

**THE SPRING PARTNERSHIP TRUST**  
**Final adopted minutes of a meeting of the Directors**  
**held at Hayes Primary School at 7.00pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**Present:**

Mr J Cliff, Chair  
Ms C Barenbrug  
Mr R Barlow  
Mr A Blount  
Mrs J Brinkley, CEO  
Miss R Punter  
Mr R Taylor, Vice Chair

**In attendance:**

Mrs C Sheehan, CFO  
Mrs V Bolton, COO

**Clerk:** Miss K Crossley

**1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies had been received from K Hawker and D Okafor. The meeting was quorate.

**2. Declaration of pecuniary interests**

2.1 None.

**3. Board Business**

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

3.1.1 The Board welcomed A Blount, who had been appointed as a Director on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and had joined ACC. Introductions were made.

3.1.2 Directors thanked L Falk, who had resigned on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020, for her support as a Director and member of the HR Committee.

3.1.3 The term of office of C Lees had ended on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

3.1.4 Directors were referred to the Board and Committee Composition (appendix 1) and received a verbal update on very recent changes, including the resignation of J Tibbalds as Chair of the Local Committee at HPS and as a Local Committee Member. The appointment of a new chair would be considered in the context of the on-going local governance review and a proposal would be brought to the Board for approval. **JC to action.**

**4. Minutes of previous meeting**

4.1 The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 (appendix 2) were approved by Directors and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Directors were referred to the matters arising report (appendix 3) detailing actions which had been completed and the status of outstanding actions as follows:

4.2, 7.1.1 Directors received a sample risk assessment for OPAL (appendix 4). Directors asked whether the quality and safety of loose parts donated by parents for OPAL were checked by schools. It was reported that in all schools a member of staff responsible for OPAL checked donations before use, and that a standard procedure for carrying regular checks out would be rolled out across the Trust. **JB to action.**

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- 4.3 It was agreed that a column would be added to the matters arising report to enable actions to be RAG-rated and to include a timeframe for completion of actions. **KC to action.**

**5. Executive team reporting**

**5.1 COO report**

**5.1.1 GDPR**

- 5.1.1.1 Directors were referred to the COO report (appendix 5) and asked whether the GDPR compliance issue at SMCPA applied to other schools. It was reported that the issue (location and layout of the school office) was specific to SMCPA and that work was being undertaken during February half-term to address the matter.
- 5.1.2.1 It was noted that FARCO had approved the appointment of RPT consultants to conduct site condition surveys across the Trust. The reports were expected in mid-March.
- 5.1.2.2 Directors sought to understand the nature of the risks associated with on-going litigation cases. It was reported that the recent tribunal, in which the court had found strongly in favour of the Trust, had confirmed that the Trust's processes were sound. All fees for this case had been covered by the Trust's insurance, however there had been an operational impact in terms of the staff hours devoted to managing the case. The Trust was waiting to hear whether a long-standing pension case would be appealed by the complainant. There were no significant financial risks associated with this case, however it would continue to take up staff time.

**5.2 CFO report**

5.2.1. Directors were referred to:

- the CFO report
- consolidated management accounts to December 2019
- consolidated cash flow forecast 2019/20
- consolidated financial reporting (appendices 6 to 9).

5.2.2 Commentary was provided on actions put in place to mitigate ongoing and new risks, as follows:

- **SEND funding:** SENDCos across the Trust were liaising to share their skills and experience in order to improve the effectiveness of applications for SEND funding.
- **Tree House funding:** progress had been made at a recent meeting with the borough on the funding deficit in 2018/19 and the current year. The borough had agreed to allocate £10k to the Trust for one place commissioned over numbers. Discussions were on-going and The Trust was collating evidence of the funding deficits for submission to the borough. It was acknowledged that SEND funding was a national issue and that a national SEND review was currently underway.
- **HR issues:** (long-term sickness, maternity): the HR Committee would explore a proposal from FARCO to establish an in-house pool of former teachers as a more cost-effective way of covering teacher sickness and maternity leave.

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- **Credit control:** FARCO had recently approved a software contract which would mitigate credit control and bad debts arising from non-payment of school meals and wraparound care.
- 5.2.3 The Board was referred to proposed changes to the financial scheme of delegation (appendix 9) intended to ensure accountability for any use of historic brought-forward unrestricted reserves below £5k. In addition, provision was suggested for the approval of contractors for any successful CIF bids, given the timings of FARCO and Trust Board meetings and key dates in the CIF process. The changes to the financial scheme of delegation were approved.
- 5.2.4 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 9.1.
- 5.3. CEO report**
- 5.3.1 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 9.1.
- 5.3.2 Review any strategic/political developments**
- 5.3.2.1 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 9.2.
- 5.3.2.2 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 9.3.
- 5.3.3 Progress towards targets in Business Plan/Big 4**
- 5.3.3.1 There were no questions from Directors on progress towards targets in the Business Plan.
- 6. Trust Committee Business**
- 6.1 Overview of HR issues**
- 6.1.1 The HR Committee had not met since the Trust Board meeting in December 2019. The main focus of the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 would be the consultation documents for the organisational changes.
- 6.1.2 Directors congratulated the central team on the smooth transfer of payroll in house and the successful first payroll run in January 2020.
- 6.1.3 The new HR consultants had been engaged and had provided substantial feedback on the consultation documents.
- 6.1.4 The Committee would be asked to approve the Trust's Gender Pay Gap report for 2018/19 which needed to be submitted and published before the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- 6.2 Minutes of FARCO meeting, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019**
- 6.2.1 The minutes of the FARCO meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (appendix 14) were received for information.

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- 6.2.2 In addition to discussions on ICFP, the Committee had also covered mid-year budget reviews for all schools and the central Trust and provided feedback on information required to enable consideration of the proposed revisions to the music hub at HPS at the next meeting.

**6.3 Minutes of ACC meeting, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

- 6.3.1 The final unadopted minutes of the meeting 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 (appendix 15) were received for information.
- 6.3.2 The Committee had also discussed the Trust-wide curricula and explored the use of Fischer Family Trust resources to ensure that targets were set above the national average of schools with comparable contexts.
- 6.3.3 Directors asked whether the same curriculum was in place at all schools and was advised that this was the case for all subjects apart from art, design and technology and music. In response to a question about when an improvement in risks such as boys' writing would be seen, it was reported that the focus of the new inspection framework was on the quality of education rather than tracking data, however the schools continued to closely monitor vulnerable groups. The CEO's performance management included targets relating to progress, which would be measured by outcomes, including sustaining the level of KS2 reading and increasing the level of reading in KS1.

**7. Policies**

**7.1 Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions**

- 7.1.1 Directors were referred to the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (appendix 15). It was confirmed that the policy had been updated to reflect the transfer of responsibilities from Local Committees to SENDCos and the introduction of electronic storage of medication records. The policy was approved.

**7.2 Behaviour**

- 7.2.1 Directors were referred to the Trust-wide Behaviour Policy (appendix 16). It was noted that school-specific Behaviour Procedures were in place at all schools. A discussion followed on the historic context for this structure having arisen, and it was acknowledged that the Trust had since developed to the point at which it was now appropriate for behaviour to be managed consistently at all schools. It was noted that Exclusion Procedures were in place at each school and Directors were concerned to ensure that these, as well as positive handling procedures, would also be incorporated in the Trust-wide Behaviour Policy to ensure clarity in relation to legal requirements. **VB to action.**
- 7.2.2 A discussion followed on whether there were any policies which could not be applied at Trust level. It was noted that ACC was in the process of over-seeing the updating of non-statutory policies for maths, English, teaching and learning and assessment, which had historically differed between schools but would now be used across the Trust. In addition, some policies, such as the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and the Lettings Policy, included site-specific details, for example the location of medicine cabinets. It was agreed that the policy spreadsheet would be included in the papers for the next meeting, which would explain the status of policies across the Trust. **VB to action.**

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**8. AOB and date of next meeting**

8.1.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 at 7pm at Hayes Primary School.

8.1.2 The meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed: .....Date:.....  
John Cliff, 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.