



**SPRING COMMON ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING**

Thursday 12th January 2017 @ 17.30 hours

MINUTES

Present: Judy Ward (Chair) Kim Taylor (Head)
Jay Browning (JB) Rachael Goodwin (RG)
Anne Aldred (AA) Stacey Rose (SR)
Lynda Adam (LA)

In Attendance: Clare Buckingham (Cambridgeshire LA Officer)

No.	Minutes	Actions
1.	<u>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</u> The Chair welcomed everyone. The meeting was quorate with over 3 Board Members present. Apologies were received and accepted from Kirstie Dolan and Christine Gilder.	
2.	<u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</u> None.	
3.	<u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGREED ACTIONS UPDATE</u> DECISION: The Minutes from the Board of Trustees' meeting held on 14 th December 2016 were approved and signed by the Chair, as were those of Personnel and Finance, Premises, and Health & Safety committee meetings.	

READ & AGREED AS A TRUE RECORD

Signed.....(Chair) Date.....

4. Clare Buckingham from the Local Authority (LA placements and planning) came to advise the Board about the new development on Alconbury Weald at Chair of Governor invitation. 5000 new homes together with a new primary school (already opened) and a co-located secondary and area special school are to be built. Land has been secured for such a build. Although the secondary and special schools will be on the same site, the level of sharing facilities and services is not pre-determined and is negotiable. As the special school would be well established prior to the secondary school opening, terms and conditions could be negotiated to be favourable to the Trust running the special school it would seem.

However, the Free school and Spring Common Academy would be run as 2 separate schools with individual DfE numbers, as the responsibility and part of Spring Common Academy Trust.

Previously, the LA commissioned school places involving forward planning based on the need for expansion. The sponsor for the secondary school has been selected (D-MAT). This Trust is currently running the open primary school.

Now there is a process of open bidding whereby sponsors can go directly to the DfE and bypass the LA for Free School, or LA can invite applications through an application and interview process.

The secondary school with DMAT is not required until around 2022, but the area special school is scheduled to open in September 2019 to meet demand.

Applicants who wish to sponsor and run a Free School are eligible to receive pre and post opening costs as well as the usual running costs. These used to be borne by the LA, but are now funded directly by the DfE.

There is definitely an increased demand for special school placements in the local area. Spring Common Academy has been unable to offer places to a number of prospective students. The development of 5000 new houses, together with developments across the local area, mean a further increase is still likely and statistics relating to this are available from the LA.

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A Trustee asked; "Who would fund equipment for a new school?"

DfE funds the building costs as well as pre and post opening grants. Up to £300k pre opening and £170k post opening for fixtures, fittings and additional costs plus the regular pupil funding arrangements apply.

A Trustee asked; "This process will make huge demands on the time of the current Head Teacher. How can this time be back filled and supported adequately?"

Spring Common Academy is ready to grow and develop and it may be that the Trust needs to carry the burden of costs in the initial stages as a means of doing so.

A Trustee asked: "Why hasn't D-MAT expressed an interest in running an area special school?"

D-Mat recognises that it does not have the expertise to run and support an area special school at this time and has not expressed an interest so far as the LA is aware.

A Trustee asked; "How can any new area special school be supported by other services, such as NHS and social care, when current resources are already extremely stretched?"

Clare assured the Trustees that high-level commissioners in both sectors were fully aware of the need for expansion in the local area and are in the process of addressing the issue.

A Trustee asked; "How can the ongoing revenue (running) costs of any new venture be guaranteed given that LA services are stretched to the limit of their capacity currently?"

This is all in the strategic planning of the LA and the DfE.

A Trustee asked; "When is the deadline for any application to be submitted?"

Approximately the end of March.

A Trustee asked: "What is the process by which any such application is to be taken forward?"

An initial assessment/application needs to be submitted to the DfE by the end of March. The LA is then asked to comment on any such application and give recommendations or otherwise to the DfE based on the school's current performance indicators. Then a full day of interviews with the DfE follows and they publish recommendations in the coming summer term.

A Trustee asked: "Why do we need to express an interest and what are the

benefits to us?"

The Trustees agreed MAT as of January 1st 2017 and an opportunity has now presented itself to express an interest in sponsoring a new Free School locally (area special). This was discussed at the strategy day in June 2016 and agreed in principle as part of the School Development Plan.

A Trustee asked; "How many places will the school provide? "

110.

Clare Buckingham left the meeting at this point. Trustees discussed the information in detail.

A Trustee expressed concern about the workload that any such application might place on the head teacher.

Another Trustee stated that they would not wish to see any detrimental effect to Spring Common Academy following the commencement of any such project.

Economies of scale were discussed, such as the centralising of HR, Business Management, stores and supplies, training and the sharing of expertise and other potential areas as any such scheme developed.

A discussion around backfill for head teacher's time ensued – no formal decision agreed at this point.

A Trustee asked: "How would the relationship between a secondary school and an area special school be affected upon since they would be run by 2 separate Boards of Trustees? Might there be a conflict of interest on either part?"

Any such relationship is based on negotiation and professionalism and can be worked through it was suggested and, as the area special school would be well established before the opening of the secondary school, any sponsor would be in a good position to negotiate terms and conditions on an ongoing basis.

A Trustee asked; "How shall we broach such a decision with the staff team of SCA?"

It was suggested that information should be distributed in a prompt, timely and extremely clear manner, the aim of which would be to offer reassurance to anyone with concerns whilst emphasising the positivity of such potential gain for everyone.

KT

	<p>Decision: The Chair asked for a show of hands to determine whether or not the Trustee Board was willing to ask Kim, as Head Teacher, to begin work on an application to sponsor a Free School (Area Special) on Alconbury Weald. This was voted upon unanimously by all trustees present.</p> <p>A working party/subcommittee will be established to support the application process and the overall project to pre – opening stage.</p>	
5.	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING AND SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD</u></p> <p>This was not looked at during this meeting but will be examined at the next Personnel Meeting</p>	
6.	<p><u>HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT</u></p> <p>KT presented a proposed Service Level Agreement between SCA and Sunflowers Care Ltd regarding the school nurse. Gina Williams will start with Sunflowers on 16th January 2017 and will have an induction with them prior to commencing at SCA, hopefully by the end of the month as part of her supervision and clinical governance.</p> <p>KT has arranged a meeting between Cambs Community Services NHS Trust and Sunflowers Care Ltd on 19th January 2017 which AA will endeavour to attend.</p> <p>The Avocet Cleaning contract is about start and cleaners are to be relocated to other areas of the school other than Upper School.</p>	Head AA
7.	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>Thursday 16th March 2017 @ 17.30 hours</p>	

READ & AGREED AS A TRUE RECORD

Signed.....(Chair) Date.....