

**Governing Body**  
**AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the virtual meeting held at 3.30pm on 8 February 2021**

Present: A Maltpress J Gazzard (Chair)  
H Nydam (Co-opted) J Wakelam

In Attendance: J Raffel, Group Director Finance  
L Keane, Scrutton Bland  
P Ewan, Head of Finance  
S Gales, Board Secretary  
S Graham, Group Director of HR  
S Jones, Vice Principal Finance and Resources  
T Elkin, Clerk

Apologies: N Roberts

Absent:

No interests relevant to items on the agenda were declared by members.

		Action
1.	<b><u>Apologies for absence</u></b> Apologies for absence were received from N Roberts who had wi-fi issues.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020</u></b> The minutes were agreed as an accurate account of the meeting.	
3.	<b><u>Matters Arising of the meeting held on 23 November 2020</u></b> The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report and all actions reported had been completed or, where appropriate an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.	
MA6	The revised Terms of Reference are being submitted to the Corporation as part of the Annual Report of the Audit Committee.	
4.	<b><u>Internal Audit Recommendation Tracking Report</u></b> 3 of the 14 recommendations are complete with 11 in progress (due for completion in March); of these 5 relate to HR, 1 relates to Marketing, 1 relates to Budget Setting and Control and 4 relate to IT Infrastructure.	
HS A1	The expected implementation date to be amended to read 'November 2021'.	RStevenson
HR A5	The implementation of iTrent will enable further planning around succession planning and to create clear progression routes within the organisation.	
IT A1	Following the appointment of JNicholson as Group IT Director, this action is now underway. RStevenson to advise on updated expected implementation date.	RStevenson
5.	<b><u>Internal Audit Progress Report</u></b> Scrutton Bland completed three internal audits since October 2020: Learner Recruitment (assurance level rated as 'significant'), Quality Assurance (assurance level rated as 'strong') and Student Satisfaction (assurance level rated as 'strong').	
	Key Findings from Reports: - <b><u>Learner Recruitment</u></b> – <b>Significant assurance</b> The audit considered the processes used to recruit learners to both FE and HE and the effectiveness of the admissions process. The significant findings show that the College's five-year target for HE recruitment (1,000 FTE on programme by 2025) requires a growth strategy to achieve increases in recruitment each year until 2025, in order to achieve this	

over-arching target. This includes continuing work to align HE recruitment events to better reflect the recruitment cycle followed by other HE Institutions as opposed to aligning to the College's FE recruitment cycle. Moreover, the report noted the College's targets to acknowledge receipt of an application in 5 working days, and offer an interview date within 28 working days of the acknowledgement; and observed that (for the 2020/21 applications) compliance was 93% and 85% respectively - a relatively positive position due to the impact of Covid-19 mitigation measures on usual practices.

The audit made **4 recommendations** – **3 low risk** (relating to the outcomes of mystery shopping exercises) which have now been completed, and **1 medium risk** (relating to our HE provision's recruitment strategies and milestones). The medium risk is ongoing due for completion in September 2021.

- Quality Assurance – **Strong assurance (highest level possible)**

The audit provided independent assurance to the Committee in relation to two risks on the Risk Register: 'Failure to effectively monitor the progress of all learners' and 'Underperformance/competency of staff leads to inability to deliver and meet the needs of students'. The significant findings show that the College's termly Performance Review Board (PRB) process which aligns to the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and are led by the quality team with oversight from SET operated well. The PBRs looked at each academic department and, supported by lesson observations, deep dive reviews, reviews of classroom sessions, practical exercises and tutorials culminated in a comprehensive report where areas for improvement become incorporated into the QIP for ongoing monitoring and support.

The audit made **no recommendations** and achieved a 'best practice point' for its deep dive quality assessment process.

The Committee noted that this assurance is likely connected to strengthening the Executive team to create a quality assurance team. The Committee commended the quality team for their outstanding practices and agreed to raise this to the Executive at the next Corporation meeting.

JGazzard

- Student Satisfaction – **Strong assurance (highest level possible)**

The audit considered the process by which student voice is effectively captured and the appropriate response to it; as well as the College's complaints procedure to ensure its appropriateness and its' consistent/successful application. The significant findings show the College's internal induction student survey was completed by 62% of enrolled 16-18 students - a higher completion rate than 2018/19 and 2017/18, which were 61% and 55% respectively (and anecdotally higher than most Colleges). In the majority of areas satisfaction was above the College's internal target of 90% and was also higher than the sector benchmarks. Of the nine categories the College are assessed against, the College improved results in seven of them and since September 2020, the College has received 25 compliments and 4 complaints – there were no common themes in the complaints; and all complaints were addressed through face-to-face meetings and timely communication.

The NSS report also returned a positive outcome, with overall satisfaction at 82.5%, an increase from 73.75% last year, putting the College second highest in comparison to local competitors.

The audit made **no recommendations**.

Scrutton Bland intend to complete an additional six: Key Financial Controls [Cash, Income and Debtors], IT Infrastructure, Follow up of previous recommendations [Apprenticeships, High Needs Learning and Health and Safety], Business Continuity [including Covid-19 response], and HR [Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management]. These will be reported back to the Committee for their meeting on 21 June 2021.

6. **GDPR Update**

Since December 2020, there have been 4 GDPR breaches (3 were employees sending personal and sensitive data to the incorrect email/home address; and 1 was an employee

sending a personal email address to other employees whilst setting a Teams invite for training). In one breach, an employee sent highly sensitive health information to the incorrect employee. Training has been given to this employee; and all employees involved in the 4 breaches have been reminded of the importance of checking addresses before sending and the consequence to both the individual and to the College.

There has also been 1 Freedom of Information request sent to the Business Development team, requesting information about apprenticeship software.

The College has now completed 97.8% of the GDPR Impact Assessment Report. The remaining actions require extensive planning including a review of our Retention Policy (by our DPO) to ensure all expired data is confidentially shredded. Once this policy has been finalised the recommendations will be shared with the Senior Executive Team.

Our DPO has reviewed our Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection extract from our 5-year agreement with MHR (software providers for iTrent) and has confirmed it is a robust policy and will cover all areas.

The HR team and DPO are working on developing the College's Employee Privacy Policy.

## 7. **Risk Management Update**

There are currently **2 red**, **4 amber**, **21 yellow** and **11 green** risks on the register; including 2 new risks: R108 relating to the Financial pressure on the College from implementing Covid-19 mitigation measures (amber rated) and R109 relating to the risk to student outcomes of Covid-19 mitigation measures especially in relation to exams and deadlines (amber rated).

The Committee discussed R040 and queried whether the amber rating was accurate given the timescale associated with addressing the identified IT structural concerns. RStevenson to review the risk and provide additional commentary.

RStevenson

The Committee discussed R092 and queried whether the red risk is indicative of the national apprenticeship position and whether our relationships with local employers gives us significant assurance that our position can be remediated once Covid-19 mitigations allow.

## 8. **Any Other Business**

### **1. Brexit Impact Report**

The Committee noted the report but noted that there are no material or significant implications arising from the report which impact the College, and where there have been minor implications these have been incorporated into the Colleges working practices in order to avoid any operational and/of financial impacts.

*LKeane left the meeting at 4.21pm*

### **2. Appointment of External Auditors**

The Committee discussed that the College has not formally agreed our External Auditors for 2021/22. Following feedback from other colleges and a review of other external auditors, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Corporation the extended appointment of our External Auditors for a further academic year.

SJones

Date of next meeting:

- Monday 21 June 2021 at 3.30pm.

The meeting closed at 4.26pm