



**Audit & Risk Committee Meeting**  
**Monday 3 March 2025 at 17:00 – 19:30**  
**via Teams**

<b>Directors present</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Gill Askew	Nexus MAT Director	GA
Tina Havenhand	Nexus MAT Director/Chair	Chair
Ray Palmer	Nexus MAT Director	RPA
Sue Shelley	Nexus MAT Director	SS
<b>Also present</b>		
Warren Carratt	Nexus MAT CEO	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Nexus MAT Assistant CEO: Corporate Affairs	JH
Karen Smith	Nexus MAT CFO	KS
Rebecca Horne	Governance Clerk	RH
<b>Apologies</b>		
James Kelly	Advisor to the Committee	JK
<b>No Apologies</b>		
Mark Greenwood	Nexus MAT Director	MG

<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>1.1 Welcome &amp; receive apologies for absence</b>  Apologies were received from JK.	
<b>1.2 To accept apologies for absence.</b>  Apologies were accepted from JK.  No apologies were received from MG.	
<b>2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
<b>2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered.</b>  None to discuss.	
<b>3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>	
<b>3.1. Individual Directors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda.</b>  None to discuss.	
<b>4. AUDIT &amp; RISK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES</b>	
<b>4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting: Audit and Risk Committee held on 11 November 2024.</b>  The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting held on 11 November 2024 were received and agreed as a true and proper record.	
<b>4.2. REVIEW OF ACTION TRACKER</b>	
The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.  <b>5.1 Pre-meet with auditors - KS to look into how timesheet information is stored and for this to feature in the audit tracker at future meetings.</b>  In relation to the above KS explained the new Edu Pay Payroll system requires digital authorisation for expense claims and additional hours.  In relation to the above KS explained how the new EduPay Payroll system worked in terms of digital authorisation for expense claims and additional hours.  TH suggested conducting a walkthrough to ensure the system's robustness, with the CEO suggesting this could be covered in a brief assurance report to the Committee. KS suggested this could be covered through internal audit, as Veritau (internal auditors) had recently highlighted they had capacity to cover an additional area within the agreed budget. This was agreed. <b>Action: KS to request a review of additional hours/expense claims processes and compliance in the spring internal audit</b>	<b>KS 30/06/25</b>

<p><b>visit. This will include a walkthrough of the EduPay system to confirm the process and whether non-compliance is still possible under the new system. The internal audit report will go to the summer Audit and Risk Committee.</b></p>	<p><b>CLERKING SERVICES 30/06/25</b></p>
<p><b>4.3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b></p>	
<p>No matters arising were discussed.</p>	
<p><b>5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED</b></p>	
<p><b>5.1 2023-24 Gender Pay Gap Report</b></p> <p>The CEO introduced the Gender Pay Gap Report, highlighting a slight reduction in the pay difference. A key factor identified in the output was the high proportion of female workers in Nexus as a whole organisation.</p> <p>The CEO noted that staff surveys indicate the majority of employees do not believe pay is related to gender.</p> <p>An in-depth discussion took place with Directors regarding the Gender Pay Gap.</p> <p>SS suggested tracking staff progression within Nexus, specifically monitoring individuals who have taken on apprenticeships and subsequently secured higher-grade positions.</p> <p>The CEO suggested in response that a question about career progression could be included in the next employee opinion survey.</p> <p><b>Action: CEO to instruct that a question on career progression is added to the next employee opinion survey.</b></p> <p>It was noted that the Directors approved the Gender Pay Gap Report.</p> <p><b>5.2 Schools Resource Management Self-Assessment Checklist</b></p> <p>KS presented the SRMA answers, noting that they are similar to last year's responses, and requested the committee's approval of the draft answers.</p> <p>The Directors approved the draft SRMA answers.</p> <p><b>5.3 Trust Risk Register</b></p> <p>CEO reported no changes to the register since it was last received by Directors. There were no further questions or concerns.</p> <p><b>5.4 Finance Risk Register</b></p> <p>KS confirmed that no significant changes had been identified in the risk register and reviewed individual risks with the Directors.</p>	<p><b>CEO 30/06/25</b></p>

KS informed the Directors of a vacancy for the Regional Finance Lead position. Currently, there are two out of the three Regional Leads in post, with the third position remaining vacant from January until May.

KS provided an update on the lease commitment with Banner Cross Hall for Hallamshire Academy.

GA asked if the Trust's documents have been updated to reflect the new Procurement Act Regulations 23 now that they are in force.

JH confirmed that Lana Stoyles, Head of Business Transformation, has worked to ensure compliance, including drafting amendments to the Trust Procurement Policy that will be reviewed ahead of being tabled at Trust Board.

**SS: Under risk 2, why is it marked in red? I understand that the score is 18, but how significant is this lease? What is the level of risk to the Trust?**

KS: That's a good point. The risk is not red because of the lease itself. It has been red for the last three years due to the funding increase we receive not covering the rise in staffing costs and pay awards. This represents an ongoing funding pressure. However, it is questionable whether it should still be marked as red, considering that year on year, we have been increasing reserves. We are managing to absorb this pressure through growth and efficiencies.

TH stated she would be inclined to leave this in the red category.

It was agreed to leave this category in red.

## 5.5 Competent Person Termly Health & Safety Update Report

JH reported that the iAM Compliant system has now been rolled out, and staff in schools are being trained on it. So far, feedback has remained positive.

In terms of the individual site audits, The Bridge is still in negotiations with Doncaster Council regarding some long-standing issues.

Regarding the reds highlighted on the chart, these have reduced over time. There is a narrative in the report addressing the two sites that have remaining red-flagged items.

**RPa queried the meaning of the red scores.**

JH explained that these scores represent high-priority actions that have not been completed within the timescale, but they do not necessarily indicate that a school should be closed or is non-operational.

After a detailed discussion, it was decided JH will prepare a separate report on Central Team Asset and Facilities processes with a 12-month reflection. This will be added as a separate agenda item for the summer term meeting.

**Actions: JH to prepare the report on Central Team Asset and Facilities processes.**

**JH  
30/06/25**

## **Clerking services to add the Central Team Asset and Facilities Assessments Report to the summer term agenda.**

**CLERKING  
SERVICES  
30/06/25**

### 5.6 P5 January Budget Monitoring Report

KS presented the P5 reports to the Directors, noting that we have an in-year revenue surplus in line with the approved budget and a forecast of a year-end revenue reserve of £8.9 million and a year-end capital reserve of £1.2 million.

A small deterioration was reported in the revenue compared to last month, along with a slight deterioration in the capital position, but the bank balance remains healthy.

Following the request at the last Committee Meeting, KS has now included information on schools where there is financial concern.

The committee were given an opportunity to raise any questions in relation to the report.

**TH – Could you provide some context around the expansion of Fountaindale, particularly regarding the point where it says it is more than budgeted? Could you explain why this is the case and what factors contributed to the cost exceeding the budget?**

JH explained that several issues arose following the initial estimate, including inflationary rises, the need for bat surveys that caused delays, adding to the inflationary rise, and other elements around the structures. The accuracy and rigour of the initial estimate is being pursued as a line of enquiry.

JH reported that, in addition to working with RLB who have been project managing the work, they have also asked the Local Authority to determine whether they will be willing to fund any of the work.

#### 5.6.1 P5 Balance Sheet Report

This was sent out for information prior to the meeting.

#### 5.6.2 P5 Cashflow Report

This was sent out for information prior to the meeting.

#### 5.6.3 P5 Key Performance Indicators

KS discussed the KPI summary, noting that the report is less meaningful this year due to the budgeting system. KS suggested including high-level KPIs in the main report for regular updates.

TH agreed with this approach, proposing that examples of KPIs to monitor be included on the front page of the report, along with some narrative. **Action: KS to include high-level KPIs in the main report for regular updates.**

**KS  
30/06/25**

### 5.7 Audit Tracker

KS explained that she has updated the Audit Tracker with the latest external audit points and internal audits.	
<b>6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
<b>6.1 To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair</b>  None raised.	
<b>7. CONFIDENTIALITY &amp; RISK</b>	
<b>7.1 To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</b>  None raised.  <b>7.2 To consider any areas of risk discussed during the meeting</b>  None raised.	
<b>8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>	

Monday 30 June 2025	17:00 – 19:30	MS Teams	Audit & Risk
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**Minutes approved**

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE
Tina Havenhand		