

**Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 8 February 2022 at 4.15pm**

**Present virtually:** H Nydam, co-opted J Wakelam, Vice Chair  
J Gazzard, Chair N Roberts, co-opted

**In attendance:** J Raffel, CFO  
N Savvas, CEO  
P Goddard, Scrutton Bland  
S Gales, Governance Professional  
S Graham, Group Director of HR

**Apologies:** C Sutherland, RSM  
L Cox, Scrutton Bland  
P Ewan, WSC Finance Manager

**Action**

**1 Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence**

J Wakelam declared her role as a Trustee of Suffolk Academies Trust. No conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

Apologies were accepted from C Sutherland, L Cox and P Ewan.

**2 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2021 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

**3 Matters Arising from meeting on 23 November 2021**

The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report and all actions reported had either been completed or, where appropriate an update had been provided on progress.

The Committee noted C Sutherland's recommendation that, should the Committee want more assurance that funding income has not been materially mis apportioned it might wish to conduct a funding audit. The Committee to discuss at the next meeting.

**4 Risk Management Update**

There are currently **1 red**, **7 amber**, **7 yellow** and **0 green** risks on the register, of which 14 risks have no change in post mitigation score, 1 risk has reduced in score. No new risks have been added to the register and the risks which were green post mitigation (R012, R027, R026, R023, R009, and R004) have been removed from the register to enable Governors to focus on the most serious risks.

J Raffel noted that whilst the post mitigation green risks are removed from the Governor's risk register, these risks remain on the risk register and are regularly reviewed by the Executive to ensure these risks are still reviewed and can be reviewed by Governors should the risk increase.

The Committee commended this approach.

The Committee discussed R111 (relating to loss of access to key systems due to malicious attack, illegal activity or network failure) and queried whether, given the recent IT connectivity issues, the risk mitigations were adequate. N Savvas noted that this is a key area of development and investment and we are overhauling and updating our IT systems (which are old and were built piecemeal as the College grew) whilst still operating the College systems. N Savvas added that we have just appointed a cyber security specialist and a new Group Director IT to lead this area; but a key area for risk mitigation will be creating a talent pool in IT.

The Committee discussed R092 (relating to not achieving apprenticeship growth) and queried whether this is still a red risk. N Savvas noted that apprenticeships are less of a concern now that students are not furloughed, employers are hiring apprenticeships and end-point assessments are more readily available. N Savvas noted that concerns over whether the College will achieve AEB and HE targets (R106 and R071) are of greater concern. J Raffel to review.

JRaffel

P Goddard noted that the 'level of assurance' column is currently blank, and recommended using this column to triangulate external assurance from corresponding internal and/or external audits.

The Committee discussed the debt tracking as an issue raised within the audit tracking report and queried whether this should be added to the risk register. J Raffel advised that this is not currently a substantive risk to the College.

#### **5 Internal Audit Recommendations Tracking Report**

The Committee received and considered the tracking report which shows that of the 13 recommendations; 1 is now complete, 10 are ongoing and 1 is partially complete, with 1 recommendation with no status.

J Raffel advised that the recommendations of the external auditors are also included on the tracking report.

The Committee asked for an updated report to be circulated with new expected implementation dates.

JRaffel

#### **6 Internal Auditor's Findings Report**

P Goddard noted there are multiple internal audits due in the summer term. The Committee agreed to receive the finding's report ahead of the June meeting.

ScruttonBland  
SGales

The Project Funding Audit received a **strong** assurance; with no recommendations.

The Committee commended the project team.

#### **7 GDPR update**

Governors received and noted the update report provided.

SGraham informed that since November 2021, there have been 6 breaches of which 5 were 'Disclosed in Error' and 1 was 'Lost in Transit' and none have been reported to the ICO. There was 1 subject access request requested by a student's solicitor which was provided after confirmation and consent from the student.

S Graham noted that have introduced new specific GDPR e-systems which help reporting.

The Committee asked P Goddard to, within the scope of the Safeguarding internal audit, consider whether the systems and processes are effective and lessen disclosures in error of a confidential nature.

PGoddard

#### **8 Review of Committee Membership, Skillsets and Training Requirements**

Governors received and considered a report summarising the Committee's membership, skillset and proposing training delivered by CST.

The Committee discussed that the primary concern for the Committee is membership and S Gales gave an update on the governance recruitment process.

The Committee discussed the recommended training, and noted that it would be helpful for the Committee to have general risk assurance training to have refresher on the types of questions a highly effective committee asks and the sector-wide context and national landscape in which it should be considering risks. S Gales to explore

SGales

additional training providers (such as the AoC) and enquire if SAT's Audit and Risk Management Committee would like to link up the training.

The Committee agree to read the Good Practice Guide.

ARMC

**9 Appointment of internal and external auditors**

J Raffel advised that the College needs to re-tender for internal and external auditors for 2022/23. The Committee asked J Raffel to arrange the tender process.

JRaffel

**10 Any Other Business**

**- Date of next meeting**

The Committee agreed to move the date of the next meeting to Thursday 30 June 2022 at 4.15pm.

SGales

The meeting closed at 5.20pm