEO commented on the growth of staffing in this area since the pandemic. Previously, the SENCO was the DSL. This was confirmed, in response to a question, to be common to all schools.	

	A Trustee commented on KCSIE, as follows: • 'consent' does not include reference to understanding, • For the document to state that FGM 'appears' is inappropriate. • Safeguarding children is not just related to what happens in school. *IW left at 17.32*	
6.	**CEO Written Update** The CEO report had been circulated with the agenda. The CEO gave a verbal update on events since the report was written: • He has expressed frustration about the Seaford Primary Headteacher (HT) appointment being a missed opportunity for the Trust. Trustees asked if there would be any merit to Trustee to Governor discussions with the chairs but BE explained that he would prefer to build a relationship with the HT. RT and AC met the Seaford Primary School board, but the most positive people have now moved on. The influence of weak governance is concerning. • CS unvalidated outcomes data shows progress in key areas. Trust support was focused on maths, and interventions had impact. The combined score was disappointing due to a dip in writing. • SHS GCSE and A Level results were pleasing, and above national and local. The gap between the stronger and weaker schools is widening. • RT 's focus will be CS. • SHS is currently working with The Aquinas Trust and, specifically, Robertsbridge Community College. This provides good CPD for the leadership team and there have been internal temporary appointments. BE confirmed, in response to a question, that SHS is being paid for this work. • Strategically, the trust may need to support other schools. <u>Pupil numbers at CS</u> Trustees asked: • About the proposed unofficial cap in pupil numbers at CS. BE explained the rationale for the cap, which would be aimed at reducing the number of in-year admissions (IYA) once the PAN reduction is agreed. The CFO explained that some classes could be amalgamated, and staff structured appropriately. The LA would support restricting numbers to forty-five to allow staffing. • If CS would have to staff according to PAN. BE explained that the school could be creative so that separate groups can be taught together. • Why academies cannot refuse to take IYA, and BE explained that there is an unspoken code that a child has an entitlement to attend. Academy freedoms apply more to large chains. SLT markets itself as a community Trust. • Would previously excluded pupils have to be admitted, which was confirmed, under the fair access protocol. • What PAN will be requested. SL explained that it is unfortunate that the dwindling numbers are not in consecutive year groups. The aim will be to reduce to thirty for YR in 2026 and negotiate caps in other year groups. • If the LA will challenge the pupil numbers, and it was explained that place planning shows that pupil numbers are reducing.	

	Trustees agreed that reducing PAN is the right thing and it is worth exploring the cap. <u>Proposal to open a nursery at CS</u> BE explained that developing a nursery at CS would enable the message about the PAN reduction to be managed well. Provision in the area is lacking and hopefully, in the long term, CS may return to being 2-form-entry. Trustees asked: • About the data to support the need for a nursery. SL explained that she and AC met Jane Spicer from the LA, who stated that there is a big need. It would be successful, especially if children can be admitted from age 2 at the proper time. The consultation templates will be provided by the LA to ascertain parents' needs, which will inform the business plan. The consultation would gage the level of interests. • If the nursey would be ready in 2025. BE confirmed that there are staff in place, space to use, and government funding for in-school provision. Capital investment would be used to change toilets, tables, etc. • About the timescale for marketing and advertising, and BE explained that the LA is pushing for 2025 as they cannot meet needs. • If there would be government funding for the provision, and it was confirmed that this would be the case. The school would be able to charge for hours above the statutory allocation. Some Trustees were concerned about the plans, due to a lack of supporting documentation, though BE and SL explained that this will come through the next stages of the process. This is good timing, nationally, as funding is available. Locally, this area is red flagged for lack of provision. A business plan could be brought to the next A&R committee. SL explained that the nursery would begin with 3–4-year-olds, due to the need and the staffing ratios, during school hours, initially. A subsequent move to wraparound hours would be useful to working parents. A longer-term expansion to more than term-time only could then be considered. The current wraparound care is popular, which shows there is a need. Some Trustees were also concerned about the proposed specialist provision. BE explained that the LA would support with funding if they agreed that there is a need. This information will be available in January. *JH left at 18.24* <u>6th Form (SH6)</u> BE reported that: • there are now 130 students in Y12. • He met the CEO of Sussex College to discuss A Level provision. • Several Eastbourne schools are now feeding the 6th Form Trustees asked: • if the SH6 facility will be equipped to manage greater student numbers. SL explained that the lower school site is limited but there may be options. • If there is a wide range of options for A Levels. BE explained that it is kept narrow to be a partner to East Sussex College. Trustees noted that the original idea was to facilitate subjects for university, which has proved to be successful.	

	Trustees noted the school dashboards and academy committee meeting minutes, which had been circulated.	
7.	**Finance and operations:** <u>Premises and business for the year ahead</u> SL reported that: • Changes to the cleaning arrangements have been successful; three of the seven staff chose TUPE. Cleaners have been retained for SH6 and Sports Hall and will do the places not in the contract in the holidays. • Summer tasks at CS included painting and decorating, the move to Chyngton.org, installation of the Paxton System, for which fire release will be installed, and the addition of room dividers. • Summer tasks at SHS included painting and decorating, creating a science dept office, repairs, and maintenance. Work was limited by capacity over the summer, and a new caretaker has been appointed and is showing good impact. • Unsuccessful CIF bids will be resubmitted in December. • Fire doors at the Arundel Road site complete • There is a meeting planned for later this week to discuss the external wall. Trustees asked about the planning application and SL explained that tweaks will be needed to make a full application. More complaints have been submitted since approved. • Finance audit complete – processes will be made more streamlined for ease in future. Trustees asked about a long-term issue, which SL confirmed was being managed. <u>Finance</u> SL reported that Period 12 reports showed a high deficit, but there was movement due at year end and there will be draft accounts for the December meeting. The July and August accounts will be recirculated. Trustees asked: • when next year's budget should be submitted to the DfE. The CFO confirmed that it was approved in June and submitted in August. • If both budgets were in deficit, which was confirmed. • If the deficit can be expressed as a percentage of total Income, which was confirmed, for both schools and combined. • If the reports show the bank balance. They do not, but the CFP will share the information. Trustees discussed catering, which is poor at both schools. The CFO will raise this with Chartwells, the catering company. Issues include the quality of food, staff training processes and turnover, and safety. Both schools are developing their food agenda via student/ pupil voice, eco warriors and food champions. SHS LGB has recruited a governor to drive this. Trustees queried the reason for the issues and were informed that staff turnover and attitudes require improvement. JB/CM volunteered to attend the meeting with Chartwells.	
8.	**Governance** • **Confirm Chair and Vice Chair election outcomes**	

	Trustees had participated in an electronic ballot and agreed that JD will be Chair of Trustees, and SS will be Vice Chair. **Trustees agreed JB may continue to attend Trustee meetings, as a guest** • **360' Review of the Chair** SS thanked Trustees for contributing to the review, which she has discussed with JD • **Code of conduct** Governors were reminded to sign the Code of Conduct on Governor Hub. **Action: Trustees to sign the Code of Conduct on Governor Hub.** • **Trustee Induction** **Trustees agreed to use the ESCC model Induction Pack**	**8.1**
9.	**Agenda items for next meeting:** The AGM will follow the next meeting. The clerk confirmed this will be advertised in a timely manner. **Action: Advertise AGM**	**9.1**
10.	**Any other business** A Trustee asked if the Trust website is live, which was confirmed, though it is hard to locate – SL will raise this with Greenhouse. **Action: Raise ease of locating the Trust website with Greenhouse** Trustees asked about: • governor involvement with Ofsted at CS. BE explained that the Academy Committee will lead the process. The last CS inspection was successful and BE's regular meetings with CS challenge progress since then. JD attended the SHS inspection as a Trustee and would be happy to support CS, though the governors are experienced at Ofsted and CS is in a stronger position. Preparation will begin this year. • The Recruitment Policy on internet searches, as the ESCC model policy says that they should be completed. **Trustees agreed, following a discussion, not to include reference to searches in the policy, but to ask potential employees about their social media history at the interview**. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 4 December 5-6.30pm. **There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19.02**	**10.1**

Summary of actions		
No	**Action**	**By**
3.1	Circulate online seminar to Trustees	SL
3.2	Share sample recruitment template with Trustees, for further discussion at the next meeting	GN
4.1	Add Trust logos to the Terms of Reference	GN
8.1	Trustees to sign the Code of Conduct on Governor Hub.	All

9.1	Advertise AGM	GN
10.1	Raise ease of locating the Trust website with Greenhouse	SL

Seaford Learning Trust – draft meeting schedule for 2024 2025				
Term	**SHS LGB**	**Chyngton LGB**	**Trustees**	**AGM**
1	Tuesday 24 September 8-10am	Thursday 26 September 9-11am	Wednesday 09 October 5-7pm	
2	Tuesday 12 November 8-10am	Thursday 14 November 9-11am	Wednesday 4 December 5-6.30pm	Wednesday 4 December 6.30-7pm
3	Tuesday 14 January 8-10am	Thursday 16 January 9-11am	Wednesday 29 January 5-7pm	
4	Tuesday 4 March 8-10am	Thursday 6 March 9-11am	Wednesday 19 March 5-7pm	
5	Tuesday 29 April 8-10am	Thursday 08 May 9-11am	Wednesday 7 May 5-7pm	
6	Tuesday 24 June 8-10am	Thursday 10 July 9am-3pm	Wednesday 11 June 5-6.30pm	