



**Audit & Risk Committee Meeting**  
**Focus: Audit & Risk**  
**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 17:00 – 19:30**  
**via MS Teams**

<b>Those Present:</b>		
Sue Shelley	Nexus MAT Director – Chair	SS
Steve Booth	Nexus MAT Director	SB
Warren Carratt	Nexus MAT CEO	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Nexus MAT Assistant CEO – Strategy & Partnerships	JH
Emma Heyes	Nexus MAT Corporate Governance & Projects Manager	EH
Naveen Judah	Nexus MAT Director	NJ
Ray Palmer	Nexus MAT Director	RPa
Rachel Potts	Nexus MAT Director	RP
Cath Sands	Nexus MAT CFO	CFO
Emma Sheedy	Nexus MAT Clerk	Clerk
<b>Apologies:</b>		
James Kelly	Advisor to Committee	JK
<b>No Apologies:</b>		

<b>1. WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
1.1. To receive apologies for absence  Apologies were received from JK.	
1.2. To accept apologies for absence  Apologies were accepted from JK.	
<b>2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered  The CEO provided an update regarding the addition of the late agenda item.	
<b>3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>	
3.1. Individual Directors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda  None.	
<b>4. AUDIT &amp; FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES</b>	
4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:  The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting held on 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2021 were reviewed and approved.	
4.2. Review of Action Tracker  The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.	
4.3. Matters arising from the minutes  <b>The Chair queried Page 17 regarding Hilltop cash flow position</b> and the CFO advised the monies had been received.  <b>The Chair queried sight of the balanced budget for Craggs</b> and the CFO advised this would be tabled at the meeting on 10 <sup>th</sup> May.	
<b>5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED</b>	
5.1. Confirmation of Shortlist External Audit Providers  The CFO provided a verbal update. The tender has now closed with five received. All five will progress to interview with RP/NJ/CFO/CEO on 17 <sup>th</sup> March.	
5.2. Trust Risk Register  The CEO provided a verbal overview of the Trust Risk Register and explained about the inclusion of item 2. Improvement - Increasing quality of provision in our education system from Page 5.  <b>SB sought clarity regarding changes since the last report as some columns were blank</b> and the CEO provided a verbal update for those items, explaining that blank meant there was no update.	

<p><b>RP referred to the new section in the risk register and queried inclusion of the Voyager project</b>, and the CEO explained that EH presents regularly updated Risk Registers to the Project Board for free school projects, so detailed info isn't needed in the strategic risk register. JH has done this specifically for Voyager, which is tabled regularly at Board. The CEO felt it was better to keep with that detailed risk register for the Voyager project than try to cover it in this document. Directors agreed.</p> <p><b>The Chair queried the online learning solution</b> and there was a discussion regarding this, with the CEO explaining that the update report to Standards Committee was due to be issued next week. The CEO will circulate this to A&amp;R committee members once it has been published.</p> <p><b>The Chair queried Page 11 regarding HR which is rag rated red</b> and the CEO explained this is largely due to the impact of COVID-19 on staff attendance and wellbeing. The CEO felt this was appropriate, but would also change once national lockdown ends.</p> <p>The CEO clarified the new payroll system was rolled out in December 2020.</p>	
<p>5.3. Asset Strategy – Implementation Plan Update Report</p> <p>JH provided an overview of the Asset Strategy Update Report, which Directors had received in advance of the meeting. Discussion and challenge was as follows:</p> <p><b>SB commented positively on the format of the report and the need to appointment an Estate Manager</b> and JH explained this is being further considered between himself and EH, with reference to the DfE good practice guide.</p> <p><b>RP sought clarity regarding Five Rivers Trust, Barker's Associates and how spend will be prioritised</b> and JH expanded on the project further. Following discussion, it was agreed for Directors to be provided with a copy of the DfE good practice guide.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> JH to provide Directors with a copy of the DfE good practice guide.</p>	<p><b>JH</b> <b>19/07/21</b></p>
<p>5.4. High Level 12-Month Delivery Plan</p> <p>Directors received the High Level 12-Month Delivery Plan and the CFO provided a verbal overview.</p> <p><b>SB queried 23/02/21 AAR to ESFA</b> and the CFO agreed this should have been black to indicate complete.</p>	
<p>5.5. Competent Person Update Report</p> <p>EH provided an update regarding ProAktive and explained about their involvement regarding new sites. The portal is now being used to record accidents and to input cyclical compliance and maintenance requirements for the academies. This work is in its infancy but is progressing well. It is anticipated that future health and safety reports to the Audit and Risk Committee will include quarterly accident analysis and compliance reports. The issue of 'near misses' will also be reportable. EH explained that anything above a bump note is recorded on the portal.</p> <p>EH advised that the Coppice H&amp;S and Fire Audit had taken place at Coppice on 8<sup>th</sup> March, the outcome of their findings will be presented at the next meeting.</p>	

<p>Becton's H&amp;S and Fire Audit has taken place and findings will be presented at the next meeting.</p> <p>EH explained that Hilltop &amp; Kelford had specified their preference of no visitors in school, therefore a written assessment was completed but physical audits will now be scheduled.</p> <p>EH provided an overview of the charts included with the report and <b>SS queried Charts 4 &amp; 5. SB suggested addition of a one-line narrative relating to each chart, as he found it confusing. RPa suggested concentrating on anything high risk or key highlights</b> and EH noted this.</p> <p><b>SB asked how much the ProAktive 12-month contract is</b> and EH advised of the cost. The CEO asked for this to be kept out of the minutes, to protect commercial interest, given minutes are published.</p> <p><b>SS queried 3.4.4. regarding the compartmentalisation of the corridors at Abbey School</b> and RPa explained that guidance changes year on year. EH stated that ProAktive's Fire Audit is more in-depth than the LA's.</p> <p><b>RPa asked if Covid compliance has been picked up in the audits</b> and the CEO advised no but expanded on ProAktive's involvement with risk assessments etc. It was agreed for EH to liaise with ProAktive, obtain a statement of assurance regarding the Trust's compliance and include with the next report.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> EH to obtain a statement of assurance regarding COVID from ProAktive and include with the next report.</p> <p><b>RPa queried Page 10 item 3.5.2. regarding the low course evaluation</b> and EH provided context, explaining it was the first time the Trainer had delivered by Teams. The CEO provided further input and explained it was not prescriptive.</p> <p><b>RP queried implementation of the portal and how EH will assess usage going forward</b> and EH explained the portal makes life easier. School Business Managers (SBM) are willing and co-operating. EH has also set up a SBM networking group to share best practise and trouble shoot.</p> <p><b>SS queried the reporting of near misses</b> and EH explained this will be incorporated with the next phase of training to SBMs in May. EH will also empathise this at the SBM networking group.</p> <p>EH was thanked for her report/input and left the meeting at 18:05.</p>	<p><b>EH</b> <b>19/07/21</b></p>
<p>5.6. Gender Pay Gap Report 2019/20</p> <p>The Gender Pay Gap Report 2019/20 was overviewed by the CFO.</p> <p><b>SB queried the published date on the front page</b> and the CFO advised this will need to be changed to March 2021. CEO will also promote this in his briefing.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> CFO to amend the published date on the front page of the Gender Pay Gap Report.</p> <p>The Report was approved by the Committee.</p>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b></p>

<p>5.7. Audit Action Tracker</p> <p>The internal and external audit trackers were tabled and overviewed by the CFO. No questions were raised by Directors as the commentary was self-explanatory,</p>	
<p>5.8. Finance Risk Register</p> <p>The Finance Risk Register was overviewed by the CFO and <b>RP queried the detailed Financial Procedures Manual and when they will be published</b> and the CFO advised very soon. <b>NJ further asked who had compiled the procedures</b> and the CFO advised a collaboration in the Finance Team. The CFO advised a copy had already been given to the Internal Auditors.</p>	
<p>5.9. ICO Referral – Data Loss</p> <p>The CEO provided Directors with an overview of the recent data loss at one of the academies, which he has referred to the Information Commissioners Office. The CEO explained the next steps.</p> <p><b>SB asked if the Trust disposes of confidential waste</b> and CEO advised yes. SS asked if COVID may have affected this. JH believes this stems from information being transitioned from paper files to electronic storage over a phased period, and this was not delayed because of COVID. The responsible Headteacher is leading the response, with input and guidance from JH.</p>	
<b>6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
<p>6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the chair</p> <p>None.</p>	
<b>7. CONFIDENTIALITY &amp; RISK</b>	
<p>7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>No items were deemed confidential.</p>	
<p>7.2. To consider any area new risks identified during the meeting</p> <p>Risks identified will be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	
<b>8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>	

Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	17:00 – 19:30	via MS Teams	Finance & ICT
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ	Audit & Risk

**Minutes approved**

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE