



**MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2021 AT  
10.00 AM REMOTELY VIA MS TEAMS**

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## MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2021 AT 10.00 AM IN REMOTELY VIA MS TEAMS

Present: Kevin Slack (Chair), Hazel Clint, Mike Kapur, Rosslyn Green

In attendance: Jenny Brandham (Director of Higher Education) – 49/20-21.2 only  
Richard Eaton (CFO)  
Michael Ford (Corporate Services)  
Kate Martin (Vice Principal) – 49/20-21/2 only  
Heather Simcox (Deputy CEO)  
Jonathan Creed (ICCA – Internal Auditors)  
Sam Lifford (BDO – External Auditors)  
Rose Matthews (Clerk)

Prior to commencing formal business, Governors met in private with the representatives from ICCA and BDO.

### PART ONE - GENERAL MINUTES

#### 43/20-21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

#### 44/20-21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, CONFIRMATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND QUORUM

All members were eligible and the meeting was confirmed to be quorate.

There were no new declarations.

#### 45/20-21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020 were formally approved.

#### 46/20-21 MATTERS ARISING

29/20-21 The Clerk had circulated the presentation on higher education.

30/20-21 The CFO talked through the pension update he had circulated via e-mail. He confirmed they related to historic pensions from previously merged institutions and confirmed it had been an isolated incident and there were no more issues.

The financial statements had been shared and approved.

35/20-21 The HE Risk Register had been updated.

Action

Date

47/20-21

## **REVIEW OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Internal and External Recommendations Monitoring Report was shared.

The Committee noted there were three outstanding actions.

48/20-21

## **RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK REGISTER REVIEW**

Michael Ford presented the latest Risk Management Report and updated Register.

In summary, the high risks related to Covid-19, followed by the failure to achieve the budget targets, both of which were detailed in the report.

The Chair questioned how things were in the moment. The Deputy CEO explained that lateral flow testing had been carried out on 5, 8, 11 March, the College had also provided this for the UTC.

All teaching and student support staff were asked to return on the 8<sup>th</sup> and many students, including HE, adults and apprentices had returned. Some students had been given priority to return to a full timetable, which in the main related to those undertaking practical assessments and JWC had returned to the model introduced last September. Some students had been anxious and reluctant to return to site, some were shielding until the end of March. Overall it was very positive, with most students keen to return to face to face teaching.

The main focus for health and safety remained Covid-19 and ensuring the buildings complied with Covid-19 regulations and developing the lateral flow test programme.

An update was also provided on litigation and safeguarding.

Roslyn Green questioned an increase in the number of safeguarding disclosures from the previous year. The Deputy CEO explained that as a result of covid-19 there were a number of wider issues in society such as exploitation, an increase in domestic abuse and an increase in poverty. Parents were also needing a lot more support. The College had rolled-out a number of extra sessions to support students, but a lot of students were returning as the College provided a safe place for them.

Mike Kapur noted some sensitive issues were emerging around the Black Lives Matter movement and recent events with Sarah Everard and asked if the College had

a mechanism to assess the unintended consequences of decisions made in relation to diversity, exclusivity and gender balance.

The Committee discussed this at length and it was agreed to review the Decision Making Policy and formalise the impact assessments carried out as part of the process to take into consideration Mike's comments.

MF

22/06

**49/20-21**

## **HE RISK REGISTER**

The Director of HE summarised the HE Risk Register.

The Director had worked closely with Michael Ford to ensure it was aligned with the Strategic Risk Register.

Changes since the last meeting related to risks around the Access and Participation Plan, Covid-19, concern around curriculum activity and competition and markets authority and student voice had been a recent addition.

Rosslyn Green questioned Risk 16 and noted there were no comments indicating the preventative controls were effective. The conditions of registration were ongoing and subject to change and could not be confirmed as effective until any such review by the OFS.

Students were glad to be back on site, there were no concerns with partners and the relationship with employers was working well.

Mike Kapur asked if there were any adverse effects with Erasmus moving to Turing, but it was noted there was not.

*Kate Martin and Jenny Brandham left the meeting.*

**50/20-21**

## **INTERNAL ASSURANCE**

**51/20-21.1**

## **STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS**

Jonathan Creed, of internal auditors, ICCA presented the Internal Audit Report on the Strategic Business Planning Process.

Jonathan said that in terms of the review itself, this was the most sophisticated business planning process he had ever seen in a college. It was clear DCG was a policy led organisation.

The report contained the full details and there were no recommendations. The report provided substantial assurance.

Rosslyn Green noted the move to a five-year plan and questioned if that had been adapted to incorporate Covid. Jonathan explained the plan remained in place,

but the processes beneath that had changed to react to the changing environment.

The Deputy CEO noted that Covid would have some impact on the business plans, but the overarching objectives remained the same. There could be some adaptations on the back of the Skills for Jobs White Paper.

**51/20-21.2 CAPITAL STRATEGY**

The Internal Auditors went on to share the Capital Strategy.

The objective was to provide assurance the College had adopted a sufficiently robust approach to capital planning and prioritisation, ensuring the resultant expenditure met the needs of the College and its stakeholders.

The report provided substantial assurance with one advisory recommendation.

**52/20-21 EXTERNAL ASSURANCE**

**EXTERNAL AUDITOR PROGRESS**

Sam Lifford, of External Auditors, BDO explained there was little to report at this stage.

The External Auditors were gearing up to commence the audit in April, with an update at the June Audit Committee meeting.

There would be more relating to going concern at the planning stage, but the CFO was aware.

The Committee Chair asked if there was anything from last year's audit process that could be improved upon. It was noted carrying out the audit remotely held its challenges.

The Committee Chair confirmed with Sam that she would remain the audit partner responsible for the College for the forthcoming year.

*The meeting finished at 11.45 am*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_