

THE SPRING PARTNERSHIP TRUST
Final adopted minutes of a meeting of the Directors
held at Hayes Primary School at 7.00pm on Tuesday 21st May 2019

Present:

Mr C Lees, Chair
Mrs J Brinkley CEO
Mr R Barlow
Mrs C Barenbrug
Ms K Hawker
Mr J Martin
Mrs M Mina
Miss R Punter
Mr R Taylor from minute 6.1.1.3

In attendance:

Mrs C Sheehan, CFO
Mrs V Bolton, COO

Clerk: Miss K Crossley

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from J Cliff and L Falk.
- 1.2 Directors were satisfied with the reasons given for absence and accepted the apologies. D Okafor was absent.
- 1.3 The meeting was quorate.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

- 2.1 No pecuniary interests were declared.

3. Board Business

3.1 To note changes to the Board and remaining terms of office

- 3.1.1 There had been no changes to the Board. The terms of office of all Directors were noted.

3.2 Trust and Local Committee membership

- 3.2.1 Directors were referred to, and approved, the updated Board and Committee membership (appendix 1). Consideration would be given to the membership of the Human Resources and Achievement and Curriculum Committees. **CL to action.**

4. Minutes of previous meeting

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of 1st April 2019 (appendix 2) were approved by the Board and signed by the Chair.
- 4.2 Directors were referred to the matters arising report (appendix 3). The following actions were discussed:
 - 4.2, 6.1.2.3 In response to a question from the Committee, it was reported that plans were in place to provide further information to parents on Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL), which would also be used as part of the Trust's offer. Parents had been invited to see OPAL in action at lunchtimes. The development of OPAL would be measured at all schools and

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data brought to the next meeting. **JB to action.** Directors asked whether there was information on school websites about OPAL and were informed that this was in progress with the Communications Officer. An update would be provided at the next meeting. **VB to action.**

4.2, 7.1.1 It was confirmed that oversight of staff awareness and implementation of policies had been incorporated in the annual monitoring cycles and checks would be undertaken in schools as part of school improvement visits in the second half of each term. A communications plan had also been drawn up to ensure oversight of communication of policies to staff as well as understanding of the content of the policies and implementation thereof. A review of implementation of HR policies and staff records had been planned as part of an internal audit in the summer term.

4.2, 14.2.1 Further to recent changes to the Behaviour Policy, it was confirmed that training on restorative justice had been delivered to staff at CPS and HPS. A more sophisticated understanding of behaviour was being developed across the Trust, with positive strategies for management of non-conformist behaviour, avoidance of toxic shaming and encouragement of pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour.

5. Chair's report

5.1 There were no questions from Directors for the Chair.

6. Executive Team Reporting

6.1 CEO report

6.1.1 Strategic/political developments

6.1.1.1 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 13.1.

6.1.1.2 Trust Development

6.1.1.2.1 The Trust had been invited to bid, along with two other trusts, to establish a Croydon hub of TSPT by working with the Synaptic Trust, a three-school MAT in Croydon with c2k pupils.

6.1.1.2.2 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 13.2.

6.1.1.2.3 If the bid was successful directors would need to carefully consider whether it would indeed be in the interests of TSPT to manage the three Synaptic schools and how we might ensure that the costs of any time and effort invested into the interactions with Synaptic would be recouped. Alternative options for working with Synaptic, such as a partnership agreement, may also be explored, although from an operational perspective this would not be ideal.

6.1.1.2.3 Directors inquired whether there were any other opportunities for growth and were advised that the Trust was not aware of any.

6.1.1.2.4 Directors asked whether it would be possible to extend the previously obtained MAT Development and Improvement Fund grant for a potential merger with Synaptic Trust

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and was advised that this had been investigated and the funding was no longer available.

6.1.1.3 SATs administration 2019

- 6.1.1.3.1 An update was provided on the administration of recent SATs. External visits had been made by Local Committee members and Directors who had undertaken checks using a checklist compiled by the central team covering all aspects of the tests, including the storage and distribution of papers and arrangements in classrooms being used for tests.
- 6.1.1.3.2 One issue had arisen, which had been reported to the STA, resulting in no further action. The matter had been investigated internally, as a result of which actions had been agreed to prevent a recurrence. Directors suggested that consideration be given to appointing one member of staff, with no vested interests in the tests, to the role of examinations officer, to oversee all statutory tests. **JB to action.**

6.1.2 Update on Big 6 Priorities

- 6.1.2.1 It was reported that the next steps for the Big 6 would be to refine, clarify and track the priorities more accurately. Commentary was provided on the following priorities:

Career development:

- The first peer reviews had been conducted at LPS, identifying strengths, weaknesses and areas for development to focus attention on the school development and an accurate SEF.
- Curriculum-led training was on-going for NQTs, with the Trust considering its statement of intent and action plan to roll out a new curriculum to reflect the new Ofsted framework from September 2019.
- Training had been completed by all disciplines of staff across the Trust, including site and admin staff at the recent INSET day
- Subject leaders meetings would continue in 2019/20

Pedagogy

- The Trust was working toward finalising shared expectations of planning, feedback and marking by the end of term.
- A single model for reporting to parents would be introduced following consultation with parents. This was expected to reduce teacher workload.

Building Community

- The Spring Success event would be held on 10th June 2019, including celebration of achievements and governance training. An open discussion would be held on the use of Trust reserves, including the need to boost income generation in order to replenish reserves.

6.1.3 Implementation of Trust Behaviour Policy in schools

- 6.1.3.1 This matter had been discussed in minute 4.2, 14.2.1.

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6.2 CFO report

6.2.1 Financial and audit reporting

6.2.1.1 Directors were referred to the CFO report, the consolidated management accounts and financial reporting to March 2019, the balance sheet and cash flow report (appendices 11-14). Attention was drawn to the following headlines:

6.2.1.1.1 The most pressing concern was the financial situation at DRIS, where the overspend on the CIF project associated with structural issues in the hall looked set to result in a deficit position at year-end. A request for £25k top-up funding for the project would be submitted to the ESFA, which, if successful, would eliminate the forecast year-end deficit.

6.2.1.1.2 A spending freeze was in place at LPS following meetings with the Executive Headteacher and School Business Manager reinforcing the need to limit the deficit to the amount of restricted reserves brought forward. The central team was furthermore constantly challenging any spend. Directors noted that it was essential that a realistic balanced budget be set for 2019/20 as further losses would not be acceptable, albeit that this year's loss was caused by exceptional circumstances.

6.2.1.1.3 The budget setting process was well underway. Funding, by way of grant, for increased employer contributions to the Teachers' Pension Fund had been confirmed for the whole year and incorporated in budgets. Other measures were still being considered in order to ensure balanced budgets in 2019/20. Discussions would be held at the HR Committee to review and support the budget setting process.

6.2.1.1.4 In response to Directors' concerns regarding the in-year deficit at LPS, it was explained that costs had increased due to relying on agency staff to provide SEND support, a situation exacerbated by the difficulties of securing funding from LBB. However, such reliance was reducing and funding was being pursued vigorously. . The appointment of a new HoS was expected to further stabilise operations at LPS, while an increased focus on income generation would further improve the financial position.

6.2.2 Budget Forecast Return Outturn

6.2.2.1 The Budget Forecast Return Outturn had been approved by email by Directors ahead of the deadline for submission.

6.2.3 It had been confirmed that a grant would be received in relation to the increase in employer contributions to the Teachers' Pension Fund in 2019/20. There was no information of future funding for years beyond 1st September 2020.

6.2.4 Directors congratulated the CFO on the very good outcome of the internal audit report dated March 2019 (appendix 16).

6.3. COO report

6.3.1 Review content and compliance or Trust website

6.3.1.1 It had been agreed that review of the compliance of Trust and school websites together with general updating would be undertaken in the second half of the autumn term going forward and reported to Trust Board/Local Committees at the December meetings.

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6.3.2 Health and safety

6.3.2.1 There were no questions from Directors on the comments in the COO report (appendix 17) on health and safety.

6.3.3 GDPR

6.3.3.1 There were no questions from Directors on the comments in the COO report (appendix 17) on GDPR. The outcome of visits by the Data Protection Officer to all schools and the central team would be brought to the next meeting. **VB to action.**

6.3.4 Review risk register

6.3.4.1 Directors were referred to the risk register (appendix 18), which was due for annual review by Directors. It was noted that individual risks were monitored by Committees (as reflected by symbols in the document) over the course of the year.

6.3.4.2 It was reported that the format for reviewing risks would change, with the risk register being used as a working document alongside KPIs to enhance mitigation of risks and tie in with strategic objectives. Directors noted that the overall impact of some risks would remain unchanged regardless of whatever mitigation was put in place and suggested that going forward, a pre-meeting discussion on risks should be held with the Chair of the Board or relevant Committees to enable an active process of support and challenge at the meeting, at which a commentary paper would be provided. The executive team would propose changes to risk register, which would be considered by Directors. **VB to action.**

6.4.4.3 There were no changes to the risk register.

7. Report from FARCO

7.1 The minutes of the FARCO meeting on 2nd May 2019 would be brought to the next meeting. **KC to action.**

8. Report from ACC

8.1 Overview of key issues

8.1.1 The Chair of ACC provided an update on the work of the Committee as follows:

- The new format for KPI reporting had been well received by the Committee.
- The Committee had considered the impact of falling pupil numbers and level of SEND need
- The Committee had discussed preparation for an early Ofsted inspection at LPS in the event that KS2 SATs results were below the national average. It was reported that an improvement in outcomes was expected, but it was not yet clear whether the extent of the improvement would be sufficient. Directors noted the need for urgent improvement at LPS and accepted assurances that work was underway to set up a strong Ofsted-ready group, which would be driven by the EHT and held to account by the CEO.

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- 8.1.2 The minutes of the ACC meeting on 2nd May 2019 would be brought to the next meeting. **KC to action.**

9. Report from HR Committee

- 9.1 The HR Committee had not met since the last Trust Board meeting. It was confirmed that at its next meeting in June 2019, items on HR operations and the approval of possible staffing restructures across the Trust and the associated consultation processes would be considered.

10. Safeguarding

10.1 Trust-wide school trips procedure

- 10.1.1 The Trust-wide school trips procedure would be brought to the next meeting. **JB to action.**

11. Policies

- 11.1 There were no policies due for review.

12. AOB and date of next meeting

- 12.1 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 13.3.
- 12.2 The meeting closed at 8:55pm. The next meeting would be held on Thursday 4th July 2019 at 7pm at Hayes Primary School.

Signed:Date:.....
Clive Lees, Chair of Directors

Minutes might be confidential for the following reasons:-

- a) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office, or a pupil or their family;
- b) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
- c) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Trust and its employees;
- d) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Trust;
- e) action being taken to prevent or detect crime to prosecute offenders;
- f) the source of information given to the Trust in confidence; or
- g) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Trust's functions.

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