

MINUTES



Directorate: Governance

Minutes of: HRUC Audit and Risk Committee

Date: 15 June 2023 **Time:** 4.30pm – 6.00pm

Venue: Uxbridge Campus and via MS Teams link

Present:

Nasim Khan (NK)	Governor/Chair
Tracey Critchley (TC)	Governor
Ketan Sheth (KS)	Governor
Vincent Neace (VN)	Governor
Keith Smith (KS)	CEO

In attendance:

Dylan McTaggart	Deputy CEO/ Principal Uxbridge College
Mumtaz Van der Vord	AP* Supported & Targeted Learning
Perry Perrott	Group Director of Governance
Shane Woodhouse	Chief Finance Officer
Andy Miller	Group Director Corporate Services
Kath Rangeley	Director of Funding & Information Services
Paul Carruthers	Managing Director Employer Services & Partnerships
Anna Beattie	Director of Finance

Apologies: None.

Action Tracker:	Actions:	Responsible:	By When:
1	Test of lockdown procedure to take place using current fire alarm.	AM	July 2023
2	Equipment required has been purchased and will be distributed across 5 campus. Defib requirements to be investigated.	AM	Sept 2023
3.	New format of Risk register to be delivered	PP/SW	Sept 2023
4.	Produce a published policy procedure	PP	Sept 2023

1. **Apologies for absence**
Nasim welcomed all to the Audit Committee meeting. There were no apologies of absence.
2. **Notification of any urgent items members may wish to raise under Any Other Business:**
There were no items notified.
3. **Notification of Interests Members may wish to declare relating to any item:**
There were no interests declared.
4. **Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 23rd March 2023 at Uxbridge College**
The minutes were approved and would be taken as 'signed by the Chair'.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 23rd March 2023, not on the agenda**
There were no matters arising that were not already included on the agenda.

Item for Discussion:

6. **Title: Review of previous audit recommendations**
SW provided a comprehensive update.
Chair commented that the audit recommendations are being actioned and work is ongoing.
AM provided a detailed discussion regarding the lockdown procedure. Current software used is no longer compatible and a replacement is being sourced.
 - **Test of lockdown procedure to be completed by July 2023 (action 1)**

Item for discussion:

7. **Health and Safety update**
AM provided a comprehensive Health and Safety update.
The committee had a detailed discussion around the health and safety review and audit findings including training needs. It was suggested that health and safety should be elevated into the risk register, Chair suggested to make it more meaningful and not a generic headline. PP explained that the risk register will be fully overhauled by the start of term which will report in a more succinct manner. Risk will be the highlight and first agenda item going forward.
 - **Equipment purchased to be distributed across 5 sites. (action 2)**
 - **Defib requirements to be investigated. (action 3)**
 - **Risk register to be overhauled for start of new term (action 4)**

8. **Item for discussion:**

ESFA Provider Market Oversight – Funding assurance review

KR talked through the Education and Skills Funding Agency report which was performed September 2022.

A number of housekeeping errors were reported.

Chair queried the housekeeping errors and what needs to be done to rectify this.

KS responded there are historical issues as well as the vast number of people involved in apprenticeship provisions. We are moving in the right direction and going forward there is a need to communicate how important apprenticeship funding is.

VN asked for reassurance that the process is good enough.

PC gave detailed response of the improvements that are being made to take us forward following the audit.

9. **Item for discussion:**

Learning Support Report

KS provided details for the 2021 National Funding Audit. Following the audit, a full internal audit was conducted by KPMG in January 2023 for HCUC resulting in five recommendations which were categorised as high. SW confirmed that we have responded to the recommendations, KPMG have not yet validated the responses.

M VdV gave a summary on the five recommendations and details of the steps taken to mitigate the variances. SW commented that historically the recording has been done on home grown systems and now is the time to source a software solution to assist with recording information and providing evidence to meet our needs. KS commented on the next steps and the great opportunity we have to restructure and put the organisation architecture around what is such an important area. KS gave thanks to MVdV for the progress made in this area so far. Suggested as a committee to add this area into the internal audit programme to test our response to the recommendations and that our systems and procedures are developing.

Chair suggested going back to KPMG for a more contextual version of the audit.

10. Item for discussion:
Title: *Incidences of Fraud or Corruption

SW provided details of a fraud incident that occurred in April 2023 involving a spoof email address, all monies were refunded. Following this incident enhanced protection has been put in place to protect staff and individuals within corporate services and the senior leadership team in terms of impersonation. In addition, all staff within finance department have attended the Barclays Cyber Fraud Awareness campaign. We have also enhanced the process in terms of addressing urgent payments, we now require 2 senior post holders to confirm payment.

11. Item for discussion:
Title: Additional Audit Commissioned – PEEPS

SW discussed the requirement for an internal audit for PEEPS (personal emergency evacuation plan students) to ensure compliance. SW confirmed there is room within the budget to accommodate the additional audit. Committee agreed to proceed with the audit.

12. Item for discussion:
Risk Register update

SW gave details regarding the risk register, scoring from when last reported is not much different. SW confirmed that with the assistance of PP there will be a new format to modernize and make the report more robust which will highlight the key risks, which will include merger and capital risk in addition to operational risk. Committee welcomed the new format.

13. Item for discussion: Policies for Approval
Anti-Bribery Policy

PP talked through the recommendations made by PP following a full review of the policy. PP confirmed he supported the changes made. Main changes

- Approval of the policy under delegation from the full corporation.
- Public Interest Disclosure Act was updated in 2020 which is now updated in the policy.
- Roles and responsibilities of Governing Body.
- PP to produce a published policy procedure with the support of Senior Leadership Team.

The chair queried if the Anti-Bribery Policy is mandatory published policy. PP confirmed that it is a mandatory policy but not mandatory to published, but we will publish for full disclosure.

The chair sought clarification of FOI request being made regarding anti bribery would we be able to answer that request. PP confirmed that we would, and we would have to answer under FOI unless it has commercial sensitivity.

Committee approved Anti-Bribery Policy.

14. Any other business:

Decision on next meeting for Estates and Property

PP agreed to organise this meeting.

A review of all committees, their effectiveness and use is taking place with PP and the Chair of the Corporation to ensure we have the most effective use and communication between each Committee and the Corporation.

20.1 To confirm and agree the dates and times of Audit and Risk Committee meetings for 2023/24

The dates and times of the meetings are indicative and may be subject to change:

- Thursday 28 September 2023 at 4.30pm
- Wednesday 22 November 2023 at 4.30pm (leading into joint meeting with Resources Committee)
- Wednesday 7 March 2024 at 4.30pm
- Wednesday 13 June 2024 at 4.30pm

The Chair thanked the committee for their time.

The meeting closed at 6.00pm.

Signed.....

Date.....