

**East Midlands Academy Trust – Finance, HR and Estates committee**

 Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 @ 10.00am. Meeting to be conducted virtually.

**Third meeting of academic year 2021/2022**

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

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
1. <b>Welcome</b>	<p><b>Present:</b></p> <p><b>Andrew Davis</b> (Trustee) - <b>Chair</b>  <b>Kevin Crompton</b> (Trustee) <i>left meeting at 11.00am</i>  <b>Stephen Morales</b> (Trustee)  <b>Ayo Salam</b> (Trustee)</p> <p><b>Joshua Coleman</b> (EMAT: CEO)  <b>Paul Wheeler</b> (EMAT: COO)  <b>Nattia Dhana</b> (EMAT: Finance Manager Accountant)  <b>Kevin Weier</b> (EMAT: Management Accountant)  <b>Daryl Unitt</b> (EMAT: Head of Shared Services)  <b>Ruhena Mahmood</b> (EMAT: Senior Workforce Planning &amp; HRBP)  <b>Monica Juan</b> (EMAT: Head of Governance &amp; Compliance) – Minutes</p> <p>The Chair 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. <b>Apologies</b>	There were no apologies.	
3. <b>Quoracy</b>	The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
4. <b>Declarations of interest</b>	The Chair 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.	
5. <b>Minutes of FHRE meeting 06/12/2021 &amp; matters arising not appearing on the Action Log</b>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on the <b>06/12/2021, including confidential minutes</b> 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. <b>Actions Log from the meeting held on 06/12/2021</b>	<p>Actions from the meeting held on the <b>06/12/2021</b> were reviewed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) DU to include KPIs in next report - <b>DONE</b></li> <li>2) MJ to upload policies to website- <b>DONE</b></li> <li>3) Share RSC presentation with Trustees- <b>DONE</b></li> <li>4) Confidential minute: JC to update at next FHRE – <b>Within agenda</b></li> </ol>	

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7. Confidential minute 06/12/2021 update	<p><i>JC gave a brief update on the matters discussed during the previous meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HAT</b> – New CoG had been appointed. A meeting had been scheduled for the following week to keep ongoing relationships.</li> <li>• <b>CE Academies</b>– Allocated to TOVE Academies</li> <li>• <b>Thrapston</b> – No communication at the moment</li> <li>• <b>Willows</b> – Still keen to join, have entered into a paid SLA with HR.</li> </ul> <p>The trust had received a positive letter from the RSC. They had agreed to fund and ERG. The NLG had already been allocated and made contact with the Head of Governance.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether there was any financial impact to be addressed after the NIA Ofsted inspection</b> JC explained that as part of the trust’s response an envelope of funding would need to be put in place to address any issues. PW confirmed that there was sufficient headroom to provide the necessary support.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the issue at length and agreed that there was no point to have healthy reserves if these didn’t provide a positive impact on the children. <b>Trustees agreed, if needed, for the FHRE Chair to approve any essential actions before the next meeting.</b></p>	<p><b>Share RSC letter with trustees</b></p>
8. Finance Update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Management Accounts December 2021 (for approval)</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Finance papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</i></p> <p><b>EMAT Management Accounts:</b> ND and PW ran through the highlights of the Management Accounts and informed trustees that the finance team would be working with schools during the following week preparing the reforecast to present at the next meeting alongside the budget assumptions and IRFP.</p> <p>PW confirmed that accounts were looking healthy and no major changes were expected. PWS numbers for next year had increased and some of the current surplus would be used to anticipate and support the potential requirements of a larger cohort.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from a trustee regarding where the extra numbers were coming from</b> JC explained that the majority were coming from schools in Corby.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether current increases in gas and electricity prices would affect the trust</b> PW reported that as the contracts had been renegotiated during the previous year, prices would remain fixed until 2023. Savings were being reinvested in sustainable and renewable measures where possible, to help reduce future consumption. One of the initiatives was looking at installing vehicle charging points at PWS, as part of the current works taking place. However, this would have to be done through own capital as there were no grants available.</p> <p>Trustees discussed this topic at length and praised that energy savings and carbon reduction surveys had been commissioned. <b>Trustees unanimously accepted the EMAT Management Accounts – December 2021</b></p>	

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<b>9. Procurement, IT &amp; Estates update</b>	<p><i>Papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting.</i></p> <p>DU presented the highlights of the report and informed trustees that the KPIs had been added to the report as requested and cyber essential plus had been achieved in January 2022.</p> <p><b>Procurement:</b> A carbon reduction survey had been commissioned to identify potential savings and investments. The action plan would be presented during the following meeting.</p> <p><b>Estates:</b> Exploring the possibility of conducting an external audit from H&amp;S and Compliance. Safety Mark certification was being investigated to compliment what had been achieved so far in order to provide an extra layer of security for stakeholders.</p> <p><b>IT:</b> An external audit had been commissioned around IT security. New websites were fully operational and most of the content was updated centrally to ensure compliance.</p> <p><b>Contract recommendation report:</b> DU informed trustees that the report was looking at consolidating the number of suppliers in order to centralise and maximise buying power. DU was expecting the number to greatly reduce within the next two years as more suppliers would have gone through the procurement process.</p> <p>Trustees noted the report and praised DU for his tenacity as the transformation in the shared services department had been significant.</p>	<p><b>DU to present action plan in next meeting</b></p>
<b>10. HR update</b>	<p><i>Papers had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting</i></p> <p>RM presented the highlights of the report and took questions from trustees.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from a trustee regarding whether the allegations in two of the disciplinary proceedings were serious enough to refer to external agencies</b> RM explained that the LADO had been clear that there was enough evidence for a referral to the TRA and DBS to be made.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from a trustee regarding historical issues, how they were investigated and what policy was used to address this</b> RM explained that the LADO was informed in every instance and was always involved in the process. The Managing Allegations policy and Staff Code of Conduct were always shared with staff. With the current historical allegation, further training had been put in place to support both children and staff and to ensure nothing similar would happen again. RM clarified that the police had not been involved.</p> <p>RM informed trustees that investigations across the trust had uncovered the need of further training around de-escalation techniques and performance management.</p>	<p><b>RM to present summary at next meeting</b></p>

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	<p>Trustees discussed the matter at length and agreed that the quality of the investigator officer was crucial moving forward.</p> <p>The HR department was currently conducting a staff trust wide survey, fusing in the wellbeing of staff. Results and actions would be shared at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>In response to a question from a trustee regarding staff absence numbers</b> RM clarified that staff absences had gone down during the term; however it would be difficult to predict numbers after half term.</p> <p>Trustees noted the report and thanked RM and her team for their continuous support.</p>	
<b>11. AOB</b>	<p>A trustee query whether the possibility for an organisation working closely with him to rent some of the training space ½ day once a month.</p> <p><b>Trustees agreed to this to be explored.</b></p>	<b>ND to forward prices to SM</b>
<b>12. Items for next meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reforecast</li> <li>• Budget Assumptions</li> <li>• ICFP tool</li> </ul>	
<b>15. DONM</b>	<p><b>Dates for the academic year 2021/2022 have been set.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 8th June 2022 at 10am</li> <li>• Tuesday 12th July 2022 at 10am</li> </ul>	<b>Calendar appointments had been sent</b>

**The meeting closed at 11.36am**

**Actions from the FHRE committee meeting 14/02/2021**

Item	Action	Owner
1.	<b>Share RSC letter with trustees</b>	MJ
2.	<b>Carbon Reduction Survey action plan presented at next meeting</b>	DU
3.	<b>Staff Survey summary presented at next meeting</b>	RM
4.	<b>Forward letting premises price list to SM</b>	ND