



**Minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held  
on Tuesday 25 June 2019 at 5.00pm at Diverse Education Centre**

| Membership     |                      |         |  |
|----------------|----------------------|---------|--|
| A =<br>absence | Governor name        | initial | Academy                                  |
|                | Mr M Quigley (chair) | MQ      | DAT Trustee & Retford Oaks Academy (ROA) |
| A              | Mrs K Mitford        | KM      | Chair National C of E Academy (NCEA)     |
|                | Mr T Hill            | TH      | Tuxford Primary Academy (TPA)            |
|                | Mrs P Bryn-Jones     | PBJ     | Retford Oaks Academy (ROA)               |
|                | Mr G Gadie           | GG      | Retford Oaks Academy (ROA)               |
|                | Mr I Storey          | IS      | DAT Trustee                              |
|                | Mr P Mabbott         | PM      | DAT Trustee                              |

In attendance:

| A =<br>absence | Staff/in<br>attendance | Initial |   |
|----------------|------------------------|---------|---|
|                | Mrs A Elway            | AKE     | Company Secretary and Clerk                             |
|                | Mr C Pickering         | CBP     | Chief Operating Officer                                 |
|                | Mr G Corban            | GCO     | Chief Operating Officer                                 |
|                | Mrs K Bonser           | KBN     | Business Development, Projects and Standards<br>Manager |
|                | Mr M Harrison          | MH      | ICCA Auditors   |

| Item No           | Item  | Action<br>by who<br>when |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <b>AC/36/1819</b> | <b>Welcome from chair</b><br>Mr Quigley welcomed attendees to the meeting.  |                          |
| <b>AC/37/1819</b> | <b>Apologies for absence</b><br>Apologies for absence were received and approved from Mrs Mitford due to personal circumstances.  |                          |
| <b>AC/38/1819</b> | <b>Declaration of interest and any changes made to existing declarations</b><br>There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda. There were no declarations to update.   |                          |
|                   | The agenda was taken out of order to enable Mr Harrison from ICCA to arrive at the meeting.   |                          |
| <b>AC/39/1819</b> | <b>Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2019</b><br>The minutes of the meeting, having previously been received were agreed and signed by the chair.<br><i>AC/29/1819 – IT Audit with management responses</i><br>To be discussed when Mr Harrison arrives<br><br><i>AC/29/1819 – NCEAT Audit Plan</i><br>NCEAT financial audit had been completed in line ICCA financial key controls audit as undertaken in the other academies this year. When Mr Harrison arrives he will be asked if a separate annual audit is necessary because they are a separate legal entity. |                          |



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|                   | <p><i>AC/31/1819, AC/20/1819 – Overview of HO Single Central Record Audit</i><br/>Mrs Bonser advised that she has included this in the safeguarding report which is a later agenda item</p> <p><i>AC/32/1819 – Reputational Risk claims added to Risk Register</i><br/>Mrs Bonser confirmed that any risk from insurance claims are being added to the risk register following monthly review meetings</p> <p><i>AC/32/1819 – Top 10 risks to remain on Risk Register</i><br/>Mrs Bonser confirmed there were no changes to advise and the current top ten risks remain on the register</p> <p><i>AC/32/1819 – update re ROA Sports Hall roof</i><br/>Mrs Bonser reported that Andrew Wilson is liaising with contractors. It had been agreed that the roof will be replaced in the holidays as the size of the crane required would block access to St. Giles School causing inconvenience during term time.</p>                                     |  |
| <b>AC/40/1819</b> | <p><b>Audited Accounts Management response.</b><br/>Mr Corban confirmed that F&amp;R committee had reviewed the actions noted on the last reports for each Trust and all had been fully discharged. It was agreed that Mrs Elway would forward a copy of both reports to committee members.</p>   | AKE<br>forward<br>after the<br>meeting |
| <b>AC/41/1819</b> | <p><b>Risk</b><br/><b>New risks identified since last meeting</b><br/><b>Update on risk management internal review programme for 2018/19</b></p> <p>Mrs Bonser advised that the risk register had not been included in this meeting's agenda as internal risk register reviews are currently being undertaken. She confirmed that no concerns had been seen so far whilst carrying out these reviews.<br/>She advised that a new risk of the use of RAAC on roofs had arisen. Following investigation, this only affects Holgate's lower site (Nabbs) and Walton Girls Academy and it had been added to their risk registers until clarity had been received from the LAs confirming if this was an issue.<br/><b>In response to a question</b>, Mrs Bonser confirmed that her reports are received by each academy and are shared with governors.<br/>An updated risk report will be received at the next meeting with the results of the audit.</p> | <b>agenda</b>                          |
| <b>AC/42/1819</b> | <p><b>Safeguarding Internal Reviews – 18-19 report and plans for 19-20</b><br/>Mrs Bonser advised that she and Mr Knight had conducted reviews at each academy and the scores from this and last year's audit were received and reviewed for comparison purposes. She paid particular attention to, and gave assurance that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Behaviour and safety across the group was at least good</li> <li>- LGBTQ and Modern Slavery training had been received by key staff</li> <li>- There are 7 recommended actions for the Trust in 2019/20 including continuing training via the Institute on mental health awareness to</li> </ul>  |  |



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|                          | <p>support the increasing number of students with complex conditions and implementing MyConcern in each academy.</p> <p><b>Members asked</b> what had caused the red RAG rated areas specifically with regards to Whistleblowing and were advised that this was either due to staff training records not being updated, that there was no evidence that Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) had not had training or that staff did not know the Whistleblowing process due to lack of training. Members noted that in 3 academies (ELA, QEA and SPBA) their grade had reduced and in RPA it had remained at limited assurance for both years. <b>They asked</b> what has been put in place to ensure that issues have now been addressed. Mrs Bonser advised that Mr Knight will pick this up in the academies with DSLs. <b>Members suggested</b> that this wasn't quick enough if it poses a safeguarding risk to the organisation and enquired what the consequences of non-compliance are to individuals. Mr Corban advised that he will ensure this is followed up through Mr Knight and it should be raised as a competency issue with DSLs if persistent non-compliance is seen. <b>In response to questions</b>, attendees were assured that all areas in the report are covered in staff induction processes. Mrs Bonser advised that this is the second year that internal audits have been carried out and therefore the focus between each has been different which could account for some of the different outcomes seen. She confirmed that Mr Knight always compared his audit grades to those in Ofsted reports with most aligning. Mrs Bonser clarified that the original safeguarding audit was compiled with Smith-Cooper, where there are four gradings. ICCA only use three gradings. It is not unusual for auditors to use 4 gradings in education as it originally aligned to Ofsted gradings. Mrs Bonser will ask Mr Knight if there was a possibility of removing one of the gradings and keep to red, amber and green. <b>A discussion followed with committee members stating</b> that all risks should be green and asked if any assurance less than this is taken seriously. It was proposed and agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Knight should attend the next meeting to advise the steps taken after the audits</li> <li>- Mr Corban will ensure there is immediate follow up with red and amber RAG ratings</li> <li>- Ofsted grades will be added to the safeguarding reports</li> </ul> | <p><b>KBN</b></p> <p><b>PK</b></p> <p><b>GCO</b></p> <p><b>KBN</b></p> |
| <p><b>AC/43/1819</b></p> | <p><b>Accounting Officer (AO) exception reporting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fraud related</li> <li>- health &amp; safety</li> <li>- safeguarding</li> </ul> <p>Mr Pickering advised that up to the last Accounting Officer meeting, there were no exception reporting issues to bring to the committee's attention for any of the areas above.</p> <p>Mrs Bonser and Mrs Elway advised that an auditor from the Information Commissioners Office had conducted a voluntary Advisory Visit. The report received had largely been positive around the work put into GDPR implementation across the academies. There had been some suggestions for amendments to Privacy policies which is underway. <b>In response to a question</b>, members were advised that GDPR remains on the risk register</p>  |  |



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|            | but has been downgraded as the risk has been mitigated as much as it can be, but the financial risk remains if a breach was to occur.   |                       |
| AC/45/1819 | <p><b>Internal Audit Scope and Audit Plan for 2019/20</b></p> <p>Referring to matters arising above, Mr Harrison was asked whether NCEAT should continue to have separate financial audits to satisfy external audit requirements even though financial transactions are centrally processed. He recommended that this practice is continued but suggested it could be reduced to a one day visit.</p> <p>Mrs Bonser advised that the AO meeting which Mr Creed had attended had identified and is recommending that new audits for staff expenses, student attendance and procurement and its value for money were undertaken next year along with another IT audit until compliance is a secure judgement.</p> <p>Referring to page 5 of the previously received internal audit strategy, <b>Mrs Bryn-Jones asked</b> the rationale for not following up amber reports from either 17/18 or the last academic year, and specifically the HR audit completed last year. Mr Corban advised that there should be a rolling programmes for all business function areas within a finite number of days.</p> <p><b>Throughout questioning, members were advised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and Safety is bought back from the Local Authority and they conduct biennial audits on an alternate curriculum and site/services programme. <b>Members queried</b> whether this should be an external audit with Mrs Bonser confirming that the LA audits are particularly thorough and Mr Harrison confirmed their framework would focus on the same areas as ICCAs would. Mrs Bonser will provide a copy of the LA testing document at the next meeting so that committee members can be assured of its comprehensiveness.</li> <li>- Safeguarding, Risk Management, Contracted Services and GDPR will continue to be carried out internally.</li> </ul> <p>Members asked that all internal and external audits are amalgamated into one document to enable an overarching view to be given of the totality of the audit programme with a brief description of the expectations of each review. Mrs Bonser agreed to produce a combined list.</p> <p><b>Mr Hill expressed surprise</b> that none of the financial audits recorded any additions to the fixed asset register with a value of £1.000+. It was agreed that this should be looked into and reported back at the next meeting.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note – a central fixed asset register is kept with each academy's assets listed.</i></p> <p><b>He also questioned</b> if a sample of 10 was enough to give an accurate picture of compliance as assumptions are being made on a limited number. Mrs Bonser advised that external audits check a larger sample and Mr Harrison advised that they use government methodology. Mr Mabbott understood that checks are made to test system problems and processes with assurance being gained even via a small sample.</p> <p><b>Trustees confirmed</b> the audits for 2019-20 as noted in the Audit Plan. It was confirmed that there could be an option for more days to be added if deemed necessary following receipt of the combined list of audits as discussed above.</p> | <p>KBN</p> <p>KBN</p> |
| AC/46/1819 | <b>Date and time of next meeting:</b>   |                       |



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|                   | It was agreed that all meetings will start at 5pm and will be held at Diverse Education Centre<br>To be advised  |  |
| <b>AC/47/1819</b> | <b>Exception reporting to refer to the Partnership Board</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External audits received and reviewed in Financial Controls and Accounting Officer procedures</li> <li>- Internal group safeguarding audit summary scrutinised</li> <li>- Audit Plan for 2019/20 approved</li> <li>- No issues reported from Accounting Officer meetings</li> </ul>                |  |
| <b>AC/48/1819</b> | <b>Determination of confidentiality of business and Equality Act consideration including Nolan principles</b><br>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<br>That paperwork received at the meeting should remain confidential to attendees. |  |
|                   | The meeting closed at 6.05pm<br><br>Signed.....(chair) Date.....   |  |