

East Midlands Academy Trust – Finance, HR and Estates committee

Friday 16th April 2021 @ 1.00pm.. Meeting to be conducted virtually.

Fifth meeting of academic year 2020/2021

These minutes reflect the order of the agenda, not necessarily the order of discussion

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome	<p>Present: Andrew Davis (Trustee) - Chair David Houghton (Trustee) Fiona Wheeler (Trustee) – Attending to reach quorum Ayo Salam (Trustee) – Attending to reach quorum</p> <p>Joshua Coleman (EMAT: CEO) Paul Wheeler (EMAT: COO) Nattia Dhana (EMAT: Management Accountant) Daryl Unitt (EMAT: Head of Shared Services) Ruhena Mahmood (EMAT: Senior Workforce Planning & HRBP) – <i>joined the meeting at 10.30am</i> Monica Juan (EMAT: Head of Governance & Compliance) – Minutes</p> <p>AD welcomed everyone and reminded all present that the matters raised within this meeting would remain confidential until the minutes were agreed and signed off.</p>	
2. Apologies	<p>Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Stephen Morales. Asvin Morjaria was absent.</p>	
3. Quoracy	<p>The meeting was confirmed as quorate.</p>	
4. Declarations of interest	<p>AD asked if there were any declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda in addition to those already recorded on the annual Register of Interests. None were declared.</p>	
5. Minutes of FHRE meeting 10/03/2021 & matters arising not appearing on the Action Log	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 10/03/2021 had been distributed with the agenda for this meeting and were agreed to be an accurate representation of the meeting.</p> <p>AD agreed to physically sign the minutes once lockdown restrictions had been lifted.</p> <p>There were no matters arising not already on the agenda for this meeting.</p>	
6. Actions Log from the meeting held on 10/03/2021	<p>Actions from the meeting held on the 10/03/2021 were reviewed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Catch-up funding to be shared with FHRE - ONGOING 2) Contact SI team to produce a SWOT for S&P - ONGOING 	

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	3) Amend formatting Budget Assumptions 2021-22 paper - DONE 4) Add HAT merger item to the next TB agenda. - DONE 5) Pyramus paper to be added to next agenda - ONGOING 6) Upload policies to website - DONE	
7. COVID19 Update	<p><i>JC gave a verbal update and answered questions from trustees.</i></p> <p>JC informed trustees that from January to March around 8,500 tests had been conducted for pupils and staff. Positive tests had been low and only a few bubbles had to be closed across the trust. Attendance figures, both remotely and in schools had been high (around 95%) throughout the pandemic, compared to national figures. Changes in the guidance had been implemented and RAs had been updated accordingly.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether the guidance around masks had changed JC confirmed that guidance around wearing masks in the classrooms would be reviewed on 17th May.</p> <p>There was an expectation of another COVID wave happening in Autumn 2021 and therefore it would be sensible to expect some of the current measures to continue to be in place during the next academic year.</p> <p>Changes in behavior in schools, particularly around attachment issues and compliance with routine had been noticeable and part of the catch -up funding was being used to support students around these concerns.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether support around behavioural issues was also in place for adults JC confirmed all staff had been consulted around their return to school and HR had put systems in place to support those members of staff unable to return. In addition, EMAT was hosting an event with other trusts in the county to discuss how to improve support around wellbeing and mental health for staff and other adults in schools. A programme of implementation of Mental Health aiders in schools was currently in progress.</p> <p>Trustees thanked JC for his report.</p>	Catch up funding report to be presented to trustees.
8. Finance Update: i. Management Accounts	<p><i>Finance papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</i></p> <p>i. ND presented the Management Accounts for the period to February 2021. The current surplus for the group was £271K. ND ran through the highlights in the report and took questions from trustees.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding free school vouchers claim ND confirmed that a claim for £76k had been submitted.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether FSM vouchers were still being provided to those children no attending school ND confirmed that the facility was still available to those shielding or self-isolating.</p>	

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	<p>Trustees discussed the report at length and praised the clarity of the information, particularly the benchmarking and dashboard feature which aided to quickly identify the key metrics driving the organisation.</p> <p>The FHRE committee unanimously agreed to accept the Management Accounts – Period February 2021.</p> <p>ii. ND presented the Hardingstone Nursery paper, ran through the different scenarios and clarified that starter costs would be provided by the contingency plan and claimed back once the venture was successfully running. ND and PW took questions from trustees.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding the lack of clarity in the paper presented around the strategic aim driving the proposal and the potential impact in the school and organisation PW clarified that the strategy behind the proposal was not only to provide wrap around care for the local community but also to protect the reception intake and increase the school numbers, which were currently low. Additionally, the provision of a nursery attached to the school and manned by school staff would help to provide a seamless educational journey for those children attending and transitioning to Hardingstone, improving the EYFS educational outcomes and eventually boosting attainment and progress for the whole school.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether this strategic approach had been successful in other schools ND confirmed that Castle and SAA were running successful nurseries on site and have managed to secure a steady number of children transitioning to reception.</p> <p>Trustees unanimously agreed for the Hardingstone Nursery proposal to go ahead.</p> <p>PW informed trustees that the finance team had started work on the preparation of next year’s budget. This would be presented to trustees for approval at the next FHRE meeting.</p> <p>Secondary offers had already been reported and both schools were full. The Primary phase indicated a severe decline in numbers across the county, particularly in Northampton town and Kettering & Corby, showing low intake in reception numbers. EMAT school’s intake numbers so far were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle – Full • NIA – 45/60 (lower than previous year) • SAA – 28/60 • HAR – 24/30 • SHEPS – 28/60 <p>Although some of these numbers would increase towards September there were concerns that, due to Brexit and COVID some children from migratory communities, which would normally be part of the reception intake might not require the spaces, thus creating a risk around numbers. This might have</p>	

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	<p>an impact on staffing in some of the schools. However, PW explained that the risk would be manageable. More clarity and information around this issue would be available once numbers were confirmed.</p> <p>Trustees discussed this issue at length and requested to be updated around this issue at the following meeting.</p>	<p>PW to present Primary numbers update at next meeting</p>
<p>9. Update on Procurement, IT & Estates</p>	<p><i>The Shared Service Update Report had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</i></p> <p>DU presented the highlights from the papers around Major projects, Estates and IT and answered questions from trustees.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding the meaning of ‘business incubation’ in NIA PW clarified that this would be a facility provided for Sixth Form students to develop their studies around the business and enterprise agenda, as part of their course work. The space would be flexible and could be used by the community if necessary to generate a further income stream.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding schools’ income generation around their facilities and how this could be managed PW explained that one of the targets for the new Operations Manager would be generating new income streams and unlocking the potential of all sites across the trust.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding the removal of Shepherdswell Outdoor Gym and whether this would be replaced DU confirmed that the current facilities were unsafe and would be replaced after the removal.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding attacks on IT systems and what information could hackers harvest from education DU explained that educational organisation primarily suffered two types of attacks. The ‘Spear Phishing’ attack, where a fake request to pay an urgent payment would be made to someone in the organisation. ‘Credential Theft’ was another one, where personal details would be harvested like account details and personal passwords. The final major attack was ‘Ransomware malware’, a form of malware that would encrypt a victim's files. The attacker would demand a ransom from the victim to restore access to the data upon payment. There were mitigations in place to stop it all of this, like regular back up of files and encryption of DATA.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding the current organisation GDPR journey DU confirmed that although several changes had been put in place there were still gaps that needed to be addressed. A comprehensive report was to be presented to the A&R committee the following week, the main change being the outsourcing of 24/7 DPO services.</p> <p>Trustees thanked DU for his report and praised the clarity of the report.</p>	

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10. HR Update	<p><i>HR papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</i></p> <p>RM gave a brief HR verbal update as a comprehensive paper had been presented at the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trust had entered its biggest recruitment window with resignations deadline on 31st May. Maths was the biggest challenge so far, and there was evidence of recruitment on this area being a national issue. • A contract with I-Trent, the new HR management system had been signed. • SCR operating procedures had been tightened across all schools. • The TUPE process for the Hardingstone cleaning staff had been complete with REEF. • Work continued with staff still shielding and not in school. • Work around wellbeing had taken place with staff and Mental Health Champions were to be introduced in all schools. • HAT support was ongoing. <p>There were no questions from trustees.</p> <p>JC presented the Executive Leadership staffing structure paper which had been fully costed into the next year's budget and took questions from trustees.</p> <p>In response to a question from a trustee regarding the possible duplication of roles around fundraising and income generation with schools JC clarified that the fundraising role in the proposed structure would look at income streams across the whole organisation.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the salary range for the Learning & Organisational Development Officer and whether it would be sufficient to attract the right candidate for the roles. PW agreed to revisit the figures to align them with the discussion.</p> <p>Trustees thanked RM and JC for their presentation.</p>	
11. Items for next agenda	<p>Trustees requested for Heads to be invited to the next meeting when the Budget would be presented.</p> <p><i>FW left the meeting at 14.53pm</i></p>	MJ to invite Heads
12. AOB	There were no AOB	
13. DONM	<p>Dates for the academic year 2020/2021 have been set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 8th June 2021 at 10am • Thursday 8th July 2021 at 10am 	Calendar appointments had been sent

The meeting closed at 14.59pm

Actions from the FHR & Estates committee meeting 16/04/2021

Item	Action	Owner
1.	Catch-up funding impact and costed plans to be shared with FHRE/S&P/TB	PW
2.	Contact SI team to produce a SWOT for S&P	MJ
3.	Produce an update on Primary numbers to share with trustees	PW
4.	Invite Heads to next FHRE meeting	MJ