

Meeting Minutes
Trust Finance and Resources Committee
Wednesday 23 June 2021, *Virtual Meeting*

In attendance: **Alex Walmsley –Chair (AW)** **Rob Bosworth (RB)**
 Philip Bostock (PB) **Charlotte Davies (CD) – Director of Bus & Ops**
 Moira Marder (MM) **Sue Pym (SP) – Director of Finance**
 Richard Jacobs (RJ)
 Melody Floyde - Clerk to the Trust (MF)

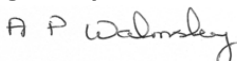
Item Ref	Business	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Attendance</p> <p>AW welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting. No apologies were received.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No new declarations were raised.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of Previous meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 12.05.21 were approved as a full and accurate record.</p> <p>The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and marked as complete.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>None were raised.</p>	
For Monitoring		
5.	<p>LGB Finance & Resources Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the recent LGB meetings were reviewed. No issues for Trustees were noted.</p>	
For Approval		
6.	<p>Trust Financial Update</p> <p>SP gave an overview of the Financial reports, noting that the Accounts for 2021/22 needed to be approved by the Committee and recommended for sign off by the Board of Trustees on 07.07.21.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the Minutes.</p> <p>It was noted that the filing deadline was 27.07.21</p> <p>It was agreed that, subject to approval by the Board of Trustees on 07.07.21, the forecasted return was submitted to the ESFA in accordance with deadlines.</p> <p>It was agreed to recommend the budget for 2021/22 to the Board of Trustees for approval on 07.07.21.</p>	

7.	<p>Bank Approvals and Treasury Management</p> <p>SP gave an update on the signatory list for bank approvals. SP requested that Sandra Yeats, Will Barrett and Tom Thorne should be included on an initial list of approvers, with more senior staff being second approvers. This would take away a lot of the pressure.</p> <p>The £20k limit would be taken away, meaning that the first line approvers could sign without limit as long as second line approvers also signed.</p> <p>This was agreed.</p>	
8.	<p>Proposed Contract Awards</p> <p>AW noted that several contracts that were below Trustees sights were being the subject of requested variations, and confirmed that when the finance policies were reviewed in the Summer this would be changed.</p> <p><u>Extend cleaning contract for 12 months</u> – this would allow alignment of the renewal of the contract with the expiry of the one in MAP.</p> <p><u>Whipton</u> – various works were noted, these had been undertaken by delegated authority</p> <p><u>ASAP</u> – capital work had been undertaken using Condition Allocation Funding.</p> <p><u>IT infrastructure update at Isca Academy</u> - SP noted that this had been explored further. The current equipment was nine years old and no longer capable of supporting the curriculum. £35k was requested to be found from revenue.</p> <p><u>Catering Costs</u> – SP also requested in principle agreement to explore £150k for catering costs within schools to come from condition allocation. Aspens were looking to agree a position where they would be £100K worse off due to the arrangement and would like to agree a recovery plan. SP felt strongly that we should support them and help to maximise selling opportunities to children. It was proposed to put a catering pod in to support provision, this would support more children to get a meal during the day and help to support through Covid. The quote was for £22k per school, but SP advised to allow for £30k.</p> <p>AW noted that SP had negotiated not paying Aspens losses, but was now looking at ways to maximise their sales.</p> <p>Trustees were happy to support all of the contract Awards.</p> <p>AW confirmed that the finance policy would be reviewed to ensure that Trustees only looked at key contracts rather than minor ones in future.</p>	

9.	<p>Policies</p> <p>CD noted the fairly minimal and straightforward policy changes. These were set out in the updated schedule.</p> <p>Lone Working Policy - this had been extended to include working from home.</p> <p>Risk Strategy and Management Policy - was a simple update, once the Audit & Risk committee was established it would be presented for an early review to the Committee. However, it was now factually correct.</p> <p>School Emergency Planning – CD would be looking at this again in more detail and linking to the new requirement for Schools to have a clear outbreak management plan alongside Covid risk assessments.</p> <p>The changes to the policies were approved.</p> <p>MF to circulate updated policies following policy update procedure.</p> <p>AW queried if the flexible working policy had been updated following Covid. CD noted that the HR team were working on this, and that there would be some guidance issued. Heads and schools would be consulted with.</p> <p>AW also queried contingencies for isolation following summer holidays. CD noted that contingency arrangements were in place in schools, and that staff could work from home if they were required to isolate. MM noted that staff were also asked to adhere to government advice.</p>	MF
For Information		
10.	<p>Letter from Baroness Berridge</p> <p>The letter outlining the changes to the Academy Trust Handbook were noted.</p>	
For Approval		
11.	<p>Update from Growth Working Group</p> <p>PB noted the headline issues from the Growth Working Group on 15.06.21.</p> <p>A full record of the discussion is in Part B of the Minutes.</p>	
12.	<p>PFI/ Fusion Update</p> <p>CD had received a positive update from the DfE about the process for approval of the PFI contract documentation. They appeared to be close to completing ministerial submission and were supportive, having clarified perceived concerns over the procurement process and related party transactions. MM was still pressing for continued updates and would escalate if needed.</p> <p>CD confirmed that she was intending to book in further meetings with DCC to keep them updated with the process.</p> <p>CD also noted that, on the back of the positive response, if there was any further delay then at that point it would be escalated further. AW noted that the Trust had already been remarkably patient with the process.</p>	

	<p>It was suggested that MM should escalate to Baroness Berridge if no finality was reached within the next few days.</p> <p>RJ felt that a letter should be written to the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister as soon as possible, the Trust had become victims of bureaucracy. AW was in agreement with RJ. PB also noted the ongoing patience of the Trust and that there was now a lack of confidence in the DfE. However, it was acknowledged that it could be unhelpful to write at this point and that it was a fine judgement. MM agreed the need to tread a fine line, and confirmed that she would continue to pursue the outcome. She noted concern that intervening at this stage could put the process back again.</p> <p>AW noted that there was no excuse for DfE procrastination. RJ predicted that further delays could be caused by moving into the holiday season.</p>	
13.	<p>ASAP Sports Hall Update</p> <p>CD noted that, following the meeting of the Working Group, the outline planning response had been received from Plymouth City Council. This had raised one objection around the parking provision and replacement would need to be put in for the lost spaces. This was potentially a positive as it had been the Trust’s intention to do this, but it put us in a stronger position to gain funding from DfE as a condition of planning.</p> <p>The feasibility information had been submitted to DfE technical advisers. Responses and requirements in terms of additional survey work were expected w/c 29.06.21. If further approval was required, the members of the Working Group would be notified.</p> <p>Victoria Strickson was putting together an updated timeline to follow the DfE route and ensure the quickest possible process and value for money.</p> <p>The report was noted and it was agreed that a meeting of the Working Group would be scheduled when needed.</p> <p>PB queried if there was any progress on the relationship with the YMCA. CD confirmed that the Trust’s legal providers were preparing a case in relation to the letter of comfort. The intention was to ensure that the Trust has a watertight position in relation to the playing field which was a key point for the Trust.</p>	
Any Other Business and Next Meeting Dates		
	<p>Dates of next meetings: Wednesday 22 September 2021, 4.30pm Wednesday 24 November 2021, 4.30pm Wednesday 19 January 2022, 4.30pm Wednesday 16 March 2022, 4.30pm Wednesday 4 May 2022, 4.30pm Wednesday 22 June 2022, 4.30pm</p> <p>The meeting closed at 17:45</p>	

Signed by the Chair of the Committee:



Date: 22.09.21