

Minutes of the unreserved business meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 19 September 2019 in Newtownabbey campus commencing at 5.20pm.

Present: Mrs I Allison, Mr W Hutchinson, Dr K McCambridge, Mrs J Eve Mr W McCluggage (Chair)

In Attendance: Mr D Conliffe (DfE), Ms K Doey (NIAO), Mr M Higgins, Ms D Kerr (61.8), Mr S Lavery, Ms H Sampson (DfE), Prof T Scott, Mr V Taggart, Mr N Taylor Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

61.1 Apologies/Welcome

There were no apologies.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Donnelly who was with the College on secondment from SIB and Ms Sampson, Deputy Principal in FE Corporate Governance & Accountability, to the meeting.

61.2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

61.3 Information Governance

Ms Kerr spoke to the Information Governance Report to September 2019 and highlighted key issues including the status of the data retention and disposal schedule and current work being carried out to identify software for recording evidence of consent for the use of cookies.

It was agreed to take item 61.8 on GDPR, at this stage of the meeting.

61.8 GDPR

Mr Taylor outlined the work undertaken through the GDPR Internal Audit process, which had returned 7 x Priority 2, and 2 x Priority 3 findings, in line with other colleges in the sector. Members noted that the audit had returned a satisfactory assurance rating and all findings had been accepted by the College.

The Chair queried provision of a number of IT practices including 2-factor authentication and addressing internal phishing. Committee noted that whilst the need to progress on these issues was appreciated, budgetary pressures required the prioritisation of critical activities. In the meantime, additional resources were being sought by the College and implementation of a new mobile phone contract was underway.

Ms Kerr left the meeting at 5.40pm.

61.4 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 June 2019 were approved.

Proposed: Mr Hutchinson

Seconded: Dr McCambridge

61.5 Matters Arising

Committee noted the report on overview of partnerships between DfE and NRC.

Action: This report to be shared with the Governing Body with the recommendation that it be included as part of the induction process for new governors.

61.6 Chair's Communication

None.

61.7 Correspondence

Members welcomed the FE Colleges Accounts Direction for taking forward and presenting accounts and noted that the College would comply fully with the framework.

61.8 Internal Audit Update

Mr Taylor presented the following final reports, all of which had received satisfactory assurance:

- Estates Management – it was noted that significant change would be reflected in the new strategy.
- Procurement and Management of Contracts – Committee noted this very positive report with which the College was fully compliant. The requirement for business cases and implications for resources was discussed; Mr Conliffe would circulate available guidance.
- Curriculum Planning

Mr Taylor highlighted the Internal Audit Follow Up and the Annual Assurance Report noting that all audits for the year had been concluded and had achieved satisfactory assurance ratings. The College had, therefore, been awarded a satisfactory audit opinion for 2018/19.

Mr Taylor referred members to the Annual Audit Plan for 2019/20 and confirmed that he would review the draft audit report timeline for future presentations.

Committee approved the audit reports as presented.

Action: Internal Audit would agree timelines for a sector wide review with management, and in line with Audit Committees. Details would be brought to the next meeting of Committee.

61.9 Progress against Audit Recommendations

Covered under item 61.8 above.

61.10 Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements

Committee noted the draft annual accounts and report, which would be lodged with the Department and NIAO on 20 September. The documents would then be presented to Resources Committee before being brought back to Audit & Risk for recommendation to the Governing Body.

Members were asked to refer any comments on the report and accounts to Mr Lavery by 24 September.

61.11 External Audit Update

Members noted that the external audit had started on 16 September and a report would be brought to the November meeting of Committee.

61.12 Report Card / CDP

Mr Higgins outlined the status of the Report Cards (RCs) noting amber status for RC 1 and green status for RCs 2 and 3. An outline of performance would be presented at the Governing Body meeting on 25 September.

61.13 Risk Register

Mr Higgins presented the risk register and referred members to the review on page 14 which highlighted extensive significant changes made since the previous meeting.

Committee noted that responsibility for risk 3 had been realigned to Craig Fairless, Head of Marketing and Communication; and responsibility for risk 4 to Helen Dixon, Head of Innovative and Creative Learning.

Actions being implemented to address the various risks were outlined and members noted that for risk 8, a business case application had been approved by the Principals' Group and would now go forward to the Department.

61.14 Registers

Committee noted updates to the FOI, Hospitality and Whistleblowing registers. Mr Lavery reported that the College would be reviewing its Whistleblowing Policy and that the Gifts & Hospitality register would be published on the College website shortly.

61.15 Committee Meeting Dates

Committee agreed the dates for 2019/20 meetings subject to any issues being advised to the Secretary.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 November in Farm Lodge.

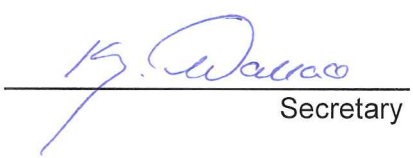
61.16 Any Other Business

None.

The meeting ended at 6.30pm.

Mr W McCluggage 
Chair

Date 6/11/2019
6 November 2019

Mrs K Wallace 
Secretary