

**Minutes of the Southerly Point
Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust
Finance and Resources Committee Meeting**



**Thursday 10th March 2022, from 6.30pm
in the Trust Conference Room**

<u>ATTENDING :</u> Karen Harris Kristin Pryor Susan Reynolds Phillip Woods In Attendance Sean Pinhay [SPCMAT Chief Financial Officer] Karen Teague [SPCMAT Administrator / Clerk to the Trust Board]		KHa KPr SRe PWo SPi KTe
<u>APOLOGIES :</u> Alison Newman		ANe
		<u>ACTION</u>
3.	<u>WELCOME AND DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS</u>	
	The Chair welcomed all those present. Under Declarations of Pecuniary Interests , no further declarations were forthcoming.	
4.	<u>MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – JANUARY 2021/22</u>	
	The Management Accounts for January 2021/22 were shared with Committee members in detailed, summary and graphical [with narrative] form prior to the meeting. These included the balance sheet position. Committee members were to go through the detail and bring any queries they might have to the meeting. Areas covered included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil to Teacher Ratio [Adjusted for Maternity] by individual school and average. • Pupil to Support Staff Ratio [Adjusted for Maternity] by individual school and average. • Expenditure per Pupil [Including Other Activities] by individual school and average • Income per Pupil by individual school and average • In Year Over / Underspends – All Activities, budgeted and latest actual, by individual school and Central • End of Year Reserve, budgeted and latest actual, by individual school and Central • End of Year Reserve – Trust Total, budgeted and latest actual SPi advised Committee members he would strip out the detail for Cury C of E School going forward, as including that would significantly skew the data given the school’s current status. On the whole, most spending had been within the limits and the remainder had been highlighted. SPi talked through any key areas of concern or points to note in respect of individual schools. See also Confidential Notes.	
5.	<u>SCA AND DFC REPORT</u>	
	A DFC [Devolved Formula Capital] analysis as at 28 th February 2022 had been shared with Committee members prior to the meeting. A SCA [School Condition Allocation] analysis as at 28 th February 2022 – including Completed Projects, Work in Progress / Committed Works Projects and Planned Projects - had also been shared with Committee members prior to the meeting.	

	<p>DFC</p> <p>SPi reiterated the previously discussed proposal that IT was a very sensible use of this fund. He advised Committee members that, for some of the larger schools, it would be necessary to put additional funding in place but DFC would cover most of the Trust schools. The Trust's Network Manager was putting together individual plans for schools around IT. Initial investments would need to be in the fabric / network, such as access points, but then it would be possible to bolt on other additional items.</p> <p>However, the DFC spend was not limited to that area and schools could spend on other items where appropriate. PWO confirmed the school at which he was Chair of Governors had purchased furniture for a library area.</p> <p>SCA</p> <p>SPi talked through any points to note in respect of individual schools, combining this with a verbal report on Estates.</p> <p>See Item 6 below.</p>	
6.	<p><u>ESTATES REPORT</u></p>	
	<p>Information presented to Committee members and discussed included:</p> <p>Roving Caretaker Service. As the events of recent months had been unsettling for the Trust and its schools, a decision had been made not to expand the Roving Caretaker service at the present time but this was still very much on the table going forward.</p> <p>Compliance. Compliance was now back on track and, when the Trust had been challenged by one set of governors, the Estates Team had been able to answer all of the challenges.</p> <p>Health and Safety. The Estates Manager with responsibility for Health and safety was currently working with Matt Grainger, Cornwall Council Health and Safety Co-ordinator, on a range of Health and Safety matters, including going through fire risk assessments.</p> <p><u>Q. Do the Estates Managers manage fire drills?</u></p> <p>A. Not directly - schools do that locally. However, schools are meant to record having done these and to do them with a certain degree of frequency. These are often front loaded for the benefit of new pupils at the start of the academic year. Schools may also do something to make a drill more realistic, such as blocking a door, removing a child, etc. Fire alarms are also regularly checked.</p> <p><u>Q. How are we finding cost escalations for materials and labour?</u></p> <p>A. These are impacting on us but the Trust has a lot of contractors so we are able to bounce them off each other to keep prices as reasonable as possible.</p> <p><u>Q. Is any funding available to schools for new sustainable energy technologies?</u></p> <p>A. There have been two rounds of capital funding but these were over-subscribed 10 to 1. One of the criteria used is the number of people it would benefit so, given the size of the Trust schools, we always do badly on that. However, we are working with other parties who may be able to help with this.</p> <p>Committee members were advised there was over a million pounds of SCA funding yet to be committed. However, the Trust was allowed 2 years to spend the funding so the fact it currently had a little more than a year's worth was not a problem and some big spends were already planned.</p> <p>See also Confidential Notes.</p>	
7.	<p><u>BISHOP FLEMING BENCHMARKING</u></p>	
	<p>Bishop Fleming's personalised Academy Benchmark Data 2022 for Southerly Point Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust had been shared with Committee members prior to the meeting. This included: Income Measures; Overhead Costs Measures; Staff Salary Measures; Pension Cost Measures; Pupil / Teacher Measures; Surplus / [Deficit] Measures, net Asset Measures and Fixed Asset Measures.</p> <p>SPi advised Committee members the document had been shared for their information. It could be seen the Trust was relatively average on everything but annual salaries. SPi explained the main reason for this was the low turnover of staff leading to higher salaries but the Committee was aware</p>	

	of this matter.	
8.	<u>GENDER PAY GAP STATEMENT</u>	
	<p>The Gender Pay Gap Report, with the data supplied by Cornwall Council to inform the report, was shared with Committee members for their information and consideration.</p> <p>Committee members were reminded this was an annual requirement and that reports were a year in arrears. The template into which the figures had been put, with supporting statement and narrative, was the same as that used previously and Committee members could be assured the figures were from a guaranteed source. In the Upper Pay Band Quartile, the percentage of male employees looked higher – purely in relative terms. The change between years was only marginal.</p> <p>Committee members approved the Gender Pay Gap Report for signing.</p> <p>Action: KHa to sign and KTe to upload to Trust website.</p>	KHa / KTe
9.	<u>SUPPORT STAFF PAY</u>	
	<p>PWo re-declared an interest at this point, as a close family member was an employee of the Trust, and he was therefore not permitted to participate in the voting process around this matter.</p> <p>Following up on an action from the Trust Board meeting of 17th February, SPi had pre-prepared a model for support staff pay incorporating a 3.5% increase across the scales and an additional bottom load for the lowest categories, with a starting point of 10p more than the National Living Wage and then tapering.</p> <p>The decision around the starting point had resulted in a very small differential between the lowest scales, with a differential of 0.5% between Scales 2 and 3. In light of the decision to move Teaching Assistants and Nursery Assistants from Scale 2 to Scale 3 and to ensure there was a material increase, SPi had re-instigated a differential of 1.5%. It was felt a significant number of people would benefit from that and that this was necessary in terms of recruitment to these roles.</p> <p>SPi reiterated he had budgeted for a 2.7% increase across the scales and any additional costs would be more than offset by the savings in teacher pay as a result of the pay freeze for the current year.</p> <p>Committee members were reminded that pay protection for a small number of support staff members who had received a reduction to their pay when the Trust moved to a new pay structure in April 2019 was due to finish at the end of March 2022 so it was proposed the pay grades were approved with effect from 1st April 2022.</p> <p>Committee members unanimously approved the pay grades detailed in the shared model for support staff pay with effect from 1st April 2022.</p>	
10.	<u>SCHOOL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT</u>	
	<p>A draft version of the completed School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool Checklist had been shared prior to the meeting for Committee members to pre-read and come with any questions / challenge.</p> <p>Committee members were again reminded this was an annual requirement and were asked if there were any changes they would like to make to the proposed answers. It was suggested mention might be made of moving towards an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee [ARAC] and that some of the terminology could be slightly altered but no significant changes were required. The responsibility for going back through the document in more detail to make those amendments was delegated to KHa and SPi, as the deadline for submission was very tight.</p> <p>Action: KHa and SPi to amend terminology / add any additional assurances for submission by 15th.</p>	KHa / SPi
11.	<u>POLICIES</u>	
	There were no new financial policies for review on this occasion.	
12.	<u>RISK REGISTER REVIEW</u>	
	Committee members were advised risk had been looked at as part of the discussion around the	

	<p>Trust Statement of Intent in the January meeting of the Trust Board and continued to be looked at as part of an ongoing piece of work around this. Risk Register Review was therefore to be removed as a standalone standing item on the agenda and would be looked at in that broader context.</p> <p>Action: Remove as standing item on agenda.</p>	SRe / KTe
13.	<u>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</u>	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee on 9th December 2021 were agreed to be an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair. Matters arising included updates on:</p> <p>Residential Trips as foci for a future audit. This matter was in hand and would be part of discussions with Internal Auditors around the next Trust audit.</p> <p>SCA Working Group. A meeting had not been able to take place in the Spring term as all the Trustee members of the group had been amongst those who had recently resigned. Committee members were assured decisions were still being made in this respect, as this came under SPi's jurisdiction, under the Estates Managers' jurisdictions and under tendering rules. For the benefit of any members not familiar with the SCA Working Group, SPi explained the group went through proposed projects in more depth / challenged the Estates Managers' about these and provided additional assurances to the Committee around what the Central Team was proposing. It was suggested that, if the working group added value, the Committee would not want to lose it.</p> <p>Action: Reinstate SCA Working Group, agree membership and organise meeting in early part of Summer term.</p> <p>Risk Register Review. See Item 12 above.</p> <p>All other actions had been completed.</p>	SPi / KHa
14.	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u>	
	<p>Interim Headteacher Arrangements for Helston Community College</p> <p>Committee members were reminded that, while the current Headteacher was retiring at Easter, the newly appointed Headteacher would not be able to take up the permanent role until September. Therefore, formal confirmation of the interim arrangements for the summer term was required. It had been proposed the current Deputy Headteacher step up into the role of Headteacher.</p> <p>Committee members unanimously approved the current Deputy Headteacher stepping up to the Interim Headteacher role for the defined period.</p> <p>Next Steps for Coverack Primary School after August 2023</p> <p>The Trust had made a commitment to stakeholders that it would come back this year to say what its plans for the school were. It was important this was not done too early or left too late so it was suggested the optimum time might be at the start of the next term, following budget setting. It was reiterated that having a model incorporating one school under one Headteacher but split over two sites – Coverack and St Keverne – with each being infant or junior only would be the most feasible for retaining the school's footprint in the village. If stakeholders wanted to retain a school presence at Coverack and ensure a quality educational provision, it would be necessary to start thinking like this. Fiscally this would be more sustainable but, as importantly, it would be beneficial to the pupils as the lump sums from both schools would be retained and the provision could be superb as a result. There could also be less mixing of age groups within or across key stages.</p> <p>Action: Set date for discussing next steps and associated timeframe.</p> <p>Review Bank and Other Authorisation Signatories</p> <p>At the Trust Board meeting of 17th March 2022, Trustees had approved the following in respect of Bank Signatories / Online Bank Access:</p> <p>Bank Signatories – SPi, SRe, KHa, LWa.</p> <p>Online Bank Access - SPi, MCo, SRe and KHa.</p> <p>No changes were required in respect of the above.</p>	SPi

	<p>At the Trust Board meeting of 17th March 2022, Trustees had approved the following in respect of Central Trust Authorities:</p> <p>Payroll Authorisation - GCh, SPi Supplier Invoices [Creditors] – GCh [Certify for Payment], SPi [Orders] and MCo [Goods Received]</p> <p>Due to recent changes in respect of the Executive, however, the following signatories were now proposed:</p> <p>Payroll Authorisation - TRi, SPi Supplier Invoices [Creditors] – TRi [Certify for Payment], SPi [Orders] and MCo [Goods Received]</p> <p>Committee members unanimously approved the proposals for Payroll Authorisation and Supplier Invoices [Creditors].</p> <p>Ill Health Retirement</p> <p>While Trustees had been minded to agree to this request at the Trust Board meeting of 17th January 2022, additional reassurances had been sought around pensions and whether the member of staff would be better off if they were to die in employment rather than have ill health retirement.</p> <p>SPi reported the Trust’s Business Manager had recently undertaken training in this respect.</p> <p>SPi advised Committee members he had received a full health report which made it clear a great deal was wrong with the member of staff and it would be impossible for them to fulfil role. They would also reach their pension age in two years’ time so only a very short period of time was being requested.</p> <p>SPi had spoken with the Pensions team to determine whether there would be any implications for costs and had been assured these were factored into the fees in this instance so a decision to approve the retirement on the grounds of ill health would have no material impact.</p> <p>In terms of the query around whether the member of staff would be better off if they were to die while still in post, SPi had been advised this was not applicable in this instance.</p> <p>Committee members approved the ill health retirement.</p> <p>There were no further matters for consideration so the meeting was brought to a close at 8.10pm.</p>	
16.	<u>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u>	
	The next meeting of the SPCMAT Finance and Resources Committee will take place on Thursday 30th June 2022 , from 6.00pm , in the Trust Conference Room.	

Chair’s Signature _____ Date _____