



An Daras Multi Academy Trust

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Chief Executive Officer – W Hermon

19/11/18

Minutes

Audit Committee Autumn 2018

Tuesday 20th November 2018 at 9.30am at ADMAT Central Office

Note that actions are highlighted in bold and red, and will be carried forward to the next meeting and questions or challenges during the meeting are highlighted in bold and blue

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Present: Bex Couch, Claire Paul, Brian Jennings, Will Hermon

Apologies: Nicola Murphy

In Attendance: Governance Officer, Nathan Coughlin (Bishop Fleming Auditor) for item 5, Peter Hague (potential new Director)

2. **Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests Relevant to this Agenda**

WH and CP are employees of ADMAT.

3. **Elect/Re-elect Committee Chair and Vice Chair**

Proposed at full Board that Chair will be BC and Vice will be CP. BC challenged whether CP can be Vice as an employee. Governance Officer confirmed that CP cannot be Chair of the Board, but same restriction does not apply to committees. However, it is recommended that CP is not Chair of a committee but can be a Vice Chair. Committee agreed to the appointments.

4. **Confirm Minutes of previous Audit meeting Summer (11th June 2018) and Matters Arising**

- Add termly debt report to Audit committee cyclical plan (Clerk) *See item 11*
- Confirm there is a Devon agreement for Lew Trenchard (WH) *Still awaiting response, linked to item 5.*

Committee agreed the minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

5. **Presentation of 17/18 Accounts (Bishop Fleming)**

NC briefed the Directors on the Audit and Accounts Key Facts document. He explained some of the missing facts such as the Devon based school pension adjustments. Revenue and expenditure are up on last year. There is a reasonable figure of reserves to carry forward; it should sit at 4-6 weeks and the reserves need to be steadily built up again. NC talked through the individual school figures. EG questioned whether pooling of GAG funding was allowed and NC will confirm this. **BC challenged when the figures and funding for CG will be confirmed?** WH gave an update and NC confirmed that this should be done within 4 months of transfer, and he recommended that the transfer agreement is looked at again. NC noted that the debtors balance has reduced. He noted the journal testing and that there were no real concerns.

NC noted some missing detail from the draft accounts and talked through some of the figures including revenue, debtors and cash figures. These will be complete by 3 Dec 18 for the full Board sign off.

NC talked through the management letter and the observations. He discussed internal assurance reports and the need to broaden the scope of risks beyond financial. There is the option of using Bishop Fleming instead of Cornwall Council to assist with this. He noted some issues regarding reconciliation of accounts, redundancy costs and delivery of purchases to appropriate locations. From last year, the register of interest concern was addressed but as per the new financial handbook, there are further adjustments required regarding the nature of interests and when they started. NC updated on the other concerns raised last year and all are complete or in hand.

NC noted the surplus deficit reconciliation and that the Directors will need to sign these off as part of the accounts. Overall, NC confirmed that overall the audit is positive.

6. Confidential Agenda Items

Covered at confidential minutes.

7. Review Documents

- a. ADMAT Statutory Decision Planner - *approved July 18*
- b. ADMAT Scheme of Delegation - *approved July 18*
- c. Academies Financial Handbook 2018 – *governance officer is reviewing and amending cyclical plan to include all requirements of handbook – will complete in Spring term*
- d. Funding Agreements – MFA and SFA – no changes.
- e. Latest EFA guidance changes – management reports should be seen by Directors 6 times a year – this has been actioned.
- f. Latest Responsible Officer Report – WH made the Directors aware of the last LFS report but this is superseded this month by the central audited accounts.

WH thanked the Governance Officer for her work on the governance review documents, policy management, training plan and other work that she has done regarding improving governance across the MAT. WH noted the Gateway newsletter and other means that are being used to communicate across all levels of governance.

8. Review Risks and Improvement

WH updated on MAT Finance Risks and MAT Improvement Plan. He noted the final review of the last Academy Improvement Plan and talked through some of the detail. In particular, he noted the evidence surrounding the KPIs and the KS1/2 data. The Directors discussed some of the areas for concern, the de-aggregation of data, the issues with some cohorts and some of the positive improvements.

WH discussed the DfE National Percentile Ranking data and the conflicts with the DfE tool “Analysing School Performance (ASP)”; noting that the ‘average’ band is very wide. There is also OFSTED generated data so there are 3 pictures from which to judge the schools that can confuse the picture.

WH briefly discussed the draft teaching and learning priorities for the 19-20 improvement plan – increase writing/spelling attainment and progress for boys & vulnerable groups, improve IT access, extend consistent impact of Visible Learning, increase skills of middle leaders, improve parental engagement and embed Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) strategies

across all MATs. These priorities were discussed in detail in particular the management of middle leaders and succession planning for all levels of leadership. The CFO is putting together an improvement plan specifically for finance.

9. Internal Financial Control

Covered by audit of accounts.

10. Review Payroll Expenditure and Monitor Payroll Accuracy

Payroll is being monitored monthly and there is a greater degree of confidence in its accuracy. **BC challenged whether overtime is being properly monitored now** and WH confirmed that it is, and that there is very little overtime now. **CP challenged whether “payroll” will continue to be used as some of the issues faced by staff come from payroll and not the An Daras finance team.** EG updated on this.

11. Termly Debt Report

Nothing to report at this stage.

12. Investigate Areas Highlighted by BoD that may threaten or adversely affect:

- a. Accomplishment of MAT Vision and Aims
- b. MAT Assets
- c. Reliability of Record Keeping
- d. Compliance with Relevant Laws, Regulations, Policies and Governing Instruments

Nothing further to report less items identified in the management report (of which nothing is designated ‘red’)

13. Skills and Training

Governance Officer is working on a training programme and will link this in to the committee review and skills audits.

14. Policy Review

Whole School Pay Policy/Teaching Staff Pay Policy – both approved. Governance Officer will publish on the An Daras website and inform Heads.

15. AOB

Staff restructuring update covered at confidential minutes.

16. DONM

Date of Spring Term meeting is Wednesday 6th February 2019 at 9.30am at ADMAT Central Office.

The meeting closed at 12 noon.

TJH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

B. Couch – Director (Chair)
C. Paul – Director (Vice Chair)
N. Murphy – Director

W. Hermon – CEO Director
B. Jennings – Chair of Board of Directors
E. Gilbert – CFO
M. Basford – Trust Business Manager