

Minutes of the OLICAT Directors Meeting
18th December 2024



Attendees:

Directors

Christopher Donnellan, Bill Nelson, Ilona Bond, Joe Burns

Staff

Tony Bishop, Asha Morjaria, Andrew Waterhouse

Azzets

Richard Monkhouse

Apologies

Catherine Leong

Agenda item	Key information
1. Declaration of pecuniary interest/conflict of interest arising from agenda	a. Verbal None arising
2. Minutes & Matters arising	a. Draft minutes Accepted as a fair record b. Approvals outside committee <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No out of meeting approvals to record.• Post meeting approval of last meetings policies confirmed:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Safeguarding template○ Health and Safety○ Data Protection○ Lettings e. Finance Handbook○ Early Careers Teachers (new)○ Online Safety template (new)○ HR -Code of Conduct○ HR – Sick absence○ HR – Grievance○ HR – Teachers’ Pay Policy○ HR – Disciplinary○ HR – Capability○ HR – Redundancy○ HR – Appraisal Policy for Teachers○ HR – Appraisal Policy for Support Staff

3. Finance

- a. Audit report and management letter (received as Audit and Risk Subcommittee). BN recorded thanks to RM for the preparatory meeting at which a number of issues were addressed.

RM was invited to invited to present an overview and raise key items:

- The MAT accounts have expanded to 5 key sections reporting to 4 different areas.
- One trustee has passed away. Check on administrative details for accuracy as of point of signing.
- Directors' report meets required format and no issues arising.
- IB queried Trade Union Facilities time on page 6. RM confirmed total is overall salary bill.
- Governance statement is a regularity one to be signed by Accounting Officer.
- Audit reports are statutory, clean, unqualified and unmodified. Auditors are happy it is a true and fair view.
- Auditors agree there is no irregularity.
- Net movement deficit is 857k for the year. As a one of it is notable but not drastic but directors should be aware and managing going ahead.
- Balance sheet snapshot as of 01 August: 2.4 million in the bank, fixed assets down, lot of in year capital work (repair rather than build).
- Pensions remain a deficit.
- Debtors are up, but largely due to timing.
- Accrued income up – noted RPA outstanding claims.
- Cash is down at 1.5 million. 857k as above, rest is working capital movement.
- Deferred income movement – legacy balances being held until statute barred. All now written off.
- Note 11 – staff notes. Costs up, headline staff number fractionally down.
- Free reserves for each school in trust show 2 in deficit, but movement visible with most reducing reserves.
- Audit findings report is filed with accounts for the ESFA.
- Appendix 1 is an executive summary of what was found. There is nothing of particular concern rather points of best practice.
- Appendix 5 shows adjustments that have been made.
- Debts are flagged as potential bad debts. AM reported some date back to 2021 and should have shown on prior reports. Many are not necessarily actual debts but potential duplication of invoices across legacy systems.

Directors recorded their thanks to Asha for her involvement in preparing these reports

- b. Finance Report

AM presented the Finance report – key points noted:

- Management accounts are to October. Some of the normal detail is not there due to system transition but we are confident in numbers.
- We have a known issue of some schools still working on presumption of my school and my reserves as opposed to MAT reserves.
- We have identified a small number still working on an old LA concept of accounting (private funds). Private funds are reserves. Directors noted it

	<p>is important to get that message across. TB noted we are still on a direction of travel and have made significant inroads on collective financial responsibility. Moving reserves was only 12 months ago. It is still a process of development. CD observed our house needs to be in order before others join.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected deficit is 914k. Reports will show month by month trends by school, including forecasting and budgets. We do expect to come in lower than that as ESFA confirmed additional funding around staffing costs. We aim for c400k. • Central services have accrued income 80k RPA claims. Some confusion over what can and can't be claimed as includes settlement amounts. Need to look at what eligible to claim. • One school has 22k debts outstanding that it doesn't believe to be recoverable. Will go to LAC to consider write offs. • Future reports will include information on capital spending. • We are looking at cleaning procurement next year – cycle is now due and there is some dissatisfaction. Would like to look also at catering but that will be next academic year.
<p>4. HR</p>	<p>a. Staff increments TB reported the HT appraisal process is slightly different this year, but other processes are the same and have been through LACs.</p> <p>IB notes a disparity in pay policy on UPS and MPS and recommendation to LAC. This was noted and will be corrected.</p> <p>Directors reviewed and discussed the range of exceptions requesting a 2 point increment. Directors agreed it was not possible to make judgements on these with the information provided. These will be returned to the central team to be reviewed and resubmitted at the next meeting.</p> <p>b. Redundancy proposal Proposal presented to directors was agreed.</p> <p>c. Headteacher regrading The growth of Thomas Becket justifies re-evaluation and does place it on a revised scale. This does not affect budgets this year but will do next year. Directors agreed the regrading.</p>
<p>5. St Joseph's and St Gregory's name change</p>	<p>TB reported that the wish to rename has been discussed with the diocese. Given physical changes this is an opportune time to effectively relaunch the school on the UPS. Both head and LAC are happy with this suggestion.</p> <p>BN queried time frame. TB confirmed the aim was September 2025.</p> <p>CD observed St Gregor's is a name that will have some resonance with community as it has a history, however a name change doesn't erase that. St Francis has community links and seems appropriate.</p> <p>Directors approved to go forward to diocese.</p>

6. Chair's Update	<p>TB reported Academicis conversations regarding SEL recruitment and we now have a format and programme to share with directors. This will be a 2 day programme with a carousel of panels and a task. Expectation is on TGS site over 2 days. Shortlisting will be on 6th Jan.</p> <p>BN queried MK and expansion? CD reported nothing direct, but they have had their meeting and letter and have been informed of diocese position. There will be just the 2 MATs.</p>
7. Governance	<p>a. Receipt of LAC minutes Directors noted receipt and content.</p>
8. Safeguarding	<p>a. Critical Issues arising No incidents to report.</p>
9. AOB	<p>None raised.</p>