

Finance Committee Meeting

Date/Time	04/10/2016
Invitees	Jodie Croft, CEO and Andy Collings, Director of Finance, Dr Harry Ziman Chair of the Trust Board
Apologies	None
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of last meeting's minutes 2. Update from Audit pre-amble meeting with UHY 28/09/2016 3. Audit meeting agenda (07/11/2016) 4. Update from EFA re TPA deficit budget/consideration of further budgetary cuts 5. Further discussion on Reserves Policy development – papers attached. 6. Approvals for invoices over £10,000 7. Item redacted for commercial sensitivity 8. AOB
Minutes 04/10/2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of last meeting's minutes - approved 2. Update from Audit pre-amble meeting with UHY 28/09/2016 – Auditors have suggested not to have a GAG pooling policy as this can be divisive for Principals and the Trust. Principals have a right of recourse if a Trust makes the decision to pool GAG. We have agreed not to pool GAG as a Trust. JC awaiting a list of audit deliverables from UHY, JC to chase today 3. Audit meeting agenda (07/11/2016) - not discussed – deferred to email conversation 4. Update from EFA re TPA deficit budget/consideration of further budgetary cuts – EFA have requested further information in determining how to help TPA. JC has provided cashflow forecasts at their request. EFA have had since June 2016 to assist with TPAs deficit and the decision is becoming more pressing as the term progresses. JC to chase today, AC to contact EFA if decision is not immediately forthcoming. 5. Further discussion on Reserves Policy development – papers attached. JC and AC agreed policy on reserves for schools and the Trust to aim to build up a month's payroll costs in reserve. Policy to be presented for full board approval in November. Trust to consider a top slice policy. 6. Approvals for invoices over £10,000 – none at present 7. Item redacted for commercial sensitivity <p>AOB</p> <p>DPA has a final funding allocation of 120 pupils but 134 currently on roll. JC to make a request to have an in year adjustment for funding rather than wait till a PNA in 17/18.</p> <p>Barclays bank signed update letter lost in post. JC to re-send for AC to sign and return.</p>

	<p>Pay reviews to be added to finance committee remit. First pay review to be tabled at November 1st meeting with AC and JC. Principals to email recommendations and justifications ahead of this meeting.</p> <p>AC suggested that 15/16 audit is completed before we begin the migration of Sage to HCSS. JC agreed.</p> <p>Item redacted for commercial sensitivity</p> <p>Next finance meeting 1st November 2016 9.30am GEMS head office</p>
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Remit

- Develop and gain Board approval for an annual Trust budget, delivering within the budget and reporting regularly to the Directors;
- Where the academy premises are let to other users, monitor and review the Academy Lettings Policy and Arrangements;
- Ensure that maintenance, decoration, and equipment/furniture renewal is planned and budgeted for
- Audit review the use of academy premises, the equipment and resources and ensure they match the requirements of the academies' priorities;
- Consider and determine the need for capital works at the academy, in line with academy development plans;
- Oversee Asset Management
- Consider and determine pay recommendations
- Oversee procurement to ensure that value for money and internal efficiency gains are realised through collective purchasing and contracting and ensure compliance with procurement policies;
- Ensure that the GEMS Learning Trust represents good value for money for the Academies;
- Ensure financial and procedural compliance with the Academies Handbook and Funding Agreements including reporting to the EFA;
- Scrutinise and approve on behalf of the Board each GEMS Learning Trust academy's detailed annual budget, review annually and report plans to address identified over or underspends to the Board in line with academy priorities;
- Ensure that each Academy has suitably trained staff for the operation of financial systems;
- Agree the scheme of financial delegation to trust academies and review this annually;
- Receive the annual report from the GEMS Learning Trust's auditors and take the appropriate actions to respond positively to any recommendations;
- Monitor compliance with approved financial procedure and consider action required as a result of internal and external audit report;
- Advise on the Charging and Remissions Policy for non-National Curriculum academy activities and review if necessary;
- Support the board of directors in ensuring that a framework is established and maintained for the identification and management of risk, the management of crisis, the plan for business continuity, fraud prevention and detection;
- Assist with the development of the whistleblowing policy;
- Report to the board on a termly basis or more as required.

Audit Committee

The audit committee consists of the Accounting Officer, Director of Finance and the Chair of governors. It is chaired by the Director of Finance. It meets on bi-annual basis. Its remit is to:

- Consider the appointment of the external auditor and assess independence of the external auditor, ensuring that key audit personnel are rotated at appropriate intervals.
- Recommend the audit fees to the Trust Board and pre-approve any fees in excess of £10,000 in respect of non-audit services provided by the external auditor and to ensure that the provision of non-audit services does not impair the external auditors' independence or objectivity.
- Oversee the process for selecting the external auditor and make appropriate recommendations through the Trust Board to the members of the Trust to consider at any general meeting where the accounts are laid before members.
- Discuss with the external auditor the nature and scope of each forthcoming audit and to ensure that the external auditor receives the fullest co-operation.
- Review the external auditor's annual management letter and all other reports and recommendations, together with the appropriateness of management's response.
- Review the performance of the external auditor on an annual basis.
- Recommend to the Trust Board the appointment / re-appointment of the external auditor.
- Review and consider the circumstances surrounding any resignation or dismissal of the external auditor.

<p>Minutes/Record of meeting 13/09/2016</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance committee (FC) meetings will take place on the first Tuesday of every month. JC to issue invites 2. JC/AC agreed financial committee remit. JC to allocate standing items to each agenda for FC meetings 3. AC agreed to approve grant-based invoices over £50k on a monthly basis at FC meetings. Full board to approve all other invoices over £50k 4. Scheme of financial delegation to be adjusted to show names of online banking raisers and approvers. Also to show any director can approve claims for EFA or LA grants. 5. Barclays to move to another internet based software system, further information to follow in due course. AC/JC agreed to add HJZ as an approver on Barclays Banking system. 6. Edufin have not provided regular management accounts, bank reconciliations or cashflow forecasts. JC to issue clear request for this information to be sent to the Trust on a monthly basis by the 20th of every month. AC considering alternative accountancy provision 7. All points on internal audit report have been addressed or are in the process of being addressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payroll now signed on a monthly basis • Capital projects now standing item at board meetings • Two directors now have sign off between £10 and £50k • GLT not having an independent review of payroll until further notice as funds are limited • Dataplan have been asked split employees by job type for analysis • TPA and DPA clear on petty cash rules and invoicing parents • All ICOs now approved before payments are made
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">8. External audit set for 10th October 20169. Audit committee to meet with UHY 7th November 2016, prior to the AGM10. Reserves policy – AC suggested increasing top slice for central trust from schools with surplus to provide increased funds for school to school collaboration. AC agreed with the reserves policy to be set at 1 months payroll per entity and suggested in the future this might increase to 3-6 months of full costs.11. JC has purchased HCSS to replace SAGE. This will enable school finance managers to operate the system remotely, load own purchase orders and invoices and for directors to access financial reports. This will introduce sequential purchase orders.12. AOB: Rony Valeny to issue written record of the value of the donation of desk space to the Trust for 15/16 – JC to action
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