



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & PREMISES COMMITTEE

Wednesday 6 March 2024 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Large Conference Room, Fambridge Road

### Present:

Mr T Bailey	(TB)	Trustee, Chair of Finance & Premises Committee
Ms J Ellum	(JE)	Trustee
Mr M Howell	(MH)	Trustee, Health and Safety Link <i>arrived at 6.35 pm</i>
Ms S Milward	(SM)	Trustee <i>arrived at 6.10 pm</i>
Ms S Robinson	(SR)	Trustee

### In attendance

Mr T Baster	(TBA)	Joint Head of Academy
Mrs R Clark	(RCL)	Joint Head of Academy
Mrs K Redmond	(KRE)	Clerk to Trustees (Governance Professional)
Mr R Scott	(RSC)	Director of Finance & Premises

### Apologies:

Mrs E Crees	(EC)	Trustee
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*This group was quorate for the purpose of resolutions*

Item	Topic	Minute
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were NOTED.
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting	Minutes of the previous Finance & Premises Committee meeting held on 11 November 2023 were APPROVED unanimously.
3.	Matters Arising	Matters Arising were covered by the agenda.
4.	Notification of Any Other Business	1. HR System 2. Thomas Plume Library
5.	Declaration of Business Interests	There were no new declarations of business interests and no Trustee recorded any conflict of interest with the items on the agenda or the receipt or giving of any gifts or hospitality since the last meeting.
6.	Summary of actions taken since the autumn term	There were no Chair's Actions to report.
7.	Finance	Trustees NOTED:  a) Management Accounts to February 2024  The forecast was for a positive end of year revenue deficit of -£4,825 rather than the original forecast deficit of -£250k i.e. almost break even. This was as a result of additional grants being received after the original 2023/24 budget was set and an underspend of £219k on staffing. An indepth analysis of staffing

		<p>costs was now being tracked to provide accurate data for each role.</p> <p>TB queried what costs will be incurred to eradicate the current surplus.</p> <p>RSC advised that there were significant examination fees which were budgeted for each month but were mostly paid in the summer term.</p> <p>Trustees requested that expenditure be allocated to the month the expenditure will occur.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action RSC</b></p> <p>TB referred to the General Annual Grant (GAG) income relating to the quality of Key Stage (KS2) outcomes, and the academy receiving additional income for lower results, and queried how that was calculated.</p> <p>RSC advised that the calculation was based on the average of one year's results e.g. 2019 and then rolled forward but would investigate and provide an update at the next meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action RSC</b></p> <p>Trustees NOTED that TBA had not received a response to his letter to the Department for Education (DfE) raising the academy's concerns on KS2 results for a small number of students.</p> <p>b) Update on first draft Three Year Budget Summary, General Annual Grant (GAG) funding allocation statement 2024-25 for KS3 and 4, and reserves breakdown from 2023. Sixth Form funding will be confirmed in April 2024.</p> <p>MH queried whether the budget forecast had taken into account expansion costs.</p> <p>RSC confirmed that the expansion costs were included with average costs for teachers and student numbers as they increased.</p> <p>TB queried when the three year budget summary had to be submitted to the DfE.</p> <p>RSC advised it had to be submitted in the middle of the summer term and the information provided for this meeting was a very early draft.</p> <p>RCL requested that a drop down box be added to each line explaining what each category meant e.g. Professional Fees – Administrative.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action RSC</b></p> <p>c) School Resource Management Self-Assessment Checklist</p> <p>Trustees REVIEWED the draft Checklist and raised the following queries:</p>
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		<p>i. did the Responsible Officer provide enough professional challenge</p> <p>RSC advised that the alternative was to appoint an internal auditor which would incur additional costs.</p> <p>ii. why did question 36 not have an answer</p> <p>RSC advised that he would refer to the criteria. A benchmarking report had been submitted at the last committee meeting.</p> <p>iii. why did question 39 not have an answer</p> <p>RSC advised that he would refer to the criteria. RSC confirmed that a contract register was in place.</p> <p>iv. did the academy consider social environmental, ethical and sustainability factors referred to under question 39 as there could be a high reputational risk for significant tenders</p> <p>RSC advised not generally and agreed to add a criteria to the tender documents to indicate whether or not a company had provided their environmental and sustainability policy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action RSC</b></p> <p>v. were Trustees provided with the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bids for approval</p> <p>RSC advised that Trustees agreed the areas which required action from the estate plan and then bids were created and submitted by Ingleton Wood. RSC agreed to circulate the completed bids in future.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action RSC</b></p> <p>Trustees AGREED that TBA be named as the Principal and RCL as the Accounting Officer for the purpose of reporting to the DfE/Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).</p> <p>Trustees AGREED the Checklist for submission by the deadline of 15 March 2024 subject to clarification of the above points.</p> <p>vi. Trustees NOTED the Report to the Board: top 10 planning checks for Governors with reference to the schools financial benchmarking service and curriculum led financial planning.</p> <p>SM queried whether it would be financially beneficial not to have a sixth form.</p> <p>RCL advised that there was an obligation to provide a broad curriculum offer at KS5 as the only secondary school in Maldon. There were informed decisions made to determine whether it was financially viable to put on a subject with low numbers of applicants.</p>
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		<p>SM queried whether the aim was to increase numbers in the sixth form and was there capacity to do so.</p> <p>RCL confirmed that the aim was to increase numbers in the sixth form. The current capacity issue will be addressed by the expansion project.</p> <p>Trustees AGREED to provide consider any further feedback to the written report and RSC to create a tracker for each item for monitoring.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action RSC</b></p> <p>d) Aged Debtors report as at 29 February 2024</p> <p>e) Audit Update</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that tenders had been sent to four companies excluding the current auditors. Returns were required by 31 March 2024.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that a tender exercise had also carried been out for legal services and AGREED to remain with the current provider as their fees were very similar to the other company who had tendered.</p> <p>f) Benchmarking – report provided at the last meeting.</p> <p>g) Gifts &amp; Hospitality Register: there were no declarations above £25.</p> <p>h) Key Indicator of Performance (KIP) report.</p>
8.	Premises Report	<p>Trustees NOTED:</p> <p>a) the outcomes of the CIF bids for the Fambridge Road Campus (FRC) roof and FRC sports hall changing room area were expected by Easter</p> <p>TB queried what the plan was if the CIF bids were unsuccessful.</p> <p>RSC advised that the FRC sports hall roof will have temporary repairs to last two years until the expansion project was complete. The FRC roof will be reviewed and reassessed to determine the urgency and costs of repairs required.</p> <p>b) the current CIF project for the boiler replacement at FRC was complete</p> <p>c) the current CIF project for the replacement pipework and boiler at Mill Road Campus (MRC) will recommence at Easter for completion by end of August 2024.</p>
9.	Health & Safety Update	<p>Trustees NOTED the Health &amp; Safety Committee scheduled for 14 December 2023 had been cancelled.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that there were no RIDDOR reportable incidents.</p>

10.	Risk Register/Risk Management	Trustees NOTED that the Risk Register/Risk Management were in progress for presentation at the next meeting. <b>Action RSC</b>
11.	General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	1. Trustees NOTED that there had no breaches sufficient to reach the threshold to report to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The academy followed all guidelines for any minor breaches and guidance was issued to individual staff who carried out a breach.  2. Trustees NOTED that staff carried out Handsam GDPR training when employed and then refreshed every two years. RSC to review training requirements for Trustees. <b>Action RSC</b>
13	Policies	Trustees NOTED there were no policies requiring approval at this meeting.
15	Confirmation of confidential items for the minutes	Agenda item 12, and 14.1 and 14.2
16	Date of next meetings	12 June 2024

*Meeting closed at 8.20 pm*

### **Actions**

<b>Date of Meeting/ Item number</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Minute</b>
06.03.24 - item 7a	Management Accounts	RSC to allocate expenditure to the month the expenditure occurs  RSC to provide a report on how the calculation for KS2 results was made and how it affected the academy.
06.03.24 - item 7b	Three Year Budget Forecast	RSC to add a drop down box be added to each line explaining what each category meant e.g. Professional Fees – Administrative.
06.03.24 - item 7c.iv	School Resource Mgt Self-Assessment Checklist	RSC to add a criteria to the tender documents to indicate whether or not a company had provided their environmental and sustainability policy.
06.03.24 - item 7c.v	CIF bids	RSC to circulate the completed bids in future.
06.03.24 - item 7c.vi	School Resource Mgt Self-Assessment Checklist – Report to the Board	RSC to create a tracker for each item for monitoring
06.03.24 - item 10	Risk Register/Risk Management	Risk Register/Risk Management to be presented at the next meeting.
06.03.24 - item 11.2	GDPR training requirements for Trustees	RSC to review training requirements for Trustees.