

THE SPRING PARTNERSHIP TRUST
Final adopted minutes of a meeting of the Trustees
held remotely via WebEx at 6 pm on Wednesday 31st March 2021

Present:

Mr R Barlow
Ms C Barenbrug
Mr A Blount
Mrs J Brinkley, CEO
Mr J Cliff, Chair
Ms K Hawker
Mr D Okafor
Miss R Punter
Mr R Taylor, Vice Chair
Clerk: Miss K Crossley

In attendance:

Mrs V Bolton, COO
Mrs G Sesli, EHT

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies had been received from Mrs Brookman and Mrs Sheehan.

2. Declaration of pecuniary interests

2.1 None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 10th February 2021 (appendix 1) were approved by the Board and would be electronically signed by the Chair. **JC/KC to action.**

3.2 Trustees were referred to the matters arising report (appendix 2) detailing the status of outstanding actions.

3.2 It was agreed that a remedial action plan would be drawn up for relevant actions arising from the KPI heatmap. **JB to action.**

3.2, 4.6 The risk assessments for nurseries would be circulated to Trustees. **JB to action.**

4. Executive team reporting

4.1 Updated Strategic Plan 2020-25

4.1.1 The Committee considered the Executive Report, updated SWAT analysis and the draft Strategic Plan (appendices 3-5). The following suggestions arose in discussion:

- Strategic Objective (SO) 1: In order to ensure consistency, it was suggested that either 'school of choice in the community' or 'full school roll' would be used as indicators of success.
- SO 2: it was agreed that 'exceptional progress' would be quantified as within the top 25% of schools nationally for all Trust schools
- SO 3, 4 and 5: the wording of goals and objectives would be reviewed to ensure clear and consistent articulation as per SO 1 and 2 (for example, by defining 'excellent leadership' (SO 4)) and establishing how to measure outcomes.

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- SO 5: The wording and classification of income generation would be updated to reflect the impact of Covid-19 on incomes. **JB to action.**
- 4.1.2 It was agreed that, from 2020/21, the first meeting each year would focus on the Strategic Plan, with annual educational, financial and HR plans, which would be approved by the respective Committees and would be set for the remainder of the year. **JB to action.**
- 4.1.3 A typo on the success criteria for average Trust attendance data in Y3-5 would be corrected. **JB to action.**
- 4.2 KPI heatmap**
 - 4.2.1 Feedback from Trustees was invited on the KPI heatmap (appendix 6). It was suggested that the success criteria for each Strategic Objective should be mapped to KPIs. **JB to action.**
 - 4.2.2 It was requested that a deep dive be undertaken on the FARCO items in the heatmap at the next FARCO meeting, specifically the amber risk relating to shared vision and good relationships. **JB to action.**
 - 4.2.3 The Chair of the HR Committee summarised feedback on the heatmap at the HR Committee meeting in March 2021, including:
 - Establishing more than one measure for each indicator
 - Addition of quantitative measures such as acceptable ranges, changes over time and emerging trends
 - Addition of a section for comments and qualitative measures
 - Using 3-colour RAG rating rather than 4. **JB to action.**
 - 4.2.4 The scheduling of HR Committee meetings would be reviewed to ensure that the non-confidential minutes could be included in the papers for the following Trust Board meeting. **KC to action.**
 - 4.2.5 Feedback on educational and financial KPIs had been provided at the recent meetings of the respective Committees. The educational KPIs would be finalised at the next ACC meeting.
- 4.3 BAU risk registers**
 - 4.3.1 Trustees were referred to the Trust risk register and a sample school risk register (appendices 7 and 8) and considered the frequency of review. It was agreed that the register would be considered by Trustees in its entirety twice yearly and that they would be notified of any changes (through executive reporting) at the meeting where the register was being discussed. **VB to action.** A discussion followed on the response to risks which remained high post-mitigation, and it was noted that rather than implicitly accepting high risks, it was important to mitigate further, introducing additional remedial controls and actions. This information would be brought to the next Trust Board meeting. **JB/VB to action.** The Trust and sample school risk registers were approved, subject to actions agreed above.

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4.4 Project updates

4.4.1 School amalgamation and school name change

4.4.1.1 The CPS and DRIS Local Advisory Council had proposed that the amalgamated school be renamed Elmstead Woods Primary School in order to appeal to wider community. A discussion followed as to whether the name should include 'School' or 'Academy'. It was noted that only one Trust school, SMCPA currently used 'Academy'. Trustees were keen to ensure consistency in the naming of Trust schools and agreed that 'School' would be used across the Trust.

4.4.2 Summer schools

4.4.2.1 Trustees approved the pilot TSPT holiday club for 20 pupils over two weeks at MPS. The proposals and costings would be taken to the FARCO meeting in April 2021. **JB to action.**

4.4.3 Music Hub

4.4.3.1 There were no questions from Trustees on the process of tendering for the extension to The Cottage to house the Music Hub at HPS, which would be considered at the next FARCO meeting.

4.5 Estates Management update

4.5.1 Trustees were referred to the Estates Management Report (appendix 9). Approval was sought for the £10k professional fee for the tender preparation work for the additional classroom being built as part of the expansion of CPS. It was clarified that it covered full project management, tendering, structural calculations and drawings and all design elements. The request was approved, subject to confirmation of the fee as a percentage of the total project costs. **VB to action.** It was suggested that in future the Trust should agree fixed fees for consultancy where possible.

4.6 Monthly managements accounts to January 2021

4.6.1 There were no questions from Trustees on the monthly management accounts to January 2021 (appendices 10 – 13).

4.7 School Resource Management Assessment

4.7.1 Trustees were referred to Trust's School Resource Management Assessment report (appendix 14) and welcomed the useful and interesting comparisons, which would support the work on KPI heatmap. The data would be revisited at Committee level. **KC to action.**

4.8 Contract approvals and/or spend requests over £20,000:

4.8.1 IT support contract extension

4.8.1.1 The ratification of the Board was sought for an extension of the IT support contract with Platform 365. Trustees were reminded that the contract had been tendered for an initial three-year period, with a two-year extension option included. The Trust was happy with the current provision and proposed to exercise its option to extend the contract for further two years at a cost of £106k, which was a reduced annual rate compared to years one to three. A discussion followed on the process of adherence to the Scheme of Delegation for options

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to extend contracts, in order to ensure value for money. It was agreed that Platform 365 would be asked to grant a short contract extension of one month at pro-rata cost to enable two further quotes to be sourced to determine whether the cost of the extension offered value for money. **VB to action.** Delegation of authority to approve the expenditure was delegated to the Chair of FARCO and Mr Okafor. It was agreed that clarity would be provided in the relevant Trust documentation regarding the process of extending contracts that had been through a full tendering process. **VB to action.**

4.8.2 Management Information System contract

4.8.2.1 Plans to introduce a new management information system across the Trust from September 2021 were outlined. Following in-depth research on providers and the opinions of staff within the Trust, two potential providers had been identified. Trustees cautioned against rushing the process in order to ensure that staff would be familiar with new systems and able to use them effectively before the switchover. Further research would be undertaken with a view to taking a spend request to the FARCO meeting in April 2021, which would then be ratified by email by the Trust Board. **VB to action.** The Board thanked Mr Blount for his input into the MIS transition process.

5. Trust Committee Business

5.1 HR Committee meeting, 9th March 2021

5.1.1. This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute x.

5.1.2. Work had also been done on Gender Pay Gap report for 2020, the deadline for which had been extended to June 2021. The non-confidential minutes of the meeting would be finalised and circulated to Trustees. **JB/VB/RP/KC to action.**

5.2 Minutes of FARCO meeting, 27th January 2021

5.2.1 The minutes of the FARCO meeting on 27th January 2021 would be finalised and circulated to Trustees. **RT/KC to action.**

5.3 ACC overview

5.3.1 ACC had not met since the previous Trust Board meeting. The Committee had provided support on policies. The next meeting would be held in May 2021 and would cover educational KPIs and the restore/recovery curriculum.

6. Governance

6.1 It was agreed that an external review of Trust Board would be arranged. **JC to action.**

7. Policies

7.1 Accessibility

7.1.1 The CEO thanked Ms Hawker for her feedback sent in advance of the meeting on the Accessibility Plans for all schools (appendix 15). It was suggested that reference to

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schools' duties to staff, parents/carers and visitors, particularly in relation to building access, be added. It was also suggested that all schools use the same format for their plans. **JB to action.** The plans were approved, subject to the suggested amendments.

7.2 SEND

7.2.1 The SEND policy (appendix 16) was approved, subject to minor amendments.

7.3 Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy

7.3.1 The Statement of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff (appendix 17), which would be added as an appendix to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, was approved.

7.4 In response to a question about the Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy, which had been reviewed at the Trust Board meeting in February 2021, it was confirmed that the policy had been revised to reflect that all schools had robust systems in place for generic epi pens and asthma inhalers.

8. AOB

8.1 Further to discussion at a previous ACC meeting, it was agreed that an external safeguarding audit would be arranged. **JB to action.**

8.2 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 13th May 2021 at 6 pm, remotely via WebEx.

Signed:Date:.....
John Cliff, Chair of Trustees