

**Approved Minutes for a meeting of the Auriga Academy Trust Board held on Wednesday 16 July at 6.00pm at School Clarendon Secondary (RTS Conference Room) and via Teams**

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

Link to Papers [Board-24-6 160725](#)

**Trustees of the Auriga Academy Trust in attendance:** Sarah Baker, Lucinda Christian-Lim, Chris Euden, Jonathan Pallas (Chair), Paul Roberts and Andy Whiteside.

**Trustees of the Auriga Academy Trust absent:** Lorna Goodwin, Paul Giuffredi and Rebecca Gonyora.

**Also in attendance:** Ivan Pryce (Chief Executive Officer), Susie Connor (Chief Operating Officer),

**Also in attendance virtually:** Jane Curzon (Trustee Elect and Chair of Strathmore School LGB), Simon Gordon (Chair of Capella House School LGB - from Item 2 only) and Niall Brady (Chair of Clarendon School LGB - from Item 2 only).

**Clerk in attendance :** Julie Adams.

## 1 Confidential Item

The Board of Trustees **discussed** a confidential item.

See also Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

Supporting papers: [CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS](#)

*Simon Gordon and Niall Brady joined the meeting.*

## 2 Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest and items from the Clerk.

- 2.A The Board of Trustees **noted** that apologies for absence had been received from Lorna Goodwin, Paul Giuffredi and Rebecca Gonyora. The Board of Trustees **agreed** to consent to their absences. .
- 2.B The Chair **reminded** all members of the Board that they must abide by the Auriga Academy Trust Declarations of Interest Policy and should declare if they have an interest in any matter that comes before them. There were no declarations made.

## 3 Minutes, Resolutions and Correspondence

- 3.A The Board of Trustees **received** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025 [[Board-24-6-03A Previous Draft Minutes 210525.pdf](#)] and [[Board-24-6-03A Previous Draft Minutes 210525-CONF.pdf](#)] and **approved** them as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 3.B The Board of Trustees **noted** completed actions from the previous meeting.

- 3.C The Board of Trustees **considered** actions arising from the previous meeting that were incomplete and their status.
- 3.D The Board of Trustees **noted** the Chairs Written Resolutions to the approve the purchase of a minibus for Clarendon School, the development of a sensory room for Capella House School and a new VOIP system. There were no challenges due to the clear information provided within the resolutions.
- 3.E The Board of Trustees **noted** the Chair's approval of the HMRC Tax return for the period ending August 2024, submitted by the auditors for that year.#
- 3.F The Board of Trustees **noted** a Trust Appeal Panel met on 19 June 2025 to consider the decision of a Contract Review Panel at Clarendon School to dismiss an employee. The decision was upheld, and the Chair **thanked** the participants for their time, especially due to the large amount of preparation and reading involved.
- 3.G The Board of Trustees **received** a letter from Ofsted dated 21 June 2025 [Board-24-6-03G Correspondence to the Chair - Ofsted 210525.pdf](#). The CEO **explained** that the matter had been addressed at the time (December 2024). He **added** that the six-month delay was due to a 25% rise in complaints addressed to Ofsted which had overwhelmed their systems. The Board of Trustees noted the letter was for information.
- 3.H The Board of Trustees formally **received** the letter from the DfE dated 25 June 2025 [Board-24-6-03H Letter to accounting officers 25 June 2025.pdf](#).
- 3.I There were no other matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **4 Review of 2024-25 and planning for 2025-26 from Strategy Day**

The Chair of Trustees **thanked** Trustees for their attendance and input during the Strategy Day. He **noted** that the documents had been reviewed thoroughly during that session and many in previous Board and Committee meetings: Trustees who had not been able to attend the Strategy Day confirmed that they had read the documents and had nothing further to add.

- 4.A The Board of Trustees **noted** the progress on the [Board-24-6-04A CEO Report on Priority Objectives for 2024-2025.pdf](#).
- 4.B The Board of Trustees **noted** the [Board-24-6-04B Risk Register 2024-25 Review.pdf](#).
- 4.C The Board of Trustees formally **approved** the [Board-24-6-04C Proposed Trust Priorities 2025-2026.pdf](#) and associated revised [Board-24-6-04C Trust Strategic Objectives 2024 - 2029 Revised June 2025.pdf](#).
- 4.D The Board of Trustees formally **approved** the [Board-24-6-04D Proposed AAT Risks 2025-26.pdf](#).
- 4.E The Board of Trustees formally **approved** the [Board-24-6-04E Annual Plan 2025-26 \(Draft to Client\).pdf](#) as recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Chair of Trustees **recorded** his thanks to the CEO for his extensive work involved in preparing the necessary reports and documentation.

## 5 CEO Report

The Board of Trustees **received** a verbal update from the CEO on other matters arising since the Strategy Session. The CEO **advised** that there had been no changes other than the updates provided during the confidential item.

The Board of Trustees **noted** the concerns from both Strathmore and Clarendon Schools regarding potential delays to the new building projects, the consultation periods and the reputational risks associated with them. The Board of Trustees **asked** for an update. The CEO **advised** that at a recent meeting with Achieving for Children (AfC), it was agreed that AfC would create a timeline for contingency decisions and that AfC would 'own' communications with parents. He is meeting with AfC again in September. Following a question, the CEO **advised** that the local authority has more authority over the builds themselves as they had commissioned the buildings. The CEO **clarified** that any contingency response would depend on the length of a potential delay and stressed that the relationship between parents and the school must not be jeopardised. He **advised** that updates would be provided to the LGB meetings in September/October **(ACTION)**.

The COO **added** that following a finance meeting, Achieving for Children (AFC) were keen to have the finances signed off by the Trust Board to prevent further delays. Reworked financial figures, developed with the head teachers, had been submitted to AFC and a response was expected by the end of the week, with a view to bringing a proposal to the Board in September for approval **(ACTION)**.

The Board of Trustees **expressed** concern that the schools, not AfC, would be the public-facing 'touch point' for parental complaints in case of delays. The CEO **reassured** the Board that this was precisely why the issue had been raised with AFC more than a year in advance of the planned opening. He **noted** that the risk was significant of a reputational effect on the schools if the projects were not delivered.

## 6 Finance

- 6.A The Board of Trustees **received** a verbal update on year-end position and review of management accounts against revised budget. [Board-24-6-06A The Auriga Trust 24.25 P10 Mgt Accs v1 \(1\).xslm.url](#). The Board of Trustees **noted** that the three-year forecast looked positive. The Chair **cautioned** that this was based on a funding assumption from AfC which was almost certain to change within the next one to two years.
- 6.B The Chair **advised** that the budget document had been fully discussed and extensively reviewed by the Board at the Finance Committee meeting on 10 July 2025 and requested that the Board formally minute its approval. The Board of Trustees formally **received** and **approved** the 2025-26 Budget and 3-Year forecast. [Board-24-6-06B 25.26 Budget Support Workbook - DRAFT.xlsx](#). The Board of Trustees also **approved** the COO submitting the budget forecast return based on the documents the Board had received. **(ACTION)**

## 7 Governance and Appointments

- 7.A The Board of Trustees **approved** the appointments of LGB Chairs and Vice Chairs for 2025-26 as proposed by LGB's. [Board-24-6-07A Proposed Governance Structure 2025-26 Trust as at 010925.pdf](#)
- 7.B The Board of Trustees **approved** the appointments of Chris Buckley-Reynolds to Strathmore School, Kelly Faulkner to Clarendon School LGB and Asif Mullan to Capella House School LGB's as Trust appointed Co-opted Governors with immediate effect.
- 7.C The Board of Trustees **approved** meeting dates for 2025-26 [Board-24-6-07C Meeting calendar for publication.pdf](#)
- 7.D The Governance Professional **stated** that she would update all governance documents, including the Scheme of Delegation, over the summer. She **noted** that these updates would incorporate guidance from the new Trust Handbook and Governance Guide, with the revised documents to be presented at the September meeting. **(ACTION)**
- 7.E The Board of Trustees **noted** that an annual report to stakeholders will be prepared to include in the Governance Statement in the Annual Report and Accounts.
- 7.F The Board of Trustees **noted** the publication of the [Academy Trust Handbook 2025\\*](#) and [Governance Guide](#), receive the Board Briefings on the [Handbook\\*](#) and [Governance Guide](#). The Chair **highlighted** that a change in the new Handbook meant he was no longer permitted to sit on the Audit and Risk Committee. He **confirmed** that he had therefore stepped down from this committee as a result, and consider any actions arising.

## 8 Election / Appointment to key Trust roles for September 2025-26

- 8.A The Governance Professional **noted** that no other nominations had been received for the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees. The current Chair **confirmed** his willingness to continue in the post for another year. The Board of Trustees **unanimously agreed** to his re-appointment as Chair from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026.
- 8.B The Chair **proposed** that the election of the Vice Chair(s) for 2025-26, along with other key roles under agenda item 8, be approved. No objections were raised by the Board.
- 8.C The proposed Vice Chair(s), Committee Chairs and Link Trustees were therefore elected as below .
- 8.D
- Andrew Whiteside – Vice Chair and LGB Link Trustee.
  - Sarah Baker - Chair, Pay and Governance and Nominations Committee and Designated Link Trustee for Safeguarding
  - Paul Giuffredi – Chair, Finance and Resources Committee, Designated Link Trustee for Finance
  - Lorna Goodwin – Chair, Standards and Effectiveness Committee
  - Chris Euden – Chair, Audit and Risk Committee

## 9 Committee Summary Reports

- 9.A The Board of Trustees **received** the summary reports from the Committee Chairs [Board-24-6-09A Committee Chairs Summary Reports](#) noting that only those from Strathmore School and the Standards and Effectiveness Committee had been received. The Board of

Trustees **emphasised** the value of these reports for two-way communication, explaining that as they do not attend LGB meetings, the summaries provide a crucial and convenient understanding of local matters without needing to contact other trustees directly and requested that a report is submitted for every meeting. **(ACTION)**

- 9.B The CEO **stated** he would create a document, in collaboration with the headteachers, for the Clarendon and Strathmore Schools expansion projects. This would outline clear timelines and responsibilities, using information from the local authority and AfC, to provide advance notice if buildings were not ready, which would affect student placements. He **confirmed** this document would be presented to the next Local Governing Body (LGB) meetings. Following a question, the CEO **advised** that this would be a live, working document that would be regularly updated. **(ACTION)**

There were no other items for consideration which had not previously been covered on the agenda.

Supporting draft minutes for noting

- Clarendon School LGB, 9 July 2025,
- Capella House School LGB, 8 July 2025
- Strathmore School LGB, 7 July 2025
- Audit and Risk Committee – 1 July 2025
- Governance and Nominations Committee – 24 June 2025
- Standards and Effectiveness Committee – 24- June 2025
- Finance and Resources Committee - 17 June and 10 July 2025

## 10 Approval of Policies / Statements

The Board **approved** the [AAT CPD Policy Sept 25](#)

## 11 Review impact, planned actions and agree feedback to stakeholders.

The Board of Trustees **considered** the impact of this meeting and reflected that much had been a formal 'rubber stamping' exercise of the discussions and agreements made at the Strategy Session. The Governance Professional **advised** that she will consider minimizing duplication and ensure that tasks suitable for delegation are appropriately assigned as part of her review of the governance procedures and documents.

The Board of Trustees **noted** it was Paul Roberts' last meeting as Trustee, noting his long-standing association with Clarendon School before joining the Board. Mr Roberts **advised** that whilst sad to leave, he felt that there was sufficient strength and engagement within the Board to deal with any challenges the Trust would face. The Board of Trustees **expressed** their thanks to Mr Roberts and wished him well in his future endeavours.

The Board of Trustees **noted** the actions arising from the meeting, which include three items within the Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Create a working document for the Clarendon and Strathmore expansion projects, detailing timelines and responsibilities, to be shared with the Local Governing Bodies ahead of their meetings in September / October	IP	Sep-25
2	A financial proposal to be brought to the Board of Trustees in the September meeting for the Board to approve in relation to the Clarendon and Strathmore School expansion projects.	SC	Sep-25
3	The COO to submit the budget forecast return ahead of the July deadline following their approval of the 3 year budget	SC	Jul-25
4	Update all governance documents, including the Scheme of Delegation, incorporating guidance from the new Trust Handbook and Governance Guide, for presentation at the September Board meeting.	JA	Sep-25
5	All Committee and LGB Chairs to provide a Committee Summary report following every meeting	All	ongoing
6	All Appointments to LGB, Committees etc to be confirmed	JA	Sep-25

## 12 Confidentiality

The Board of Trustees **agreed** that the discussion at the meeting the background papers , and the reports identified as confidential above, {and the minutes contained in the confidential appendix to the minutes relating to item 1,) should remain confidential and excluded from the published minutes and papers.

The date of the next Board meeting is **18 September 2025**

*Jonathan Pallas*

Jonathan Pallas (Oct 6, 2025 16:14:58 GMT+1)

Jonathan Pallas

Chair of the Board of Trustees

06/10/25






# Board-24-6-00 Approved Minutes 160725

Final Audit Report

2025-10-06

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