

## AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 6 February 2023 at 4.30pm

**Present virtually:** J Gazzard, Chair  
J Wakelam, Vice Chair  
K Chapman

**In attendance:** A McGarel, CFO  
C Shepherd, FA - Risk  
L Cox, Scrutton Bland  
M Chatt, Deputy CFO  
N Savvas, CEO  
P Ewan, Head of Finance  
P Goddard, Scrutton Bland  
R Lawson, observing as part of the External Governance Review  
S Gales, Governance Professional  
S Graham, CPO (part)

**Apologies:** H Nydam, co-opted  
S Mason, RSM

**Absences:** A Mapana, co-opted  
N Roberts, co-opted

#### 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 H Nydam. The absence of A Mapana and N Roberts was also noted.

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

The Chair thanked the Vice Chair for chairing the previous meeting.

#### 3. Matters Arising from meeting on 22 November 2022

All matters arising from the previous meetings were complete aside from MA2 which was discussed by the Finance Committee and can be marked as complete.

#### 4. Risk Management Update

The Committee received and considered the papers provided.

There are currently **2 red**, **11 amber**, **12 yellow** risks on the register, of which 1 new risk (WSC061 relating to the ONS reclassification of GFE colleges into public sector) has been added to the register and 2 risks have been removed from the register.

Governors discussed WSC044 relating to the negative impact of Covid-19 on students' prior attainment and gaps in learning, and queried whether this risk can be considered low risk. The CEO outlined the mitigations in place and confirmed that whilst there will be a lasting impact on students, we feel confident we have mitigated the risk to this year's results.

Governors discussed WSCR024 relating to loss of access to key systems due to malicious attack, illegal activity or network failure, and queried whether the risk rating will reduce significantly after the action required works are complete. The CEO confirmed that we expect this to reduce significantly probably to an amber level.

### Action

Governors discussed WSCR021 relating to inflationary pressures lead to issues with costs throughout the organisation, and queried what was meant by this risk. The CEO outlined the rationale for the risk but agreed to work with the FA Risk to refine the risk definition.

CEO  
FA Risk

5. **Audit Recommendations Tracking Report**

The Committee received and considered the tracking report which shows that of the 28 recommendations; 5 are complete, 1 is partially complete, 15 are ongoing and 2 are awaiting an update.

The Committee discussed that many of these recommendations remain ongoing and asked the Executive to prioritise completion of these.

Governors discussed whether there is merit to reviewing low risk recommendations from years ago or whether we should recognise that systems and processes will likely have changed. The CFO to consider.

CFO

Governors discussed the format of the report and asked that future reports provide a summary of progress since the last meeting, hyperlinks to the original audit finding report and reorganised into risk priority order.

FA Risk

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

i. **Progress Report**

Governors received and noted the internal audit progress report which outlined the audits which have been scheduled and completed.

ii. **Examinations**

Governors received and considered the internal audit which took place in November 2022 and received **significant** assurance; with one low-risk recommendation.

Governors discussed the emerging threat of AI (e.g., ChatGPT) and the threats and opportunities it poses to reliable models of assessment. One challenge is that exams may be seen as a lower risk than continuous assessment i.e. AI could be used by students to draft some forms of continuous assessment whereas invigilated exams may be less affected. However, continuous assessment is arguably more relevant to vocational education. AI raises the risk of possible plagiarism and is a risk affecting the wider sector, and queried whether this should be a risk on our register and how the College would mitigate this risk. The CEO agreed this should be added and assigned the risk to the two Principals.

FA Risk

S Graham joined the meeting at 5.05pm

iii. **Health and Safety**

Governors received and considered the internal audit which took place in November 2022 and received **reasonable** assurance; with 2 medium-risk recommendations and, 3 low-risk recommendations which have now been completed.

Governors discussed the importance of health and safety, and asked for the Executive to provide a detailed progress report to the next meeting. It was stressed by the Governors that health and safety provision had been an ongoing issue and that the Executive should demonstrate urgency in addressing the matters raised. A first step being to accept the recommendations stated in the internal audit and promptly implement the findings.

R Stevenson

7. **GDPR update**

Governors received and noted the update report provided, and the CPO summarised the report noting that since the last there have been 12 GDPR breaches/near misses of which 2 were reportable breaches to the ICO. There were no Data Subject Access Request and 1 Freedom of Information request.

The CPO summarised the actions taken to improve systems and processes, and to upskill the staff who caused the breaches. Governors queried the actions taken to inform the individuals affected and provide appropriate support. The CPO outlined the themes of communication and the feedback from those affected.

Governors noted the update on data cleanse plan and welcomed further progress updates.

**8. Review of Committee membership, skillsets and training requirements**

Governors received and noted the report provided.

**9. Any Other Business**

**- Next meeting**

The Chair invited members to attend the next meeting in person and the Committee discussed possibly moving the meeting to a different date to follow the meeting with a dinner at Edmunds. The Governance Professional to arrange.

Gov. Prof.

The meeting closed at 5.31pm