



Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
Focus: Finance & ICT
Monday 11th October 2021 at 17:00 – 19:30
via MS Teams

Those Present:		
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
James Kelly	Advisor to Committee	JK
Ray Palmer	Nexus MAT Director	RPa
Rachel Potts	Nexus MAT Director	RP
Cath Sands	Nexus MAT CFO	CFO
Emma Sheedy	Nexus MAT Clerk	Clerk
Apologies:		
Naveen Judah	Nexus MAT Director	NJ
No Apologies:		

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
<p>1.1. To receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from NJ.</p> <p>The CEO and Clerk advised that JK would be joining the meeting late.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and proposed that unless Directors had any specific queries related to the July finance reports, which are not answered by the August papers, that the CFO focuses on providing a detailed overview of the August papers only. This was agreed.</p>	
<p>1.2. To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for NJ.</p>	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>2.1.1. Headline Risk Log – Merger Process</p>	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
<p>3.1. Individual Directors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>None.</p> <p>The Chair queried if Register of Interests have been distributed and the CEO explained these would probably be distributed at the Trust Board Meeting or dealt with by email.</p>	
4. AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES	
<p>4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting held on 19th July 2021 were reviewed and the following amendment agreed:</p> <p>Amend Item 5.11. on Page 37 to read SB asked how different it is to previous years and the CFO advised it is not different, just a different auditing style. ACTION: Clerk to amend the minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2021.</p>	COMPLETED
<p>4.2. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.</p>	
<p>4.3. Matters arising from the minutes</p> <p>None.</p>	

5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
<p>5.1. High Level 12-Month Delivery Plan</p> <p>The CFO provided an overview of the High Level 12-Month Delivery Plan and provided an overview regarding the reporting of H&S items, which all were happy with.</p> <p>The CFO provided assurance that the 2020/21 Audited EOYC to Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS) had been completed, but that this wasn't shown on the report as Clerking Services required this report prior to the submission deadline.</p> <p>The CFO added that the Medium Term Financial Strategy item should say 'Board' not A&R and this was noted.</p>	
<p>5.2. Trust Budget Monitoring Report (July & August 2021)</p> <p>The Committee received the Trust Budget Monitoring Report in advance of the meeting and discussion/challenge was as follows:</p> <p>The CFO explained about the forthcoming capital programmes for the academies with the highest level of revenue carry forward. Abbey are looking at purchasing an outdoor classroom/pod on the new ground between the new access roads to/from school. Becton are looking at the addition of fencing at Moncrieffe and an ICT refresh. Coppice want to develop their outdoor learning areas. Heatherwood need new hoists, classroom refreshes and a new fire alarm system. North Ridge will be adding a climbing wall and playground refresh.</p> <p>SB queried reserves and the CFO explained about the central trust capital reserve, which comes out of SCA funding which is Nexus MAT capital. All schools individually have a revenue and capital budget. It was agreed for the CFO to add a note regarding the Nexus MAT capital on the front page of future reports.</p> <p>ACTION 1: CFO to add a note on the front page of the report to explain how much of the reserves Nexus MAT capital is.</p> <p>RP asked when the impact of the forecasting would be realised and the CFO provided an explanation regarding this.</p> <p>SB asked the CFO to add a note to table two to say excluding carry forward. It was also agreed to do this going forward and not retrospectively for the August report.</p> <p>ACTION 2: CFO to add a note to table two of the August Consolidated Monitoring Report to say excluding carry forward. It was also agreed to do this going forward and not retrospectively for the August report.</p> <p>SB commended the graphs.</p> <p>RP asked about lessons learnt regarding the Finance & Compliance Officer at Abbey and the CFO provided an explanation regarding this.</p> <p>RP queried the decrease in Direct Revenue Financing (DRF) at North Ridge due to an amendment in the contract and the CFO explained about the climbing wall,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">CFO 07/02/22</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CFO 07/02/22</p>

<p>which was initially planned to be installed during 2020/21 but will now not be installed until 2021/22.</p> <p>SB queried Bader cash flow as expenditure exceeds income and the CFO explained she is aware of this but there will be more pupils from September 2022.</p>	
<p>5.3. Year End Deliverables</p> <p>The CFO provided an overview of Year End Deliverables and explained this has been divided between the Finance & Compliance Officers, in preparation for the audit on 1st November 2021. The CFO explained she has not completed this before. The Chair stated the document provided reassurance and commended the efforts of the CFO.</p>	
<p>5.4. August Internal Audit Report</p> <p>The Committee received the Internal Audit Report, which the CFO overviewed and there was a discussion regarding the Census process. The CFO advised that she had agreed to adopt the recommendation and as of September 2021, the Census figures will be presented to the A&R Committee via the High Level Report. The CEO added context regarding this and explained that Census does not really relate to special schools, as places change more dynamically and there is a an annual High Needs Place Notification return that local authorities must submit to the ESFA each November, which is one of the mechanisms for changing planned places which in turn changes place funding allocation. It was agreed for the High Needs Return to be tabled at the March meeting. ACTION: CFO to table the High Needs Return at the March meeting.</p> <p>RP commended the report and queried Page 7 regarding bank and petty cash and CFO explained about the pre-paid cards and inputting of the wrong nominal.</p> <p>The Chair asked when the next report would be received and of the focus and the CFO advised February 2022 and the focus will be income and purchasing and procurement.</p> <p>[JK joined the meeting at 18:00].</p>	<p>CFO 07/03/22</p>
<p>5.5. ICT Information Governance and Strategic 2021/22 Update</p> <p>JH provided an overview of the ICT Information Governance and Strategic 2021/22 Update and discussion/challenge was as follows:</p> <p>JH advised the Committee of Ian Burns' departure from Nexus and explained about the handover process. There is good collaboration and team spirit within ICT and the Interim Lead is Anthony Upshall, which is working well. The position for Head of ICT & Digital Technology has been re-advertised.</p> <p>RP asked of the IG Lead and if progress is being made on separation of this and JH advised that the administration will integrate into the role of the Corporate Governance & Project Manager but the IG Lead currently defaults to himself. The CEO is the named Data Protection Officer.</p> <p>RP queried interest from academies to explore the Bromcom transfer and JH advised of none so far.</p>	

<p>SB asked about ICT capacity if the proposed merger goes ahead and JH advised he believes there would be scope for growth within the current existing team but this will be reviewed.</p> <p>JK stated Freedom of Information (FOI) requests can be pretty time consuming and asked of the quantity and JH advised of two within the last year, which were managed locally via the academy.</p> <p>SB queried the difference between Level 2 and Level 3 complaints and the CEO provided an explanation.</p> <p>SS asked about Cyber Essentials on Page 4 and queried the renewal timeframe and JH advised he was unsure of this. ACTION: JH to provide an update regarding the Cyber Essentials renewal timeframe.</p> <p>SS asked for the definition of a high-risk spam email and JH advised this is defined by the Office 365 system.</p>	<p>JH 15/11/21</p>
<p>5.6. BHP Data Analytics</p> <p>The CFO provided an overview of the BHP Data Analytics Report, which is an additional cost module. Following discussion, it was agreed for BHP to be asked to present a Data Analytics Report.</p> <p>ACTION: CFO to ask BHP to present a Data Analytics Report.</p>	<p>CFO 07/02/22</p>
<p>5.7. Record of Accounting Officer Financial Decisions</p> <p>The CFO provided context regarding the tabled report and explained this is a summary of all expenditure over £5k, which is above the Headteachers delegated authority but below the Committees.</p> <p>JK commended the purchase price of the three minibuses and the CFO explained they are second hand and had to be collected from Exeter.</p> <p>SB asked about items of expenditure in excess of the CEO's delegated authority and the CEO explained this would be dealt with as a project and submitted to the Board approval.</p>	
<p>6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p>	
<p>6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the chair</p> <p>6.1.1. Headline Risk Log The CEO provided context of a potential merger and a lengthy discussion followed.</p>	
<p>7. CONFIDENTIALITY & RISK</p>	
<p>7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>None.</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>	

8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Monday 15 th November 2021	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ	Audit & Risk
Monday 7 th February 2022	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ	Finance & ICT
Monday 7 th March 2022	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ	Audit & Risk
Monday 9 th May 2022	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ	Finance & ICT
Tuesday 28 th June 2022	16:00 – 19:00	Crags Community School	Leadership Summit
Monday 11 th July 2022	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ	Audit & Risk

Minutes approved

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE