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**Minutes of the Manchester Creative Studio Committee Meeting
18th November 2015**

Location of Meeting: Manchester Creative Studio, 16 Blossom Street, Manchester, M4 5AW

Committee Members Present: Ben Barsky, Peter Ramsay and James Spencer

Meeting Convened: 5pm

Item 1. Welcome and Introductions	
Discussion	<p>BB welcomes the committee and PR gives some background to himself as it's the first meeting.</p> <p>PR describes what his experience of budgeting is and financial management.</p> <p>PR states that generally the conversations are of high level figures and budget tracking is limited in the conversation.</p> <p>JS comments that the idea is to make everything as transparent as possible so ever line of the budget will be shown with all the detail behind this accessible at all time.</p> <p>The general position is that PR will need to sign off every invoice and check the bank statements in advance or retrospectively to ensure compliance.</p>
Action	

Item 2. Budget review and monitoring	
Discussion	<p>A review of the budget and the monitoring takes place.</p> <p>PR comments that he has sat down with JS on a number of occasions to review this and to ensure that it is fit for purpose. PR comments that it is the most clear budget that he has seen in his time in schools given the level of detail and the overall ability to track spend.</p> <p>JS comments that there is currently a claw back pending in MCS due to the drop off in numbers. It is discussed how this has happened and detailed that this was linked to the 8 week building delay and having to work out of an office with limited fit for purpose resources.</p> <p>BB comments that he can understand why parents would feel challenged under these situations given the there children did not have a formal place of education.</p>

	<p>JS commented that the school lost half its PAN due to this and that the parents had lost faith in the promises to deliver a fit for purpose space.</p> <p>JS confirmed on of the biggest factors had been the constant moving of deadlines for the building and then once onsite the building not being fully completed and no broadband.</p>
Action	JS to update PR on the budgets monthly and demonstrate Xero.

Item 3. Free School Meals	
Discussion	<p>Free school meals are discussed and the back ground to these are given.</p> <p>PR confirms that the numbers of FSM are still being sort due to the cohort of students being influx data wise as some are home schooled and the split across the board due to the year groups.</p> <p>JS comments that in the first year the school meal provision was very challenging with 8 weeks out of the building and having to take children to the soup kitchen and other spaces to make the provision work.</p> <p>JS confirms that in the first year there was a decision made not to charge for dinners as the school was in such a mess and the environment was so challenging. JS comments this decision was made to try and keep the student body together as there had been a huge drop off after opening in the office.</p> <p>JS confirmed that there had been the parent pay system had been introduced and this would do all the teaching of payment online to allow a clear picture to be developed on spend and what monies needed to be collated. JS confirms that this system will remove any requirement to collect cash or undertake a psychical haul of parent payments.</p>
Action	Review parent pay information and send out reminder letters

Item 4. End of Year Accounts	
Discussion	<p>The accounts for Manchester Creative Studio are discussed and the context to there development.</p> <p>JS comments currently Sleigh and Story are developing the accounts and will be attending site for a number of weeks to review the information and detail held.</p> <p>It is confirmed that they review:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoices • Bank Statement • Governing Body notes • Policies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting systems • Returns • Personal files • Salary records <p>JS confirms that they have access to any information that they require.</p> <p>BB asks what are the challenges of this, JS states that there are none apart from the first year was a minefield due to the school opening 8 weeks late and the inability to set up a proper accounting system as there was no internet access or office space to operate out of properly.</p> <p>JS comments that this year will be much more straight forward given the Xero system which everyone will be granted accesses to track spend. JS confirms that ultimately he would like the entire board to have access to Xero so everyone can have an overarching view of the school.</p> <p>The role of the responsible officer is discussed and the decision that was taken at the very beginning of the development of the school to outsource this activity to Sleigh and Story as the schools audits.</p> <p>It is detailed that this was done to ensure transparency as the auditors are governed by a code of conduct which adds another level of validation to the schools approach.</p> <p>JS shares examples of the reports that have been completed historically.</p> <p>JS confirms that PR will be the accounting officer for the coming year and that Raja Miah will sign off the accounts temporarily due to the last Principal leaving.</p>
Actions	PR confirms his understanding of this and JS states that he will work with him to ensure that everything is effective.

Item 5.	Asset register
Discussion	<p>The school asset register is discussed that was produced over the summer. JS comments there are two registers one financial and one itemised.</p> <p>JS comments that the Auditors produce this to allow the costs to be attributed to invoices and spend to be broken down and validated to ensure that there are clear asset paths.</p>
Action	Asset register agreed to be updates in August 2016 after school year.

Item 6.	School Outsourced Review
Discussion	<p>The school outsourced provision is discussed and the current levels of service.</p> <p>PR comments that he had no real issue with this service though the extended</p>

	curriculum has been revamped to fit in with the timetable but that is now working really well as the children love the courses that are on offer.
Action	Continued review of provision to ensure fit for propose.

Item 7.	Review of Policy
Discussion	<p>JS details the school policies that are currently in place and how these are utilised.</p> <p>It is discussed how these are developing over time given the constant changes in the school and especially after the first year where the school was 8 weeks late and partially finished. PR asks about the historical context to the school and the previous year.</p> <p>BB gives some back ground to the school and JS details areas that required resolutions by third party contractors [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] JS stated that the Trust has worked closely with the EFA to rectify the issues [REDACTED]</p> <p>JS highlighted that work had to be completed last year for safeguarding and safety reasons around:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top Floor • CCTV • Access control system • Toilet roll holders and hand dryers • Blinds for the classrooms • Lift lock down <p>JS commented that [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] JS commented that ISG were coming out to complete some fixes but nothing in terms of the major works.</p> <p>JS also detailed the issues around the basement where revenue money had been invested in brining it up to specification [REDACTED]</p> <p>JS confirmed that the basement had been developed to make more space in the school and more importantly to solve the drainage problems as the basement was continually filling with sewage [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] JS stated when the school had its open day the basement was full of sewage from the down stair toilets and they had had to be locked down.</p> <p>PR asks about the science lab and the history to that. JS comments [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

	<p>JS stated that currently there were negotiations around finding a proper solution to the science lab but there was no timing around this being completed fully.</p> <p>The group reviews the policy with JS giving some background around the sign off limits and the changes that had been made mid-year to allow works to progress quickly given the challenges around the building. JS confirms this had been the same at Collective Spirit as the building was 8 weeks late in its first year and 6 weeks late in the second year. JS confirms that all the policies will need to be revisited and looked at moving forward once the schools settle down.</p> <p>JS confirms that he would like to develop a proper manual that combined all the school policies like the staff handbook but this would be something that he would look to do and then get sign off on by August 2016.</p>
Key point	Confirmed the procurement policy and scheme of delegation.

Item 8.	Any Other Business
Discussion	None

Item 9.	Date of Next Meeting
Discussion	<p>Meeting to be held at Manchester Creative Studio 16 Blossom Street, Manchester, M4 5AW</p>