

**Minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held
on Monday 16 April 2018 at Retford Oaks Academy**

Membership			
A = absence	Governor name	initial	Academy
A	Ms S Hall (Chair)	SH	DAT Trustee
	Mr M Quigley	MQ	Retford Oaks Academy (ROA)
	Mrs K Mitford	KM	National C of E Academy (NCEA)
	Mr T Hill	TH	Tuxford Primary Academy (TPA)
A	Mr S Jones	SJ	DAT Trustee
	Mrs P Bryn-Jones	PBJ	Retford Oaks Academy (ROA)
	Mr G Gadie	GG	Retford Oaks Academy (ROA)

In attendance:

A = absence	Staff/in attendance	Initial	
	Mrs A Elway	AKE	Company Secretary and Clerk
	Mrs D Clinton	DLC	ACEO and Accounting Officer
	Mr G Corban	GCO	Chief Operating Officer
	Mr S Lowe	SL	Senior Finance Manager
	Mrs K Bonser	KBn	Business Development, Projects and Standards Manager
	Mrs A Younis	AY	Group Financial Controller
	Mr P Knight	PK	Executive Assistant Principal PDBW
	Mr J Creed	JC	Associate Director ICCA Internal Audit

Item No	Item	Action by who when
AC/28/1718	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and approved from Miss Hall and Mr Jones due to work commitments. Mrs Mitford chaired the meeting in Miss Hall's absence.	
AC/29/1718	Declaration of interest There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda.	
AC/30/1718	Safeguarding Audit Review Summary including report to Trustees from Margaret Blore, DALP Safeguarding Link Trustee Attendees had previously received Mrs Blore's summary report from the overarching review she had undertaken as well as from compliance checking she had witnessed. She assured governors that supportive but rigorous quality assurance procedures had been undertaken. Her report has also been seen by Trustees. Mr Knight summed up the audit review process, a copy of which had been received and confirmed that the compliance and culture is a strength in	

	<p>every academy and all are compliant with some extemporary practices seen from some Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). He assured and advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My Concern is a strength - Collaborative working from the DSL Team Network Group (TNG) shares best practices - Behaviour is at least good in all academies - DSLs had been given a generic job description but in response to a question from Mr Hill, it was advised that whilst some DSLs are given time to complete the role this very much depends upon their role and any teaching commitments. In response to a further query, he was advised that remuneration for the role could be looked into but deciding how to do this so that it was fair and equitable at each location could be an issue. <p>Mrs Bonser advised that some HR practices were inconsistent especially around recruitment and selection but there had been no non-compliance regarding DBS checks. The recommended actions were advised in the accompanying slide. A headquarters HR audit will take place later this term. Turning to page 7 of the report, governor's noted the 2 red RAG rated areas for SBPA. Mrs Bonser advised that these were due to old LA practices and paperwork being used and both issues have since been addressed.</p> <p>Recommended areas of action for the Trust were reviewed and it was noted that follow up had already started. Future audits will be undertaken by staff who shadowed these visits which enhances their CPD, however this needs to be balanced with the time commitment to do the visits. Governors were advised that DSLs are only asked to undertake 2 audits to limit the time they are out of their academy. The academies with amber/yellow assurance will receive a lighter touch one-day visit next year, however should there be a change in circumstances which could affect safeguarding then the visit will be upgraded to a full visit.</p> <p>In response to questions, governors were advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that the review at Hillocks Primary completed by Mrs Bonser and Mr Knight was charged to the LA at £1,200 - all academies use MyConcern to log instances and the inputted information had been QA'd to ensure there is consistency across the group - there had been 14 radicalisation instances recorded and each had been followed up. <p>Governors commended the reports and thanked staff for the comprehensive information. Mr Knight left the meeting.</p>	
AC/31/1718	<p>Overview of internal audit reviews undertaken Mr Creed was welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>He advised that the detailed reports of the audits completed since the last meeting, were available to governors if they wished to see them and he would be referring to these. For ease, Mr Corban and Mrs Bonser had provided governors with a summary report including management</p>	

	<p>responses to each of the internal audit reviews undertaken which had been RAG rated for high/medium/low impact areas.</p> <p>1. HR Recruitment and Selection Overall 'reasonable' level of assurance Issues for action focus upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring there is clarity as to who is the safer recruitment trained person on every interview panel - Tidying up of Single Central Record and DBS checks - Whilst the Trust had decided against adding probationary periods into contracts, it does need to be clear in contracts about the process of how it would deal with under-performance. <p>2. Finance – key financial controls and reports for the Northern Cluster Academies, Queen Elizabeth Academy and Primary Cluster Academies</p> <p>These academies had been chosen due to the areas for actions identified in previous reports and the primary cluster being new to DALP. Mr Creed advised that overall 'substantial' level assurance had been given. The main recommendation was that fixed asset registers and inventories across the organisation need to be completed. Mr Quigley raised concern that this had been highlighted as an issue for some time and he was surprised it had not been completed. Mr Hill suggested that it should be a tight principle across the group to at least have inventories for portable items which need tight control. In response to questions Mr Corban advised that some academies have them but there needs to be consistency across the group. Mr Gadie referred to the last meeting's minutes when an action point had been to ensure these were in place. Mr Corban and Mr Lowe suggested that whilst the fixed asset register is a finance responsibility, the inventory is more for IT to do and it was advised that a decision needs to be made as to whose responsibility in each academy it will be to oversee the register. In response to a question, Mrs Bryn-Jones received confirmation that the fixed asset register for the group will be completed in time for inclusion in the Audited Accounts. Mr Corban confirmed that a detailed progress report into this area will be given at the next meeting as well as updates to the actions highlighted in the report.</p> <p>3. Health & Safety 'Reasonable Assurance' had been given following reviews of central controls and visits to a few academies. 4 medium impact areas had been identified which have been addressed. All academies purchase the LA H&S service and the templates provided within this are now being used to give a consistent approach to recording incidents.</p> <p>4. IT and Cyber Security 'Limited assurance' opinion with 4 high impact areas for addressing all of which Mr Corban assured would be in place by May. Governors were advised that the IT audit had been brought forward in the schedule of visits so that compliance could be sought prior to GDPR implementation on 25</p>	<p>GCO/ KBN</p>
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	<p>May. Mr Richardson is working on securing a new network in readiness for the LA's One County One Network being unavailable.</p> <p>Mr Hill raised his concern as to what would happen if the IT system for the group failed and Mr Corban assured that a plan and consistent approach is being worked on. Following a discussion, governors advised that they need assurance this was being put in place and they asked that Mr Richardson provide them with a report addressing the high impact concerns by the end of the week.</p> <p>Longer standing members of the committee also raised their concern that USB devices are still being used as the removal of these had been discussed 2 years ago when they thought a decision had been agreed to block the use of them. Mr Corban advised that this has not been actioned due to other priorities and resources being finite.</p>	GCO/ PRN by 23/4/18
AC/32/1718	<p>Summary report of Internal Audit Reviews and Management Responses</p> <p>Received and discussed as part of the agenda item above</p>	
AC/33/1718	<p>Updated Audit Plan for DALP</p> <p>The schedule of visits and reports to be undertaken was reviewed. Governors agreed that the due diligence process for new academies was comprehensive and as there are no new academies in the pipeline, it was suggested that this audit was replaced by another IT audit to take place w/c 9/7/18.</p> <p>Mr Creed and Mr Corban will meet to scope the Financial Planning and Reporting Framework and the dates for this will be added to the plan. Mr Creed advised he will bring an updated schedule for the next 12 months to the next meeting.</p>	JC new audit plan 26/6/18
AC/34/1718	<p>Internal Audit Programme – Workflow Review Process</p> <p>Governors had received and approved the process for receipt of audits.</p>	
AC/35/1718	<p>Risk Management Summary of over-arching risks & plans to mitigate</p> <p>Governors had previously received the report which had been reformatted following discussions at previous meetings. There are 3 parts to the report and the risks were discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overview/Executive Summary and Key Academy Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The newly appointed Procurement Manager is focusing on the catering and cleaning contracts in non-PFI school and reviewing the quality and management of contracts to the SLA's within them - There is a need to manage the expectations of new schools that join DALP and induct them via a SLA over a period of time - GDPR audit to review the processes and procedures put in place in readiness for May has started today. Whatever the outcome the impact is likely to remain high due to the recommendations in the IT audit report. 2. Appendix 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cumulative DALP register shows most areas as being a worse risk to the scores in November 2017. Most of these negative changes are due to the 5 new academies who joined the group last year. 	

	<p>3. Appendix 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual academy risk registers. <p>Mrs Bonser advised that each Academy Operations Manager takes the academy report to their F&R Committee meetings. Governors queried how some scores had been arrived at with Mrs Bonser confirming that these are derived from the academy's perception of the risk.</p>	
AC/36/1718	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 29/11/2017</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the chair subject to adding</p>	
AC/37/1718	<p>Matters arising</p> <p><i>AC/20/1718 DALP Lanyard badge standardisation</i></p> <p>It was agreed that each badge should contain the same information and confirm 'DBS checked' rather than the DBS number. Proposal to be confirmed at SST and Mrs Bonser to disseminate to AOMs.</p> <p><i>AC/20/1718 Dignity at Work Policy</i></p> <p><i>AC/22/1718 (AC/09/1718, AC/54/1617) Whistleblowing policy</i></p> <p><i>AC/22/1718 Investments and Reserves policy</i></p> <p>Mr Corban advised that the above policies are all in draft form and they will be sent to committee members for comment after the meeting.</p> <p><i>AC/24/1718 Updates re Audited Accounts where relevant</i></p> <p>Mr Corban advised that planning work will start shortly and he will update governors on the schedule/process at the next meeting.</p>	<p>DLC/ KBN</p> <p>GCO</p> <p>GCO</p>
AC/38/1718	<p>External audit planning</p> <p>A timeframe is being put in place to ensure Audited Accounts are ready for completion deadlines. Governors stressed that they need to be completed in good time for the A&R meeting that approves them this year.</p>	
AC/39/1718	<p>Accounting Officer reporting to the committee</p> <p>Mrs Clinton advised that she and Mr Corban will meet termly and the first report will be received in June. It is the intention that the reports produced after the meeting will form the Accounting Officer statement in the Audited Accounts.</p> <p>Mr Creed advised that as part of the internal audit process, ICCA will produce a formal audit opinion which will also feed into and form part of the above.</p>	agenda
AC/40/1718	<p>Any fraud related, health and safety or safeguarding issues to bring to the committee's attention</p> <p>Fraud related incidents – none</p> <p>Health and Safety incidents – none</p> <p>Safeguarding incidents – none</p>	

	Mr Corban advised that the group's statutory Gender Pay Gap report is on the DALP website and is compliant.	
AC/41/1718	Date and time of next meeting all at 5.00pm to 7.00pm at Retford Oaks Tuesday 26 June 2018	
AC/42/1718	Determination of confidentiality of business and Equality Act consideration Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential and whether during their discussions any equal opportunities issues have arisen. It was Resolved That there were no confidential discussions.	
	The meeting closed at 6.42pm Signed.....(chair) Date.....	