

Audit Committee

Mon 02 October 2023, 16:00 - 16:45

MS Teams

Attendees

Present: Kath Causey (Independent Governor and Chair) Susan Snape (Independent Governor), Sarah Smith (Co-Opted Governor)

In attendance: Steven Scott (Finance Director), Dave Harrison (Vice Principal Data and Funding), Jane Butterfield (TIAA), Sarah Rhead (Minutes)

The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

Meeting minutes

1. Apologies for absence

AC-23-10-01

Apologies for absence had been received from Joanne Platt and Hayley Mercer.

2. Declarations of Interests

AC-23-10-02

There were no declarations of interests.



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The Chair of the Committee thanked all for attending at short notice for this special meeting of the Committee, to discuss the Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24, before it goes to Board for approval on 10 October.

The Chair welcome Sarah Smith to the meeting and introductions were made.

The Committee thanked the Internal Auditor for her report and noted it was clear and well documented.

The Chair informed the Committee that prior to this meeting, she had discussed with the Internal Auditor the scope behind reviewing Estates Management in 2024-25. In light of the capital projects to be completed on site, the Chair had queried whether this review should be brought forward but had been assured, after this conversation that 2024-25 was the right time to undertake this audit.

The Chair welcomed feedback from other members of the Committee on the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24.

The Committee agreed that Cyber Security was a high priority for 2023-24 and was identified in the plan as a key emerging theme.

Governors discussed Apprenticeships as this too is identified in the plan as a key emerging theme. The plan notes the cost of training an apprentice being double what the Government predicted and discussed whether an internal audit of Apprenticeships should be brought forward to 2023-24 instead of this being looked at in 2024-25.

The VP Data and Funding informed the Committee that there is a Government lead audit of all apprenticeships currently underway. This audit is part way through and is due for completion in 2024. This government audit will identify risks and funding changes. The Vice Principal Data and Funding suggested that an internal audit during this time would not be beneficial as risks and funding of standards could change as a result. It was noted that the College has no high risk apprenticeships and the College's provision is reviewed continuously.

The Chair queried how the outcome of the government audit of apprenticeships would be communicated to Governors. The VP Data and Funding and the Finance Director agreed this would be via the Principals Strategic Update to the Governing Board or via direct communication with Governors.

The Committee agreed that the audit should not be undertaken until the outcome of the government lead audit of apprenticeships, due for completion in January 2024, was known.

With regards to the earlier discussion regarding Estates Management, Governors noted the increased risk associated with a college site undertaking such large scale building works but felt assured after the Internal Auditors explanation to support this remains in the 2024-25 plan. The Director of Finance also confirmed that the Health and Safety internal audit is currently taking place at the College and this covers H&S procedures, risk assessment, and accidents, including near misses.

Discussion took place as to which review could move from 2023-24 to 2024-25 if the Apprenticeships audit was brought forward and Governors agreed that Sub-contracting could be removed in light of the significant improvements made in this area in recent years, which has resulted in sub-contracting provision being a low risk area.

The Vice Principal Data and Funding noted that if the apprenticeship audit was to be moved into 2023-24, that Easter 2024 would be the earliest it could be undertaken. He also assured the Committee that there are no areas of concern in relation to the College's apprenticeship provision.

The Chair agreed to discuss the proposed changes to the Audit Plan with the Principal and Director of Governance, before making a recommendation to the Governing Board.



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Resolved: The Committee agreed to make a recommendation on the 2023-24 Internal Audit Plan to the Governing Board.

The meeting ended at 4.45pm.



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