

The Swanage School

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee**

Held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 5.30pm

Present: William Knight (Chair), Jess Starmer, Robert Patterson

In attendance: Jenny Maraspin (Headteacher), Andrew Thomas (Business Manager), Sarah Percival (Clerk)

Item	Action	Lead	By
AUD 2.1 <b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received from Tim Marcus and Amanda Rowley.			
AUD 2.2 <b>Declarations of interest</b> There were no declarations of interest.			
AUD 2.3 <b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 were APPROVED. The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2023 were APPROVED subject to the amendment of COSTAR to QUOSTAR.			
AUD 2.4 <b>Matters Arising &amp; Actions</b> As the November meeting was not quorate, any recommendation from that meeting need to be formally approved. The following actions were agreed: 1.5 Risk register- Student Committee recommended 2 new risks for the register -the risk and mitigation to be referred to Staffing, Finance & Premises Committee to action. 1.6 External Audit- Budget review- to clarify that the finances are discussed and minuted 6 times a year, the Business Manager's Report is to be renamed 'Budget Report and Management Accounts' in the minutes and agenda of the Audit Committee. 1.9 Academy Trust Handbook- threshold for related party transactions to be changed to £40,000.	SFP to do the assessments  Terminology to be changed  Change threshold figure	SFP  Clerk  AT	Spring 2  Summer 1  Spring 2

	<p>1.10 Committee Review- Requirement that the Audit Committee are formally assured that the figures in the budget are accurate and submitted- AT to provide brief report each Audit Committee meeting.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising &amp; Actions</b>          From November meeting:          1.6 Budget report-the Business Manager (Andrew Thomas, AT) gave assurance that the budget process has been followed correctly. The committee accepted and recorded this.          1.8 AT had investigated the suitability of using WISE payment cards. This was not recommended as it did not fulfill the school’s needs. This matter has been investigated and is now closed.          1.9 Academy Trust Handbook – threshold for related party transactions has been updated.          1.10 Committee review- budget report given at 1.6          3.4 Chair to meet with new Clerk to update Risk Register and plan other committee agenda items to be in line with Audit Committee meeting schedule.</p>	<p>Brief budget report each Audit meeting</p>       <p>Update risk register</p>	<p>AT</p>      <p>WK/ SP</p>	<p>Summer I</p>      <p>Summer I</p>
AUD 2.5	<p><b>Report on Recent Advice &amp; Guidance from ESFA</b>          The committee received reports on the following:  <u>Transformation Public Procurement-</u>          More requirements &amp; rules are coming in but are unlikely to affect the school due to its size. The school has its own rules in place for purchasing – anything over £10k comes to committee and frameworks are used for large purchases. The advice has been accepted and AT is ensuring the school follows financial procedures.  <u>Economic Transparency Act</u>          The committee have been informed of the new guidance and advised that it will have little impact as already covered in existing procedures. Companies House have a registered email address for the school and identity verification has been done.</p>			

	<p>It was noted that all governors have the right to protection of personal information from public view and can apply for this. Governors need to be assured of this at the next meeting of the Full Governors' Board.</p> <p><u>Updated Internal Scrutiny Guidance from EFSA for Academy Trust (14/02/2024)</u></p> <p>The guidance was noted as a statement of what the committee should be covering. It was agreed that more time was needed to read and digest the information in detail and will be focused on at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the internal auditors produce an annual scrutiny report which goes directly to the external auditors. It was agreed that this report could be brought to the November meeting as an annual standing item along with the main audit findings.</p>	<p>Refer protection of ID to FGB</p> <p>Item carried to next meeting</p> <p>Scrutiny report to be included with annual audit findings</p>	<p>WK</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p>	<p>Spring 2</p> <p>Summer 1</p> <p>Autumn 2</p>
<p>AUD 2.6</p>	<p><b>Internal Audit</b></p> <p>The two-and-a-half-year process has been completed and worked well. It was recommended that the cycle be repeated using the same schedule but the topics to be audited need to be agreed. A specialist could be brought in to look at specific items. Possible topics were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Cybersecurity, health &amp; safety and site security are all works in progress which will affect decisions about topics. Reports on these will be brought to the committee next term.</li> <li>— Safeguarding is audited robustly by Dorset Council annually and reported to the Student Committee.</li> <li>— There is a School Improvement Partner who works as a peer mentor to the Head. They work on improving academic outcomes with scrutiny on the quality of teaching and learning. This is shared with the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors at the Head's annual performance review.</li> <li>— SEN- there is a termly process with service partners to assure the provision is met. At present, the lack of funding is affecting the provision, but this is being addressed through Staffing, Finance &amp; Premises committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Reports on Cybersecurity, H&amp;S, site security to be brought to next meeting</p>	<p>AT</p>	<p>Summer 1</p>

	<p>The risk register needs to be examined before deciding on topics. High risk areas are already being scrutinized and risks are being mitigated.</p> <p>The 2024-26 timing schedule was agreed but the topics will be decided once the risk register has been updated and works in progress have been reported on. The schedule begins in the summer term and the topics for this- Internal Control Framework and Budget Modelling- were agreed.</p>	Agree internal audit topics at next meeting		Summer I
AUD 2.7	<p><b>School Resource Management Self-Assessment</b></p> <p>It was noted that the self-assessment has been completed and submitted by the due date. There were no concerns.</p>			
AUD 2.8	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>New guidance for Academy Trust Governance has been produced by the DfE. This will be circulated to all governors.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the Academy Trust Handbook requires the Audit &amp; Risk committee to meet 3 times an academic year. There was a concern that the non-quorate meeting in November could result in a view that this obligation will not be met h. It was agreed therefore that the business transacted under item 2.4 above will be deemed to be the first meeting of the year while the remaining business will be deemed to be the second meeting of the year.</p>	Circulate new guidance	Clerk	Summer I
AUD 2.9	<p><b>Confidentiality</b></p> <p>No items were deemed to be confidential.</p>			
	<p><b>The meeting closed at 6.50pm</b></p> <p><b>Next meeting</b></p> <p>To be held 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 5.30pm to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Updated Guidance from EFSA for Academy Trust (14/02/2024)</li> <li>• Reports on Cybersecurity, H&amp;S, site security</li> <li>• Internal Audit topics for the 2024-26 schedule</li> </ul>			