

Meeting Minutes
Trust Audit & Resources Committee
Wednesday 28th September 2016, 16.30-18.30
Cranbrook Education Campus

Attendees:

Rebecca Mitchell – Chair (BM)
 Rob Bosworth (RB)
 Ray Beale (RBe)
 Richard Jacobs (RJ)
 Josie Medforth (JM)
 Lizzy Anderson (LA)

Steph Barnard – Minutes (SB)

Meeting Minutes

CHALLENGE

DECISION

Item Ref	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>RB welcomed all to the first Audit & Resources Committee meeting for the Trust and formally welcomed BM to the Trust. RB updated the committee on BM's background as a Governor at St James School sitting on the Finance & Personnel Committee. BM will continue as Link Trustee at St James School for the Trust.</p> <p>RB confirmed that LB will Chair this committee and discussed the need for a Vice Chair. RB proposed BM as Vice Chair for this committee. The Committee voted unanimously for BM to become Vice Chair.</p>	
2.	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Apologies were received from Lewis Banfield (LB), Lynda Jones (LJ) & Simon Gregory (SG).</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No declarations of interest were received.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of Previous meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the Trust Audit Committee meeting on 9th May 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Employment Contracts – LA has actioned this with Isca Academy All other matters arising have been actioned.</p>	
Monitoring		
6.	<p>Minutes from LGB meetings</p> <p>Isca Academy LGB minutes – JM to obtain minutes from Isca Academy and circulate to the Committee.</p>	JM

RBe reported that Isca Academy were concerned that attendance at committee meetings may be an issue going forward. BM confirmed that quoracy had been reduced to 3 to alleviate this issue.

St James LGB minutes - RB commented that the new minute's format is much easier to read and identify the key actions for the Trust. The Committee noted the list of actions and list of decisions taken at the meeting.

LA confirmed that HCSS software had been put in place for the Trust so that monthly budgets and cash flow can be run on a regular basis. Access can be given on a read only basis to HCSS so that data can be reviewed regularly. The new software pulls information through from SIMS so this needs to be accurate in order to give accurate budget information. Each school needs to ensure that their SIMS data is up to date.

BM summarised that business management resource, central contributions, and clarification of services delivered by the Trust are the main concerns for St James, however these are being resolved gradually with the Senior Leadership Team but are not yet at a comfortable position with the governors.

LA explained that weekly meetings for the Trust Executive Team take place so that messages from the Trust are consistent.

LA also confirmed that a Finance policy is being produced which will give clarity of organisational responsibilities. This policy will come through this committee for approval.

RB asked for clarity of the current finance process regarding budgets. LA explained that the month end report is produced and sent to the business manager in each school. The business manager (or Finance officer) in each school sets their budget and reports this to the LGB for endorsement. The Trust then validates the budgets that have been endorsed by each LGB.

The Committee acknowledged this issue, and the current vacancy of a Business Manager at St James.

The Committee noted the concern raised by St James on policies not being ratified. JM will check with Tim Rutherford on the conduct and discipline policies. RB asked if clarity was needed on what policies the Trust will provide and what the schools will provide. JM confirmed that an updated policy sheet had been sent to each school which gives an update on each policy i.e. which ones are being written by the Trust, which are in place and which should be provided by the school. JM will bring this forward for discussion with the Heads at the half-termly operational meeting.

The Committee noted the point from St James regarding the Scheme of Delegation. JM will collate all feedback and provide an update on this to all schools.

The Committee confirmed that with regard to SLT appointments in schools the LGB ratify the appointment but the Head makes the appointment.

The Committee noted the point regarding the election of the Chair & Vice Chair of the LGB in the summer term rather than the start of term, and agreed to adopt this change. JM to update the Cycle of Business.

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	<p><u>Cranbrook Education Campus LGB summary sheet</u> – the Committee noted the list of actions and decisions from this meeting.</p> <p>Ratification of new governor to be brought forward to full Trust meeting for approval.</p>	
7.	<p>Risk Register Review JM presented the new strategic Risk Register for review at this committee. RB commented that the new format is very clear.</p>	
8.	<p>Budget Monitoring Reports LA distributed the preliminary year-end figures to the Committee and explained the variations in budget and brought forward figures.</p> <p>LA confirmed that clearer figures will be produced by half term for the audit.</p> <p>LA will circulate refined figures before next committee.</p>	LA
9.	<p>Year End Audit The Committee noted the risks highlighted with CEC processes which will be addressed in the year end audit.</p>	
Items for Approval		
10.	<p>Trust Business Support Contract JM reported that RB, DM and MM approved, via email, the transfer of incorrect contracts at CEC onto DCC contracts. The Committee agreed that this risk had needed to be addressed ahead of this meeting.</p>	
11.	<p>New Insurance Contract JM confirmed that the new insurance contract was received today which is a re-tender of the Trust insurance contract. The tender was undertaken via a broker and has come back higher than budgeted for, despite only minor amendments to the quote regarding an increase in employer liability cover due to expansion and the increased tax rate from 6 to 9%.</p> <p>JM proposed an option of undertaking a Government RPA scheme (risk protection arrangement) for CEC which could potentially save £10,000 per annum. The new policy needs to be agreed by 1st October. JM to make a final recommendation to Chair of Trust, Chair and Vice Chair of Audit & Resources Committees for final approval.</p>	JM
12.	<p>Project Management for Exeter Creative School JM reported that the Trust won the bid for the new school. JM highlighted the benefit of the University and College as our members as they provided support and resource for the bid. JM proposed bringing in resource from Exeter College on a secondment basis to project manage the new school for the Trust, with JM as a project director role to oversee the project.</p> <p>RB noted the procurement rule on this and documented the business rationale of a secondment opportunity at £15k p.a. at a fixed rate. BM challenged this as a Trustee</p>	

	<p>in line with procurement regulations. JM confirmed that procurement regulations allow this proposal, as opposed to tendering, if we have a known resource.</p> <p>JM confirmed that we will received a project development grant of £300k which will come in 9 instalments. RB suggested a separate report on the budget to make this easier to manage. JM will provide regular reports to this committee. JM proposed initial costs of £30k project management + £800 to revamp website, together with an estate manager across the two schools.</p> <p>The Committee approved this proposal.</p>	
13.	<p>Trust Pay Policy for 2016/17 JM proposed this policy for approval. The Committee approved this policy with exception of the Executive Team Pay policy which RB will action separately.</p>	
Items for Information		
14	<p>New Draft Governance Documents JM confirmed that these had been circulated and were in place. JM will bring together feedback and recirculate.</p>	JM
15.	<p>Clerk & Secretary to the Trust Post JM confirmed that the advert is currently out and we have received several enquiries.</p>	
16	<p>Update on the new Academies Financial Handbook LA has included this update in the circulated finance document. LA confirmed that the accounting officer has changed from DM to MM. JM will update Edubase with all Governors and Trustees. The Whistleblowing policy will be circulated by email from JM. JM will update the Trust with any actions needed ahead of the audit.</p>	JM
17	<p>Update on the new Finance Systems LA updated on the new HCSS system and coding as per the update paper circulated at the meeting.</p>	
18	<p>Update on the new ICT Centralised Service JM confirmed that this will be a regular agenda item for review. JM explained that the ICT Team were in place and have been working with the schools to set up relationships and work on strategy and policies. Budgets have been set for each of the schools and are working on making savings with licences. JM will give further updates.</p>	
19	<p>Update on progress with Finance Policy LA is working on this policy and will circulate to the Committee and bring forward to the next meeting for approval.</p>	LA
Any Other Business & Next Meeting Date		
	No AoB was noted.	
	Date of next meeting confirmed as 30 th November 2016	



Minutes by:

Signed by Chair of the Committee.....

Date.....