

The Federation of Abbey Schools Academy Trust

Audit & Finance Committee

Minutes

Date & Time: 5.30 pm on Wednesday 2nd March 2022

Present Governors: Dr L Bryant, Mr G Buchanan, Mrs R Hall and Mr N Little.

Also in Attendance: Mr J Briggs, Mrs C Hurworth (EPM) and Mrs L Hawksby (Governance Professional.)

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF DISCUSSION</u>	<u>ACTION BY</u>
	<p>Note: meeting held in person: Nurture Class Room, Junior Building, the Federation of Abbey Schools.</p> <p>Note: Employees of the Trust are not involved in audit matters, considerations or recommendations, however the Accounting Officer (Head Teacher) attends to provide information and participate in the discussions.</p>	
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and accepted for Directors Mr M Fryer and Mrs R.Kershaw.</p>	
2.	<p>Notification of Items of Other Business</p> <p>There were no items of any other business</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of Interests:</p> <p>Declaration of personal or pecuniary interests in any matters arising from the Agenda of the current meeting.</p> <p>There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interests declared.</p>	

	<p>Declaration of any updates for the Register of Business Interests.</p> <p>There were no updates for the Register of Business Interests.</p> <p>4. Approval of Minutes</p> <p>a) Approval of Minutes – Thursday 7th October 2021</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meetings of the Audit & Finance Committee held on Thursday 7th October 2021 be approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>b) Pay Review Sub Committee Minutes – Thursday 7th October 2021</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meetings of the Pay Review Sub-Committee held on Thursday 7th October 2021 be approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>c.) Matters Arising –</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the above Minutes.</p> <p>5. Update Finance Procedures 21-22</p> <p>Further to Minute 8 (Audit & Finance Committee 7th October 2021) Mrs C Hurworth reported on small updates to the school’s Finance Procedures. These included changing reference from the company name of ‘Avec’ to ‘EPM’ and the ‘Finance Committee’ to the ‘Audit and Finance Committee.’</p> <p>On page 24 of the procedures the following was added:</p> <p>‘Supplier bank details may only be changed on the finance system on receipt of written instructions directly from the supplier. Care must be taken to ensure that the instructions are genuine and should always be confirmed by telephone from details already held or by sourcing contact details separate from the updated instructions.’</p> <p>At point 7.1 of the procedures the Committee requested that ‘lettings’ and ‘staff generated income’ be added to the list of how the Academy also obtains income.</p>	
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	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the above updates to the Finance Procedures 2021-22, as detailed above, be approved.</p> <p>6. Nursery</p> <p>The Head Teacher verbally advised that Nursery licence renewal would be due next year.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the above be noted.</p> <p>7. Finance Training</p> <p>It was agreed by the Committee a Finance training session would be provided by Mrs C.Hurworth (EPM) prior to the next meeting of the Full Governing Body on the 21st March 2022. The training session would cover, for example reading and understanding the balance sheets and allow Directors to ask questions.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That all Directors be invited to a Finance training session prior to the next meeting of the Full Governing Body scheduled for the 21st March 2022.</p>	<p><i>Mrs C Hurworth/ Business Team</i></p>
	<p>STANDING ITEMS OF THE COMMITTEE: Spring Term (Items 8 - 19)</p>	
<p>8.</p> <p>CQ</p>	<p>Financial monitoring: Budget /Management Accounts/Cash flow/Spring Update Report</p> <p>Mrs C Hurworth (EPM) reported to the Committee on the Management Accounts for January 2022. She also advised on other key areas of financial performance such as aged debtors, cash flow and balance sheet which were noted to be in a good position. The current month deficit was approximately £6,000 which was noted to be largely due to increased energy costs, however the accounts were overall still in surplus.</p> <p>The Committee enquired if there was anything the school could do further to help reduce energy costs? The Head Teacher advised the new boilers should be more efficient, and that there</p>	<p><i>Mrs C. Hurworth</i></p>

	<p>2022 that Clive Owen LLP act as auditors for the financial year ending 31 August 2022.</p> <p><i>(Mrs C Hurworth left the meeting at approximately 6.00 pm)</i></p> <p>10. Discuss the recommendations and outputs of any assurance activities by third parties, including ESFA financial management and governance reviews, funding audits and investigations.</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised there had been no recommendations/outputs of any assurance activities of third parties, apart from the scheduled internal audit which had just been carried out (please refer to Minute 14 below.)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>11. Review of last years' external audit and review actions in response to audit.</p> <p>The Committee advised that they had found no outstanding issues resulting from last years' external audit which required action.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That there were no outstanding issues resulting from last years' external audit and no actions were required.</p> <p>12. Review the Trust's Autumn Census returns to ensure they are accurate and compliant with the funding criteria</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the Autumn Term census and noted they were accurate and compliant with funding criteria, with no issues identified.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That no issues were identified.</p> <p>13. Confirm the Trust's land and building collection tool (LBCT) has been submitted to ensure it is compliant with funding criteria</p> <p>The Head Teacher verbally confirmed that the land and building collection tool (LBCT) has been submitted to ensure it is compliant with funding criteria</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p>	<p>Finance Committee</p>
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<p>14.</p>	<p>That the report be noted</p> <p>Internal Assurance Report</p> <p>The Committee considered the internal assurance report provided by the Trust's internal auditors Azets.</p> <p>The Committee noted that there were no issues or recommendations of major concern, with the one recommendation relating to a 'house-keeping' issue.</p> <p>It was recommended that:</p> <p>On review of the fixed asset register, the serial numbers and location of each asset were not always visible on the Register, therefore to collate the serial numbers on fixed assets with the fixed asset register to help identify assets in future and to ensure the Trust is complying with their Finance Procedures.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the recommendation be noted and implemented.</p>	<p><i>Business Team</i></p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>Premises Report</p> <p>The Head Teacher presented the premises report. It was noted that Telephony system upgrade was required to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The Business Team were currently reviewing requirements and expected significant cost savings. Adaptations to remote monitoring for fire alarms was also in the scope to align to internet based software rather than phone lines</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the premises report be noted.</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>Human Resources</p> <p>The Head Teacher updated the Committee on the latest Human Resources Committee report with regards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff that had left • New appointments • Maternity leave • Changes to contracts • Long term sick • Covid 19 	

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>17. Service Level Agreements</p> <p>A list of the current Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and their costings were presented to the Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>18. Risk Register (strategic review to report back to Board and report any changes made during the term.)</p> <p>The Committee strategically reviewed the whole Risk Register They also noted the updates recommended by the Board at its meeting on the 31st January 2022 (Minute 12 Full Governing Body 31st January 2022) and Teaching & Learning Committee 9th February 2022 (Minute 10 Teaching & Learning Committee 9th February 2022.)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That in relation to Covid 19 remove mention to essential cleaning as it was no longer applicable.</p> <p>19. To review the school staffing structure</p> <p>Consideration was given by the Committee to the Trust's current staffing structure.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That no changes to the school staffing structure were required at the current time.</p> <p>20. Investments & Reserves Policy</p> <p>Consideration was given by the Committee to the Investments & Reserves Policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Investments & Reserves Policy be approved.</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Head Teacher</i></p>
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<p>21.</p>	<p>Charging & Remissions (Lettings of Premises).</p> <p>Consideration was given by the Committee to the Charging & Remissions (Lettings of Premises) Policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Charging & Remissions Policy be approved and be brought back to the Summer term meeting of the Audit & Finance Committee, as it was the appropriate point to review in the Academic Year if a fees increase was required.</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher/ Governance Professional</i></p>
<p>22.</p>	<p>Agenda Items for the Next Meeting :</p> <p>Standing Items and Policies due for review, including the Charging & Remissions Policy (Lettings of Premise) (Minute 21 above refers).</p>	<p><i>Governance Professional</i></p>
<p>23.</p>	<p>Approval of Documents for Public Inspection</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Agenda, supporting documents and approved Minutes be made available for public inspection with the exception of the reports and supporting papers at Minute 8 - Financial Monitoring, Minute 9 – Update External Auditors Tender and Minute 17 - Service Level Agreements above in accordance with Article 125 c.) as they all contain commercially sensitive financial information.</p>	<p><i>Governance Professional</i></p>
<p>24.</p>	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the next meeting of the Committee be held on 16th June 2022 at 5.30 pm</p>	<p><i>Governance Professional</i></p>
<p>The Meeting concluded at 7.00 pm</p>		

	<p>Approved by the Audit & Finance Committee</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Signature (Chair): _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p>	
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(Note: CQ – Challenging Question)