

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College
Audit Committee**

**PART 1: Minutes of a meeting held at the Brighton Campus on
Monday 4 March 2019 commencing at 16.30**

Present: Gary Anderson (Chair), Natalie Brett, Rob Lee, Kathleen Downes

In attendance: Stephen Pringle (Wylie & Bisset), Nick Juba (CEO), Jon Rollings (COO), Yolanda Hughes (Interim Governance Advisor)

Apologies: Martyn Wilkes

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

AUDIT COMMITTEE TRAINING SESSION

2. Stephen Pringle of Wylie & Bisset led training session on the role and responsibilities of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee were provided with the background information leading to the training session which covered the role of the Audit Committee. It was explained that the session was part of the work on development and progression of the Committee in line with the intention to ensure it was fully discharging its obligations and operating effectively.

16.40hrs Rob Lee joined the meeting

The session covered the following key headlines with additional information provided:

Role of the Audit Committee
Role of the Chair of the Audit Committee
Communication
Core Programmes for an Audit Committee
Role of the Internal and External audit providers

The Members welcomed the training session and based on the information provided agreed that it would be sensible to incorporate an additional Audit Committee meeting for the 2019/20 academic period. The meeting to be scheduled to take place in late October 2019 to give the committee the opportunity to finalise their self-assessment for 2018/19 in order to include the outcomes from this review into their Annual Audit Committee report and submit their findings to the Corporation Board.

Action:

**Schedule a meeting for October 2019.
Review the Audit Committee terms of reference and draft Self-Assessment
Questionnaire in June 2019.**

SESSION WITHOUT MANAGEMENT PRESENT

- 19 *The Chair proposed to carry this item forward for consideration at the end of the meeting.*

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3 DECEMBER 2018

- 20 The Part 1 and Part 2 minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2018, having been previously circulated to governors, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

- 21 There were no matters arising.

AUDIT COMMITTEE SELF ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

- 22 The Chair of Audit the Committee explained that he did not wish to lose sight of the action plan and that the Committee needed to improve its overall effectiveness and refocus their attention on their key responsibilities.

The members discussed their self-assessment approach as touched on during the training session and it was agreed that the Interim Governance Advisor would prepare a draft self-assessment document along with the Audit Committee terms of reference to review and complete at the June 2019 meeting. It was proposed by the Interim Governance Advisor that the self-assessment exercise needed to be linked to the Audit Committee terms of reference and that the exercise be evidence based. It was envisaged that the Audit Committee would receive and consider the draft self-assessment document and Audit Committee terms of reference at the June 2019 meeting for completion by the October meeting.

Action

Interim Governance Advisor to draft and circulate a self-assessment questionnaire specific to the Audit Committee and include an additional agenda item for the June 2019 meeting.

INTERNAL AUDIT – WYLIE & BISSET

- 23 **Financial Controls - Commercial Income Audit Report – January 2019 –
CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

- 24 **Libraries and Virtual Learning Environment Audit Report – November 2018**

Stephen Pringle presented the Internal Audit Report on Libraries and Virtual Learning Environment undertaken at the College and went through the executive summary which set out the scope of the review and the work undertaken.

Overall conclusion – Strong

Strong assurance was given for the audit and it was concluded that the Library and Learning Resources Centre at the college and the Virtual Learning Environment were meeting learners needs.

The audit had also identified several areas of good practice and these were noted in the final report

It was noted that 1 medium risk recommendation and 3 low grade recommendations had been made as detailed in the report.

Members welcomed the comparative benchmarking data in the audit report which showed that the College had a greater number of devices available to learners than the comparator Colleges with a ratio of 1:9.

Governors welcomed the report which as strong outcome for the College however, noted the challenge would be in maintaining the level and quality of IT equipment going forward.

Approved

The Committee formally approved the Libraries and Virtual Learning Environment Audit Report

26 Health & Safety Audit Report – February 2019

Stephen Pringle presented the Internal Audit Report on Health & Safety undertaken at the College and went through the executive summary which set out the scope of the review and the work undertaken.

Overall conclusion – Substantial assurance

A Substantial level of assurance over the controls in place surrounding Health & Safety was given to the College.

The audit report had raised a total of 6 recommendations to enhance the arrangements of controls as follows:

3 medium risk recommendations and 3 low level risk recommendations were made as detailed in the report.

The Committee referred to the recommendation in relation to mandatory training aspect and asked whether there was a definitive list of the required Health & Safety training that needed to be undertaken by staff and whether the College ensured that all necessary training was completed. The Chair of the Audit Committee stated that he did not feel that the culture of the organisation in respect of Health & Safety had been captured in the report. The COO accepted the point raised and stated that there was a difference across the sites and that it would take time to achieve a consistent approach and unified culture across the College.

The CEO explained that on a positive note in respect of the cultural aspect there was a number of staff who were extremely competent and were working hard to bring consistent and improvements to the culture across the sites.

Action – CEO Principal/Director HR

The Committee requested that regular updates on Mandatory Training data be provided in the CEO report within the HR section. It was noted that this data was provided as requested albeit no broken down to specific areas.

It was agreed that it would be useful for the Board to receive a briefing on Health & Safety at a future board meeting.

Approved

The Committee formally approved the Health & Safety Audit report.

27 Support Service Internal Audit Report – February 2019

Stephen Pringle presented the Internal Audit Report on Support Services undertaken at the College and went through the executive summary which set out the scope of

the review and the work undertaken. The audit covered Marketing and Student Recruitment; Management Information Services (MIS); Human Resources; Student Services; IT Services; Finance Departments; Estates and Facilities.

Overall conclusion – Substantial assurance was provided over the controls in place across the Support Services Department at the College. The report had also identified several areas of good practice across the 7 departments.

The audit report had raised a total of 9 recommendations to enhance the arrangements of controls as follows:

- 1 High Risk Recommendation
- 5 Medium Risk recommendations
- 3 Low risk recommendations

The Committee received the report but requested that an amendment be made to Page 7 in respect of the number of Level 6 advisors at the Worthing site. There were no additional comments recorded.

Approved

The Committee formally approved the Support Services audit report.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDITORS – RSM

28 Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2019 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

29 Outstanding Audit Recommendations – Progress Report

The COO presented the progress report on Outstanding Audit recommendations and acknowledged that they had not achieved as much progress as desired although work was ongoing.

Members asked about the lack of progress around GDPR and if this was a capacity issue. The COO explained that there was an element of capacity but it was also due to financial constraints which had limited the use of external resource.

Action – COO

The Committee requested that the date of the original recommendation and priority level be included as an additional column within the report.

RISK

30 Risk Management Report – update

The COO presented the update on the Risk Management report explaining that there were currently 8 red category risk with scores of 20 or 25 within the schedule and that the number and risk scores were unchanged from the last report.

Members requested that the Executive that the risk score around GDPR compliance be reviewed considering the lack of progress as outlined in the Outstanding Audit Recommendations report. The CEO and COO did not deem this to be a red category risk due to the probability assessment but noted the potential high impact.

It was proposed that access EU Staff and Students recruitment issues relating to BREXIT be considered for addition to the Risk Register

Received

The Committee received the update on Risk Management.

31 WHISTLEBLOWING AND FRAUD

None to report.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION EXCLUDING EXECUTIVE

32 The Chair of the Audit Committee explained that he had carried forward this item on the agenda to the end of the meeting and requested that the executive remain present.

The Chair explained his views on this specific agenda item and it was proposed that they would allocate an annual session on the Audit Committee agenda when IAS and FSA would be given the opportunity to meet with the Committee in private and the same facility would be provided to the SLT. It was agreed that they would retain the flexibility to hold a closed session if the need arose to do so.

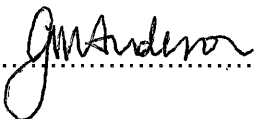
AOB

33. No other business was raised.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

34. It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on 1 July 2019 at 16.30 at the Brighton Central Campus.

The meeting ended at 18:29 pm.

Signature of Chair.......... Date.....1/7/19.....