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		<b>Synergy Multi Academy Trust</b> <b>Trust Board Meeting</b> <b>Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025</b> <b>at 5.30pm</b> <b>RHSC Sixth Form Centre</b>	
<b>Trustees Present</b>	James Macadam (JM) Chair	Deborah Boldero (DB)	Susi Waters (SW)
	Robin Hanley (RH)	Constance Tyce (CT)	Robin Gainher (RG)
<b>Members Present</b>	Philip Dewin (PD)	Andrew Savage (AS)	
<b>Present</b>	Alastair Ogle (AO)	James Claxton (JC)	Julie Dorling (CFO)
<b>Clerk</b>	Sarah Rankin (SR)		
<b>Absent</b>	Tracey Hughes	Peter Hawes	Richard Lord

## Minutes

### ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING OF 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025





Item No.	Action	By Whom	By When
4.	4.2.2 – Policies – Minor amendments are required to the Conflict-of-Interest Policy following the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting. <i>JC will amend the policy.</i>	JC	Jul 25
8.	Redacted - confidential	AO	17 Jul 25
	Trustees were invited by the chairs to attend LGB meetings and suggested that each Trustee could attend two meetings per year. Clarification of this role will need to be considered.	JM	Jul 25
	Leases on school premises are being reviewed. AO will send information to TH regarding the leases and keep her informed of progress.	AO	Jul 25
10.	The Trustees requested amendments to Accountability and Responsibility relating to the Audit & Risk approving all Audit & Risk related policies and the appointment and removal of external auditors. <i>AO will make the amendments and email to all Trustees.</i>	AO	Jul 25
11.2	Committee Membership – <i>JM will collate the requested changes.</i>	JM	Jul 25

### ACTIONS FROM EGM 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025

Agenda item	Action	By whom	By when
2.	Revised forecast plan incorporating VR and other relevant information	AO	Jan 26
3.	Admissions and marketing standardisation	AO	
3.	Explore lettings opportunities	AO/RG	
5.	Development of all key business cases for final review Primary amalgamation, restructures and Sixth form reform	AO	Jan 26
6.	Communications plan including escalation regime for Board approval	AO/JC	Jan 26

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Item No.		ACTIONS
1.	<b>APOLOGIES</b> Apologies were received from TH, PH and RL	
2.	<b>TO RECEIVE ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS DEEMED TO BE URGENT BY THE CHAIR</b> None received.	
3.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND RELATED PARTIES INTERESTS RELEVANT TO THE AGENDA</b> AO declared that his wife, Catherine Ogle, is an Executive Headteacher for the Trust.	
4.	<b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING &amp; MATTERS ARISING</b>	
4.1	Trustees reviewed and approved the minutes of the meeting of 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2025. Actions complete.	
4.2	Trustees reviewed and approved the minutes of the EGM on 15 <sup>th</sup> October Clerk to consult with AO and JM regarding redactions before publication on the website. Actions ongoing.	
5.	<b>BOARD REPORT</b>	
5.1	The CEO report was circulated in advance of the meeting. The following was discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim change of leadership at LS and its positive impact</li> <li>• Accuracy in student outcomes at LS to be supported by Trust-wide INSET day in January on assessment procedures.</li> <li>• LGB at LS planned for relaunch in January. Remaining governor will be Chair.</li> <li>• Assistant Head being recruited internally.</li> <li>• External quality assurance taking place at LS in the Spring with VNET</li> <li>• Site security across the Trust discussed with the introduction of Martyn's Law in 2027. MT looking into this to assure compliance.</li> <li>• Absence management discussed. JC advised that this is work in progress but that improved monthly reporting is assisting Heads in monitoring absence. Data is being fed into the People Committee. New policy in place. Trustees suggested this could be a focus on an internal audit.</li> <li>• Update given on progress of mandatory training for staff, Governors and Trustees.</li> <li>• Schools dashboard reviewed and discussed. All schools to complete SEF by the end of January relative to the new Ofsted criteria.</li> <li>• LGB reports discussed. Pressure on Heads acknowledged. New Head at GVSN being supported by RL with weekly meetings. Workplace Investigator Richard Moden is taking the pressure off Heads by investigating complaints. Challenge of SEND provision acknowledged due to inadequate funding. The need to educate parents regarding realistic expectations agreed, given the lack of funding from NCC. CT observed that the recently appointed Parent Support Advisor at the Federation will significantly reduce pressure on the SLT and will build helpful relationships with families. It was agreed this will be a valuable area to monitor the impact. The need to feedback to LGBs was underlined. This will be done at the Chair' meeting in January.</li> <li>• Parent Code of Conduct shared with Heads for feedback.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Priorities reviewed and significant work and progress noted. It was acknowledged that the strategic priorities may change due to the restructuring process.</li> </ul>	
6. 6.1	<p><b>FINANCIAL RECOVERY UPDATE</b> <i>Restructuring Planning and 3-year plan</i></p> <p>Recovery update and planning slides shared on screen. The following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AO meeting with the DfE fortnightly</li> <li>DfE receiving monthly management accounts. Revised recovery plan to be approved at the next Board meeting and submitted end Jan.</li> <li>RL named interim CFO</li> </ul> <p>Redacted - staffing    </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support from School's Choice is being monitored carefully</li> <li>Synergy Added Value – plenty to celebrate.</li> <li>AI/SEND conference being hosted by the Trust to explore how to build capacity to support SEND with AI</li> </ul>	
6.2	<p><i>SHS Business case – draft</i></p> <p>Circulated in advance of the meeting. The following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AO and RL spoke to staff at SHS on 25<sup>th</sup> November.</li> <li>Transparency and honesty key with learnings taken from the process last year. It was felt that staff need to fully understand the situation and that this will help acceptance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Redacted - staffing</b>    </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings taking place with the unions on Friday.</li> <li>Heads are very much part of the process with training lined up for next year. It was noted that DH has confirmed she is being consulted and feels well supported by the CEO.</li> </ul> <p>Trustees felt the business case was robust, clear and carefully considered. It was evident to Trustees that lessons have been learnt from the process last year.</p> <p>Trustees raised the management of parent reactions at all schools where a process will take place. It was agreed that timely communication to parents is key and that the reasons behind needing to 'downsize' must be clear. It was felt that the parent community is likely to be aware to some extent of the picture in Norfolk given the national conversation about falling rolls. It was noted that the messaging is going out earlier this time, observing that the VR email was circulated before half term. Trustees stressed the need for consistency in communications and for the Trust to ensure it is on the front foot in order to keep control of the narrative.</p> <p><b>ACTION: an escalation plan to be drafted clarifying how the Trust will react to a dynamic situation, and when the Board needs to be involved.</b></p>	AO
6.3	<i>VR and other update</i>	

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	JC reported 27 applications with 13 approved making savings of around £400K. 13 applications declined and one pending.	
7.	<b>SAFEGUARDING REPORT</b> Update circulated in advance of the meeting. All websites confirmed as compliant. Noted that safeguarding audits are taking place at FPS (this week) and LS (in January). AO confirmed that he checked the SCRs in the summer.	
8.	<b>POLICY STATUS</b> Covered above under agenda item 5.	
9.	<b>COMMITTEE REPORTS</b> 5.1 Committee reports Circulated in advance of the meeting. 5.2 LGB escalation forms Discussed under Item 5.	
10.	<b>OFSTED AND MAT INSPECTIONS</b> AO advised that MAT inspections are coming on board in 12-18 months time. The MAT Assurance Framework was shared in advance of the meeting. Trustees agreed this is a useful document with some great questions for the Board to consider. It was agreed to share these amongst the committees to consider. <b>ACTION: Framework questions to be shared to committees for consideration during the summer term.</b>	JM
11.	<b>ACCOUNTS APPROVED AND SIGNED</b> Actioned at AGM.	
12.	<b>TRUSTEE TRAINING</b> To be completed by the end of term.	
13.	<b>TRUSTEE ID VERIFICATION</b> Confirmed as completed.	
14.	<b>ITEMS TO DISSEMINATE TO LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES</b> Feedback on escalation forms as discussed above.	
15.	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> EGM agreed for Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January at 6.30pm	
	The meeting closed at 7.30pm.	

### Action log

Item No.	Action	By Whom	By When
6.2	an escalation plan to be drafted clarifying how the Trust will react to a dynamic situation, and when the Board needs to be involved.	AO	
10	Framework questions to be shared to committees for consideration during the summer term.	JM	