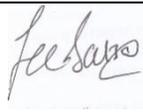


Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust
Unlocking the Potential of Collaboration

Finance and Audit Committee

Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference were approved by the Board of Trustees in:	October 2019
Signed by the Chair of Trustees:	
These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Trust on an annual basis. Next review date:	October 2020

1. POWERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- 1.1. The Trustees of the Trust Board shall establish the Finance and Audit Committee as a Trust Committee as empowered by the Trust's Articles of Association (Article 100b).
- 1.2. The Trustees shall determine and approve the Committee's Terms of Reference and shall review the Terms at the start of each academic year (Article 101).
- 1.3. The Trustees shall determine and approve the delegation of powers, responsibilities and duties to the Committee and shall review this Scheme of Delegation at the start of each academic year (Article 105).
- 1.4. The Trustees shall have the right to intervene in the governance of an individual School where it has serious cause for concern that there is financial mismanagement or failure to operate within budget.

2. POWERS OF THE FINANCE and AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Committee shall exercise the powers, responsibilities and duties delegated by the Trust Board as set out in the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation, and in particular:

- 2.1. shall prepare and recommend to the Trust Board the Trust and School Financial Regulations and Procedures which shall comply with relevant statute and regulation, the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and the decisions of the Trustees (SoD 5.1-2),
- 2.2. shall review, recommend to the Trust Board and monitor the individual School one (1) year budgets that are proposed by each Local Governing Body with a specific responsibility to ensure that budgets do not go into deficit (SoD 5.15-16),
- 2.3. shall review, recommend to the Trust Board and monitor the Trust one (1) year budget which shall consolidate individual School budgets with Trust central costs and charges. It shall also have specific responsibility for ensuring that the Trust budget does not go into deficit (SoD 5.6-8),
- 2.4. shall seek to identify and propose to the Trust Board opportunities for the Trust to achieve financial and resource efficiencies for member academies through joint commissioning and procurement,
- 2.5. shall review and approve the Trust and School Interim Year End financial reports prior to audit (SoD 5.10 & 5.17),
- 2.6. shall review and propose to the Trust Board the appointment and any subsequent re-appointment of the Trust's auditors (SoD 5.4),
- 2.7. shall plan and oversee the statutory audit of Annual Accounts for the Trust and each School,
- 2.8. shall review and recommend to the Trust Board the audited Annual Accounts and Financial Statements in accordance with relevant statutes and regulations (SoD 5.11),
- 2.9. shall review and recommend to the Board the Trustees Annual Report for the Accounts (SoD 5.12),
- 2.10. shall prepare and recommend to the Trust Board a Trust action plan in response to the auditor's management letter and be responsible for its subsequent implementation (SoD 5.14),
- 2.11. shall plan, oversee and monitor the internal audit of the Trust and ensure School compliance with the Trust's financial regulations and procedures. In the event of any non-compliance shall recommend and implement appropriate actions to enhance compliance (SoD 5.1-2),
- 2.12. shall ensure that the internal audit report is submitted to the ESFA by the Trust,
- 2.13. shall recommend intervention in the financial management of an individual school where it has serious cause for concern that there is financial mismanagement or failure to operate within budget (SoD 5.3),
- 2.14. shall prepare and approve policies relating to the Trust's financial governance and operation including;
 - 2.14.1. Procurement,

- 2.14.2. Anti-Fraud and Corruption
- 2.14.3. Investment.
- 2.14.4. Disposal and write-off of stock assets
- 2.15. shall consider any proposals for Teachers Annual Pay Awards and Support Staff Annual Pay Awards and make recommendations on these to the Trust Board (SoD 3.7-8),
- 2.16. shall recommend to the Trust Board expenditure above the OJEU limit having completed the necessary procurement procedures (SoD 6.4),
- 2.17. shall consider and respond to proposed compensation payments up to £50,000 or the limit set by the Education Funding Agency (SoD 6.5),
- 2.18. shall ensure a Risk Register is in place and regularly maintained to ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook,
- 2.19. shall ensure the Risk Register includes details of contingency and business continuity planning arrangements,
- 2.20. shall regularly review the Risk Register and use this to inform the committee's priorities in relation to internal scrutiny activities,
- 2.21. shall monitor the gender pay gap information on the DfE reporting website as well as on the Trust's website,
- 2.22. shall ensure robust whistle-blowing procedures are in place and compliant with the requirements set out in the Academies Financial Handbook and
- 2.23. shall ensure full compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook.

3. COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT OF THE FINANCE and AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 3.1. The composition of the Finance and Audit Committee shall be as follows;
 - 3.1.1. Specified Trustees with relevant knowledge, skills and expertise in finance, accountancy, compliance, commerce and business,
 - 3.1.2. The Chief Executive Officer,
 - 3.1.3. Such additional persons with finance, accountancy or commercial expertise who may be appointed by the Trust Board and
 - 3.1.4. Such further Trust Trustees as the Trust Board may appoint in order to ensure that the Committee has a majority of Trustees.
- 3.2. The membership of the Committee is detailed on appendix A.

4. TERM OF OFFICE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 4.1. The Term of Office for all committee members is 4 years.
- 4.2. On appointment, committee members are each required to familiarise themselves and to agree to comply with;
 - 4.2.1. the Trust Articles of Association,
 - 4.2.2. the Trust Master and Supplementary Funding Agreements
 - 4.2.3. the Trust Financial Regulations,
 - 4.2.4. the Academies Finance Handbook,
 - 4.2.5. these Terms of Reference,
 - 4.2.6. current relevant financial legislation and guidance for academies.

5. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

- 5.1. The Committee shall meet at least once per term and in particular;
 - 5.1.1. The Committee shall meet at the times designated in the Trust Governance Planning Calendar
 - 5.1.2. The members will receive notice of each meeting at least seven (7) clear days before the date of the meeting.
 - 5.1.3. The agenda, papers and minutes of Committee meetings will be sent to the Clerk to the Trustees at the same time that they are issued to members
 - 5.1.4. Minutes will be signed by the Committee's Chair at the next meeting to verify that the minutes are a true record.
- 5.2. Quorum for a meeting of the Committee will be half the membership of the committee provided that the majority of those present are Trust Trustees. The CEO, as Accounting Officer, must be in attendance at all meetings.
- 5.3. Each question to be decided at a meeting of the Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes of those members present and eligible to vote on the question. The Chair shall have the casting vote in the case of equal votes for and against the decision.
- 5.4. Trustees may join a meeting by telephone by prior request and in exceptional circumstances.

6. APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- 6.1. The Trust Board shall appoint the Chair of the committee noting any recommendation from the Committee.
- 6.2. The Trust Board shall have the right to remove the Chair and/or Vice Chair, specifically in circumstances where they have cause for concern that there is financial mismanagement.
- 6.3. The term of office for the Chair and Vice-Chair will be 1 year. They shall be appointed at the first meeting of the Trust Board each school year.

7. APPOINTMENT OF A CLERK

- 7.1. The Trust Board shall appoint a Clerk to the Committee.

Appendix A:

Committee membership 2019/2020

Vacancy

Dee Wood

James Wood (Chair)

Peter Tidmarsh (CEO/Accounting Officer)