



TRUST BOARD AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Audit Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held at Liskeard School & Community College on Wednesday 5th March at 6.30 pm.

Present	Yes/No	In Attendance	Yes/No
Mr B Cook	Yes		
Mr D Buckley	Yes	Mrs J Lumbard, CFO	Yes
Mr R Newton Chance	Yes	Mrs K Williams, Clerk	Yes

10. **Welcome Evacuation Procedure**

As the post as Audit Trustee is currently vacant, Mr Newton Chance agreed to chair this meeting. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The evacuation procedure has been explained.

11. **Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**

None.

12. **Apologies for Absence**

All Trustees were present.

13. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 5th December 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2019, having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record and were signed.

14. **Matters Arising**

M6. Business Continuity Plans

The agreed cycle is; the plans will be updated and agreed in the summer term and approved by the Audit Committee in the Autumn term. In the meeting in March, Trustees will need to discuss the testing of the plans. Clerk to add to the agenda.

Update: On this agenda.

15. **Strategic Risk including Risk Register – Approval of allocation of risks**

a) It was discussed that the People and Learning Committees have already identified the risks relevant to their committee.

b) Risk 17 through to Risk 26 – Trustees agreed that these risks are the responsibility of the Resources Committee.

c) **A Trustee asked if the committees should be agreeing the level of risk and mitigations in place.**

It was discussed that during this meeting, Trustees will agree the list of risks which are relevant to the Resources Committee and the Resources Committee will then agree the level of risk at the next meeting. Clerk to add to agenda.

Action: Clerk

16. **Business Continuity Plans – For approval**

a) These plans have been discussed and agreed at LGC level. **A Trustee noted that the plans should be updated in view of the current Corona virus situation.**

- b) **Trustees noted that these plans are comprehensive and queried if the schools should be using smaller operational documents.** It was discussed that testing the documents will drive improvements and schools should test an element of the plan.
- c) The Trustees requested that the schools should test one element of their business continuity plan annually and the results of this should be fed back to the LGCs. Dan to agree this approach with MSLT. Action: D. Buckley
- d) **A Trustee asked if the CBU has its own Business Continuity plan.** Mrs Lumbard explained that the CBU does not have one as the CBU falls under Liskeard's plan. Mr Buckley and Mrs Lumbard have discussed if the CBU should have one and it was agreed that it is not necessary.
- e) Trustees approved the process but to have confidence, Trustees request that one element should be tested annually.

17. **ESFA Funding Statements – For information**

- a) Following the usual checks carried out by the Finance team, a comparison had been circulated detailing the October 19 census to the ESFA funding statements for 2020/21 to check that student numbers, which are the basis for funding, were in alignment. Mrs Lumbard explained there is a slight difference at Saltash which she is checking with the ESFA.

Action: J Lumbard

18. **Annual Assessment against AFH 'musts' – For discussion**

- a) Mrs Lumbard and Mr Buckley have met and checked this document. **A Trustee asked where responsibility lies that the "musts" are met.** It is the role of the Accounting Officer.
- b) The Trustees discussed the different levels of judgements in this document at length.
- c) Trustees were content with the information as presented but requested that in future one or two elements of the list should have assurance that the process is robust. The process of assurance was discussed at length and it was agreed that scrutiny is only required if there is a cross against a "must", indicating that it had not been met.

19. **Report of any novel or contentious transactions to consider risk – For information**

- a) Mrs Lumbard explained that there is nothing to report. It is good practice to give the Audit Committee assurance that we are looking at anything novel or contentious to be reported.

20. **Internal Assurance scrutiny tests to be decided/agreed**

- a) Mrs Lumbard explained that the spreadsheet presented details the proposed testing programme. Mrs Lumbard explains that this covers the key risks to the Trust.
- b) **A Trustee asked where this list of internal assurance tests have come from.** Mrs Lumbard explained that this has been formed by Bishop Fleming and herself. The testing programme is for internal assurance. The Trustees have appointed Bishop Fleming to carry out the internal assurance testing and will use this checklist for the process.
- c) Many of the tests link to the "musts" in the Academies Financial Handbook. Mrs Lumbard advised that items from the Risk Register with high risk ratings over 10 could be added to the testing programme. However, Trustees may be content that the regular checks that are made on the Risk Register are sufficient.
- d) **A Trustee asked what is the function of the internal assurance.** Mrs Lumbard explained that the internal scrutiny and assurance is a requirement in the Academies Financial Handbook and is becoming more substantial. Trustees need assurance from an external source that processes are robust.

- e) Trustees agreed that the risks on the Risk Register should not be included in the internal assurance testing.

21. **The Anti-Fraud checklist – For consideration**

- a) All Trustees need to consider this checklist. **A Trustee asked if this is a standard ESFA policy** and Mrs Lumbard advised that it is and has been in place for a long time.
- b) Mr Buckley explained that two instances have been identified over the past five years and procedures are in place.
- c) Trustees have considered the checklist.

22. **Regulatory update – For information**

- a) Mrs Lumbard explained that good practice is to check there has been no changes since the accounts were signed in December.
- b) Confidential appendix.

23. **Annual assessment of the MAT against CC8, internal controls in a charity – For discussion**

- a) **A Trustee asked who completed this document.** Mr Buckley and Mrs Lumbard completed the document.
- b) **A Trustee asked if anyone else checks the document.** Mr Buckley explained that he is held to account for completion of this document by the Trustees.
- c) Trustees were content with the process and compliance provided by the Accounting Officer and CFO.
- d) **A Trustee asked if the internal scrutiny testing report will be complete and available for the next meeting.** Clerk to add to the agenda and Mrs Lumbard to contact Bishop Fleming.
Action: Clerk/J Lumbard
- e) It was discussed and agreed that a further Trustee is needed for this committee. Recruitment for a H&S and Premises is a priority and the possibility of asking a Trustee from another committee to sit on this committee to fill the gap temporarily, was discussed.

24. **Date of next meetings:** 4th June at 6.30 pm

The meeting closed at 19.56.

Action Summary	
<p>M15. Strategic Risk including Risk Register – Approval of allocation of risks</p> <p>c) A Trustee asked if the committees should be agreeing the level of risk and mitigations in place. It was discussed that during this meeting, Trustees will agree the list of risks which are relevant to the Resources Committee and the Resources Committee will then agree the level of risk at the next meeting. Clerk to add to agenda.</p>	<p>Action: Clerk</p>
<p>M17. ESFA Funding Statements – For information</p> <p>Following the usual checks carried out by the Finance team, a comparison had been circulated detailing the October 19 census to the ESFA funding statements for 2020/21 to check that student numbers, which are the basis for funding, were in alignment. Mrs Lumbard explained there is a slight difference at Saltash which she is checking with the ESFA.</p>	<p>Action: J Lumbard</p>

<p>M23. Annual assessment of the MAT against CC8, internal controls in a charity – For discussion</p> <p>d) A Trustee asked if the internal scrutiny testing report will be complete and available for the next meeting. Clerk to add to the agenda and Mrs Lumbard to contact Bishop Fleming.</p>	<p>Action: Clerk/J Lumbard</p>
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