Sutton Grammar School Trust Board
Finance and general purposes committee: terms of reference

Name of trust:	Sutton Grammar School Trust
Name of committee:	Finance and general purposes committee (FGPC)
Date agreed:	1 October 2026
Review date:	Board meeting in the autumn term (2027)
Chair of committee:	David Hobbs
Governance professional:	Joanna Beeson
Membership:	Seven Trustees and the Head: David Hobbs; Felicity Alexander; Christina Bannerman; Paul Brione; Ben Cloves; Tom Kohler (Vice-chair of FGPC); Ed White In attendance: Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) Nataliya Bennett
Quorum:	Three non-executive Trustees.
Meetings:	Once a term, with additional meetings as required. The committee chair will decide, in consultation with other committee members and in conformity with the board's governance calendar, the venue (which may include a remote meeting) and date/time of meetings.

The committee's specific function is to support the trust board, Head and relevant members of the executive team in their responsibilities for the management of the financial affairs of the trust and stewardship of assets, and efficient use of resources to maximise outcomes for pupils.

In accordance with the scheme of delegation and as appropriate, the committee will:

- report to the trust board on the outcome of its meetings;
- seek guidance or decision from the trust board; and
- liaise with and consult with other committees of the trust board where appropriate, and in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

The committee will have the following responsibilities delegated by the board:

Finance

1. Review and approve an annual budget (for the financial year to 31 August) prepared by the Head, ensuring resources are allocated in line with the trust's strategic priorities as set out in the school development plan (as approved by the Board), staffing needs (including having regard to the work/life balance and wellbeing of staff), curriculum plans (as advised by the education committee) and fulfilment of regulatory requirements.
2. Present the annual balanced budget to the board for approval.
3. Review and approve a realistic three-year financial plan, taking into account the trust's vision, known risks and opportunities.
4. Receive the trust's monthly management accounts in order to monitor the trust's cash position and income and expenditure against the approved budget.
5. Review the trust's reserves policy annually and recommend approval or changes to the policy to the trust board.
6. Report back to each meeting of the trust board, alerting the board to potential problems and significant variations to the approved budget, including a potential appropriation of the trust's reserves, at the earliest opportunity.
7. Ensure that the board's approach to pay and benefits is transparent, proportionate and justifiable and complies with equality legislation.
8. Develop a framework for the pay of the senior executive leader and the leadership team.
9. Comply with statutory requirements to publish trust staff rates of pay and benefits.
10. Ensure that sufficient funds are allocated in the budget for staff pay increments and staff training.
11. Approve pay scales and pay policies for teachers and support staff (but not individual salaries).
12. Review and approve any adjustments to the trust's approved budget (subject to the scheme of delegation).
13. Approve or recommend approval to the board of expenditure in accordance with the limits set out in the finance policy
14. Approve all tenders with regard to the value that reflects the total value of the tender across its contract term.
15. Approval of proposed capital projects with proposed expenditure in excess of the limits set out in the finance policy and monitoring of the implementation of those projects.
16. Ensure that the trust's financial procedures are complied with.
17. Review and act upon any issues identified by benchmarking against similar trusts, internal or external scrutiny.
18. Ensure that the trust follows basic procurement rules and achieves best value for money when acquiring goods and services.

Inclusion and financial scrutiny

1. Ensure that the Trust's financial strategies, resource allocations, and procurement activities support its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Academy Trust Handbook and the Trust's funding agreement obligations regarding pupil inclusion and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
2. Liaise with the Education committee and Pay and Personnel committee, and (if not already a member of the committee) the Send Trustee and Inclusion Trustee, to ensure that the curriculum and staffing structure are financially sustainable while meeting the needs of all pupils.

Audit and Risk

1. A Trustee member of the FGPC will be nominated by the FGPC as its accountable member for Audit & Risk. This Trustee cannot be the Chair of the FGPC, the Chair of the Trust Board, or an employee of the Trust.
2. This Trustee will be included as a key point of contact for escalation of matters related to risk management and/or litigation by the School Leadership Team.
3. This Trustee will oversee the discharge of the functions by the FGPC relating to Internal controls and risk management as outlined below, and will be the lead Trustee for the external audit responsibility of the FGPC.

Internal controls and risk management

4. Examine and review and advise the Trust Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's systems and methods of control of both financial and non-financial matters, including governance, risk analysis and risk management.
5. Ensure that the Trust is complying with the overall requirements for internal scrutiny, as specified in the Academies Financial Handbook.
6. Oversee the annual review of the Trust's risk register by the board.
7. Conduct a regular review of the risk register, seeking and assessing executive assurance that risks and control measures are appropriately identified and monitored, and inform contingency and business continuity planning and the programme of internal scrutiny/audit.
8. Agree an annual programme of internal scrutiny/audit, which is objective and independent, covering systems, controls, transactions and risks appropriately.
9. Consider reports from those carrying out the internal audit/internal scrutiny reviews and the appropriateness of executive action following such reviews and advise the board, including on any additional or alternative steps to be taken.
10. Provide assurance to the board that the trust is properly managing its technology and cyber risks including appropriate risk mitigation strategies by confirming that the appropriate framework is in place and that continuous monitoring and improvement initiatives are adopted and sustained.

External audit

1. Review the auditor's findings and recommendations, and actions taken by the trust's managers in response to those findings.
2. Review findings from other assurance activities by third parties including ESFA financial management and governance reviews, funding audits and investigations.
3. Provide advice to the Trust Board on the basis of its reviews in 1 and 2 above so that the Trust Board can fulfil its duty to ensure there is an appropriate, reasonable and timely response by the trust's management team to findings and recommendations by the external auditors and other third parties (as referred to in 2), taking opportunities to strengthen systems of financial management and control.
4. Review and recommend appropriate actions to the trust board in relation to: the external auditors' annual plan and management letter; and the draft annual report, financial statements and accounts, ensuring that the board and the trust's management team have sufficient time to consider and take appropriate actions in accordance with regulatory requirements.
5. Assess the effectiveness and resources of the external auditor to provide a basis for decision by the trust's members about the auditor's reappointment, dismissal or retendering for the role taking account of the factors referred to in the Academy Trust Handbook.
6. Produce an annual report of the committee's conclusions on the assessment referred to in 4 above to advise the board of trustees and members, including recommendations on the reappointment, dismissal or retendering for the role of the external auditor, and the terms of their appointment, including remuneration.

Insurance

Review the trust's insurance cover having regard to the trust's legal obligations.

Premises and health and safety

1. With regard to the Trust's estate, appoint a Trustee to lead on oversight of estate management, review and approve the Trust's estate management plan, and monitor actions.
2. Receive a report (high-level) from the DFO termly as to lettings of the trust's premises.
3. Review the trust's accessibility plan annually having regard to the role of the Education Committee to also review.
4. Receive an annual health and safety audit report and monitor any arising actions.
5. Receive regular reports on accident statistics, near misses, and incidents of violence or aggression.
6. Ensure that a process is in place to approve educational visits, ensuring that health and safety planning and risk assessments have been undertaken for them.
7. Ensure that appropriate inspections of the trust premises and equipment take place (annually and at appropriate intervals), and a report is received identifying any issues.

8. Monitor the health and safety training that staff undertake.

Policies

The committee will review and monitor all policies delegated by the trust board in accordance with the board's governance calendar.

Delegated policies
Policies that are delegated to the committee to review include:
Acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes and benefits
Anti-fraud Policy
CCTV Policy
Charging and remissions Policy
Data Protection Policy
Disaster Recovery Plan
Educational Visits Policy
Equality Policy and Objectives
Finance Policy
Investment Policy
Pay Policy
Premises Management Policies
Privacy Notices
Reserves Policy
Risk Assessment Policy
Risk Register (operational)