

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2024, AT 9:00AM, HELD AT CITY COLLEGE NORWICH, THETFORD BOARDROOM

Present:

Marcus Bailey	MB	Acting Chair
Jock Downie	JD	Governor
Phil Gormley	PG	Governor (<i>until 11:00am</i>)
Sean Green	SG	Governor (<i>remote, via Teams</i>)

Attendees:

Jen Eves	JE	Chief Operating Officer
Jerry White	JW	Principal
Jodie Mitchell	JM	Director of Governance and Legal
Karen McIntosh	KM	Finance Manager
Leisyaen Cox	LC	Internal Auditor, Scrutton Bland (<i>remote, via Teams</i>)
Martin Colbourne	MC	Deputy CEO
Stuart McKay	SM	External Auditor, MHA (<i>until 10:20am</i>)
Claire Harber	CH	Governance and Legal Officer, Minutes

Apologies:

Nikki Gray	NG	Governor
Paul Goddard	PGd	Internal Auditor, Scrutton Bland
Philip Pearce	PP	Chair

1. CONFIDENTIAL – Governor Meeting with Auditors

This item is an opportunity for informal discussion between Governors and auditors and is not formally minuted.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted as above.

3. Declarations of Conflicts

No declarations were made.

4. UNCONFIRMED Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 September 2024

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2024 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

5. CONFIDENTIAL - UNCONFIRMED Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 September 2024

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2024 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

6. Matters Arising

This item was taken after item 13.

Audit 1 Action 2: ACTION COMPLETE
 Audit 1 Action 3: ACTION COMPLETE
 Audit 1 Action 4: ACTION COMPLETE
 Audit 1 Action 10: ACTION COMPLETE
 Audit 1 Action 11: ACTION COMPLETE
 Audit 1 Action 12: ACTION COMPLETE

Audit 1 Action 13: ACTION COMPLETE

It was agreed that owners of outstanding actions should work with the Chair of the Committee to close their actions by the end of January 2025.

7. CONFIDENTIAL – Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023/24

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

8. CONFIDENTIAL – Draft Audit and Risk Committee Report 2023/24

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

9. Review of Internal Audit Reports

9.1 IAS Reports for 2023/24

LC confirmed that the internal auditors have assigned a strong assurance opinion to the Darwin Project audit. The purpose of the audit was to review how the project is being managed, how the workstreams have been defined and how they are being progressed and implemented.

The internal auditors consider that the project is being efficiently managed and the processes for monitoring and reporting on progress were found to be transparent. No recommendations have been raised.

The Committee noted the IAS Reports for 2023/24, but it was recognised that the project has been superseded due to the change of strategic framework and the Committee requested that there be narrative to explain this.

ACTION 9: LC to include narrative in the Final Report – Darwin Project to note that the project has been superseded due to the change of strategic framework (LC).

9.2 CONFIDENTIAL – Internal Audit Annual Report 2023/24 including Head of IA Opinion

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

10. Progress Report on Outstanding Internal Audit Recommendations

The Progress Report on Outstanding Internal Audit Recommendations were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Committee were assured that outstanding internal audit recommendations are a priority for the Senior Management Team and are being brought into sharper focus at team meetings. It is expected that by the end of the year the College will be in a much better position on outstanding recommendations.

It was highlighted that there is work to be done to overlay action plans resulting from the FE Commissioner's (FEC) recent deep dive on the apprenticeships provision with the College's own internal audit recommendations. It was confirmed that there will be support from the FEC on this work.

A discussion ensued on whether external support could assist the College in gaining greater assurance on outstanding recommendations.

ACTION 10: SG to meet with JW/MC to discuss possible frameworks and external expertise required to gain greater assurance on outstanding recommendations (SG/JW/MC).

11. CONFIDENTIAL – Risk Update

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

11.1 Risk Management Policy

The Risk Management Policy was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Committee noted that suggested changes to the Risk Management Policy reflect the change to a single risk register for the College. Risks will be considered at every Audit and Risk Committee meeting, by the executive team termly and by the Board on an annual basis.

JW asked the Committee to decide what risks they would like to review at each meeting to enable relevant reporting. Points for consideration were highlighted as follows:

- How would the Committee like risks scored (for example, top ten)?
- How will the College ensure relevant risks are considered by the relevant Committees?
- What will be the process for closing risks, and what should the Audit and Risk Committee’s role be in this process?

ACTION 11: A&R Committee to decide which risks they wish to consider, how it will be ensured that relevant risks are considered by the relevant Committees and what the process should be for closing risks. Add to next A&R agenda (JM/CH).

It was agreed that the Risk Management Policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

The Audit and Risk Committee determined to recommend the Risk Management Policy to the Board for approval.

12. Statutory, Regulatory and Sector Updates

The Committee noted the FE Digest circulated prior to the meeting.

13. Other Urgent Business

No matters were raised under this item.

14. CONFIDENTIAL – Meeting Review and Summary

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next Audit and Risk Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place on 4 March 2025 at 9:00am.

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 11:32am.

Signed Date
(Acting Chair)