

THE SPRING PARTNERSHIP TRUST
Final adopted minutes of a meeting of the Trustees
held remotely via WebEx at 6 pm on Thursday 13th May 2021

Present:

Mr R Barlow
Ms C Barenbrug
Mr A Blount, from minute 4.3
Mrs J Brinkley, CEO
Mr J Cliff, Chair
Ms K Hawker
Mr D Okafor
Miss R Punter
Mr R Taylor, Vice Chair

In attendance:

Mrs C Sheehan
Mrs V Bolton, COO
Mrs G Sesli, EHT

Observers:

Mrs J Penn, National Governance Lead

Clerk:

Miss K Crossley

1. Apologies for absence

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed and introduced J Penn, National Governance Lead, who was observing the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from B Brookman.

2. Declaration of pecuniary interests

- 2.1 None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 31st March 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 The remedial action plan for relevant actions arising from the KPI heatmap would be marked as 'not completed' and brought to the next meeting. **JB to action.**
- 3.2, 8.1 Trustees asked why there had been a change in plan regarding the external safeguarding audit and was advised that this was no longer general practice. The audit would be conducted internally by Heads using an NSPCC audit tool, which was updated annually. The output would be monitored and moderated by the Executive Headteacher. The tool would generate an action plan for all schools. Trustees noted the benefit of an independent, external process which would offer assurance that safeguarding practice aligned with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The matter had been considered at the recent ACC meeting and an action had been agreed for the NSPCC process to be documented and a paper brought to the next ACC meeting.
- 3.2, 5.3.1.4 Two Trustees who had not yet confirmed that they had read the relevant sections of KCSiE would be supported to resolve IT issues to enable this action to be closed. **KC to action.**

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4. Executive team reporting

4.1.1 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 8.1.

4.2 KPI heatmap

4.2.1 Trustees were referred to the KPI heatmap (appendix 4) and advised that the financial, educational and HR indicators had been updated, but that further work was required on the estates management and IT indicators. **JB to action.** It was requested that remedial plans be drawn up for indicators which were not rated green and that indicators would be rated using three colours, red, yellow and green, not four (amber). **JB to action.**

4.3 Risk register – actions to treat high-risk items

4.3.1 Trustees considered the revisions to the Trust risk register detailed in the Executive Report (appendix 3). It was agreed that the marketing plan for schools, including the business model, revenue generation and cost assumptions, would be brought to the FARCO meeting in October 2021 to enable Trustees to understand the strategy and cost/benefit analysis. **JB to action.**

4.4 Risks of support staff pay award negotiation

4.4.1 Trustees expressed concern at the delegation of financial responsibility to a third party on behalf of the Trust in relation to the support staff pay award and highlighted the need to understand the negotiating brief and parameters. The £55k financial impact of the 2% pay award (vs 1% budgeted) was noted, and it had been agreed that, while the Trust currently had no involvement in the process, a range of scenarios would be modelled with a view to mitigating the impact of future pay awards. **CS to action.**

4.5 This minute was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 8.2.

4.6 Internal audit report

4.6.1 The internal audit report (appendix 8) would be considered at the FARCO meeting in June 2021. **KC to action.**

4.6.2 In response to a question from Trustees about historic compliance issues in some schools, it was confirmed that processes had been clarified and adherence to procedures had improved.

4.7 Monthly management accounts to March 2021

4.7.1 There were no questions from Trustees on the management account to March 2021 (appendix 9).

4.8 Contract approvals and spend requests over £20k

4.8.1 Ratification of approval of MIS contract

4.8.1.1 Trustees ratified the approval of the management information software (MIS) contract, which had been recommended for approval at the FARCO meeting on 30th April 2021, and subsequently approved by email by Trustees.

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4.8.1.2 An update on the use of data held in the MIS would be taken to the FARCO meeting in June 2021. **JB to action.**

4.8.2 Ratification of approval of IT support contract

4.8.2.1 Trustees ratified the approval of the extension of the existing IT support contract with Platform 365, which had been delegated to two Trustees following discussion at the Trust Board meeting in March 2021.

4.3.2 HPS music hub

4.3.2.1 Trustees were referred to the spend request for the Music Hub (appendix 10), which had been discussed at the FARCO meeting on 30th April 2021. The Committee was satisfied that a suitable contingency had been put in place, and that confirmation had been received from the PTA Chair that further fundraising to support the music hub would be supported in the event of any shortfall.

4.3.2.2 The Music Hub was a key flagship project and the Trust was keen to make a financial contribution to the kitting out of the project. Information on the contribution would be considered by FARCO at the appropriate time. **JB to action.**

4.3.2.3 It was agreed that Trustees would write to the Headteacher at HPS to thank him for his efforts to raise funds for the Music Hub, and to pass on the thanks of Trustees to the PTA and all those involved in fundraising. **JC to action.** An opening event would be planned once the project was completed.

5. Trust Committee Business

5.1 HR Committee meeting, 9th March 2021

5.1.1. Trustees were referred to the non-confidential minutes of the HR Committee meeting on 9th March 2021 (appendix 11). The Chair thanked the CFO, the COO and the HR Team Leader for their work on the consultation.

5.2 Minutes of FARCO meeting, 27th January 2021

5.2.1 There were no questions from Trustees on the minutes of the FARCO meeting on 27th January 2021 (appendix 12).

5.2.2 At the next FARCO meeting, the Committee would review the latest financial forecasts and outlook. Consideration would be given to refining the approach to forecasting.

5.3 Update on ACC meeting, 5th May 2021

5.3.1 At the recent ACC meeting, the Committee had considered the build up/bounce back curriculum, gaps, trends and school improvement. There had been a lengthy discussion on the proposed purchase of the V21 oracy programme, to which further thought was being given. **JB to action.**

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6. Policies

6.1 None

7. AOB and date of next meeting

- 7.1 Trustees were informed that the OPAL sheds at MPS had been destroyed by arson. Parents had voluntarily set-up an online donation page to raise funds to replace the sheds, although a claim was also likely to be required through insurance once the full value of the damage was known. In the event that funds were raised in excess of the cost of the sheds, parents be informed that the funds would be put to another suitable use and would not be able to be returned. **GS to action.**
- 7.2 It was noted that the OPAL sheds at DRIS were not currently in use and consideration would be given to how best to deploy them. **VB to action.**
- 7.3 The Chair and CEO reported on a constructive meeting with LAC Chairs, the notes of which would be shared with Trustees. **KC to action.** Consideration was being given to how to raise the profile of Trustees, for example, by inviting LAC Chairs to observe a Trust Board meeting, possibly at The Warren, and inviting Trustees to attend LAC Chairs' meetings. A number of questions had been raised by LAC Chairs and responses would be drafted by the Executive Team and shared with Trustees. **JC/JB to action.**
- 7.4 The announcement of the outcome of CIF bids had been delayed until June 2021. Depending on the timing, the delay may result in spend request papers being circulated to FARCO and Trust Board by email to ensure that essential work could be carried out during the summer holidays. Any unsuccessful bids for essential work would be funded from reserves or capital funds.
- 7.5 Trustees thanked J Penn for observing the meeting and looked forward to her feedback.
- 7.6 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 8th July 2021 at 6 pm, venue tbc.
- 7.7 The meeting closed at 7:26 pm.

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