

Minutes of the meeting of the AUDIT COMMITTEE

Held on 23rd May 2023

Present: Kathy Newman (Chair), John Arnott, John Dernie, Richard Hewitson, Monica Lawson, Rob Stokes

With: Leah Palmer, Deputy CEO/Deputy Principal Curriculum and Learners
Lindsey Stewart, Interim Vice Principal
Marc Webb, Interim Director of Finance
Richard Bott, Mazars
Louise Tweedie, RSM

147. Apologies for absence – received from Carole Kitching, Principal and CEO.

148. Disclosures of Interest – none received.

149. Minutes of the last meeting held on 7th February 2023 and matters arising: agreed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising.

150. Audit committee outstanding actions – received and noted.

All actions assigned to the former Deputy Principal Finance and Resources will now transfer to the Interim Director of Finance. The meeting agreed that the actions relating to the following minutes be closed – 111, 122, 133, 142, 143c, 144. The action relating to minute 143a can also be closed but it must be acknowledged that risk delivery remains as a risk. With regard to 143b relating to the IT Action Plan it was noted that a meeting is needed to discuss all aspects of IT. Two governors, Peter Boucher and Rob Wheeler are meeting with the Director of Resources and Projects to look at the college IT. The committee needs to know how the college will manage risks relating to IT security, access and reputation. The Interim Vice Principal will take ownership of these risks. Action 143c can also be closed as the curriculum and quality assurance audit is included in the audit plan for 2023/24.

With regard to mandatory staff training, it was noted that the categories of mandatory training had been forwarded to governors however details of completion rates for this training are still outstanding. The meeting requested that the Head of HR presents a report to the next meeting of the Corporation regarding mandatory staff training.

The Chair advised the meeting that she has sourced a day with a graduate from Nationwide Building Society to assist with the review of risk management at the college. She suggested that a Strategic Risk Day be scheduled to look at all aspects of risk and risk management. Risks need to be pushed down to a level where there are staff who can undertake mitigating actions for those risks. Output from the Risk Management Group (RMG) is encouraging. For risk appetite, it was suggested that this should be considered by the RMG and they present a recommendation to the corporation.

A discussion was held on the committee Key Performance Indicators and the committee asked for a KPI on issue closure and age to be included in the risk management report for Corporation on 4th July 2023. Data Breaches and computer outages are also risks that should be noted and reported.

ACTIONS: TS to remove actions 111, 122, 133, 142, 143a, 143b, 143c from outstanding committee actions list; LS to take ownership of action required under 143b re IT; PF to present report to Corporation 04.07.2023 re mandatory staff training including completion rates; MW to include KPI on issue closure and age in risk management report to Corporation 04.07.2023; data breaches and computer outages to be included in report.

151. Post-16 Audit Code of Practice – document and comparison document received and noted.

NEED TO ADD IN HERE THAT DISCUSSED WHAT CHANGES ARE REQUIRED - AND FACT MINIMAL IMPACT ON THIS COMMITTEE

Reference was made to the bite-size guides referenced in the document and requested that the link to these be forwarded to all governors

ACTION: TS to forward link to bite-size guides to all governors

152. Fraud, irregularity and whistleblowing update – no issues to report.

With regard to fraud, a log of attempted fraud incidents needs to be kept.

The college has a whistleblowing policy but concerns were raised about the promotion of whistleblowing at the college and the committee asked for the Head of HR to look at this.

ACTION: MW to keep a log of attempted fraud incidents; LPA to discuss promotion of whistleblowing with PF

153. Any other business – none raised.

154. Date of next meeting – to be advised.

155. Risk Register and risk management update (including minutes of last Risk Management Group) – confidential minutes refer.

156. Internal Audit reports – confidential minutes refer.

157. Audit Strategy Memorandum year ended 31st July 2023 – confidential minutes refer.

158. Audit Action Log – confidential minutes refer.

159. Audit committee self-assessment/performance review – confidential minutes refer.

160. Audit committee cycle of business 2023/24 – confidential minutes refer.

161. Confidential minutes of last meeting held 7th February 2023 and matters arising – confidential minutes refer.