

Minutes of the online meeting held on 24 June 2025 at 4.30pm

Present physically:

Present virtually: D Bicker
J Wakelam, Trustee **Vice Chair** R Attwell

In attendance: A Brewster, Group Head of Finance
A McGarel, CFO
L Carroll, Group Head of Project Accounting, Risk and Transformation
N Savvas, CEO
S Gales, Governance Professional

Apologies: P Frazer-Gale, Committee member
R Inman, **Chair**

Absent:

Action

1. Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence

J Wakelam declared her role as a Governor of West Suffolk College. No other conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

Apologies were received from P Frazer-Gale and R Inman.

2. Proposal to remove the net recharge cap on staffing RPT charges

Members received and considered the paper provided which proposed the removal of the net recharge cap for related party services (RPT) between WSC and EEGT. The CFO explained the history of our intra-Group agreement for RPTs, the rationale for the proposed change and the DfE regulatory framework applying to RPTs.

The CFO explained that multi-academy trusts and colleges are both publicly funded by the DfE and share the same charitable purpose to further education for the benefit of our community and summarised the history of the Group's working with the DfE in relation to RPTs leading to the DfE amending their guidance to relax the approach for RPTs between multi-academy trusts and colleges.

Members reflected that the existing RPT agreement underpins the Group's strategy and that this change will ensure we remain compliant with our own policies.

The CFO explained that each year he presents a value for money report to this Committee for review, and every three years we re-agree the RPT agreement with EEGT and declare the RPT to the DfE.

Members noted that both WSC and EEGT will be independently audited to provide external assurance to the Corporation.

Members discussed and **agreed to recommend** to the Trust Board the removal of the internal recharge limit to EEGT from WSC, though **noted** continued adherence to RPTs within the DfE agreed limits.

3. Proposal to re-appoint Larking Gowen as External Auditors

Members received and considered the paper provided which outlined the outcome of the request for quote exercise and proposed the reappointment of Larking Gowen LLP as the External Auditor for Eastern Education Group Trust.

Members discussed the small pool of qualified external auditors available to tender.

Members discussed the familiarity threat of reappointing Larking Gowen LLP. The CFO noted that Larking Gowen are live to this risk and advised that this is the current lead audit partners tenth year, after the tenth year Larking Gowen LLP will review how to mitigate the familiarity threat. Members asked that Larking Gowen LLP summarise their plans for the lead audit partner at the Committee meeting in November 2025.

Members asked the CFO to update the report to include the proposed term of appointment and the request that Larking Gowen LLP outline their plans for mitigating the familiarity threat.

Members **agreed to recommend** to the Trust Board and Members, the reappointment of Larking Gowen for an initial term of 36 months, with two potential 12-month permissible extensions.

CFO

4. **Any Other Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 4.50pm