

**Strategic & Finance Committee meeting
Held on 21st Nov 2024 at 6 pm via Teams
Draft Part I Minutes**

Present: A Walmsley (chair), P Walker (CEO), A Denner, M Williams and I Thomas

In attendance: A Gavin (DoPO) and I Candy (Co Sec)

Quorum: the meeting is quorate

Circulation: Directors (through GovernorHub), FFT website

	Decision		Action due
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1. Welcome & apologies		
Apologies were received from M Platten (leave)		
2. Declaration of Conflict of Interests		
Declarations of conflicts of interests were invited by the chair. None was made.		
3. Minutes of the last meeting of the S&F committee		
3.1. To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the committee (held on 10th Oct 2024)		
The draft minutes of the last meeting, Part I and Part II, were circulated ahead of this meeting. They were agreed to be an accurate record of the last meeting and signed by the chair.		
3.2. To review personnel and operations matters arising not otherwise on the agenda, including the approval of the 2024 insurance quote		
The list of matters arising not otherwise on the agenda was circulated ahead of the meeting. The following matters were raised and briefly discussed:	Appendix 1 As per matters arising list	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management partnership with Exeter Road: the agreement has now finally been signed by all parties and the first meeting of the joint committee has taken place. • Single supplier assumption for Moxton: this has been documented. <p>It was agreed that other matters arising not otherwise on the agenda would be followed up at the next meeting of the committee.</p> <p>The committee noted that the payment of the insurance quote had been approved by the committee by written resolution as it was urgent and approval could not wait until this meeting.</p>		
4. To review and discuss the Director of People and Operations (DoPO) report		
The tender outcome reports and DoPO report were circulated ahead of the meeting. The notes from the DoF that were written as an internal discussion were shared because he was not able to attend the meeting. P Walker highlighted that:		Appendices 2 – 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Trust financial position is now quite different from the one previously expected early in the financial year. There were some positives (as listed in the DoF notes) but also some significant negatives. The first one is that TCAF has been cancelled by the DfE for all schools. There are also further risks around alternative provision costs and contracts inflation generally. 		

As a result, the Trust predicted in-year deficit has now increased from £290K to £690K and this is when including one-off funding which will not be repeated (e.g. one-off grants that are no longer available).

- There is very limited information about funding for next year with the exception of the announcement around TCAF and conversion grants.

Therefore, the situation is now different from when the tenders went out.

M Platten was involved in the communications & VOIP tender and A Gavin was involved in the ICT managed service tender to spread the workload because these are both large tenders.

The committee asked whether all tenders have been led by Moxton as part of the commissioned review.

The ICT managed service and communications & VOIP tenders have been done as part of the Moxton review but not the MIS tender. Moxton had no input in the MIS tender because of timelines on the advice of PHP.

MIS tender

A Gavin reported that:

- the Trust had gone through a very rigorous assessment process for this tender, which was moderated twice, in order to ensure that the ratings were robustly evidenced because MIS tenders are a particularly commercially sensitive area.
- The financial element of the rating was 30% of the weighting, which the Trust was advised to adopt, because the MIS is so integral to the schools and therefore user interaction is particularly important.

The meeting went into Part II to discuss this further (in order not to prejudice commercial interests).

The meeting went back into Part I.

The committee agreed the recommendation to award the tender to Arbor as they have been scored as the best provider.

K Rajpurohit (the Trust data analyst) will be asked to manage the change because he has the best understanding of data transfers.

ICT managed service tender

The committee were reminded that the service is currently provided by Computeam which replaced TME when the Trust last tendered for the service.

The meeting went into Part II to discuss confidential aspects of this tender.

The meeting went back into Part I.

The committee agreed to award the ICT managed service to RM subject to the clarification of points around the onsite visits.

A Gavin

Communications & VOIP tender

A Gavin highlighted that:

- The scoring of the tender has been checked and is accurate, and there is a preferred provider at this stage.
- M Platten had raised a number of relevant points around this tender given that the Trust financial situation has changed. The specification may not need to be as high as initially set and this would allow the Trust to save on costs. However, the outcome of the process cannot be changed at this stage as the scoring system and specification were agreed at the onset of the tender. If the committee decides that the specification should be changed, then the Trust would have to re-tender.
- There is enough time within the current process to do a second tender with a different specification.

The meeting went into Part II to discuss this further (in order not to prejudice commercial interests).

The meeting went back into Part I.

The committee agreed to re-visit this tender at its next meeting.

Committee

Moxton review

The committee discussed that:

- When it had commissioned the review, the Trust was hoping to get TCAF funding to help with the cost but there is now no funding mechanism

<p>available to cover the cost quoted to complete the implementation of the last two tenders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will not be an IT lead within the Trust with the appropriate skills, hence some proposed next steps where support is likely to be needed. • Implementation of IT systems is really important, so the Trust needs to have the right process in place to ensure systems are implemented well and the Trust gets value for money out of them. • If an alternative was sought, some of the work may need to be done again and therefore the cost difference may be marginal. • The Trust needs to ensure expectations are clear so that the projects are implemented seamlessly. <p>The committee agreed to proceed with the next steps as outlined with the DoPO report at a cost of approximately £54K .</p>	
<p>5. Policies and compliance</p>	
<p>The policies and compliance report was circulated ahead of the meeting, as were the proposed policies.</p> <p><u>CCTV policy:</u> This was updated to include the CCTV recently installed at Axminster and following completion of a DPIA for this and advice being sought from the Trust DPO.</p> <p>The committee adopted the updated CCTV policy.</p> <p><u>H&S policy:</u> This required further minor updating to reflect advice given by the Trust H&S advisor during recent H&S reviews.</p> <p>The committee adopted the updated CCTV policy.</p> <p><u>Finance policy:</u> The committee agreed that the reserves section of the policy needed to be amended to match the policy stated in the 2022-23 accounts, before the policy could recommend it for adoption by the full board, I Candy will check the wording used and amend the proposed policy accordingly. The policy will then be submitted to the full board for approval.</p>	<p>Appendix 4</p> <p>I Candy</p>

Meeting times: start: 6 pm, end: 7.15 pm

Date of next meeting: 12th Dec 2024

These minutes are agreed by those present as being a true record.

Signed:.....
Chair of S&F committee

Date:.....