

## **Dartmoor MAT**

### **Audit Committee Report 2019**

The Audit Committee has met six times during 2019. It is fully aware of its statutory duties as laid out in the Academies Financial Handbook. It has established its terms of reference to reflect these requirements.

The Trust has appointed Thompson Jenner as our Internal Auditor. Its scope of work was agreed. Reports were received in June and October. Overall the Trust has made significant progress with its financial and procedural controls since its inception in January 2018. It was pleasing to note that the October report no RAG-rated “Red” items were raised. Many items are now rated as “Green” and the majority of “Ambers” are showing improvement. The CFOO, her team and the school admin teams are congratulated for their hard work. It has been recommended that Thompson Jenner continue as our internal auditors and a programme of work has been agreed for 2020.

The Trust has appointed Bishop Fleming as its external auditors. The Trust is required to submit accounts by the end of year for the 12 months ending August 2019. Since the Trust was established in January 2018 this is the first set of accounts cover a full twelve-month period. The auditor presented its draft financial report to Audit on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019. This was supported by a Key Issues Discussion Document/Management letter. The committee fully discussed this with the auditor and in particular the auditor’s analysis of risks. It was noted that no process issues were RAG-rated as Red and that all the items raised last year had been resolved. Nothing of substance was raised by the auditors to place any qualification on the accounts. The annual report and financial statements were thus recommended to the Trustees for approval.

A concern of the committee last year was the slowness by the Trust in implementing a comprehensive Trust wide risk register. A system has now been installed and this has been supported by an update of the Trust’s Risks Policy. Audit looks forward to seeing its first Trust wide reports in 2020. In parallel to this a comprehensive condition survey has been carried out of all the Trust’s properties. This has highlighted a number of significant risks that were not made clear to the Trust during hand over from the local authority. This is the subject of an ongoing discussions with the EFSA and the Schools Commissioner.

Both the internal and external auditors have not reported any whistle blowing incidents in the year.

J Lawlor

Audit Chair January 2020