

Meeting Minutes
Trust Audit, Finance and Resources Committee
Wednesday 5th June 2019
Cranbrook Education Campus

In attendance:

Alex Walmsley –Chair (AW)	Rob Bosworth (RB)
Philip Bostock (PB)	Beccy Mitchell (RM)
Richard Jacobs (RJ)	Moira Marder (MM)
Sue Pym – Director of Finance (SP)	Josie Medforth –Director of Operations (JM)
Alison Layton-Hill, Company Secretary (ALH)	Fran Metay - Clerk to the Trust (FM)

Item Ref	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Attendance</p> <p>The meeting opened at 17:00. AW welcomed all present. Apologies were received from Lin Donnellan.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest –the following were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AW: Director, First Federation Trust. - RB: Exeter College, in relation to apprenticeships offered to TWMAT students. 	
3.	<p>Minutes of Previous meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 13.03.2019 were approved as a full and accurate record. Actions from the previous meeting were reviewed; all had been completed, bar the update of the Trust Finance Policy, which will be carried out over the Summer, as agreed with Trustees.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p><u>Feedback from LGBs.</u> JM had clarified with Tim Rutherford that CCTV footage at West Exe School can in fact be accessed. The comments on the Exwick Heights’ LGB meeting minutes were in fact merely to flag up issues with which the school had had to contend, rather than suggesting that the school had not received appropriate support in resolving them.</p>	
For Monitoring		
5.	<p>LGB Minutes</p> <p>Minute summaries from Isca, CEC and St James were received. No issues to report.</p>	
6.	<p>Financial Strategy</p> <p>The April 2019 budget, medium term forecast, balance sheet and dashboard indicators had been circulated. SP presented headlines from her report (recorded in Part B of the minutes). SP informed Trustees that the budget forecast revenue outturn had been submitted based on the March accounting position. This had been done in close consultation with AW and recorded in detail in the notes of AW and SP’s regular finance meetings. Trustees formally noted this and confirmed their support.</p> <p>Trustees approved the submission of the three year budget forecast return, which will be prepared based on the figures submitted to this meeting (subject to Board ratification).</p>	SP

7.	<p>Capital Programme</p> <p>JM noted that all projects were still at an early stage, with little of significance to report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The remodelling of classrooms in preparation for increased pupil numbers in September is being managed through the ACO process in PFI schools and all is progressing well. • JM had met with the DfE lead for the Whipton Barton refurbishment project. Design will start over the Summer. A desktop feasibility study is being carried out by the DfE on the spare land at the school to assess its sale potential. • The CEC extension project is out to tender with three contractors. Work is due to begin on site in August, with a view to completing in late January 2020. <p>JM to provide an update report at the next meeting.</p>	JM
8.	<p>Independent Internal Audit</p> <p>SP acknowledged that there had not been capacity to dedicate as much time to addressing audit recommendations as would have been desirable. However, SP is now meeting half-termly with finance officers across the Trust, with specific issues being taken forward in sub-groups, and feeling reassured about progress. The new financial manager for the Plymouth Schools will be starting on 1st July, and the time commitment required of the Exeter finance manager to implement the new payroll system is now easing, all of which should allow the Trust to return to an optimum position.</p> <p>PB queried the provision of apprenticeships to TWMAT students by Exeter College in light of tightened expectations around related party interests. SP had sought advice on this point from the auditors and is awaiting a response. SP to update Trustees at the next meeting.</p>	SP
9.	<p>Risk Impact Review</p> <p>In light of the increasing complexity and diversity of the Trust’s business, the Executive Team had undertaken a more fundamental review of the Strategic Risk Register. ALH gave the rationale to these changes, as reported in Appendix B of the minutes.</p>	
For Approval		
10.	<p>Policies Update</p> <p>Minor revisions were proposed to the Whistleblowing, Risk Management and School Emergency Planning policies, largely to update terminology and tidy formatting.</p> <p>ALH noted that proposed changes to the Lone Working policy had been necessary to take into account an emerging risk to staff of being victims of allegations when working alone with challenging and vulnerable students. Union consent to the changes will also be sought.</p> <p>Trustees approved all four policies. Subject to Union consent, ALH to finalise the documents.</p>	ALH

11.	<p>Application for Exemptions from the Application of Competitive Tendering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to increase Michelmores Solicitors' fees to £19k (exceeding the agreed fee of £12k) to cover the additional legal documentation arising from the academisation of St Luke's. JM confirmed that she had successfully negotiated a rebate from the original fees of £23k. It was recognised that Michelmores' expertise in both PFI and working with the Diocese made them a natural choice for this work, particularly in light of pressing timescales. Trustees approved the application, although requested that quotes also be sought from other firms with appropriate expertise in future. Request for payment of two contracts totalling 11,600 signed by Whipton Barton immediately after joining the Trust. Training has now been provided to ensure that staff at the school are fully aware of the Trust's procurement processes. Request for an additional financial commitment to Civica, provider of the Trust's financial software, to upgrade the solution and extend the Trust-wide contract to St Luke's and Whipton Barton. JM clarified that Civica remain substantially cheaper than market competitors. <p>After consideration, Trustees approved all four exemption applications.</p>	
For Information		
12.	<p>PFI Update JM updated the Committee on recent developments, which are reported in Appendix B.</p>	
13.	<p>Apprenticeship Levy Report Trustees noted the contents of the report.</p>	
14.	<p>Academies Financial Handbook This has not yet been published. SP to update Trustees at the next meeting.</p>	SP
15.	<p>ESFA Information Request SP confirmed that all information requests from the ESFA had been comprehensively answered, including providing context for the KPIs where TWMAT was out of line with sector norms. There had been no further communication from the ESFA beyond acknowledging receipt. Trustees thanked SP for completing this substantial piece of work at short notice.</p>	
16.	<p>Malware Incident Report JM reported developments since the report circulated to Trustees (recorded in Appendix B).</p>	
17.	<p>Growth <u>Exeter Creative School.</u> Letter from the DfE dated 21 May 2019 outlining the timescales and respective roles and responsibilities of TWMAT and the DfE in programme delivery tabled. Trustees confirmed their approval for JM to sign the acknowledgement on behalf of the Trust.</p> <p><u>Plymouth Schools.</u> School performance continues to go from strength to strength. The Trust is having a tangible impact, which has been formally recognised by the RSC and Ofsted.</p> <p>Discussions regarding other schools are reported in Appendix B of the minutes.</p>	JM
Any Other Business and Next Meeting Date		
	<p>Any Other Business –none was raised.</p> <p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 25 September 2019 at Cranbrook Education Campus.</p>	

Exceptionally the meeting will start at 5.30pm on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 19:00.

Signed by the Chair of the Committee:

A P Walsley

Date: 25.09.19