



**An Daras Trust**  
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

Central Office  
Unit 4 Tamar Business Park  
Pennygillam Way  
Pennygillam Industrial Estate  
Launceston  
PL15 7ED  
01566 777503  
Email: [governance@andaras.org](mailto:governance@andaras.org)

CEO: J. Callow

04/03/2026

**Minutes**  
**Audit Committee Spring 2026**  
**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 9.30am at ADMAT Central Office**

**1. Welcome and Apologies/ Trust Identity Reminder (Chair)**

**Present:** Steve Tavener (Committee Vice Chair), Jon Sharpe, Peter Hague and Gill Shipsides.

**Apologies:** Graeme Barriball (Committee Chair- work commitments)

**Not Present:** Ian Wilkinson

**In Attendance:** Jo Callow (CEO) and Gemma Peacock (Governance Officer)

ST chaired the meeting in GB's absence.

The Directors discussed the Trust Identity document and asked if a shortened version could be developed? JC will look at developing a bullet pointed version. Could a version of the document be created for the schools? JC confirmed that schools have already created their own so that the children are aware that they are part of the Trust.

**2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests relevant to this Agenda (GP)**

None declared relevant to this agenda.

**3. Confirm minutes of Audit Autumn Meeting (3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025) and Matters Arising (Chair/ GP)**

- **Matter carried forward from FRS Committee- Premises and Infrastructure- Energy- JC will find out some further information regarding the fixed contracts and the issue was referred to the next Audit Committee.**

JC explained that the contracts were fixed for 5 years for the original Trust schools. Zen Energy had contacted the Trust about aligning the contracts for all Trust schools as at the time energy market prices had looked favourable. A quote was requested yesterday but had not been provided due to the current volatility in the market. **The Directors agreed that the contract for the original Trust schools should be left as is for the moment and Marg Basford will review pricing in the summer term when market volatility may have subsided.** The contract end date for Boyton, Lewannick and Callington is due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> May. **The new contract is to be agreed at the FRS1 meeting.**

Actions from confidential minutes:

- **Finance- refer to confidential minutes.**
  - Approach Bromcom and see if they will reduce their quote and approach Compass to see if they can add the additional requirements and what the cost would equate to. *Full Board Meeting, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025 item 7- the decision was made to take up the contract with BROMCOM.*

The Committee agreed the minutes and confidential minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

#### 4. **Confidential Matters** (JC)

None raised for this meeting.

#### 5. **Risks** (JC)

The Directors discussed the Trust Risk Register which has changed a lot over time and is now an Excel document. JC noted that the register has been checked against online guidance to ensure that it is compliant. The Directors considered the following tabs:

- People and Governance- staff absence continues to be a risk.
- Finance- falling pupil numbers is a high risk and consideration is already being given to changing school structures. GAG funding statements have started to be received for next academic year. Prior to the release of the Government White Paper, discussions had taken place with Cornwall and Devon County Councils about the possibility of creating a SEN base. The White Paper, however, has an emphasis on inclusion. A new CFO has been appointed for the Trust.

The top three risks continue to be the reduction in pupil numbers, SEN and staff absence. [Can you compare An Daras absence rates against that of other MATs?](#) JC confirmed that from the forums she attends the picture is the same across all MATs. Some MATs have dropped their reserves to 2-3%. [Should Subject Access Requests \(SARs\) be added to the risk register?](#) The number of SARs have increased with the majority relating to SEN. Often parents are using AI to generate the SAR or to submit a complaint. SARs are highly resource intensive often due to the amount of redaction that is required.

DPA 2018 and GDPR Compliance- the Trust has a record retention policy and staff are encouraged to delete e-mails where possible. The Trust Cyber Security Plan was previously shared with all Directors. All staff are required to complete annual GDPR training. The Trust continues to work with ICT4 to ensure compliance and the IT system frequently undergoes phishing tests.

[Is it worth Heads thinking about mitigation?](#) The Headteachers have all been provided with a similar spreadsheet which is reviewed by the LGB.

#### 6. **MAT Improvement Plan** (JC)

Priority 5- two new headteachers that started in September have settled in well and are completing NPQ training. Both are being mentored by Louise Hussey and have access to CAPH Pastoral which provides them with someone independent to talk to in terms of their wellbeing.

At present the Trust remains financially viable and class structures are being looked at for next academic year. Many of the schools have been successful in securing grants. Lewannick and Werrington have been particularly successful in securing £36k which is ringfenced for school trips.

[The Directors commented that it would be helpful to have a list of factors that could affect the MAT Improvement Plan.](#) These would inform discussions at the FRS Committee meetings, for example,

teacher pay rises. **JC to action.** The Directors also noted that it would be beneficial if the new CFO could look at setting some new strategic priorities. Kyran provides the reporting data which enables confidence in terms of accuracy and understanding where any problems may lie.

School catering options are currently under review, and these will be discussed at the next Full Board meeting.

#### 7. **Governance Review (JC)**

**The Directors agreed that this year's governance review would focus on a skills audit for Directors to identify any "gaps". GP will source a skills audit template and circulate to all Directors.**

#### 8. **Visible Learning (JC)**

Visible learning is ongoing in all Trust schools and teachers are producing case studies throughout the year which are shared with other staff. Lewannick, Boyton and Callington are all receiving internal training as they are at a different stage of the programme having joined the Trust later.

#### 9. **Finance (JC)**

The debt report was discussed at the FRS Committee meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and there was nothing additional to highlight. Kyran has begun his CIMA training. The CFO will submit the School Resource Self-Assessment Tool by the deadline of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026. **JS to view the report prior to submission.**

At present the Trust remains a going concern. **What's your view if the reserves reach zero?** It will be interesting to see where the reserves are at by the end of the year and if they reach the planned 2%. It is helpful that Kyran provides analysis of where money is being spent.

#### 10. **Internal Audit (JC)**

The Internal Audit which is being undertaken by Cornwall County Council this year is planned for 18<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> June. It is planned that the 18<sup>th</sup> May will focus on premises and estates and 22<sup>nd</sup> June will focus on absence management. Both areas are high risks on the risk register. Advice will be taken from the auditors in terms of the IT systems which are available to manage these areas, all of which are expensive.

The requirement to receive assurance that public funds have been used as intended by Parliament that the Trust has full responsibility for financial affairs and is using resources efficiently will be considered at the summer term Audit Committee. It is a question that will be asked of the external auditors. **GP to add to the summer term Audit Committee agenda and update the cyclical plan.**

**When is the next external audit review due?** It was confirmed that this will take place in the Autumn term.

**11. External Audit (JC)**

There were two actions from the external audit. Management accounts were highlighted as amber as the balance sheet wasn't consistently provided. The other action was highlighted green with GIAS not listing the Directors. This had been checked and all Directors are listed.

**Last year's external audit is to be reviewed by the new CFO as part of her induction.**

There have been no requests from the DfE.

**12. Policy Review (GP)**

- a. Pecuniary Interest (GP)- approved with no changes.
- b. Freedom of Information and Publication Scheme (SC) - approved with no changes.
- c. Critical Incident (JC) - approved with no changes.

**13. AOB (Chair/ GP)**

GS will be meeting with the local MP, Ben Maguire and will emphasise the positive work of the Trust.

**14. Date of the Next Meeting (GP)**

Date of next meeting will be Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at ADMAT Central Office.

Meeting closed at 10.36 am.

GL Peacock  
Governance Officer

**Distribution List:**

J. Callow – Ex Officio/ CEO & Director G. Barriball (Chair) S. Tavener – Director (Vice Chair) P. Hague - Director	I. Wilkinson – Director J. Sharpe – Director G. Shipsides – Director
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