

Name	Position	Attendance
Trustees		
Isabelle Dennigan (ID)	Non-Executive Trustee and Chair of Board of Trustees	Present
Kate Chhatwal (KC)	Non-Executive Trustee	Present
Mark Ducker OBE (MD)	Executive Trustee - CEO	Present
Angela Farrell (AF)	Non-Executive Trustee	Present
Ross Gardner (RG)	Non-Executive Trustee	Absent (Apologies accepted)
Navdeep Sanghara (NS)	Non-Executive Trustee	Present
Attendees		
Paul Glover (PG)	Deputy CEO	Present
Philippa Jackson (PJ)	Governance Clerk	Present
Ben March (BM)	Chief Finance and Operations Officer	Present
Patricia Salami (PS)	Trustee Candidate (Observer)	Present (from item 7)
Rama Venchard (RV)	Advisor to the Board of Trustees	Present

1	<p><u>Welcome, Apologies and Housekeeping</u></p> <p>PJ, STEP Governance Clerk, welcomed everyone to the meeting particularly AF, who would be appointed as a Trustee at the meeting, and TM, STEP Director Teaching and Learning. TM would give a presentation on the STEP Ahead Teaching School Alliance.</p> <p>PS, Trustee candidate, would join the Board meeting as an observer and would arrive a little late to the meeting.</p> <p>PJ set out the fire evacuation procedures.</p> <p>Apologies had been received and were accepted from RG (work commitment).</p>
2	<p><u>Quorum</u></p> <p>The Clerk declared the meeting quorate.</p>
3	<p><u>Review of Pecuniary and Conflicts Interests</u></p> <p>There were no pecuniary or other potential conflicts of interest declared.</p>
4	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting held on 1 May 2019 were approved.</p>

	The Chair confirmed she would sign a copy of the minutes at the end of the meeting.
5	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u></p> <p>Trustees noted the actions from the previous meetings as set out in the agenda.</p>
STEP First – We are all one team	
6	<p><u>Chief Executive’s Report</u></p> <p>The CEO updated Trustees on developments within the Trust since the last meeting.</p> <p><u>STEP Standards Heat Map</u></p> <p>Trustees considered the STEP Standards Heat Map, which showed the Academies’ performance against the Trust’s performance standards. The data showed that the performance of the Academies within the Trust was strong and had moved closer to the STEP Standard over the year.</p> <p>Some areas of governance had been rated as 3 (progressing towards the STEP Standard) due to the uncertainties with some governors with the new changes in relation to the Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p><u>Ofsted Inspection Update</u></p> <p>MD provided a report on the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspections. The recent changes to the STEP model had impacted the schools dramatically and had led to positive Ofsted inspection outcomes this year.</p> <p>Trustees were pleased to hear the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspections and congratulated the children and staff at the schools. Trustees also congratulated TM, STEP Head of Teaching and Learning, for his on-going support to the East Sussex academies.</p> <p>The Chair referred Trustees to the David Livingstone Academy Ofsted report. She commented that the report was one of the best Ofsted reports that she had read. The report had complimented many different areas within the school as well as the support received by the Trust.</p> <p><u>KS2 Data</u></p> <p>MD reported that the SAT’s results across the Trust showed a strong picture in London. Many challenges remained in East Sussex and these would be discussed in more detail later in the meeting.</p> <p><u>STEP First Survey</u></p> <p>The key results of the 2018/19 STEP First Staff Survey were reported to trustees. All staff had been given the opportunity to complete the survey. STEP staff showed increased positivity towards the Trust related questions including prioritising the needs of the pupils, being proud to work for STEP, a strong feeling of teamwork within the Trust and understanding of the mission, vision and values. There had also been notable improvements in work/life balance</p>

and staff generally felt supported by leaders. MD reported that on the most recent round of STEP First visits, he had discussed the results with Academy leaders who agreed to share the key themes with their Academy Committees in September.

Trustees raised the following questions on the survey results:

Q: Of the three outstanding schools, there had been a negative response in the survey to pressure on staff. Why was this?

A: I had discussed this with Headteachers. When we drilled down to the results, it related to the negative response of just a few members of staff. One particular academy, a growing school, had dealt with a couple of challenging staffing issues. These had clearly had a negative impact on the survey results.

Q: Trustees agreed that the survey results showed a positive picture, where average responses were slightly lower in levels of stress. There were some diversity issues in the work force, was there any commentary for this? Was there anything we should respond to as a Trust?

A: Most of the diversity issues related to East Sussex as some areas were not particularly diverse. We were surprised about the diversity issues at Angel Oak Academy as this was a particularly diverse school and community. Some of the smaller academies had diversity issues but generally, the diversity scores were consistent across the Trust. An average of 75% of staff felt that diversity was appropriate.

STEP Way

The CEO reported a number of changes within the Trust under STEP Way including an improved Headteacher appraisal process and quality assurance mechanisms to develop leaders within the Trust.

STEP Ahead

A number of Academy Development Days had been held across the Trust and focused on curriculum and academy improvement cycle in preparation to the changes in the Ofsted curriculum from September 2019.

MD reported that a talent mapping process had been carried out across STEP this year. Trustees noted the key leadership changes across the Trust for the new academic year. MD reported that key leadership changes would be implemented for Gonville, Applegarth and David Livingstone Academies. Trustees were pleased to hear that career development opportunities had been well facilitated in line with the STEP First one team culture.

Q: In relation to talent mapping, could Trustees have a high level summary of the gender and diversity at the Education Committee or Board meeting?

A: PG confirmed that a breakdown would be presented to the Education Committee.

Action: High level summary of the gender and diversity of the talent mapping to be presented at the next Education Committee. (CEO/DCEO)

Q: Could we meet Tom Gary, Head of STEP Ahead Teaching School Alliance, at the next Board meeting?

A: Yes. He can be invited to the next Board meeting in September.

Action: TG to be invited to 30 September Board meeting (Clerk)

Item on Growth Strategy recorded in confidential minutes.

Trustees thanked the CEO for his report.

The Chair welcomed PS to the meeting.

7 **STEP Ahead Teaching School Alliance**

TM gave a presentation on the STEP Ahead Teaching School Alliance. TM provided an update on the current progress made against the KPI's, the quality assurance process and the next stages of development.

Trustees raised the following questions:

Q: Would the Teaching School have to self-fund?
A: Arguably, the Teaching School already self-funds but we could get people to buy into the programme through formalising the Teaching School Alliance. We could possibly sell the programme onto other organisations who would pay a levy.

Q: How could you ensure that the people you train remained within the Trust?
A: Graduates join STEP and buy into the programme from an early stage. They are trained by STEP so there is a lot of incentive to join the Trust and stay on. We accept that we would train some teachers who decided to move on but do not feel uncomfortable with this.

Q: Are teaching school grants still available?
A: No the grants had dried up. TM added that we were currently in a trial period of teaching school hubs where large numbers of teachers could be trained. We had also been approached by London South Teaching School Alliance. We would not receive funding from the hub but if a school joined which fitted STEP they would be passed on to us. There were currently no teaching school hubs in East Sussex.

Q: Why did the Teaching School institutions go through STEP Ahead TSA rather than a hub?
A: Mainly due to the good working relationship and contacts.

Q: Could the STEP Ahead Teaching School Alliance grow into something larger and become a revenue generator for the Trust?
A: We would see how things went in the next year before making any further decisions. PGCE and ITT could be future revenue generators.

The Chair thanked TM and the team for the progress.

STEP Ahead – We invest in our future

8 **Links with Other Academy Trusts**

PG provided an update on the links with other Academy Trusts. He reported that many new links had been established with other Academy Trusts including sharing practices and learning. A further discussion on the external perspective of the Trust and the outward facing relationship would be held at the Board development day.

9 Financial Management and Monitoring

Finance Report

The STEP Financial Report for May 2019 was noted. Trustees also noted the updated cash flow forecast to reflect the budget approved for 2019/20.

BM provided a summary of the monthly update on STEP’s in-year financial positions as at 31 May 2019.

Discussions on the Finance Report recorded in confidential minutes.

Trustees noted the overall positive year-end financial position, which had been a great achievement taking into consideration the financial challenges of the schools.

2019/20 Budgets

The STEP Finance and Operations Committee had looked in detail at the proposed 2019/20 budgets and recommended them for Board approval.

Discussions on 2019/20 Budgets recorded in confidential minutes.

The Board of Trustees thanked the CFOO and STEP Finance and Operations Committee members for their work and approved the 2019/20 budgets.

Trustees confirmed that they were happy for the Academies Budget Finance Returns to be returned to the ESFA.

STEP Finance and Operations Committee – 11 June 2019

The minutes of the STEP Finance and Operations Committee held on 11 June 2019 were noted.

Significant Items of Expenditure

Trustees considered and approved the significant items of expenditure as set out in the paper.

Lord Agnew Letter

The letter from Lord Agnew to MAT Auditors was noted.

ESFA Letter

The letter from Eileen Milner, CEO ESFA, to academy trusts about high pay was noted.

The Chair thanked the CFOO, Director of Finance and Business Services and the Director of Operations for providing excellent reports to the Finance and Operations Committee and the Board of Trustees.

	<p>Trustees were reassured that the Trust continued to be financially viable and recognised that that this was vitally important in the long term to ensure the best outcome for the children. Trustees were also reassured that the Trust had the correct staffing capacity and succession planning in place.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p><u>Educational Standards and Performance</u></p> <p>PG presented the 2019 KS2 headlines across the Trust.</p> <p><i>Discussions on the KS2 data were recorded in the confidential minutes.</i></p> <p>PG advised that a full report would be presented to Trustees at the meeting in September. The report would include a breakdown of the progress data to provide Trustees with an outward picture.</p> <p>On behalf of Trustees, ID recorded thanks to everyone at each of the STEP Academies for their excellent achievements.</p>
<p>STEP Way – We agree to do things like this</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p><u>STEP Governance</u></p> <p><u>STEP Board of Trustees</u></p> <p><u>Trustee Recruitment Update</u></p> <p>ID advised that she had decided to stand down as Chair and as a STEP Trustee. She had joined the Board of Trustees in March 2014 and it had been a great experience to be part of the Trust, particularly during its period of growth. Unfortunately, due to her workload and family commitments she was unable to continue her role as a Trustee.</p> <p>On behalf of the Trustees, MD thanked ID for her continuous support, which had been greatly valued and acknowledged and for the key role she had played in the development and success of the Trust.</p> <p>ID asked the non trustees to leave the meeting room whilst she provided an update on trustee recruitment and succession planning.</p> <p><i>Non Trustees left the room.</i></p> <p>Discussion on trustee recruitment and succession planning recorded in confidential minutes.</p> <p><i>Non trustees joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>ID provided an update on the Trustee recruitment process. She advised that RV would be appointed as a STEP Trustee and Chair of Trustees from September, subject to nomination and approval.</p> <p>Three potential trustee candidates had also been identified through Academy Ambassadors and Inspiring Governance and initial interviews were currently being arranged. It was hoped</p>

that these three candidates would be appointed as STEP Trustees in the new academic year. ID explained that careful consideration had been given to the skills and experience before recommending trustee appointments to the Board. The CV's of the candidates had also been circulated to Trustees.

PS introduced herself and provided some background to her skills and experience. She had experience of working in local government and with various local authorities. She had worked on a number of large regeneration projects and had been involved with employment and skills programmes with London Boroughs and the LDA. She had also been a local authority governor in Croydon at a number of troubled schools.

Trustee Appointments and Resignations

Trustees approved the appointment of AF as a STEP Trustee for a four-year term from 11 July 2019 to 10 July 2023. ID welcomed AF to the Board.

Trustees re-elected RG as a STEP Trustee for another four-year term from 15 July 2019 to 14 July 2023.

Trustees noted the resignation of STEP Trustee Alan Armstrong as of 26 June 2019. Following AA's resignation, a trustee with a strong educational background would be recruited. On behalf of the Trustees, ID thanked AA for his support to the Trust.

Action: Carry out recruitment process for trustee with educational experience. (MD/ RV)

Q: If our intention was to raise the external profile of the Trust, would we need a trustee with marketing or branding experience?

A: Yes, we would get in touch with Academy Ambassadors in the new academic year.

Action: Carry out recruitment process with Academy Ambassadors for trustee with marketing experience. (Clerk)

Board Development Day

Trustees agreed to hold the Board development day and Board of Trustees meeting on Monday, 30 September 2019 at Angel Oak Academy. Lunch would be available from 1.00pm. The Board development day would start at 1.30pm followed by the Board of Trustees meeting at 5.30pm.

STEP Scheme of Delegation

Trustees considered and approved the revised STEP Scheme of Delegation (SoD).

The following points were raised:

- The JD for the Academy Committee governor stated that the governors needed to attend a minimum of three meetings a year. Could we also include a note about the number of Academy visits they would be expected to carry out?
- Was the 3-year appointment term for the Chair of Trustees correct? The Scheme of Delegation stated that the Chair was appointed for 3 years but a Trustee was appointed for 4 years.

Action: Questions on the SoD would be directed to the Director of Finance and Business services. (Clerk)

	<p><u>STEP Strategic Governing Bodies</u></p> <p>Trustees noted the minutes of the Summer term SGB meetings.</p> <p>Trustees ratified the STEP governor appointments, as listed in the Governor Appointments Report for July 2019.</p> <p>Trustees noted that the procedure for approving the 2019/20 Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors for the STEP Academy Committees would take place at the Board of Trustees meeting on 30 September 2019.</p> <p><u>Trustee Training and Development</u></p> <p>Trustees noted the invitation to the STEP Trustee and Governor training. The training would be held on 25 September 2019 at 6.00pm at Heathfield Academy and would cover Scheme of Delegation, Safeguarding, Ofsted Framework and Academy Improvement Cycle.</p>
12	<p><u>STEP Policies and Procedures</u></p> <p>Trustee approved the following STEP policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy • Visitors Policy • Equality Policy
13	<p><u>Signing of Legal Documentation</u></p> <p>Trustees noted that the following documentation had been signed by the Company Secretary/ CEO/ Chair of Trustees since the previous meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Fontaine Academy Lease Plan
14	<p><u>Correspondence to the Chair</u></p> <p>There had been no correspondence received by the Chair since the last meeting.</p>
15	<p><u>Any Other Urgent Business</u></p> <p>Q: Was a trustee involved in the Executive team performance management process? A: Yes, the trustees were advised by Sir David Carter in relation to the CEO performance management process. Trustees were also involved in the performance management of other members of the Executive team.</p> <p>Q: Do we need a formal crib sheet for new trustees setting out the acronyms used in the Board and Committee papers? A: We could enhance the STEP Financial Handbook. A 1-2-1 induction session would also be held with the new trustees.</p>

	<p>Action: Financial and education acronyms used in papers to be kept to a minimum, with explanations as/when required. (Executive Team)</p> <p>Q: Could the references to SGB's be removed from the policies and procedures and replaced with Academy Committee?</p> <p>A: This would be amended in the policies and procedures going forward.</p> <p>There were no other matters of business to report.</p>
16	<p><u>Meeting Impact</u></p> <p>Trustees were pleased to receive reassurance from the Executive Team that the Trust remained in a stable financial position. They were also reassured by the effective and efficient use of funds within the Trust. Trustees were pleased to hear that the trust wide performance in education had increased and trustees had provided effective challenge on the attainment results.</p> <p>Trustees felt very positive about the new trustees joining the Board, which would provide the Trust with the capacity to prepare for the next stage of its development.</p>
17	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next Board development day and Board of Trustees meeting would be held on Monday, 30 September 2019 at 1.30pm at Angel Oak Academy.</p> <p>Trustees noted the 2019/20 schedule of Board and Committee dates. The Clerk advised that the schedule would be updated and recirculated.</p> <p>Action: Circulate the revised 2019/20 meeting schedule to Trustees. (Clerk)</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.</p>
18	<p><u>Confidential Matters</u></p> <p>Discussions on strategic, financial, governance, staffing matters and complaints were recorded in the confidential minutes.</p>

Action List	
Description	Owner
High level summary of the gender and diversity of the talent mapping to be presented at the next Education Committee.	DCEO
Tom Gary to be invited to 30 September Board meeting	Clerk
Carry out recruitment process for trustee with educational experience.	CEO/ Chair
Carry out recruitment process with Academy Ambassadors for trustee with marketing experience.	Clerk
Questions on the SoD to be directed to the Director of Finance and Business services.	Clerk

Financial and education acronyms used in papers to be kept to a minimum, with explanations as/when required.	Executive Team
Circulate the revised 2019/20 meeting schedule to Trustees.	Clerk
Send CEO appraisal date to ID.	Clerk

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's signature	
Chair's name	
Date	