



**Venture Multi Academy Trust. Company Number 7535379**  
**Meeting minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting, hold via zoom on**  
**Monday 5th December, 5-7pm.**

<b>Present</b>	Philip Robinson - Chair Julia Dodson - Vice Chair Ben Jones Harry Hart Andrew Mercer Alan Honeybone Ian Raggett - from agenda point 3
<b>In attendance</b>	Tracy Lewis - Francis Clark Sam Newman - Governance Professional Belinda Burton - BSO Jo Long - COO Will Johnson - CEO

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Person</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies, welcome and quorum</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, no apologies were received from trustees, Ian Raggett was not present at the start of the meeting. The meeting was quorate, in line with Venture MAT's Terms of Reference.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declaration of business and pecuniary interest</b> There were no new declarations of business and pecuniary interests to declare.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Accountants presentation - 2021/22 Accounts &amp; Audit (Tracy Lewis - Francis Clark)</b> The Francis Clark representative (Tracy Lewis) shared the screen, the audit process this year was incredibly smooth, Tracy Lewis thanked the Venture MAT team for the fantastic support. The report reflects this. The standards had met the requirements. Planning stage identified the key risk areas, management override, prerequisite risks, on top of this the regularity was also looked at. Status of audit - all done, subject to VMAT approval. Nothing outstanding, signed accounts and letter of representation. Nothing needs highlighting to ESFA, no statutory issues, unadjusted audit differences usually shown, however there are none. Controls, nothing found. Revenue recognition and fraud of override, journal entry testing, material grants, GAG, PP etc, reconciled and transactional testing conducted - nothing to report. Projections looked at, funding is still strong even with the staffing deficit.	

	<p>Pension scheme discussed, deficit decreased slightly, guaranteed by the government, assumptions from the actuaries, if it continues on the trend and ends up in surplus, it will not be recognised.</p> <p>Adjustments posted - late accruals adjustments, reclassification of fixed assets and pension movement looked at, no unadjusted.</p> <p>Internal controls - green. Holiday pay calculations were already in progress for quantifying this issue, worked with lawyers to identify the affected staff and adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>Francis Clark will adjust this in the accounts.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> about restricted versus unrestricted, and the difference between the two?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> Restricted funds such as GAG, PP can only be spent on specific items, projects, unrestricted funds can be used on a wider variety of things.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> what the threshold was for how much the trust was allowed to keep in reserves.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> There isn't one, you need to be able to justify why you hold them.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> the auditor if she had ever come across this being questioned before.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> When the trust is emerging, or when the trust is rebrokering, then they would dissect your funds. Balances are looked at every year, highlighting specific funding pots for specific projects, when uplifted in July they asked a lot more about the reserves.</p> <p>Where trusts don't identify reserves spending, this will be monitored. If the ESFA had an issue they would highlight it at the meeting with the RSC, they advise a percentage for a reserve of 5%.</p> <p>A trustee asked from the trust point of view, are there any recommendations for a point on the agenda for reserves are X amount and noted what they would be spent on.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> This is done at the F,GP meeting and put into the minutes.</p> <p>Looking at budgeting and future plans, it is recorded.</p> <p>The VMAT team expressed their thanks for the smooth process from Francis Clark.</p> <p><u>Tracy Lewis left the meeting.</u></p> <p>Benchmarking on expenditure, we keep a close eye on what we spend on areas, we have a range of benchmarking tools.</p> <p>Belinda Burton has been asked to strip out the ARB and benchmark it separately.</p> <p>We have reserves and we are spending well in-year, never short in-year with spending.</p> <p>How do we get bigger projects moving quicker? More efficient ways of working.</p> <p><u>Ian Raggett joined the meeting</u></p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> if the trust employees were happy with the provision they were receiving from the auditors this year.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> Yes.</p>	
4	<p><b>Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (03/10/22)</b></p> <p>The trustees agreed that the previous minutes were a true and accurate representation of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair will sign the previous minutes.</p> <p><b>Matters arising:</b></p> <p>Sort a date for safeguarding training.</p> <p>JL to invite Deborah Pullen.</p> <p>SN to set up a date for WJ PM.</p> <p>SN to invite members to the next meeting.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Committee &amp; Local Governing Body (LGB) minutes</b></p> <p><b>a. Trevithick Learning Academy LGB minutes (03/10/22)</b></p> <p><b>b. St Issey LGB minutes (06/10/22)</b></p> <p>There are two new Chairs, Heather Holder-Powell for St Issey and Tiffany Pope for Trevithick Learning Academy.</p> <p>Safeguarding training for governors has been scheduled for both LGB's.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> who the MAT Sendco was?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> Nicola Garge, St Issey has a school sendco undertaking training.</p>	

	<p>Hayley Lowry will take the role at St Issey.</p> <p>Recruitment will be moving forward in the new year.</p>	
6	<p><b>MAT Van renewal</b></p> <p>Cheapest option would be £300, this would involve staying with the current provider, a new van would have an initial cost of £400, if trustees are happy the MAT would like to extend the current lease.</p> <p>All trustees present <b>agreed</b> to extend the lease for a further term.</p>	
7.	<p><b>CEO Report (including safeguarding, health &amp; safety)</b></p> <p>Pupil attendance is currently not great, at 95.2% at TLA, a slowly downward trend, the national average is 94%. St Issey is at 93%.</p> <p>Significant child illness, current attendance across the MAT is very low. 89% currently at TLA and 81% at St Issey.</p> <p>Staff attendance is stronger.</p> <p>The Assistant Head and the Attendance Officer are working hard with all absence concerns. There have been two successful fines processed.</p> <p>Chris Parham has enrolled on an attendance project for small schools.</p> <p>Interesting policy work has come from this, this may be rolled out across the MAT.</p> <p>Safeguarding - shifting software to a new programme, 'myconcern'.</p> <p>Due for roll out in the next three months.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> about the cost for this and whether it was deemed better value for money?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> It is a little more expensive, £970 for an annual licence, versus our previous one which is £600, it is a much better system though.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> about the current attendance figures, and if there was a certain percentage for being penalised if it doesn't improve?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> No, it would be something that the Ofsted team would want to discuss, our concern is that further illness could move it downwards rapidly, leading to persistent absence.</p> <p>Ofsted would look at what the trust is actively doing about this.</p> <p>The Headteacher at St Issey will present at the next trustee meeting in February to give trustees an overview of what is being done to combat the absence.</p> <p>A trustee <b>expressed</b> that at TLA there is an attendance officer, at St Issey there isn't scope for one, is there an EWO the trust could use for support?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> We may use our own attendance officer and our Deputy Head for supporting the students at St Issey, however we would use the EWO if it needs to be moved forward in a different capacity.</p> <p>St Issey uses our structure for letters, they just don't have dedicated people for this at their school.</p> <p>Governor monitoring visits have all happened, training is this Thursday for safeguarding upskill.</p> <p>The Health and Safety audit report has been worked through, WJ to provide an update for the next Board of Trustees meeting.</p> <p>There is a new way of tracking high level injuries, our new system automatically has oversight for any incidents.</p> <p>No reportable incidents.</p> <p>Assessment is underway currently.</p> <p>MAT moderation meeting with several schools at TLA has proved to be a very successful event.</p> <p>MAT to MAT working continues, St Ives school has now appointed their new headteacher, whilst pausing any improvements until the headteacher is embedded.</p> <p>Will Johnson continues the MAT work at two additional schools.</p> <p>Structure for a two year plan for School Improvement Support.</p> <p>Brokered support for each school. This will work alongside the current service level agreement.</p> <p>Will Johnson is set to become a governor for CSIA.</p> <p>A trustee <b>asked</b> what happens when the CEO is not at TLA.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> The Deputy Head will be deputising when the CEO is not in the building.</p> <p>A trustee <b>expressed</b> that the Deputy Head does not have a strong input into the Trustee meetings and questioned whether she should be more involved.</p>	<p>CP</p> <p>WJ</p>

	<b>Answer:</b> She has a more indepth input into the LGB meetings, the reason for invitation to the trustee meetings is for experience.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Data Protection Update</b> Last Tuesday was the data protection audit, first audit with the new auditors, full external audit. 95% full compliance, this will be shared with trustees at the next full board meeting. Any areas needing attention will have an action plan.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Policies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Whole School Pay Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Information Security</b></li> <li>• <b>Staff Sickness Absence</b></li> <li>• <b>Freedom of Information</b></li> <li>• <b>Records Management</b></li> </ul> All trustees <b><i>agreed to approve and adopt</i></b> the policies. The pay award policy will need to go to trade unions once approved. Other policies are review cycle updates, staff absence policy has moved across to Browne Jacobson format, however the content remains the same. Records management policy now incorporates the password policy. A trustee <b><i>asked</i></b> about the Information Security policy, could we look at a leaner way of doing the password change. <b>Answer:</b> Users, adults and children are classed as users, some of it is system driven. A trustee <b><i>asked</i></b> if there had been any risks with it? <b>Answer:</b> It is enforced, one area of our areas of audit is cyber security.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Confidential items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>One item to be discussed - this will have separate minutes.</b></li> </ul>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Date and time of next meeting</b> 06/02/23 27/03/23 22/05/23 17/07/22	

<b>Agenda point</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Person</b>
<b>7</b>	St Issey Headteacher to present an overview of how he is combating low attendance.	<b>CP</b>
<b>7</b>	CEO to bring the health and safety audit to the next meeting.	<b>WJ</b>

Meeting closed by Chair at 6:44pm

Signed as an accurate record.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Please note that these are draft minutes until signed off by the Chair at the next meeting.