

The Harmony Trust

Board of Trustees

Meeting – 11 March 2019, 6.00 pm

Approved Minutes

		Action lead	When
	<p><u>Present:</u></p> <p>Paul Makin (Chair), Marian Simmons, Kit Thorne, Anne Weinstock, Ashley Forbes, Sara Bashir, Antony Hughes (CEO)</p> <p><u>In attendance:</u></p> <p>Suzanne Thompson (Director of Finance) Jane Green (Director of Strategic Initiatives) Tracey Mellor (Head of HR and IT) Wendy May (Head of Safeguarding and Data) Andrew Jones (Conatous Associates Ltd – Clerking services)</p>		
1	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Graham McGuffie and Norman Hole</p>		
2	<p><u>Minutes and Matters arising from previous meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes of 21st January 2019 were approved as a correct record.</p> <p>The AGM took place on 26 February and approved the annual accounts</p>		
3	<p><u>Financial outlook for 2019: key challenges and risks</u></p> <p>The Board received a presentation from the Director of Finance. Key points from the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cost pressures identified by the DfE including pension contribution increases (£780k on the teachers' pension scheme)- Transitional funding from the DfE for changes in Teachers' pension scheme contributions		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The gap between projected expenditure and projected income is widening - The DfE's emphasis on balancing the books rather than providing new funding - The impact of the Trust's in-year deficit recovery strategy so far and the further deployment of this strategy in the Derby Hub - The impact of the withdrawal of locality funding (from the high needs block) in the Derby Hub in the context of higher than average numbers of children with SEND in Harmony Academies - 121 children have EHCPs across the Trust as a whole - The requirement to have adequate reserves - An outline of 2019/20 draft budgets was presented. Currently this shows in year deficits in all but 2 of the Trust's Academies and an overall in-year deficit for the Trust's academies overall. - A summary of key actions taken so far - The use of the school resource management toolkit - The responsibilities of Trustees and their role in providing support and challenge <p>Questions and issues raised by Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The basis of the £3bn of savings estimated by the DfE - The number of children with EHCPs - Whether shortfalls in SEND funding could be made up through applications to charitable foundations - The impact of the Trust's vacancy management process - The effectiveness of the north-west buying hub vs other potential shared arrangements - Whether a Ministerial invitation should be made, by the Board, to discuss financial strategy and operations <p>The Chair will meet with the Director of Finance on a monthly basis. The Chair of the Finance Committee to join this meeting.</p> <p>It was confirmed that Kit Thorne is the Chair of the Finance element of the FAR Committee and Normal Hole Chair for the Audit and Risk element. These elements will be on separate parts of the agenda.</p> <p>The CEO will come back with proposals on how to engage with the DfE re financial pressures.</p>	<p>ST Chair</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>CEO</p>	<p>Monthly</p> <p>July 2019</p>
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4	<p><u>CEO Report</u></p> <p>The Board received the report of the CEO. Key points from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appointment of the Deputy CEO had been paused in recognition of the previous discussion on finance and efficiencies. This would be re-started once the next phase of growth is better established. - A letter had ben received from the DfE Ministers, Nick Gibb and Lord Agnew, acknowledging and praising the Trust’s position in Academy rankings on high performance in maths progress - Carlyle Infant School in Derby had now been issued with an Academy Order to join the Trust and, also the Trust had been selected to sponsor a new Academy in Derby, Hackwood Farm - Income generated from support work provided by the Trust to other schools through formal learning partnerships - The Trust is being visited by a group of Governors from a large Sheffield school federation to discuss future links and/or membership of the Trust - The current pattern of forum meetings is currently underway and a further report on issues and points raised will be brought to the next Board meeting <p>Questions and issues raised by Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns about the impact on wellbeing of senior Trust leaders if the Deputy CEO appointment is paused. - The potential role of Trustees in the due diligence involved in assessing potential new academies - The care needed in introducing any revised relationships education curriculum <p>The Chair to write to Harmony staff, following the letter from DfE Ministers, to acknowledge their hard work.</p>	Chair	ASAP
6	<p><u>Looked After Child Designated Officer Report</u></p> <p>The Director of Strategic Initiatives presented a report to the Board. Key points from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 22 children in the Trust’s Academies care orders 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These children are being well cared for within the Trust's Academies - There will be a review on how the enhanced pupil premium funding will be used - The potential vulnerability of post-CLA children <p>Questions and issues raised by Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether all children have a personal education plan (PEP) in place 		
7	<p><u>Appointment of new Trustee</u></p> <p>A pen portrait for Philip Moulden had been previously circulated. He is currently a Governor in Derby and the Trust had previously committed appointing a Derby based Trustee.</p> <p>Philip Moulden was appointed as a Trustee with immediate effect.</p> <p>The CEO also reported that there had been a discussion with the RSC, following the application by Carlyle Infant School, about his membership of the Board as a voting member. He</p>		
	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The National Schools Commissioner, Dominic Herrington, is to visit the Trust in future.</p> <p>Trustees were reminded to complete declarations of interest forms ASAP.</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.43</p>	All Trustees	ASAP

Table of actions

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	<p>Audit and Risk element. These elements will be on separate parts of the agenda.</p> <p>The CEO will come back with proposals on how to engage with the DfE re financial pressures.</p>	CEO	July 2019
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	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>Trustees were reminded to complete declarations of interest forms ASAP.</p>	All Trustees	ASAP