

Audit Committee – Part I Minutes							
Date/Time	07:06:18 4.00pm	Location		Okehampton College			
<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Initials</b>			<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Initials</b>		
Daryll Chapman	DC	Rebecca Ledger	RL	Ian Courtney (4.00 – 4.55pm)	IC	Carol Newman	CN
John Lawlor	JL						

Apologies	Initials	Reason (Category of Trustee)	ACTIONS
			DECISIONS
			QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

In Attendance	Initials	Minutes to
Hazel Fox	HF	Attendees
Susanne Kiff	SK	Apologies
Sally Wood	SW	

41 - Apologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Trustees were present</li> </ul>

42 – Declaration of Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Trustees were reminded to declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting.</li> </ul>

43 – Agree and Sign Off Previous Minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 24:04:18 were agreed and signed by JL.</li> </ul>

## 44 – Matters Arising

- HF has completed the action of thanking staff involved in the Audit
- SK had provided a report to Trustees regarding non purchase orders

### Trustees asked the time scale the report covered

SK responded it was from January up to date

- Trustees noted the report showed the schools paying invoices without raising a purchase number. It was colour coded in order of concern with the first column showing the number of invoices.

### Trustees used Northlew and Ashbury as an example and queried the 46% in the % purchase order raised column

SK responded that showed that only 46% of orders had purchase orders raised.

- Trustees noted that 22% of schools overall didn't have a purchase order raised

### Trustees asked for clarification that raising a purchase order was someone in authority signing to say you can buy that

SK responded yes.

### Trustees asked if it was based on value

SK responded that the end column showed the percentage of total amount paid without a purchase order. DC added that for Northlew, 80% of the value of orders didn't have a purchase order raised.

### Trustees queried that meant £750,000 worth of purchases had no authority

SK confirmed yes.

- Trustees noted that an element of that amount would be exams and catering and that was acceptable. Finance staff have reported the lack of purchase orders is because of the new system. Next time the report is run, significant changes would be expected. Finance staff have been part of the internal audit, they have the procedures and they know what to do.
- Trustees noted that the message may not be 'loud and clear' in all schools and there were issues in some of the small primary schools.

### Trustees asked if Heads were aware of this

SK responded that the Heads had not seen this report, but they had had the training. Heads need to be drilling home the expectations.

### Trustees asked if the process was cumbersome that was making it difficult

SK responded the process was the same, it was completing a purchase order. HF added that at times small schools tend to bypass things and that things needed to be clear.

- Trustees expressed the need for the process to become the culture, that it becomes part of the job as it provides protection against queries.

### Trustees asked why catering was exempt

SK responded it was in the Finance Policy, the expenditure that can be non order are catering and utilities. Whilst some of this is exams, they need to have purchase orders raised in future, but secondary schools are saying they have never raised orders and there is no reason why they can't.

### Trustees asked SK to talk through the process

SK responded that a purchase order form was filled in and then signed by authority or the Head of School

**Trustees asked if the authority levels were clear.**

SK responded that she would expect people to know if they were responsible or not for a budget

**Trustees asked how they would know the monetary value of the level of their authority**

SK responded it tells them that on the form.

- SK continued to explain the process that the forms were then scanned by admin staff and sent by email to Okehampton College.

**Trustees asked if staff knew how to do that**

SK responded they did, but some found it difficult.

- Trustees noted that staff were struggling with doing the scanning / emailing part of the process and then when the invoice was received as that also needed to be scanned and emailed.

**Trustees asked if there were enough scanners**

SK responded yes

- Trustees noted that Alan, Pam and SK had supported the schools, but actually understanding the problem was difficult. Forms are scanned to a group email.

**Trustees asked who picked those emails up**

SK responded it would be Rachel or Cheryl

- Trustees noted that the details were then input into PS Financials and an email then went to SK to say there was an order. SK reviewed the scanned order, checked the signature, checked value for money had been undertaken, checked the budget and then duly authorised or rejected the order.

**Trustees asked what happened when the order was authorised**

SK responded the inputting person would receive a yes / no from the system and then twice a day orders were sent to suppliers

- Trustees noted that when the goods arrived, the delivery was checked, the delivery note should be signed and then scanned and emailed over. This was another opportunity where things could go wrong.
- Trustees noted the third opportunity for errors was when the invoice was sent by post and it wasn't scanned over.

**Trustees queried that looking at the report, whether specific people should be targeted for support and if process still wasn't being followed, then further action should be taken**

SK responded that Alan as the hub Business Manager for some schools was looking at the processes.

- Trustees noted that because it wasn't 100% of non purchase orders, that indicated that schools did know the process, so there should be no difference.

**Trustees asked SK what her thoughts were**

SK responded she didn't feel the issue was at the central hub, the issues were in the schools. In the Holsworthy Federation that system was put in place when they federated so it was a natural way for the schools to operate. Lisa Paton signs orders every time she visits schools so it was routine.

**Trustees used the Dartmoor Federation schools as an example and asked if Phil Whittlely had enough opportunity to sign orders if he wasn't in schools enough.**

SK responded that orders for Phil were scanned into the central hub and Rachel kept a pile for him to sign when in there which he was fairly regularly.

Trustees asked if staff understood the difference between orders, statement and invoices

SK responded they had been provided with laminated instructions.

- Trustees discussed where schools were working really well and the system was embedded, that they could come up with a guide to help support other schools.

Trustees asked what happened when orders were received without a purchase order

SK responded these were picked up when the invoice is on system ready to be paid.

Trustees asked how an order got on system if the process wasn't followed and therefore was money going out that SK wasn't aware of

SK responded that when the invoice was received, they had to be retrospectively signed and then put on the system to be paid.

Trustees asked how the invoice was approved

SK responded the budget holder had to sign

Trustees asked what the risk was

SK responded not following the process took time to resolve, audit would additionally report on this and it would be a point on the management report.

Trustees asked if further support would assist the schools if the process had been explained clearly

SK responded that Alison and Alan being in place was new, so they could support further with this

- Trustees agreed that a letter should go from SK to all Headteachers, copied into the Local Governing Bodies to state that Trustees were concerned and would continue to monitor the situation
- SK to provide a further report for the next Audit Committee meeting effective from 1 June so that Trustees could see any improvement

**Action:**

SK to send a letter to all Headteachers, copied into the Local Governing Bodies to state that Trustees were concerned and would continue to monitor the situation

SK to provide a further report for the next Audit Committee meeting effective from 1 June so that Trustees could see any improvement

## 45 – Matters Brought Forward at the Direction of the Chair

- There were no matters brought forward at the direction of the Chair

## 46 - Safeguarding Report

- Jane Lake (JLa), Director of Safeguarding for the MAT attended the meeting to provide a report for the Trustees.
- JLa advised that upon commencement, she had spent a whole week dealing with complaints from parents concerning safeguarding. JLa was independent from the schools which was helpful when dealing with concerns.

### Trustees asked how many complaints have been received

JLa responded there were 3 and all contained serious allegations and gave Trustees a very brief overview of the main concerns. One complaint has highlighted the lack of a policy in place and therefore this was being dealt with.

- JLa advised another situation had arisen from a disclosure from a child and once that was dealt with, JLa had sent scenarios out for further training. JLa has created a training timeline for every month from September. This covered what was going to be addressed and what the outcomes would be. JLa is supplying schools with resources to deliver training, ie quizzes, factsheets.
- Trustees noted that JLa had distributed the new KCSiE to schools along with changes identified and an action plan to ensure compliance.
- Trustees noted that JLa was also auditing every school for a day and seeing where they were at this time.

### Trustees asked the frequency of those audits

JLa responded it depended on findings, one school had received three visits to follow up on action plans.

- Trustees noted that when all audits were complete, they would get further information on that and what action was needed
- Trustees noted that next term, the S175 return was due from all schools to Devon County Council. This was a self-evaluation and the visits JLa was undertaking would help that and identify any shortcomings.
- Trustees noted this return was statutory for maintained schools and best practice for academies, however the LA has to assure itself that every child was safeguarded and so Devon asked all schools to complete the return,

### Trustees asked what Devon's response was to safeguarding needs

JLa responded the Trust had to deal with their own needs, but the LADO were happy that JLa was working with the MAT.

### Trustees asked for more detail about the return due

JLa responded there were set questions, some around statutory requirements. It was an information gathering exercise, it also provided contact for holidays in case of any child protection issues, that there was someone could be contacted. JLa added that Devon read every single audit and they would contact to offer follow up support if needed.

- JLa advised that she saw her future role about having the ability to help with escalation and at challenging the LA and authorities.
- Trustees asked for a safeguarding update at Full Trustees each term.

### Trustees asked how safeguarding information would be reported to Full Trustees

JLa responded it would be through the LGBs. Work was being done on a MAT data collection sheet to enable reporting to LGBs. Governors could then look at the figures and see the impact on the school/s. If figures jump, then this would trigger questions.

- JLa advised that the Dartmoor Federation looked at KPIs when considering safeguarding, they also looked at national figures.
- Trustees noted schools have been asked to send their processes to JLa for a common agreed format to be produced. This information could also come to Trustees.
- Trustees agreed that safeguarding would be considered at this Committee if there was significant risk
- Trustees asked for a termly summary to be provided to this Committee. Trustees discussed the importance of all Trustees seeing the summary.

- JLa advised she was providing safeguarding training, level 2 training was written and she could deliver safer recruitment training.
- Trustees to attend safeguarding training. **SW to arrange a date for this.**
- Trustees noted that JLa was working the DTSA to provide training outside of the MAT where possible as well.

IC left 4.55pm.

- Trustees noted that JLa's role gave the MAT a degree of independence and also relieved schools of some work. JLa is working with some LGBs as well where needed. Trustees noted that JLa worked three days a week.

Trustees asked how the safeguarding lead on the Trustee Board would link with JLa

JLa responded she would expect them to challenge her. It would need to be someone up to date and knowledgeable. JLa stated she would expect to meet the safeguarding Trustee prior to the meeting to go through the data in more detail. Trustees would then receive the analysis not the detail.

JLa left 5.00pm.

<b>Action:</b>	<b>SW to arrange safeguarding training for Trustees</b>
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## 47 – Safeguarding Lead

- Trustees discussed the safeguarding lead and agreed this role sat well in this Committee. JL was proposed, seconded and all were in favour of JL being the safeguarding Link Trustee.

## 48 – Cluster LGB Minutes

- Trustees reviewed the minutes from the Dartmoor Federation

## 49 – Policies / Documents to be agreed

### 49.1 Asset Register

- **Trustees formally proposed, seconded and all were in favour of the asset register being approved.** This has been circulated and agreed on email due to timescales prior to the meeting.

### 49.2 Business Continuity Plan

- Trustees asked for Central Team considerations to be included. Executive function for the VCEO was also to be covered.

HF left 5.10pm.

- Trustees discussed that the plan needed to be more focussed on the MAT structure. If issues arose at an individual school the Trust would need to respond and issues should be contained in one school if possible.
- Trustees discussed that the focus needed to be rightly on children, but also on the Trust as an employer and to cover the business continuity element, eg payroll continuing etc.
- Trustees discussed there were lots of areas where schools needed to be advised what had changed in terms of business continuity and what the MAT was responsible for. The plan should contain who would speak to the press and would also need a relaunch when reviewed.
- **It was agreed for the document to be given to Alan King for review**

#### 49.3 Oversight of policies

- Trustees agreed that MAT policies should be kept centrally on the MAT website with individual schools' websites pointing to a central page. **SW to action**
- **Trustees asked for an update on website compliance from Jackie Adams for the next meeting**

#### Action:

**AK to review the Business Continuity Plan**  
**SW to action individual schools websites to point to the MAT website for MAT policies**  
**JA to provide an update on website compliance for the next meeting**

## 50 - Risk

- Trustees discussed the risk register and noted advice had been sought from other MATs. The consensus was for the MAT to concentrate first on the risk register for each school with the key risks feeding up to the Trust.
- Trustees noted this was the next bit of work to be undertaken with the Heads populating the information. Alison, Alan and SK will produce a template rather than purchase software as it was considered purchasing risk software was not the best use of money at this time.
- Trustees discussed and agreed that LGBs should report and update on risks termly which would be built into the LGB annual cycle. It would then be considered by Trustees termly. **SW to amend Trustee / LGB annual cycle**

#### Trustees asked if risk was talked about with schools

DC responded that as part of their role in meeting Heads, risk was part of that conversation and there was a prompt on the visit note. This was a new language for Schools.

- Trustees discussed some of the entries in the current risk register and agreed it should be reviewed in full. The size of risks should be clear and where they sit in terms of responsibility should be obvious to anyone reading it.

#### Trustees asked for a timescale

SK responded that over the summer Alan, Joe Wood and SK would work on it, but the format should be done before summer holidays. The aim was for the register to be in place for Trustee meetings in September.

- Trustees agreed that each set of LGB minutes should be looked at for risk to start the process. **DC to discuss this at the next Headteacher meeting.**

Trustees asked how this would be fed to LGBs

SK responded the structure would be produced and then it would be passed to LGBs with the instructions that it was partly populated and needed to be completed. **SW to advise LGB Clerks**

**Action:**

**SW to amend Trustee / LGB annual cycle**

**DC to discuss risk register process at the next Headteacher meeting**

**SW to advise LGB Clerks of the risk register process**

## 51 – KPIs – Service Providers

- JL apologised as the action to meet with SK had not been completed. **A date would be arranged very soon**
- Concern had been raised regarding Michelmores service and the quality of advice being received.

**Action:**

**JL / SK to meet to review draft KPIs for service providers against contracts /tender documents**

## 52 – External Audit Timeline

- Trustees noted the plan from the External Auditors detailing the plans for audits and what the reports will include

Trustees asked if this was all in line with the Academies Financial Handbook

SK responded yes

Trustees asked if the audits would be over and above requirements

SK responded what would be received would be very thorough.

- Trustees noted 1.6 where it detailed the schools that will be visited which had been identified for reasons to do with size, carry forward position and the result of internal audits as well as their OFSTED rating.
- Trustees discussed whether they were happy with the identified schools which they were.
- Trustees discussed that the £750,000 would be identified within appendix 4.
- Trustees noted the timeline included and that there were legal deadline for when things had to be submitted.

Trustees queried that there wasn't an Audit and Finance Committee, so who were the Auditors reporting to

SK responded Audit.

- Trustees discussed that the Auditors would attend the November meeting and agreed it should be a single item agenda,

Trustees asked about year-end processes

SK responded it would happen fairly quickly. Schools have been asked to stop placing orders on 22 June 2018.

Trustees asked if the Resources Committee would get to see draft budgets beforehand and when would final year end be seen

SK responded this would be after August for final year end. Resources would see draft budgets on 5 July and then at Full Trustees on 19 July. The budget presented there will include a best guess at the carry forward.

Trustees asked for confirmation they would see cash flow at meetings next year

SK responded yes.

## 53 – Risks Identified / Forthcoming Changes

- Trustees discussed how safeguarding was a lesser risk after the update from JLa tonight.
- Risk register needed to be in a usable format
- Corrective action identified for non purchase order numbers
- Highampton is due to join the MAT in September with a large number of new staff in place. The Head of School has been appointed.
- Trustees are meeting with another School in the next week regarding joining the MAT
- Holsworthy Community College – leadership
- Okehampton College leadership, in terms of changes to personnel
- HF capacity in respect of North Tawton / South Tawton.
- CIF bids have been appealed and the outcome is awaited.

**Action:** SK to add risks to the risk register

## 54 – Date of Next meeting

- Okehampton College – Tuesday 11 September – 4.00pm.

## Action Table from 07:06:2018

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
SK	To send a letter to all Headteachers, copied into the Local Governing Bodies to state that Trustees were concerned and would continue to monitor the situation	DONE
SK	Provide a further report for the next Audit Committee meeting effective from 1 June so that Trustees could see any improvement	04:09:18
SW	Arrange safeguarding training for Trustees	30:06:18
AK	Review the Business Continuity Plan	10:07:18
SW	Action individual schools websites to point to the MAT website for MAT policies	30:06:18
JA	Provide an update on website compliance for the next meeting	04:09:18
SW	Amend Trustee / LGB annual cycle	DONE

<b>DC</b>	Discuss risk register process at the next Headteacher meeting	ASAP
<b>SW</b>	Advise LGB Clerks of the risk register process	DONE
<b>SK / JL</b>	Meet to review draft KPIs for service providers against contracts /tender documents	30:06:18
<b>SK</b>	Add risks to the risk register	30:06:18

DRAFT