

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Minutes: 29 March 2019

Present: Mr Roy Gillard
Mrs Isabel Cherrett
Ms Nicola Dunford
Ms Cheryl Mathieson

In attendance: Matt Matthew – Trust Business Manager

Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Mrs Fiona Walters

Declaration of Business Interests There were no declarations of business interest. The Committee noted that the DfE have released new guidance regarding related party transactions. TBM will liaise with Committee

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of 23 November 2018 were approved, Part I and II

2. Matters Arising

.1 The Committee noted the following policies were approved by the Board on 11 February 2019: Risk Management Policy 2019 and updated FOI Publication Scheme. The Chair of Directors is reviewing the current Trust Risk Register. This will be brought to the next Committee meeting, scheduled for 17 May 2019.

.2 It was noted the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2018 were approved by the Board on 10 December 2018, submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and filed with Companies House.

.3 The Committee noted the Scheme of Delegation was approved by the Board on 11 February 2019. This document will be reviewed in the Autumn term 2019.

3. Finance

.1 The Trust Business Manager (TBM) presented various financial reports in accordance with the Academies Financial Handbook, to the Trust Board. These included;

- individual academy Budget vs Actuals vs Commitments (BvAvC) reports
- Trust consolidated data dashboard
- cashflow reports

.2 It was noted that each Academy Head also receive their BvAvC monthly from the TBM to manage their own budgets effectively.

.3 The Committee acknowledged that there are no serious areas of concern, but monthly meetings

providing constant monitoring take place with the Chair of F&GP and TBM and any issues would be brought to the attention of the Committee.

.4 The TBM will have to apply year-end adjustments in relation to Central and Improvement & Inclusion Hub, which in turn will have an impact on the data for individual Academies.

.5 The TBM reassured the Committee that he meets with the CEO regularly to report to her in her role as Accounting Officer and they discuss the growth and future of the Trust in relation to finances and other schools joining.

.6 Following lengthy discussions relating to General Annual Grant (GAG) Pooling, the Committee agreed that this was not a viable option for the Trust going forward.

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.7 The TBM reported that the Trust payroll service, provided by Access Group has improved, but there is still work to be done to rectify certain issues. The Committee were advised that there is a dispute ongoing regarding the charge of Third-Party BACS payments. The Directors were in agreement and gave authority for the TBM to continue the communication on behalf of the Trust.

The Directors stated that they expect to see fewer iterations for payroll, that the Trust is to be upgraded to the newest version of Selima software and that the HR Officer is to receive the monthly detailed payroll reports that have been promised.

.8 Following a period of financial and service review, the Trust has ended the contract with ISS, the catering provider for Bearnas and Hennock. The current staff employed at each school by ISS are being TUPE'd across to the Trust, effective 1 April 2019 with Devon Norse now supplying the food. This will avoid costly management fees for the Trust.

Catering provisions continue to be looked at for the other academies within the Trust.

4. Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

.1 The Committee were assured that the TBM is checking and keeping up to date with any ESFA updates and will forward to the Board. The Committee noted the schedule of dates received from Eileen Milner, ESFA Chief Executive, in her letter dated 15 March 2019. The Trust are on track to comply with the submission dates listed.

.2 It was noted that the Chair of Directors and Chair of F&GP receive the weekly ESFA updates via email and anything relevant is logged at the next meeting of the F&GP Committee.

5. Property

.1 The Trust are awaiting the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) announcements.

.2 It was noted that general decorating and maintenance work is being carried out during the Easter Holidays at the schools.

.3 The TBM had received a proposal from Kay Tregenna Architects, to provide an estates masterplan

for future Trust development. The Committee were provided with a copy and agreed to the expenditure relating to this.

6. HR

.1 The Trust have implemented the Year 2 Pay Award recommendations from the National Joint Council (NJC) for all Support Staff with effect from 1 April 2019. Further increments will now be applied annually in September, rather than April, commencing 2020 to align with Teaching staff.

7. Dates of future meeting

03/2019 – 17 May 2019

04/2019 – 5 July 2019

Extra item – It was noted that HMRC have now gone digital with effect from 1 April 2019. The TBM confirmed to the Chair and Committee that the Trust is compliant.

Signed as Approved copy by Chair, Roy Gillard

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Date: 17.05.19

Meeting finished at 11am