

**MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
MAYVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL TRUST BOARD  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2020 AT 4 P.M. VIA ZOOM**

**Present:** Mrs Chindo Singh (Chair) Trustee  
 Mr Walter Harding, Trustee  
 Mr Rasheed Dauda, Trustee  
 Mrs Ann Smart, Trustee  
 Ms Beverley Komorowska, Interim Head Teacher (voting)


**Also present:** Mr Hugh Swanson, Buzzacott, school auditors – Mr Swanson arrived at 4.29 p.m.

Clerk to the Trustees: Mrs Julie Cornelius

**To note:** All action points recorded within the minutes, will state only the person(s) responsible for that action. Full action details are recorded in the summary table below.

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
4.1	To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2020.	Chair	As soon as possible.
4.2 'Matters arising' Minute 5.	To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020.	Chair	As soon as possible.
4.2 'Matters arising' Minute 8.2	To reduce the number of policies to be ratified per meeting, to no more than 5/6	Interim Head Teacher	On-going
4.2 'Matters arising' Minute 10.1	To chase up the quote for the front gate.	Interim Head Teacher	Immediate
6.1.3	To electronically sign the Financial Statement and letter of representation, prior to being submitted to Companies House.	Chair/Chair of Trustees	Immediate
6.1.3	To liaise with the School Business Manager regarding submission of electronically signed documentation to Companies House.	Mr Hugh Swanson, Buzzacott, School auditors	Immediate
6.1.4	To forward to Trustees, the e-mail received from Strictly Education regarding agreed payment terms for the server upgrade.	Interim Head Teacher	Immediate
6.1.4	To agree to sign off the server expenditure.	Trustees	At the Trustees meeting which follows this meeting.

Chair's Initials:  


8.2	To schedule the Head Teacher's Performance Management review.	Interim Head Teacher, Chair of Trustees, Rasheed Dauda and School Engagement Adviser	Immediate – to take place w/c 14/12/2020.
9.1	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> Wednesday, 3 February 2021	All /GS	Immediate
9.2	<b>Agenda items:</b> 1. To review Health and Safety and Accessibility policies. 2. To review Model Pay Policy	All/GS	Immediate

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1 All were welcomed to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Alex Opoku-Boateng.
- 1.3 Agenda item 6. would include a report from Buzzacott, the School auditors.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Trustees to declare any interests they may have in any of the following agenda items  
There were no Declarations of Interest.

**3. QUORATE**

The meeting was quorate, with four Trustees and the Interim Head Teacher present.

**4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2020**

- 4.1 Governors received and **agreed** the minutes of this meeting, subject to the following amendment.

**Within the attendance list:** The spelling of the Interim Head Teacher's name is incorrect – this should be Ms Beverley Komorowska.

**Action: Chair**

**4.2 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020**

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Action status update
5.	To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020.	Chair	As soon as possible
8.2	Future Policy Ratification: To prioritise so that no more than 5/6 policies are presented per meeting.	Interim Head Teacher	<b>This has been reduced to no more than 5 policies per meeting and will continue for future meetings.</b>

Chair's Initials:



10.1	Premises - Non-Closure of Front Gate: Quote to be provided at next meeting.	Interim Head Teacher	<b>C/forward:</b> The quote has not yet been received – to be followed up.
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**5. GDPR – standing agenda item**

Currently, there is nothing to report.

[Pending the arrival of Mr Hugh Swanson from Buzzacott, the school auditors, agenda item 6.4 was brought forward.]

**6.4 Policy review to include Remote learning; Anti-bullying; Scheme of Delegation; Whistle blowing; Financial Regulations**

6.4.1 The Whistle blowing policy was ratified at a previous meeting.

6.4.2 Governors had read and reviewed both the Remote Learning and Anti-bullying policies and had **agreed** to ratify these policies.

6.4.3 Both the Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations had been adopted.

[Mr Hugh Swanson arrived at 4.29 p.m.]

The meeting returned to the order of the agenda.

**6. FINANCE**

**6.1 Budget Monitoring: Month 3 - 2020-2021**

Mr Hugh Swanson from Buzzacott, the school auditors, was welcomed to the meeting. Mr Swanson reported the following.

6.1.1 The post order report on the external audit was presented.

6.1.2 The audit has gone well and was particularly pleasing, given the challenges (due to COVID-19) presented this year. Mr Swanson wished to thank the Interim Head Teacher and the School Business Manager for their work in relation to this.

6.1.3 Reference was made to the financial statements opinion and regulatory assurances. The financial statements opinion is a true and fair view.

There is uncertainty regarding the regulatory assurances given that the school has made a financial loss this year. There is pressure on the budget and there is a financial deficit.

6.1.4 There is only £56K available in reserves; this is well below the reserves policy of £180K. There are other financial pressures on the school which are discussed in the accounts.

6.1.5 Mr Swanson shared a PowerPoint slide with Governors, detailing the key disclosures in this year's set of accounts. Within the audit report, reference is made to the financial statements and disclosures. This is not qualifying the accounts but is showing for example, that these are below the reserves. There is nothing irregular.

Chair's Initials:



- 6.1.6 Final balance sheet checks are implemented prior to finalising the accounts. The audit report includes key issues; detailing the area, the issue and the response.

No issues have been identified.

- 6.1.7 This item is recorded under confidential minutes.

- 6.1.8 The on-going concern relates to the reserves position. As previously recorded, there is currently £56K in reserves which is below the reserves policy.

- 6.1.9 Given the impact of COVID-19, new disclosures are required and these have been captured in the accounts. The emergency grant of £28,764 is referred to.

- 6.1.10 Mr Swanson referred to the following: income recognition; regularity; management override and controls; accounting estimates.

Mr Swanson concluded, stating there are no judgements shown and there are no issues with internal controls.

- 6.1.11 Financial performance and position

- The operational deficit for the year is (£176K).
- £56K is the reserves carried forward; this is due to the operational deficit.
- Next year, scrutiny will increase and this will apply to Academies. It is believed there will be more of a focus on financial viability.
- There are increasing deficits which are not sustainable. Payroll has been increasing because of extra staffing costs.
- Reserves have reduced over the past three years.
- The financial statement needs to be signed off.
- Pension liability has increased this year. Every three years, the scheme is reviewed. There is a risk that if pension liability increases, there may be future rate rises.
- The performance assessment (Governors were shown a slide relating to this) is a must requirement for the 2020/20 financial Handbook. This relates to an appraisal of the external auditors.
- Cyber security was highlighted.
- A statement of contingent liabilities was presented to Governors.

- 6.1.2 The Chair thanked Mr Swanson for a very helpful presentation.

The Chair referred to on-going concerns. An interim meeting (including Trustees and the Interim Head Teacher) had taken place, prior to this meeting and at which it was discussed that it is the Trustees' responsibility to review these accounts and to provide any comments. Trustees are addressing what has been identified within the audit report and the letter of representation. Trustees are aware of the risks and the actions being taken to address these. To summarise, the Chair stated the following:

1. Trustees are considering these concerns.
2. Trustees have reviewed their duties.
3. A plan has been implemented.

The Chair asked Trustees if they had any questions or comments – none were raised.

The Chair of Trustees said strategies were reviewed and appropriate strategies implemented to ensure that this continues on the right course.

- 6.1.3 Trustees **agreed and approved** the Financial Statement and letter of representation.

Mr Swanson referred to revised processes now in place because of COVID-19. Companies House now permit electronic signatures of documents if consent to this process is agreed prior to the documents being submitted.

**Action: Chair of this Committee and Chair of Trustees**

**Action: Hugh Swanson**

[Mr Swanson left the meeting at 5 p.m.]

The Chair wished to raise an additional item for discussion.

- 6.1.4 At the previous meeting of this Committee, it was agreed that the Interim Head Teacher would formulate an action plan and provide an update regarding the points raised within the report from Buzzacott, the school auditors. The Interim Head Teacher provided the following update.

6.1.4.1 Server

The Interim Head Teacher had contacted the Head of Technology Services at Strictly Education to ask if payment for the server upgrade, could be staggered across 24 months. This was agreed but with the proviso that because of the materials required to be purchased, 50% of the overall cost would need to be paid in advance of the work commencing and with the remainder paid in September 2021. £20K is the total cost of this project.

In response to the Chair asking if it was possible for Strictly Education to review their proposal, the Interim Head Teacher confirmed that even if payment is delayed, the parts need to be purchased to update the server.

In response to the Chair of Trustees saying he would like to discuss this with the School Business Manager before agreeing this, the Interim Head Teacher said currently, the school is not receiving e-mails because of the issue with the server and this therefore, is a matter of urgency.

**Action: Interim Head Teacher**

**Action: Trustees**

6.14.2 Norfolk trip

This trip has now been cancelled.

6.14.3 Cover for sickness absence

6.14.3.1 There were four agency support (LSAs (Learning Support Assistants)) staff and the school has released two of these staff, with two remaining. One of these staff members is assigned to Early Years for the two year old provision and the other provides support for a Year 1 child with an EHCP (Educational Health Care Plan). Without the member of staff in Early Years, this provision would not be able to continue.

6.14.3.2 Assistant Head Teachers are currently covering PPA (Preparation, Planning and Assessment) and staff absence. This week, a supply teacher was needed because of a COVID-19 outbreak in Year 2 and where the bubble had to be closed down. This follows the DfE (Department for Education) advice that staff must self isolate.

Chair's Initials:



This resulted in five teachers and three LSAs self-isolating and as a consequence, one of the classes could not be covered. The teacher of this class had a child in Year 2 and consequently, because of the outbreak in that Year group, she had to stay at home to look after her child.

**Q. What is the self-isolation period?**

**A.** This is currently 14 days but because children break up on 18 December for Christmas, those children will not now return until next term.

- 6.14.4 The purchase of P.P.E. equipment was raised at the meeting and this has now been purchased.
- 6.14.5 SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) map  
This referred to moving LSAs who are permanently employed by the school, to support children with EHC Plans. This has been completed.
- 6.14.6 The Chair said it is important, as Trustees, that we have a plan in place to work with the school and to discharge our obligations in relation to the action plan.
- 6.14.7 To tie in with the audit, the Interim Head Teacher referred to the breakfast and after school club provisions and the cost involved. Magic Breakfast now charge for this provision and subsequently, because of the cost, this provision has been cancelled. Currently, on average, only three paying children attend for breakfast and after school clubs. The Interim Head Teacher said this must be included within the action plan.

The Chair said parents have written to complain about the ceasing of this provision and asked if this was something the school should provide. It was agreed this would be further discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting, to follow this meeting.

6.2 Review Progress against SIP

The Interim Head Teacher had circulated this to Trustees prior to the meeting.

- 6.2.1 The Head Teacher referred to the part of the document which showed progress made against actions.

A Governor referred to many of the decisions being made by Governors, relating to what is in the SIP; the SEND provision map is an example of this. The Governor said there needs to be a careful balance of the needs of the children against prudent financial management.

- 6.2.3 A Governor referred to the minutes of the emergency meeting and during which, the Chair of Trustees had said he would provide, to the Trustees, a report from the school engagement adviser.

The Chair of Trustees said it was strongly recommended that the school has a school engagement adviser; this support has not been in place for the past couple of years. The adviser has been working with leadership across different areas.

The Chair sought clarification on the role of the adviser. The Interim Head Teacher said she also needed clarity on the role of the school engagement adviser. During the last two visits to the school, the adviser had been asking what assistance and support was required. The Chair of Trustees said this could be further discussed at the Trustees meeting, taking place following this meeting.

Autumn term 2020

6.2.4 The Chair of Trustees wished to raise an urgent item for discussion. This is recorded under confidential minutes.

6.3 Review links with other committees  
This agenda item is not applicable.

**7. PREMISES UPDATE**

7.1 Policy review to include: i) Health and Safety; ii) Accessibility

7.1.1 Health and Safety:

The Interim Head Teacher said the problem still remains, regarding the foxes' excrement within the school grounds.

7.1.2 **Carried forward agenda item: To review Health and Safety and Accessibility policies**

**8. PERSONNEL UPDATE**

8.1 To review Model Pay Policy

This is a new policy for 2020 and the Interim Head Teacher will contact the Local Authority for support in relation to this.

**Carried forward agenda item: To review Model Pay Policy**

8.2 Review and Conduct Interim Head Teacher's Performance Management

**Action: Interim Head Teacher, Chair of Trustees, Rasheed Dauda and School Engagement Adviser**

8.3 This item is recorded under confidential minutes.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND AGENDA ITEMS**

9.1 This will take place on Wednesday, 3 February 2021.

9.2 Agenda items

1. To review Health and Safety and Accessibility policies
2. Review Model Pay Policy

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no matters of Any Other Business.

The meeting closed at 6.07 p.m.

Chair: W.E. Harding (print)

[Signature] (sign)

Date: .....

Chair's Initials: