

The Harmony Trust

Board of Trustees

Meeting – 14 October 2019, 6.00 pm

Approved minutes

	<u>Present:</u> Philip Moulden, Graham McGuffie, Olwyn Smythe, Kit Thorne (Chair for meeting), Sajen Bakht, Anne Weinstock <u>In attendance:</u> Antony Hughes (CEO) Suzanne Thompson (Chief Financial Officer) Jane Green (Director of Strategic Initiatives) Tracey Mellor (Head of Operations) Andrew Jones (Conatous Associates Ltd – Clerking services)	Action Lead	Action Date
1	<u>Apologies for absence</u> Apologies were received and accepted from Paul Makin, Ashley Forbes and Norman Hole.		
2	<u>Election of Chair</u> Trustees elected, unopposed, Paul Makin as Chair of the Trust Board for the upcoming year. Nominated by Anne Weinstock and Seconded by Phillip Moulden. In Paul's absence, Trustees agreed for Kit Thorne to Chair the meeting. The CEO informed Trustees that Paul had indicated that he would like to step down as Chair at the end of the Academic Year. Trustees would discuss this with a view to succession planning at the next meeting.		
3	<u>Clerking arrangements 2019/20</u> The clerk, Andrew Jones, withdrew for this item.		

	<p>The CFO explained that there is now a requirement for Trusts to be professionally clerked. The Trust currently used the services of Conatous Associates Ltd and had invited the company to submit a proposal to continue the service for 2019/20. After some discussion, Conatous Associates Ltd were confirmed to provide clerking services to the Trust for the upcoming academic/financial year.</p> <p>The clerk returned to the meeting.</p>		
4	<p><u>Register of Business Interests - any changes to declarations?</u></p> <p>The current register of interests had been circulated and Trustees were asked to declare whether this reflected current interests</p> <p>Trustees had no other additional interests to declare.</p>		
5	<p><u>Minutes and Matters arising from previous meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes of 1 July 2019 were approved as a correct record except for a typographical error on page 5.</p> <p>Item 2 The input from Jonathan Bell was discussed. His input would be used as part of the due diligence process for future schools.</p> <p>Item 7 Not all Trustees had been able to access the Office 365 policy group. This would be checked.</p> <p>Item 8 Philip Moulden had attended the opening of the Hackwood Academy in Derby.</p> <p>Item 9 Northmoor building fobs had not yet been issued to Trustees. This would checked.</p>	TM	ASAP
6	<p><u>CEO Report</u></p> <p>The CEO had previously circulated his report.</p> <p>Key points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The aggregate KS2 combined measure for the Trust as a whole had increased by 5% - The aggregate KS2 combined measure for the Derby Hub only had increased by 8% 	TM	ASAP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There had been significant improvements at the Cavendish Academy. - Improvements in progress measures were strong in the Oldham Academies. - Free school meals take-up has declined despite apparent levels of deprivation worsening. - Academy Improvement Board meetings are in place for some Academies, where needed, on a half termly basis - Academy Principal performance management meetings had just been held with stretching targets agreed. - The annual review meeting with the RSC had taken place and a letter had been received from the RSC. This had been circulated to Trustees. The discussion included a focus on new schools joining the Trust. - An application would be made by the end of December to the DfE for additional growth funding. - The DfE's tool for self-evaluating the impact of school improvement had been useful. - The Trust may receive a summary evaluation report by Ofsted in the next year. Several academies are due inspections. - Carlyle Infants joined the Trust on 1 August and had already started to make a contribution to the Trust's work. - The Hackwood Executive Principal and Head of Academy had worked hard over the Summer to ensure that the school opened on time. - Arbourthorne and Gleadless Primary schools had now applied to join the Trust. The RSC Headteacher Board is making a decision on these applications this week. If approved, a due diligence process with a full report submitted to Trustees and, if then approved, schools will convert later in the spring term. - Another Derby school which had previously expressed an interest in joining Harmony had paused this to prioritise other things in school. - Another Trust had approached Harmony during the Summer to explore merging with another Trust. Harmony Trust along with other MATS are being considered. A strong track record in standards is high their criteria. The prospective Trust had visited Oldham academies and had now invited the CEO on a reciprocal visit in November. - The prospective Trust has positive financial reserves. - The Trust continues to support other schools in the region on a traded basis via the Harmony Teaching School. - £120k had been received for a programme working with a local specialist school on inclusion work. 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is proposed that the Harmony Learning Communities will continue and are expanded into the Derby Hub. - The implications of the new Ofsted framework are being anticipated. <p>Key points and issued raised by Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether there is there a timeline for pupil premium ending. - The reasons why free school applications had reduced. - The staff of Academies with improved outcomes were thanked by Trustees. - What the prospective Trust is looking for. - What the prospective Trust’s financial position is - A training session on the new Ofsted framework and the potential for a Trust inspection was requested <p>The CEO will contact the lead HMI for the Trust’s Academies to discuss the potential for a summary evaluation.</p> <p>Trustees agreed to send a letter to the Hackwood Executive Principal and Head of Academy to thank them for their additional work in opening</p> <p>It was agreed to for a training session to be provided on the new Ofsted framework and expectations on Trustees.</p>	CEO	TBC
7	<p><u>Proposal to establish a separate Audit committee</u></p> <p>The CFO explained that the Trust was now larger and, indeed, had a balance sheet (including property and assets) nearing £67m. The DfE placed a great deal of emphasis, now, on internal scrutiny processes. It was felt that the time was now right to separate the functions of the finance and audit committee into two separate committees. This would enable the Trust to evidence that the Audit Committee holds the Finance Committee to account. The membership of the two new Committees could be augmented with Co-opted members</p> <p>The proposal was agreed by Trustees.</p> <p>To implement the proposal there are a number of next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Trust’s Scheme of Delegation to be amended - The format of each Committee to be agreed - New meeting dates and membership would be proposed. <p>The new Committees would start next term.</p>	CFO	ASAP

8	<p><u>Teachers' Pay Award</u></p> <p>The Head of Operations had circulated a report which had been considered, initially today by the FAR Committee. The FAR Committee had recommended option 2 – that the pay award is applied to all pay points.</p> <p>The Board accepted the FAR Committee's recommendation to apply Option 2.</p>		
9	<p><u>Infrastructure Report</u></p> <p>The CFO left the room for this item. The Head of Operations had previously circulated a report. She clarified that, at this stage, that a decision in principle was being sought. Formal proposals would be tabled in due course.</p> <p>The CFO and Director of Infrastructure had indicated an intention to leave at the end of the current academic/financial year. It was proposed to combine the CFO and Infrastructure roles if both postholders did leave.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the practicalities of how the posts might be deleted and the postholders initiate this. Given the Director of Infrastructure's focus on standards, Trustees asked how this focus could be maintained if she leaves. The CEO explained that she was, already focusing less on standards work and that other leaders within the Trust were taking more a leading role in this aspect of work.</p> <p>The proposal was approved by Trustees</p>		
10	<p><u>SRM Self Assessment - Trustees skills audit</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the skills audit is completed during the meeting.</p> <p>The Board, briefly, adjourned to enable this.</p>		
11	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>The Trust had received a letter from the RSC following a Trust Development meeting. This had been circulated to Trustees</p> <p>The Trust had received a letter for the accounting officer – the clerk would circulate to all Trustees.</p>	AJ	ASAP

12	<p><u>Any other business</u></p> <p><u>Harmony Trust Members</u></p> <p>The CEO reported that, following recent resignations, the Trust now had 3 Members. This is compliant with the Trust’s articles of association, but the RSC preference is for there to be 5 Members. It is, therefore, proposed for the Members group to be augmented with a Derby based Member and a Sheffield based Member. The CEO will discuss this further with Members</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.30 pm</p>		