

The Harmony Trust

Board of Trustees

Meeting – 12 March 2018, 6.00pm – Approved Minutes

	<p>Present:</p> <p>Paul Makin (Chair), Antony Hughes (CEO), Kit Thorne, Sajen Bakht, Ashley Forbes, Graham McGuffie, Norman Hole</p> <p>In attendance:</p> <p>Maggie Williams (Director of Infrastructure) Suzanne Thompson (Director of Finance) Tracey Mellor (Head of HR and IT) Wendy May (Head of Safeguarding and Data) Jess Hainsworth (Executive Principal, Northmoor and Richmond Academies) Mike Hodder (Senior Finance Officer) Kate Baddeley (Deputy Director to the Regional Schools Commissioner) Andrew Jones (Academise UK – Clerking Services)</p>	Actions
1	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Marian Simmons and Sara Bashir.</p>	
2	<p><u>Minutes and Matters arising from previous meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes of 22 January were accepted as a correct record without amendment.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Update on Greenhill pitch<ul style="list-style-type: none">o The Senior Finance Officer presented a briefing note for Trustees.o The Chair noted that this issue had been raised by a Parent Trustee and it is both important and symbolic to ensure that community concerns are heard and acted upon.o 3 options were presented to Trustees. Options 2 and 3 were recommended. The Board agreed that Options 2 and 3 be pursued.- Visits by Trustees<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Sara Bashir had visited two Academies	MH May '18

3	<p><u>Strategic School Improvement Fund: Raising the attainment outcomes of EAL pupils</u></p> <p>The Executive Principal, Jessica Hainsworth, circulated a briefing note for Trustees. Key points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of the SSIF programme and available funding • The local context in Oldham and the rationale for the application. • An outline of the submission and the strategic approach to be taken. • Key programmes to be delivered including school improvement and EAL champions. • A case study from Richmond Academy on provision for INA children. • Monitoring and evaluation of the project and its Governance. <p>Key points and questions raised by Trustees included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role that specialist TAs would play. • The reporting requirements expected by the DfE. • The communication plan for the project within the local community. <p>Trustees thanked the Executive Principal for her presentation.</p>	
4	<p><u>CEO Report</u></p> <p>The CEO, Antony Hughes, had previously circulated his report to Trustees.</p> <p>Key points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy level strategies continue to be implemented (e.g. pupil progress meetings) • Cavendish Close Junior Academy is the major priority for the Trust. • A one day whole-Trust training day focusing on the Harmony Learning Community had been successful. • The importance of the Parent Forum meetings underpinning the Trust's ethos of working with parents as partners. • School attendance continues to be a priority with some significant improvement in individual Academies. The Trust leadership will review why the Trust's strategy seems to have more impact in some academies than others. • Successful appointments to the planned multi-disciplinary team. • The Trust's contribution to the Oldham Opportunity Area. • The potential for expanding the number of Academies in Oldham and, also, the potential for expanding capacity within the existing Academies. • Headlines from external reviews in the Derby schools that are joining the Trust. • The capacity being built and appointed to ensure that the Derby hub is supported. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conclusion of the “ways of working” review for business management within the Trust’s Academies. • An update on the “Great place to work” consultation. • A review of parent partnerships in each Academy. • A summary of headlines from recent Parent Forum meetings. <p>Key points and questions raised by Trustees included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the Fair Access protocol on key performance indicators in the Trust and whether the local process is a fair one. • Whether the gap in Educational Psychology capacity had been filled. • What the timescale is For MDIF bids. • Whether the RSC’s office would support escalating any difficulties with individual Local Authorities where the Trust operates. 	
5	<p><u>Finance Update</u></p> <p>The Director of Finance, Suzanne Thompson, had previously circulated her report to Trustees.</p> <p>Key points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting pattern for the FAR Committee for the remainder of the financial year • A special meeting on 22 March to appoint external auditors for the Trust • A number of letters received from the EFSA and DfE and circulated to all Trustees • The challenging financial landscape that schools are facing • The forecast for income in each Academy • A challenge to the EFSA on Northmoor’s funding which is proposed to be based on 2017 pupil numbers while the Academy is likely to have 500+ pupils from September 2018 • An outline of actions being taken to help manage the financial challenges • A summary of successful external funding bids. <p>Key points and questions raised by Trustees included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support of the Standards and Performance Committee for ensuring that Northmoor’s funding is stable and equitable. • The impact of withdrawing from the supply sickness insurance scheme. 	
6	<p><u>Update on Derby conversions</u></p> <p>The conversion Project Manager, Andrew Jones, had previously circulated his report to Trustees.</p>	

	<p>Key points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six Derby schools are due to join the Trust as follows: Alvaston Junior and Village Primary schools on 1 May; Reigate and Ashcroft Primary Schools on 1 June; Cottons Farm and Lakeside Primary Schools on 1 July. • Cottons Farm and Lakeside are both PFI built schools and their conversion dates could slip to 1 September as they are more complex as conversion projects. • Reigate and Lakeside are both to be sponsored Academies. • Eversheds had been commissioned as Solicitors for all 6 conversions with Michelmores solicitors providing specific advice on the PFI projects given a conflict of interest. • Due diligence reports are due to be submitted to the Trust later this week. Highlights from the reports were highlighted to Trustees. • The Trust’s current Master Funding Agreement (MFA) need to be updated and/or replaced, to admit PFI schools. Alternatively, the Trust could operate with two MFAs. • If the current MFA is replaced/amended, all the current Supplemental Funding Agreements (SFAs) will need amending. • The new MFA will require separate bank accounts for the PFI schools and the Trust is seeking clarification on whether robust ring fencing will suffice. • An end of year deficit at Reigate in March 2018 may delay the conversion date as the school is to be a sponsored Academy and any deficit would remain with the Local Authority. 	
7	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>Re-appointment of Trustees</p> <p>The Harmony Trust Members had re-appointed Marian Simmons and Sajen Bakht as Trustees, as their original 4 year term had now expired.</p> <p>Oversight of SATs administration</p> <p>The CEO reported that Maggie Williams and Wendy May will monitor the administration of SATs on behalf of the Trust’s leadership and will be accompanied by a Trustee who will act as an independent observer.</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.40 pm</p>	