

Company registration number 09334026

Business Committee Meeting
The Radcliffe Academy, Harlow Centre, Oxford
Friday, 22nd November 2019
Minutes

Present: EC (Chair) BM	GW AS	NP Clerk	Apologies: JD
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#	Details	By whom	By when
1d	Update on replacement venue for Ambrose House	NP/BM	Next meeting
1d	Provide NP with a schedule showing schools' use of MBC	BM/AS	28 th Nov
1d	Trustee recruitment leads update	JD	Next meeting
1d	Health and Safety review	BM/JD	Next meeting
2.	Review and amend wording in the Strategic Plan section of the Financial regulations manual, specifically point 4.07	NP/BM	Next meeting
2	Read changes in the Academies Financial Handbook	All	On-going
4.	Amend terms of reference documents to include policy duty	BM	Next meeting
5.1	Include on next agenda 'people risk' item deferred from this meeting	Clerk	Next meeting
6.1	CIF re-bid update	BM	Next meeting
7	Report back on Headteacher's performance management	GW/EC	Next meeting
9	Amend policies and upload to Google drive	BM	Next meeting
10.	Update DfE self-assessment tool	BM	Next meeting
10	Add review of DfE self-assessment tool update as standing agenda item	Clerk	Next meeting

Company registration number 09334026

1. Introductory items		
1a	The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming attendees.	
1b	Apologies were received from JD	
1c	There were no new declarations of interest	
1d	<p>The minutes from the previous meeting held on 21st June 2019 were agreed and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Action points:</p> <p>1c – Replacement venue for Ambrose House in Osney Mead, Oxford has not been secured due to higher than expected legal fees and a difficulty on converting use of the building from category B1 to D1. Enquires about alternative venues continue and NP and BM agreed to keep Trustees informed.</p> <p>1c – finalising lock down policies – completed for all sites except the Harlow Centre and the replacement for Ambrose House. This matter is on-going until completion of the new build</p> <p>2 – schedule of schools’ use of MBC and annual spent – this information will be prepared by BM and AS and sent to the Headteacher for review by 28th November 2019</p> <p>3 – Trustee recruitment leads – deferred to the next meeting in the absence of JD</p> <p>6 – Review H&S – BM and JD have not yet met to review H&S and will report back to the next meeting of this group.</p>	<p>NP/ BM</p> <p>BM/ AS JD BM & JD</p>
2.	Budget review and related finance matters	
	<p>BM and AS presented the budget monitoring and potential overrun reports to 30th September 2019 focusing on the following main points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Based on latest information available the reserves are forecasted to be reduced by £3,057. Earlier forecasts had indicated an increase of £5,254. Income is forecasted to be short of budget by £58k due to a potential shortfall in traded income of £73K, offset by anticipated additional income of £15k in respect of pupil premium and the teachers’ pay award grant. Staffing expenditure is forecast to be £57k under budget, calculated by the savings due to teaching and support staff resignations and replacement costs offset by increased teaching costs for new staff and the additional teacher pay rise of 0.75%. <p>The traded income summary tables to 18th October 2019 show variances of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General traded (fte) – minus 16.46 On Course ((fte) – minus 4.62 	

Company registration number 09334026

	<p>BM commented that traded income is expected to increase as the academic year progresses and demand for places increases. EC stressed the need to monitor traded income to support discussion on future trends. NP commented that the language used in reports (eg over-budget) could be misleading and considered to be over-spending when viewed externally.</p> <p>Trustees requested the format of future budget monitoring reports be revised to included linked references between the two documents for ease of reading and to aid discussion.</p> <p>BM reported on the following changes to financial manuals and handbooks from September 2019:</p> <p>Financial regulations manual –page 22 details changes to sections 6.33 and 6.04 to reflect good practice regarding credit card use and the use of requisition forms. In addition, the Strategic Plan wording on page 7, in particular point 4.07, will be reviewed by NP and BM and consideration given to the wording.</p> <p>Academies Financial Handbook 2019/20 – the revised handbook effective from September 2019 shows changes to the previous version on page 8. Trustees were requested to read and understand the changes.</p> <p>Review of Audit Plan – Trustees respectively reviewed the audit plan for the period September 2018 – August 2019 and approved the document.</p> <p>Teachers national pay increases - the schedule shows teacher pay rates from September 2019 and was offered to trustee to aid discussions on staffing levels etc.</p>	<p>NP/ BM</p> <p>All</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Scheme of delegation</p>	
	<p>The updated scheme of delegation was agreed to reflect the role of the Senior Finance Officer</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Terms of reference</p>	
	<p>Trustees review the terms of reference for the Business Committee. The duty of reviewing and approving policies is not included in the terms and Trustees recommended the following amendment to reflect this duty. BM will amend the document as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add ‘delegated responsibility for HR, Finance and Health and Safety’. <p>Trustees approved the document with this amendment.</p>	<p>BM</p>

Company registration number 09334026

5.	Risk – standing agenda item	
5.1	Open conversation to discuss ‘people risk’ – deferred to the next meeting	Clerk
5.2	Risk associated to building work – there is good communication with the contractors on a day-to-day basis and any minor issues are dealt with promptly.	
6.	CIF bid update	
6.1	Due to minor planning issues there is a slight delay in completing planned work and the DfE have agreed to postpone funding until this matter is resolved. An earlier bid for roofing work at West Bar was un-successful and a new bid will be submitted following advice from the DfE. BM will work with Ridge to submit the new bid and report back.	BM
7.	Recruitment and staffing update	
	<p>NP tabled the teacher appraisal and pay progression report for 2019. The purpose of the report is to provide Trustees with information about the operation and impact of the appraisal process. The main points from the report are shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Assessment of teachers’ performance – appraisal review meetings have been completed for all eligible teachers. This process takes place in July 2019 and supports in-house CPD which is directly linked to individual professional development targets and those required in achieving the School Development Plan. b) Moderation of objectives and pay recommendations – professional objectives are moderated by the Headteacher, assisted by the Deputy and Assistant Headteachers. Recommendations for progression are shown below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Instructor G5: progression to the next point on the Instructor scale b) AHT L9 progression to L10 with effect from January 2020 c) 1 x TMS teacher progression to next point on TMS range <p>The Headteacher’s performance management will take place in January 2020 and reported back to Trustees.</p> <p>The progression recommendations have been predicted and are included in the budget.</p> <p>A number of teaching staff at Meadowbrook College have long service and are at the top of their salary grade so teaching costs in some areas are high. Currently only a few teaching staff who have been recently recruited are at the lower end of their grade.</p>	GW/ EC

Company registration number 09334026

	<p>Q. Are performance management targets common across all teams? A. Engagement and transition is common but other aspects differ across the school. Q. Does performance management linked back to the School Development Plan? A. Yes, teachers are encouraged to review the School Development Plan and choose where they fit in. This is new and useful practice which supports the wider picture and is currently work in progress.</p>	
8.	Health and Safety	
8.1	<p>Trustees reviewed the Health and Safety annual report completed in July 2019 and made the following observation:</p> <p>a) 6.6 Lone working – the need to ensure safeguarding for staff was essential</p> <p>BM stated the lone working policy has clear guidance, is included in the CPD folder and part of discussion during induction. NP recommended the SLT should ensure staff are reminded about the policy at regular intervals.</p>	
9.	Policy review:	
9.1	<p>Trustees reviewed the following policies and made specific recommendations as shown below.</p> <p>a) Behaviour and Relationships – questions and recommendations by Trustees: Q. Has the headteacher had a conversation with the SLT about this policy? Q. Why does this policy have a different format and has it been proof-read?</p> <p>Trustees did not approve the policy. NP will discuss the policy with SLT which will be re-submitted for approval at the Trust Board meeting in December.</p> <p>b) Business Continuity – Approved with the following amendment: Page 5 – amend top heading to read Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers and other members of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility Page 6 – amend to read Koala IT</p> <p>c) The Whistle Blowing Policy was discussed and amended to include the following named persons as contacts for expressing concerns:</p> <p>Page 4, point 21 Trustee – Emma Canter and Staff member – Brenda Mundy.</p> <p>This information will be added and Trustees approved the policy with this addition.</p>	NP

Company registration number 09334026

	<p>d) Other policies: The Fixed Asset Policy, Fraud Policy, Investment Policy, LGPS Discretionary Policy, Petty Cash Policy, Reserves Policy, Risk Management Policy, Teachers Pay Policy and Tendering Policy were all approved with no amendments.</p> <p>BM will apply the amendments recommended by Trustees and upload policies to the Google drive.</p>	BM
10.	DfE resource management self-assessment tool	
	<p>BM tabled a paper outlining the new DfE resource management self-assessment tool which gives the opportunity for school comparison data, including costs. BM had completed the checklist by adding MBC data, including financial information, for example costs for teaching staff and resources, which is converted into a percentage figure and rated as in-line with, lower or exceeding costs of other AP providers. In addition, the on-line tool is submitted to the DfE to ensure Trustees are aware of costs etc are managed appropriately.</p> <p>In all areas where costs were compared with other APs MBC's costs were rated as in-line or lower with the exception of education support staff costs which were rated in the highest 10% of similar schools. NP commented that this may be due to how costs are shown in the budget.</p> <p>Trustees found the tool a useful facility and a valuable source of information. It was agreed that the tool should be updated at regular intervals and re-presented at Business Committee meeting to aid discussions. The Clerk will add this matter as a standing agenda item at meetings.</p>	BM Clerk
11.	Date of next meeting	
	Friday, 6 th March 2020 from 0930 – 1130 at the Harlow Centre.	

Approved by the Business Committee on 6th March 2020 and signed by the Acting Chair. A paper copy of the minutes are held securely in the Headteacher's office.