

**MINUTES OF THE 113th FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
OF ASHCROFT TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY ON
WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2023 AT 16.30**

Present: Dick Whitcutt (DW) - Chair, Richard Perry (RJP), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Angela Entwistle (AEE), Stewart Harris (SH)

In Attendance: Jane Kiddell (JKD) (Minutes)

Start Time: 16:30

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Kevin Chamberlain (KC)

2. Declaration of interest

No interests were declared.

3. Minutes of last meeting held on Wednesday 18 October 2023

DW reviewed the minutes of the last meeting, which was held on Wednesday 18 October 2023.

DW questioned the replacement rollers for the lift, additional to the original work quotation. RJP updated colleagues that two of the lifts are working fine but one lift in Zone E requires some additional work and is currently out of action. RJP told colleagues that he will bring the final costings for this additional work to the February meeting.

RJP is working to establish which company is responsible for looking after the maintenance of the lifts now the work is complete. One company is under contract to look after the maintenance of the lifts and another was employed to undertake the upgrade and repair work in respect of which warranties exist for 12 months.

DW asked about TLA positions and the definitions of the role. RJP explained the differences between the Teaching and Learning Assistants' (TLA) role and Learning Mentors' (LM) role. DW referred to the previous FRC meeting at which TLA pay scales were discussed. He asked if we were minded to increase the minima and maxima of the pay scales to help reward TLAs more meaningfully and attract new TLAs to the Academy. RJP told colleagues that the associate pay scales that we used as a reference point had only recently been agreed by the Local Authority for this academic year. DMI and RJP will now review the latter and with this rewarding those on the lower pay points more favourably, this may assist in attracting future applicants.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

RJP told colleagues that the staff pay rises were now being processed and will be included in each member of staff's December pay slip. The annual salary reviews have now been concluded, the only outstanding agreement having been the national settlement for associate staff, which had now been completed and will be incorporated

in the December payments as well. The Committee undertook some discussions about the minimum wage levels and proposed national increases due from April. RJP will bring an update on this to the February meeting.

5. Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023 – Academy and Trading Subsidiary

RJP informed colleagues that his report would be brief today as members of the FRC present today had attended the recent Annual Trustees Meeting and had received the reports then.

RJP spoke about the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31 August 2023, which had been sent to the Trustees and FRC members. He took colleagues through the summary.

RJP advised colleagues that in respect of the first draft that had been sent out for comment, the audit lead confirmed they had no major issues. The auditors seem happy and there are no actionable points that the auditors have highlighted at the moment. The FRC had no further comments and RJP will ask SH and DMI to sign off the final version following the FRC meeting and following agreement from the auditors that there are no late changes to be made.

RJP spoke about the additional declarations required relating to fraud risk minimisation, internal controls confirmation and a new focus on ICT systems and controls for Buzzacott (the Auditors), which ATA has to report on. RJP has circulated this to colleagues who had no further comments and were satisfied with the reports.

ATA is now in a position where it is maximising the funding arising from the number of students on roll and has made savings within other areas as efficiently as it can.

There is an increase in employers' costs for the teachers' pension scheme from April 2024, which does have an impact on ATA's accounts. The Government will be making additional financial provision to cover the increased costs. However, ATA has still to see if it receives the funding for the current over-subscription in the 6th form student numbers.

RJP reported that the figures indicate that it has been a stabilised and robust year leading to a small operational surplus, with the forecast for the next few years indicating minimal deficits and much lower than had been forecast in recent years.

RJP asked colleagues to read through the documents and come back to him with any comments by Monday 18 December to provide time for any late adjustments and full sign off before Christmas.

6. Responsible Officers Report 2023

SH's report was covered and had also been shared with the trustees. If colleagues had any comments please do let RJP know.

Colleagues thanked SH for his hard work and comprehensive report.

7. Revenue Funding 2023-2024

The revenue funding for the year to date reflect a 9% increase in expected income levels from last year which is good news and built in to its funding projections.

8. Openview

The Openview arrangements are working well and all works have been completed on the floodlights. The facility is currently bringing in £30/£40K per year.

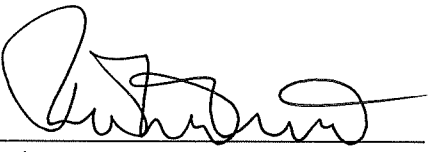
9. **Policy updates – Staff Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy 2023**

RJP updated colleagues that some minor modifications have been done to the staff disciplinary procedure and the policy has been updated on the intranet.

10. **Any other Business**

There was no other business

DW thanked the FRC for their continued support.

Signed: 
Richard Whitcutt
Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee

Date 28 Feb 2024

