



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

Central Office
Unit 4 Tamar Business Park
Pennygillam Way
Pennygillam Industrial Estate
Launceston
PL15 7ED
01566 777503

Email: governance@andaras.org

CEO: W. T. Hermon

11/10/2023

Minutes

Finance, Resources & Staffing Committee Autumn 2023
Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 9.30am at central office

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Jon Sharpe (Committee Chair), Steve Tavener (Committee Vice), Claire Paul, Ian Wilkinson, Will Hermon

Apologies: Peter Hague

In Attendance: Emma Gilbert (CFO), Jo Callow (ex-officio), Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests relevant to this Agenda

None declared relevant to this agenda. IW noted an addition to his interests for the interest register; spouse is a supply teacher and may occasionally work for an An Daras Trust School. TM will amend the register.

3. Minutes of previous FSD Summer (15th June 2022) and matters arising

- Forecasting software (EG). This is still a useful option but it is expensive and looking at the budget for next year, it would be difficult to justify the expenditure.
- Provide scope for pre-school project to the full Board for agreement to begin review this Autumn term (WH/JC). This will be done in November and WH noted there are some constraints that need to be considered such as geography. The committee discussed that the key factors to be considered are financial viability but also need to consider the geography and the fact that smaller outlying pre-schools always run at a loss. The committee discussed in detail and challenged various aspects of pre-school operation, and if there is an 'over supply' of pre-schools in the area leading to surplus spaces and therefore competition; WH confirmed there is. They agreed that the first criteria is that overall the pre-schools need to be sustainable financially/economically viable. While it is 'cleaner' to compete on price, in order to be sustainable there needs to be other unique selling points. This review should afford the opportunity to think 'outside the box' and look at offers that will potentially attract more parents such as extended hours, transport, change to ages (although the latter 2 require changes to staff ratios which will incur more cost). Current staffing ratios can also be reviewed taking into account new requirements versus the risks involved with less staff. It would also be useful to look at what other trusts are doing. Liaison with the LA will likely be required. The action required for the review was clear, and some options will be made available to the committee in the spring term. **Action: Pre-school review onto agenda for spring term.**

No actions from confidential minutes. Committee agreed the minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

4. Confidential Agenda Items

WH updated the committee on matters regarding trust expansion.

5. MAT Improvement Plan

WH noted the updated improvement plan for this academic year. Item E to ensure effective budget management this year is important so that there are no overspends two years running. This will need to be carefully monitored.

6. Review Current Finance

a. Income and Expenditure Against Planned Budget

Previous management accounts have been made available and EG issued the latest dashboard for year end at the meeting to be discussed. The last meeting around a likely £150K deficit was highlighted and this has come out at £174,308.48 deficit. EG explained that this is due to the unfunded pay rises, the minibuss funding, the settlement agreement and some legal costs. Reserves are sitting at £413,350.03 but the accounts have to go through the auditors to be confirmed. The committee discussed that there have been unfunded pay rises, increase in costs for everything and we have spent money to get schools to 'good' at Ofsted – funds have been spent wisely for the good of the children despite seeing an overspend for the last financial year.

b. Measure Budget Against Financial KPIs

The committee discussed the current budget and factors affecting staffing costs, managing costs at CG and also the need to monitor costs at WHA this year due to senior staff.

c. Virements and other transactions in accordance with the MAT Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation

None.

d. Approval of Expenditure of Sums over agreed Financial Regulations

None. WH noted the large costs for some CIF spends between July and September and the committee approved these.

7. Future Finance and Finance Compliance

a. Income Generation for MAT

WH noted some income generation through school improvement work (NS & DS) with Chumleigh and Duchy Trusts.

b. Funding Agreement or ATH Updates

WH noted the ATH checklist that has been provided to the committee which allows the trust board to ensure all the 'musts' from the ATH are being covered. Not only are we compliant but clear evidence can also be provided to prove that we are. Governance statement also drafted. This will all go to the auditors this term.

8. Staff Performance Management & Pay

Assurance given that Annual Performance Management cycle for staff across the MAT is in place and the policy is properly implemented.

The committee discussed school teachers' pay and conditions (STPCD). In July, the government accepted the recommendation made in the STRB's 33rd report for a 6.5% pay increase across all pay scales for the 2023/2024 academic year; however, it will only provide extra funding for 3% of this rise. The remaining 3.5% will need to be funded from schools' own budgets. The unions put the offer to their members and all unions have since accepted the pay offer. We expect the STPCD to be updated at some point in September or October to reflect the pay deal. The committee approved the pay rise.

9. Premises & Infrastructure

CIF projects already discussed. WH noted that planning is required for SSCA fencing. Because we need to keep finances in line this year, it is recommended that we only do the musts rather than the nice to haves. WH noted the need to replace SC playground surface because it is becoming a Health and Safety issue. The committee agreed this needs to be done and approved expenditure on it. The committee discussed the 3 quotes but wanted the project manager to delve into the detail with regards to what each one provides as there is a vast difference in cost with the 3 quotes. While the cheaper one sounds attractive, it needs to be checked that this solution will last and will not need replacing in a couple of years compared to the other ones. The chosen option must be fit for purpose and value for money.

10. Policy Review

- a. Governors & Directors Allowances (MB) – no changes. Approved.
- b. Procurement & Tendering (MB) – no changes. Approved.
- c. Performance Management & Capability (WH) – minor changes in red. Approved.
- d. Redundancy (SC) – no changes. Approved.
- e. Managing Sickness Absence (SC) – no changes. Approved.
- f. Early Career Teacher (WH) – no changes. Approved.

11. AOB

None.

12. DONM

Spring Term meeting will be on Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 9.30am at central office.

Meeting closed at 10.50hrs.

TJH Martin

Governance Officer

Distribution List:

J. Sharpe – Director (Chair)
S. Tavener – Director (Vice)
P. Hague – Director
C. Paul – Director
I. Wilkinson - Director
W. Hermon – CEO Director
E. Gilbert – CFO
J. Callow – Ex Officio Observer