

APPROVED Minutes of the Meeting of the FLT Resources Committee
26 November 2020 6.30pm
Virtual Teams Meeting

Committee Members who are also Trustees

Anthony Cook (AC) Chair - in attendance
Ian Wright (IW) - in attendance
Duncan Millard (DM) - in attendance
Mark Greenwood (MG) - in attendance

Committee Members who are not Trustees

David Hancox (DH) - in attendance
Tim Clark (TC) - in attendance
Duncan Jenkins (DJ) - in attendance from 6.50 p.m.
Alex Bond (AB) - in attendance

In attendance

Officer: Anne Lynn (AL) COO
Officer: Joanne Ray (JR) Operations Manager
Officer: Jane Cole (JC) Finance Manager
Clerk: Sandra Green (SG)

Guests

Helen Cox, FLT SENDCo Lead: Item G only
Georgina Smallman – Critchleys: Audit Manager: Item 16 only

Observer

Tori Ray: newly-recruited Board Clerk

Apologies received from

Andrew Rodzynski – Critchleys: Audit Partner: Item 16 only

1	<p>The meeting opened at: 6.30 p.m.</p> <p>Welcome new members, visitors or staff presenting and note any resignations</p> <p>AC welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Helen Cox who was joining us for Item G and Tori Ray who was observing the meeting before she takes over the role as the Clerk from Sandra. As per the agenda, we would also be joined by Georgina Smallman from Critchleys for Item 16 only.</p>
2	<p>Apologies and Quoracy</p> <p><i>50% of committee members (4) of which 2 attendees are Trustees. Current total committee number is 8.</i></p> <p>The meeting was declared quorate with 100% attendance.</p>
G	<p>Opportunity to meet Helen Cox, FLT SENDCo Lead</p> <p>AC welcomed HC who had been asked to consider a couple of questions prior to the meeting and respond this evening:</p> <p><i>1. As you look across the FLT, how well are we supporting our SEND children to achieve their learning outcomes?</i></p> <p><i>2. What would you hold up as great practice and where are the gaps?</i></p>

Signed _____ Dated _____

	<p>HC responded that she had found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good SEND support across the schools • schools were at different stages of developing their SEND support • there was much good reflection by the schools • need to ensure that the SENDCo's have a strategic role to have the influence they require • very good practise, monitoring, interventions, teachers taking accountability <p>A few gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to reinforce 'quality first' teaching • to gain consistency in paperwork to give a seamless education • complex needs are rising whilst schools are working within an archaic SEND framework <p>HC then responded to questions from committee members.</p> <p>AC asked HC if she had any requirements of the Resources Committee? HC replied that she has outsourced a software package which schools could buy into, which would help ensure consistency of paperwork. The more schools who use the software, the more comparison and analytical data will be available for HC to review and identify where interventions would be best made. A few schools are trialling. FCC is doing so but would ideally wish to pair up with another Secondary school for appropriate comparison so is exploring this with Farmors School. DM stated that he works closely with Farmors so would take this forward with them and advise accordingly.</p> <p>ACTION: AC to liaise with HC to prepare an FLT Central proposal for the purchase of the software to enable our schools to be early adopters.</p> <p>ACTION: HC agreed to feed back to the Resources Committee after an initial review of data provided.</p> <p>ACTION: HC agreed to copy her correspondence with Farmors School to DM for him to progress link up with FCC. (completed since meeting)</p> <p>AC thanked HC for attending and for providing a very interesting picture of her early reflections of SENDCo provision across FLT. HC left the meeting.</p>
16	<p>Financial and Annual Report including Accountants' Report</p> <p>This item had been brought forward on the agenda to enable the guests from Critchleys to attend for this item alone. GS made the presentation, having given her colleague's apologies for not being able to attend due to a family emergency.</p> <p>GS reminded committee members that the Accountants had undertaken two main assignments, i.e. Irregularities and Standard. She was very pleased to advise that they had concluded that they could give FLT a 'clean opinion', which meant that they had found no anomalies of note.</p> <p>Note 17 on page 49 covers how funds are used at the end of the year. GS counselled FLT to keep an eye on budgets, which are currently in a good position but which will be negatively impacted by salary increases, unexpected building works, etc.</p> <p>GS reported that it has been a steady year in accounting terms, but now seeing the impact of the CV-19 pandemic, particularly on income from lost catering and lettings. The Education sector has survived relatively well during the pandemic, but obviously those with considerable lettings potential have suffered more. Technology has been under pressure to gear up, with resultant costs.</p> <p>AL responded that extra TA and cleaning hours have increased, whilst the income from catering is a risk due to lost income, including a couple of schools who are still yet to re-introduce the provision of hot lunches.</p>

	<p>GS reported that the pandemic measures had caused the auditors to have to work remotely and she thanked the FLT Finance Team for their extra hard work to overcome this situation. Despite the impact of CV-19, GS had no new points to raise this year as FLT has managed to keep their day-to-day procedures on point, with good authorisations.</p> <p>Several of last year's points had been cleared off, e.g. school trips. Some could not be reviewed due to the pandemic measures, e.g. VAT revenue as a result of the reduction in lettings. AL advised that this is a topic which has been picked up by the Independent Audit & Risk Committee, who are due to report back on their findings in early 2021.</p> <p>AC endorsed GS's thanks to JC and the Finance Team on behalf of the Committee in getting the final accounts successfully through, especially in the current difficult circumstances created by the pandemic. He also thanked AL, JC and the Finance Team, GS and her colleagues at Critchleys on behalf of the Committee for all their efforts of working on this item, and GH for joining the meeting and her very clear and concise presentation.</p> <p>AL advised the meeting that the next step is for the Board to review the Annual Report on 17/12/2020 and the Members to do so on the same day. GS left the meeting.</p>
3	<p>Any other Business agreed as being urgent No items.</p>
4	<p>Declaration of any personal, business, or pecuniary interests regarding this meeting's content No declarations.</p>
5	<p>Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting on 17 September 2020 The minutes and confidential minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair when CV-19 measures permit.</p> <p>The signed minutes, agenda and papers to be filed by the clerk.</p>
6	<p>Matters Arising from previous Minutes (and not covered in this agenda). (Duncan Jenkins joined the meeting)</p> <p><u>R1: Meeting 20/06/2019</u> Action: JR to send out guidance on appropriate accident reporting: <i>Carried Forward</i> This was pending the update of the First Aid Policy which was due to be completed 2020 term 5/6.</p> <p>Action: JR to circulate L&F's risk assessment: <i>Complete</i> Action: JR to provide a summary of schools' number of their first aiders to the committee meeting following receipt of all: <i>Pending</i></p> <p>Action R2: JR to consider provision of employee handbook. This will be reviewed during the H&S manual update in 2021 so carried forward: <i>Carried Forward</i></p> <p>Investment options AL raised that the next step was for the committee to review how it wishes to invest as funds are currently solely with Lloyds Bank plc. It was agreed that, due to the current CV-19 impact on investment markets, etc this would be pushed back to November 2020. Action: AL/AC to present a proposal to the committee at the November meeting if timing is considered appropriate: it was agreed that the timing was still not appropriate: <i>Carried Forward</i></p> <p>Action R8: Covid-19 Update: now a Standing Item on agenda so removed from Action List</p>

	<p>Action R9: Capital Expenditure Funding for FJS Project: <i>see Item 9 below.</i></p> <p>Action R10: Appointment of new SENDCo Lead: SG to invite jobholder to committee's November 2020 meeting: <i>Complete</i></p> <p>Confidential Item: Please see separate Note.</p>
7	<p>Activity agreed out of committee</p> <p>Resources Committee approved Teachers' Pay Award in October 2020.</p>
8	<p>Period Financial Outlook</p> <p>AC reminded the committee of the considerable number of reports provided to them by AL prior to the meeting and that these are subject to final changes as the data is confirmed.</p> <p>AL reported that FLT schools have done better than expected. The pandemic has resulted in schools being closed at times which has saved some expenditure. SHR did well but is on AL's 'Watch' list. JBL is in a better place. The reserve figures are due to be finalised by period 3 of 2020 which should give the committee a better view. The impact of the pandemic is, as already stated by GS, being felt in less income/higher cleaning and catering costs, etc.</p> <p>There are some positives for 20/21, i.e. £217,000 of CV-19 Catchup Funding for the schools to spend. Our Heads are looking at spending options and are required to report back to the Q of E Committee and to display the information on their school website.</p> <p>The Sports Premium shows a large overspend however this is offset by the additional income as it has been doubled again for this year. A few Trust schools (LAF, WAT and FIS) have sports premium income from last year which is carried over into this year (DfE have agreed to this), this money is sat in the schools reserves but needs to be spent during 20/21. JBL also have funding received from OCC for their new build which is sat in reserves and will need to be spent during 20/21. Finally, due to accounting practice, FCC and JBL CIF income has been posted to 19/20, whereby the expenditure will all be posted to 20/21.</p> <p>AL reported that records are being kept of extra costs being incurred due to the pandemic. The committee discussed CV-related costs.</p> <p>ACTION: AL to bring a report of these extra costs incurred due to the pandemic to ARC's January meeting.</p> <p>Item of risk relates to FJS building works that are needed.</p>
9	<p>Capital Expenditure and update</p> <p>Combined in Items 8 and 12 above and below.</p> <p>Risks are present at FJS, i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boiler • Flood in other boiler room • Flooring issues • Block B refurbishment <p>All having an impact on FJS's school reserves.</p>
10	<p>Confidential Item</p> <p>No progress made – please see separate Note.</p>
11	<p>Risk Register</p>

	<p>As previously stated, there is catering cost exposure as the pandemic has reduced the anticipated extra earnings and FIS and Watchfield haven't moved to hot meals yet but are being required to do so as soon as possible. Bubbles of students and staff being sent home has also reduced income, despite the catering company being innovative and flexible in their provisions.</p> <p>ACTION: AC requested AL/JR to give an update out of committee</p> <p>AC advised that the Risk Register is due to go to the Trustees for review and approval, following which it will be sent out to ARC via GovernorHub. School-level risks have been separated out, so it now focuses on risks which are categorised as being 'Strategic'. Pandemic has been included as a High Risk.</p>
12	<p>Premises report</p> <p>JR covered off her paper as distributed to members prior to the meeting. It was asked whether the issues at FJS were linked? JR responded that the boiler issues are due to the age and condition of the plant, and the lack of resources to conduct preventative maintenance has exacerbated. However, it would need a successful CIF bid to be able to afford to replace and boilers were not previously considered, except via a SALEX loan, which have to be paid back. Part of the flooring issue <u>may</u> be due to the flooding, but the inclusion of replacement flooring is not usually allowed under CIF rules.</p> <p>It was asked if there was any emergency funding for which an application could be made? JR responded that the School's reserves would be taken into account, so unfortunately not. JR further advised that the risks for FJS have been mitigated as far as possible.</p> <p>The next CIF round under consideration will be submitted by 14/01/2021.</p> <p>DH asked if all schools would move to one platform rather than using both google and microsoft?</p> <p>AL reported that the intention is to get a single IT platform across FLT. Some schools made their choice to have Google Classroom due to their own inhouse expertise so this will remain in place during the pandemic circumstances, but a comparison between MS and Google has occurred from which MS came out as preferred. The transfer for those on Classroom will happen in phases, with pupils as the last group to allow all other support systems to be in place. This will take the remainder of the 2020/2021 academic year as a minimum.</p> <p>AC thanked JR on behalf of the committee for managing a heavy workload and making excellent progress.</p>
13	<p>Health and Safety Report/Covid-19 Update</p> <p>JR drew the committee's attention to the RIDDOR report which was required following an incident at Watchfield.</p> <p>The contents of the report were discussed.</p> <p>DM gave an update on Covid-19. There has been some domino effects and a few clusters. Remote learning arrangements have worked incredibly well, with a mix of platforms being used. There have been some staffing issues which has created huge pressures on Heads to maintain appropriate staffing levels.</p> <p>The ALT on 2/12/2020 will review the ongoing impact due to CV-19. 100 iPads have been opened up for pupils who did not have the opportunity of access at home.</p> <p>The turnaround of CV tests has been fairly quick, so there has not been a need to invest in the 5 day tests as previously considered. However, rapid testing materials would help.</p> <p>AC extended thanks on behalf of the committee to all HTs, Staff, Parents and Pupils for their fantastic response to helping manage the CV-19 risks.</p>

14	ESFA/ DfE letters Letter of 29/10/2020 previously circulated 'Operating an Academy Trust as a Going Concern'.
15	MAT to MAT collaboration DM spoke about the potential link-up with the Vale Academy for joint projects which would be very useful. The pandemic has unfortunately caused this to be paused but it will be progressed as soon as possible. Discussing crossovers/economies of scale/joint validations, etc. They are similar to FLT so all seeming positive. Chairs and CEOs have talked and Trust Secretaries are due to do so.

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16	Item covered earlier in meeting.
17	<p>Pupil Planning Review</p> <p>AL reported that numbers are down slightly for the same time in 2019, partly due to the delay in starting a course at RMCS which has impacted on SHR and Watchfield numbers. FLT is 23 pupils off 3000, with final number determined via the January 2021 census. FLT would then be responsible for its own budget if it meets the 3000 pupil level. We would, however, still have to undertake rounds of CIF bidding for 2021 and 2022.</p> <p>ACTION: AL to update the committee in January 2021.</p>
18	<p>HR Dashboard</p> <p>No update available as the meeting was taking place prior to the end of the first quarter. AL reported that non-Covid-19 absence is reduced.</p> <p>ACTION: AL to report back at January 2021 meeting when data is available.</p>
19	<p>Staff Changes and Appointments</p> <p>DM updated the committee and talked through his report.</p>
20	<p>Centre for Professional Excellence</p> <p>DM thanked Sally Robins for her work on this matter. Teachers have developed in IT, Subject and Curriculum Development. Identified training needs for staff are IT and Phonics. In January 2021 there will be a remote joint INSET meeting with an external speaker on Curriculum. It has been a difficult year due to working remotely but good progress has been made. Talks with Vale Academy regarding some of their activities. As previously mentioned, the Heads of Farmers and FCC are looking at suitable areas for joint working.</p> <p>AC requested that FLT ensure that we optimise any IT opportunities for joint working.</p>
21	<p>Any other Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AL apologised for the lateness in circulating the paper for this item and covered off the contents. The Committee APPROVED the Policy. 2. AC thanked all for attending and wished everyone a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year break, albeit under the continuing difficult circumstances of the pandemic.
	<p>Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 14 January 2021 via Teams at 6.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.</p> <p>Meeting closed at: 8.45 p.m.</p>

Clerk: Sandra Green

Date: 30/11/2020

Signed _____ Dated _____

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