



**Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 3rd June 2020
at 4.00pm via Microsoft teams**

Trustee name	Initials	A = absence
Mr Ian Storey –(Chair) Trustee	IS	
Mr Mike Quigley- Trustee	MQ	
Mr Peter Mabbott - Trustee	PM	
Mr Tim Hill – Co-opted	TH	
Mrs Pat Bryn-Jones – Co-opted	PBJ	A
Mr Geoff Gadie – Co-opted	GG	A

In attendance: [staff or other invited persons]

Staff name	Initials	Role	A = Absence
David Cotton	DC	Chief Executive Officer & Accounting Officer	
Gary Corban	GC	Chief Operations officer	
Karen Bonser	KB	Senior Business Leader	
Alison Elway	AE	Head of Governance	
Rachel Harvey	RH	Senior Business Leader	
Neil Holmes	NH	Senior Executive Leader	
Tereasa Skillen	TS	Senior Business Leader	
Cat Thornton	CT	Senior Executive Leader	
Jenni Harrison Hill	JHH	Clerk	

Item No	Item	Action/ by who/when
ARC/34/1920 Agenda item 1	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and agreed from Geoff Gadie, no apologies were received from P Bryn Jones.</p> <p>The Chair discussed the protocols for meeting using Microsoft Teams.</p>	
ARC/35/1920 Agenda item 2	<p>Declaration of interest and any changes to be advised There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for any items of business on the agenda. The chair asked if anyone had any declarations to update. I Storey declared a new interest of visiting lecturer at University of Law, Nottingham. This has also been recorded on the Trust website.</p>	

**ARC/36/1920
Agenda item 3**

• Review Risk Assessments from Academy Committees for Re-Opening

The Chair opened the discussion explaining that this committee's role is to review at high level the risks and exceptions from the detailed Risk assessments which have been carried out for each academy.

Documents which were distributed to Trustees prior to the meeting were:

- COVID 19 re-opening Risk assessment exception report for Trustees 3 June 2020
- Appendix 1 COVID 19 Academy Re-opening Programme – approach to Risk Management and Assessment
- Appendix 2 Academy Committees Summary – Risk Assessment collation from AC Meeting 3 June 2020
- Principals Guidance for completion of Risk Assessment Exception Report template.
- Risk Assessment exception report template for Academy Committees June 2020

D Cotton discussed the Trust board meeting on 19th June and the proposed timelines for re-opening of Special, Primary and Secondary academies.

The secondary timeline has now been amended to 15th June due to government announcement.

Special academy's will be on a different timeline due to more complex needs.

Working groups for Primary, Special and Secondary academies have carried out risk assessments for each academy for Trustees to approve involving Senior principals, Principals, Business Leaders, and Business Managers based on the Confederation Schools Trust framework for re-opening (previously this document has been shared with Trustees by the clerk).

Academy Committees met to discuss, question, and challenge the individual academy's risk assessment and feedback comments to the three working groups who then produced the exception report and high-level summary to present to Audit and Risk Committee.

The chair reiterated to the committee that the role of this meeting is to be assured of the integrity and quality of the process of risk assessment which has been carried out, and in particular looking at specific issues that have arisen.

Trustees all agreed that this is the role of the meeting.

K Bonser discussed COVID 19 re-opening Risk assessment exception report for Trustees 3 June 2020, explaining that detailed 30-page risk assessments have been completed for each academy.

The report shows exception reporting for full trust matrix gradings across each of the 7 key areas.

Trustee Question: For clarity for all it would be beneficial for an explanation to see what these 7 key areas represent to allow matching to the exceptions.

Response: K Bonser discussed the Risk Assessment exception report template for Academy Committees June 2020 and the implications and measures tested giving examples: Training for all staff before return to work, policies adapted and appendixes added to meet expectations across the Trust. Contact made with all Primary parents to assess numbers of pupils returning, and any individuals requiring specific risk assessments, adapting curriculum and timetabling to ensure 2 metre distance can be maintained, and implementation of staggered starts.

The Chair asked if there were any questions from Trustees about the template being used that we are assessing against?

Trustee Question: Is the template taken from Confederation of Schools Trust (CST) guidance?

Response: It is the template from the CST

Trustee Question: How can we be assured 100% that every academy has carried out the risk assessment as intended?

Response: Senior Principals and Principals including Site staff, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Special Educational Needs Coordinators, Business Leaders have all been involved in the risk assessment.

Checklists were first completed and feed into risk assessments. The risk assessments used are the Local Authority risk assessments adapted to include extra risks and hazards. These risk assessments templates have been discussed with unions who agreed with the template.

Leadership Teams also dedicated a full day to meet to give care and attention needed, to review and discuss the exceptions reports.

Trustee Question: What frequency of reassessment for the 30-page risk assessment documents are you implementing?

Response: During the first few weeks this will be daily while embedding.

Trustee Question: Most of the exception matrix is amber is there the possibility that they will turn to green with plans being put in place, or are we accepting the risk?

Response: There are mitigations to manage the situation but there will still be an element of risk that needs to be accepted.

The Trustees then reviewed the exception matrix from individual academy risk assessments.

K Bonser discussed the exception matrix explaining that there is an element of accepting risk at certain grading, there are not specific high risks in the cumulative report, bearing in mind that the risk assessments which sit underneath the cumulative reports detail the risks, Appendix 2 document (Appendix 2 Academy Committees Summary – Risk Assessment collation from AC

Meeting 3 June 2020) details the challenge by Academy Committees and any concerns or comments raised.

Trustee Question: Health and Safety is amber across all academies, there are some risks and proposed mitigations as would expect, however Appendix 2 document shows that Tuxford Academy and Retford Oaks Academy report no concerns raised but presumably there are, due to an amber response.

Response: Four areas that came across from most academies risk assessments were Workforce and Human Resources, these have an aspect of Health and Safety and most of academies concerns are delivery of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), social distancing, vulnerable individuals and those showing symptoms and how this is managed.

Trustee Question: There are definitions of what is amber, green and red. Tuxford Academy stands out on the matrix as nearly all green whilst three others schools are all completely amber if we aligned them in terms of second level scrutiny are we checking that there is that level of difference between the schools? And if there is why?

Academy Committees have scrutinised the risk assessments have we asked if they support the opening of individual schools? Response: Academy Committee have given no reasons for not reopening but appendix 2 does detail the ongoing controls and mitigations they raised. An example is if the PPE is not delivered then would not be able to open, but we are assured that PPE will be delivered.

Trustee Question: How can assure that the difference between the schools who are majority green and those who are all amber that it isn't subjective?

Response: There will be an element of subjectivity to it, and leadership have gone back to moderate, and taken their overall weighting, some of the subjectivity is where academies have got anxious about supply of PPE and have put more weight on the risk, it is a known risk but are accepting that we will get the PPE. There will still need to be some moderation going forward.

Trustee Question: Understand that time is an issue for the work that has been carried out, with the differences in the matrix between academies, is this due to a difference between academies or simply that Academy Committees have taken a different view and moderation is required?

Response: More moderation will be carried out as move forward to ensure ratings provide internally a consistent picture. A survey is being carried out to assess secondary numbers and this may well change some of the ratings again.

Trustee Question: How can you assure us based on the matrix, which contains an element of inconsistency and needs some more moderation for secondary academies.

Response: The opening date for secondary academies has been moved to 15th to allow a week to ensure consistency across the schools.

It was clarified that Academy Committees haven't actually done the risk rating themselves it was done for them by Senior Principals and Principals and other staff within the academies, the Academy Committees were testing out what had been put in place and testing the mitigations.

Trustee Question: to confirm the exception matrix ratings are the Senior Principal ratings which have then been approved by the Academy Committee?

Response: It is a cumulative report from the risk assessment to give one overall grading from the 7 key areas, the Academy Committees have gone through all the areas with the Senior Principal and Principals to challenge and question why each RAG rating has been given.

Trustee Question: Going forward is there an element of being able to use central functions to enable it to remove any possible bias or subjectivity, challenge why varying degrees of difference going forward?

Response: Primary Academies have two Senior Principals one working across three of the Primary's the other across two, to reduce subjectivity the working groups have meant here has been discussion prior to Risk assessment, to provide consistency.

This has allowed for a confidence in the consistency and the way that approached the working party provided the opportunity to question those areas to get greater consistency across the Principals.

Trustee Question: Ideally need to move this on to make the process consistent and not subject to variations.

Response: For secondaries guidance was only issued last week, the main function was eliminating red high risk, and some cross moderation, this week will be to work to get greater consistency across the grid.

Primary group trained both Senior Principals by working party as to how Risk Assessments are completed, there will be disparities as you can not take away the human element, but have been approached by same way in all three planning groups.

The same has been done with Secondary and Special academy Principals. The training for the risk assessments to Senior Principals and Principals has been approached in the same way by all three planning groups.

The human element and physical constraints that will create difference in confidence levels across the sites, will look like inconsistency but will be the nuance of the site.

Trustee Question: There are local issues that we as trustees do not know the specific problems, is there assurance that the primary is not going to have serious issues around social distancing, has this been fully addressed?

Response: Rationale that year 6 will return first, believe that will be able to social distance split into groups of 10 rather than the 15 as suggested by government, a different approach will be used for foundation, government guidance is year 6, year 1 and

foundation, consequence is that at a later point going to be a concern about this model going longer term. But to reopen for year 6 there is sufficient space and measures put in place to ensure social distancing, where concerns around individual pupils then risk assessment have been put in place.

Trustee Question: Where are the mitigations recorded which are not giving rise to exceptions?

Response: They are recorded in the risk assessments for each individual academy. As start to bring other year groups back then risk assessments will change and will need to be reviewed and approved by trustees.

Trustee Question: To clarify the risk assessments are based on risks for re-opening to year 6, year 1, Foundation, year 10 and year 12 and no other years beyond that beyond that

Response: Yes, Foundation has separate guidance from government which has different requirements to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will need a different risk assessment so will be bringing this back to Trustees.

Trustee Question: We need a risk assessment that looks at the wider picture and from September to be looking ahead.

Response: Risk assessments are currently a daily and weekly basis of review for the 8th and 15th June re-openings, the Executive Team is looking at the future re-openings, it is unlikely that we will be open as previously in September, through to November, so starting looking at a blended learning approach, to get children back into education, engage all children in education in a safe way.

Commons Education Committee have met today and have discussed that normal return to school will not be until at least November.

Trustee Question: Looking at Appendix 2 is there anything which is amber nearly red on risk assessments e.g. are we going to get PPE in time presumably if do not then that turns red, anything particularly concerning?

Response: PPE is high risk but being assured that PPE will be in place for Primary's next week and Secondary's the week after, stocks are low in the country, assured that will get them for short term, supply will be reviewed on daily basis.

Trustee Question: The Danish model is not encouraging people to wear masks what message are we giving staff?

Response: Not required unless in medical room or Special Needs child where need to be under the two meters. Not discouraging if people want to wear masks.

Trustee Question: Is PPE being centrally procured and how is it being distributed?

Response: The majority is procured centrally; Special Academies already have PPE in as use before pandemic as part of routines.

<p>ARC/37/1920</p>	<p>PPE and cleaning equipment are being distributed by estates team.</p> <p>Trustee Question: What is being supplied to clean down is it similar to NHS? Response: Diluted solutions are being supplied, and hazard cards issued to teachers for each of the chemicals being provided.</p> <p>Trustee Question: with reports in media that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups are more susceptible to Covid 19 has this been built into the risk assessments? Response: K Bonser has read the disparity report conducted by Public health England and discussed with human resources and contacted Local Authority Health and Safety team, Local Authority have said there are significant human resource implications which need to be taken into account before any decision taken any separate risk assessment is made for BAME, can do individual risk assessments for vulnerable staff. Government has issued no guidance yet although media is covering high percentage of deaths Action: When clear guidance is issued needs to be picked up in the risk assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree recommendation to Trust Board <p>Chair asked committee members if agree to recommend to the Trust Board any qualifications or caveats. Trustees agreed to recommend approving year 6 re-opening on week commencing 8th June with the risk assessments under review as guidance changes. All agreed</p> <p>Trustees agreed to recommend continue to plan for re-opening on week commencing 15th June for years 10 and year 12 and Trust Board reconvening briefly before 15th June to ratify the decision once more information is gathered from parents for secondary pupil numbers and further mitigations put in place and ongoing risk assessment doesn't raise any new concerns. All agreed</p> <p>Trustees confirmed they were comfortable with the sequence and processes but need more information on the discrepancy between secondary schools.</p> <p>Academy Committees will be meeting next Wednesday morning, and will be reviewing to make any recommendations.</p> <p>Trustee Question: Would it be helpful to have a recommendation from Academy Committee of their view to open or close, although our ultimately our decision. Response: This should come through the risk assessment if the Academy Committee were of the view that they did not want to open then would be reflected in the exceptions report.</p>	<p>KB</p>
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	<p>The Specials Schools are a different consideration as greater risks associated with them due to nature of school and ability of children to understand social distancing following the risk assessments put into place there is a high risk with transport which is managed by Local Authority and the risk team doesn't feel that there has been sufficient assurance, contact has been made regarding this and Local Authority are taking some actions, although doesn't prevent the school to wider opening, it may lead to not to reopen to those requiring transport, and may have to ask parents to provide transport.</p> <p>Special groups are not looking to increasing numbers according to year groups, all pupils had individual risk assessments carried out and it is on that basis that would look to increase numbers based on needs of pupils, conversations with parents and risk assessments.</p> <p>Trustees approved permission to carry out communication to parents that working towards re-opening week commencing 15th June. All agreed.</p> <p>Trustees approved recommending continuing the plan for re-opening to year 1 on week commencing 22nd June. All agreed</p> <p>Trustees approved recommending continuing the plan for re-opening to special schools on an individual risk assessment basis. All agreed.</p> <p>In the eventuality that something does change between now and Monday M Quigley and I Storey should be contacted and will assess the appropriate course of action and if an Audit and Risk meeting should be convened.</p>	
<p>ARC/38/1920 Agenda item 4</p>	<p>Determination of confidentiality of business Equality Act consideration Nolan Principles</p> <p>Trustees considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed as confidential. It was Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That no confidential information had been discussed - There had been no Equality Act implications - Attendees were content that all decisions made adhere to the seven Nolan principles. 	
<p>ARC/39/1920 Agenda item 5</p>	<p>Date and time of next meeting: extra-ordinary meeting Wednesday 10th June 4.00pm via Microsoft Teams if required for re-opening risk assessments, otherwise Audit and Risk on 23rd June at 5.00pm</p>	
	<p>The meeting closed at</p> <p>Signed.....(chair) Date.....</p>	