



AUDIT COMMITTEE - MINUTES

Minutes of the Audit Committee held virtually on 4th May 2020 at 4pm

Trustees: Mr D Austin (Chair), Mr A Stittle, Mr T Lister,

Also Present: Dr J Blunden (Chief Executive), Mrs J Brinson (Company Secretary),
and Mrs B Couch (Governance Officer and clerk to board)

Item	Decision	Action
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies The Chair welcomed members and thanked them for their time.	
2.	Minutes The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 th November 2019 were APPROVED as an accurate record of proceedings and will be signed by the chair at the next face to face meeting.	Governance Officer
3.	Matters Arising <u>Petty cash</u> The authorisation of petty cash issue has been rectified with systems now in place to ensure correct authorisation takes place. <u>Personnel files</u> Audits of school personnel files have been completed this academic year, the HR team have ensured best practice is in place and guidance has been provided. <u>Purchase orders</u> Action has been taken to remind schools that purchase orders must be used. <u>Risk Register</u> Item 1.2 regarding the TPC risk requires updating to green in the register.	Chief Executive
4.	Internal Audit report 2019/2020 Term 1 and 2 internal audit reports have been RECEIVED – congratulations were passed to the finance team.	
4.1	<u>Term 1</u> The payroll being switched to EPM (Education HR and payroll services) was discussed, QUESTIONS were raised around the	

transfer into this service. Trustees were informed the transfer is going smoothly and on target for June 2020, the current Covid 19 situation has not affected this. Bacs authorisation is being progressed and a dummy run will take place to ensure all issues have been addressed. Thorough details, guidance and FAQs will be sent to schools, ensuring all staff understand how to use the system. Secure systems are in place to transfer required information between the schools and the trust.

Term 2

A trustee **QUESTIONED** and expressed concern regarding the statement in the report highlighting the payment function is fully automated. This area was clarified, automated means everything happens electronically, there is still a requirement for appropriate checks and authorisations.

A trustee **QUESTIONED** whether the trust are satisfied with the internal auditors – response was given that yes we are as they are effective, independent of the trust and good value for money.

5. Risk Register

As discussed in matters arising, item 1.2 will be updated to green.

A section has been added with relation to Covid 19 arrangements and double flagged as high risk due to the significant number of unknowns at this time. Contingency planning has been put in place which has been in line with national practices but has also been noted locally as good practice for others to share and use. As the crisis unfolded in February, the trust were able to develop detailed advice which schools were able to use and share with their LGBs. The trust have continued with almost daily updates, being careful to avoid duplication of the many other sources of information and updates coming through.

The IT and technology systems have allowed the trust to move very well into remote working systems.

Schools have been kept well informed, the biggest issue for our schools and nationally has been the edenred voucher scheme, due to issues with the scheme some local solutions ie some schools have had to pack their own food boxes.

Staff wellbeing has been a high priority for the trust with two key aspects which need continued work – appropriate PPE for education settings and social distancing, going forward both these issues will be key with recovery planning. There are calls for a national risk assessment to ensure consistency for schools and education settings.

Further guidance from the government is expected on Thursday 7th and/or Sunday 10th May.

Trustees **QUESTIONED** school budgets and whether there may be a delay – trustees were informed that budgets are more or less done and at the moment the 3 year budget plan is still expected.

	<p>Going forward Covid 19 emergency budgeting will need looking at and reporting on for costs that are over and above – ie additional staffing costs where supply/interim measures are needed. At the moment budgets have not been significantly impacted upon, other than areas such as before and after school clubs as this income has stopped.</p> <p>Cleaning and resource budgets will need to form a significant part of the recovery plan, ie systematic cleaning will be needed and limited sharing of equipment.</p> <p>A recovery working party is being put together and will meet imminently to begin looking at plans for reopening, in accordance with government advice.</p> <p>There were no further questions on the risk register and trustees were happy to APPROVE the Covid 19 amendment.</p>	Director of Finance & Business
6.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
7.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 16th June 2020 at 4pm.</p>	