



**CALDERDALE COLLEGE
AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 March 2024
via MS Teams at 5.00pm.**

Present:

Rachel Court	External Governor (Chair)
Richie Dunk	External Governor
Jenny Grainger	External Governor
Greg Scully	External Governor
Martyn Stone	External Governor (Vice Chair)
Chris Reeve	Co-Opted Governor

In Attendance:

Andrew Harrison	Vice Principal – Corporate Resources
Marc Harvey	ICCA
Richard Lewis	RSM
Jane Taylor-Holmes	Clerk

Agenda: There were no items of other business.

Min. No	Minutes	Action
	AC/24/101 - Apologies for absence	
1	No apologies were received, all members were present.	
2	Apologies were received from Mr J Creed, ICCA, it was noted that Mr M Harvey, ICCA was in attendance in Mr Creed's absence. Committee members welcomed Mr Harvey.	
	AC/24/102 – Confirmation of eligibility, quorum and declarations of interest	
3	No notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office. There were no declarations of interest in agenda items. The meeting was quorate.	
	AC/24/103 – Minutes of previous meetings	
4	Resolved - The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.	

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5	Resolved: The minutes of the joint Audit and Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 27 November 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.	
	AC/23/138 – Matters Arising	
6	Committee members reviewed the matters arising matrix and the comments made in relation to progress.	
7	In relation to the action arising from agenda item AC/23/147 and the development of a risk acceptance process, should the residual risk remain higher than then risk appetite due to factors outside of the College control; it was agreed that this would be considered at the July 2024 meeting.	
8	In relation to the action arising from agenda item AC/23/127, it was agreed that this action was now closed as risk appetite had been RAG rated. It was noted that the Committees had been regularly reviewing risk and risk appetite.	
9	In relation to the to the action arising from agenda item AC/23/130, it was noted that all items had been considered; Audit and risk and risk appetite was being considered by the Committees, sustainability had been considered at the last Governor Development session and the business continuity was on the agenda for consideration. It was also noted that cyber security had been reviewed at the joint meeting with the Finance and Resources Committee in November.	
10	All further matters arising from previous meetings were completed, for completion at a future meeting date or on the agenda for discussion.	
	AC/24/105 – Health and Safety	
11	Mr Harrison provided the Health and Safety update. It was noted that in addition to the regular report, the external report had been provided.	
12	The Committee expressed gratitude to Mr A Wright, External Governor for undertaking the role as Health and Safety Link Governor. The Committee noted their thanks and appreciation for support in this role and for his recommendation to instruct an external provider to undertake a review.	

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13	Mr Harrison explained the staffing changes in relation to the management of health and safety. Mr Harrison explained that the College had widened the remit of Estates manager to include the health and safety role, and a new Health and Safety Manager had been recruited. The recently retired Health and Safety Manager would be providing support one day per week to support the transition.	
14	Mr Harrison, the Deputy Principal and the Head of Estates and Health and Safety would be undertaking IOSH Leading Safely training.	
15	Governors noted the progress provided in the report.	
16	Mr Harrison commented that an independent review had been commissioned on recommendation from Mr Wright. WorkNest had been engaged and it was noted that the review was timely due to the staffing changes in the area Mr Harrison explained that the College had asked for the review to focus around higher risk work areas. Mr Harrison explained that a very comprehensive report had been provided (approx. 78 pages) and a copy of the Executive summary had been provided to Committee members.	
17	Mr Harrison explained that the report provided a clear message about accountability in the curriculum areas and a recommendation that accountability and responsibility should lie with the managers and technicians to complete the risk assessments and health and safety operation role. This would leave the Health and Safety Manager to focus on oversight, the review of risk assessments, and advice.	
18	Mr Harrison confirmed that the College was in the process of development a clear action plan and reviewing job descriptions to ensure that the recommended accountability in relation to health and safety is explicit. It was noted that additional training for staff would be provided.	
19	Mr G Scully, External Governor asked whether, if there was a need to train individuals to undertake risk assessments whether there was any risk whilst training was awaited? Mr Harrison explained that the current risk assessments in place are appropriate due to the intensive involvement of the previous Health and Safety manager. There was also reassurance that WorkNest had largely reported that safe processes were in place. Mr Harrison explained that he did not believe there was any specific risk in relation to the transition period.	

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20	Mr C Reeve, Co-opted Governor asked whether based on the fact that this was the Committee with Health and Safety whether the report covered everything that the Committee needed to know in relation to health and safety and whether the report was a standard format. Mr Harrison commented on the role of Mr Wright as Health and Safety Link Governor and his oversight of the report and contribution to the process. Mr Harrison also commented on the continued use of WorkNest as independent advisors to review the actions and the progress. The RoSPA accreditation reports also provided external assurance in relation to Health and Safety.	
21	It was agreed that Mr Harrison would ask WorkNest to review the Health and Safety report and provide a comment about whether the report covered all that is needed.	Action: Mr Harrison July 2024
22	Mr M Stone, External Governor asked about the length of time to complete the actions and when the action plan would be visible to the Committee. Mr Harrison explained that there was an expectation that the action plan would be provided to the next meeting in July. It was agreed that it was important for the Audit Committee to be assured that there was progress in this area and it was suggested that the involvement of WorkNest in this assurance role would be considered.	Action: Mr Harrison July 2024
23	It was noted that the Search & Governance Committee would be considering the Health and Safety Link Governor role as Mr Wright was due to retire from the Governor role. It was agreed that it was important to link this role to the Audit Committee.	Action: Search & Governance Committee July 2024
24	Mr Harrison explained that Mr Wright had made a recommendation for unannounced senior management walks to be undertaken. This had been underway and remedial action taken.	
25	Mr Harrison referred Committee members to section 2.4 of the report and the year-on-year progress reported. Whilst there had been an increase in number of incidents, there had been a similar increase in the number of incidents in the 'no injury sustained' category.	
26	Mr Harrison referred to the additional information about fire evacuation provided.	

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27	Mr Harrison explained	<p>Action: Mr Harrison July 2024</p> <p>Action: Mr Harrison July 2024</p> <p>Action: Mr Harrison July 2024</p>
28	The College had been successful in the RoSPA award for 28 th year in a row.	
29	Mrs J Taylor-Holmes, Clerk to the Corporation explained that a question had been raised at the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee in relation to the availability of first aid trained staff on each floor within the PWC building. Mr D Malone, Principal and Chief Executive had referred to work being undertaken to ensure that staff were available. Mr Harrison explained that work was ongoing to review first aid trained staff, including the number of staff to ensure that there was good coverage. It was noted that a number of facilities staff members were first aid trained. It was agreed that an update would be provided to a future meeting.	
30	Mr Scully asked about the staff members who were first aid trained. Mr Harrison explained that it was his understanding that first aiders are recruited from business support staff members rather than teachers or lecturers who may regularly be inaccessible due to teaching commitments.	
31	There was a request to reference compliance with mandatory training in future reports. It was noted that this was currently reported to the Finance & Resources Committee meeting as part of the HR update report.	
32	In relation to the number of accidents, it was agreed that a key statistic was the number of accidents relevant to the student population. It was agreed that this would be considered (noting that the number of learners had significantly increased in the year).	
39	Resolved: Committee members received the Health & Safety Report and the external report.	
	AC/24/106 – ESFA Assurance Audit Review 2022/23 Funding Claim	
40	Mr Harrison confirmed that the audit review had been undertaken and the College had been assured that the letter confirming the outcome had been completed in January. It	

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	was understood that the letter was subject to final review as part of the ESFA quality assurance process.	
41	Mr Harrison explained that he had received emails from the PWC Auditors to confirm that there would be no clawback.	
42	It was suggested that there were a number of delays in the process of distributing final letters. Committee members thanked ICCA for their support during the process.	
43	Committee members commented that it was really positive to see the improvements in this area from the mock funding audit position.	
44	Resolved: Committee members received the update.	
	AC/24/107 – Audit Recommendations and Actions	
45	Mr Harrison presented the Audit Recommendation and actions.	
46	Committee members commented that it was pleasing to see that there were no overdue actions; the only actions not implemented were not yet due for completion. It was agreed that this was a good cultural indicator.	
47	It was agreed that it was useful to include the recommendations from the External Audit.	Action: Mr Harrison July 2024
48	Mrs J Grainger, External Member asked, in relation to the blue actions; were they likely to be implemented in time, were there any areas that the Committee should be alert to. Mr Harrison explained that some actions were linked to the introduction of the new apprenticeship system and he was not anticipating any delays.	
49	Resolved: Committee members received the Audit Recommendations and actions report.	
	AC/24/108 – Other External Assurance Reports	
50	Mr Harrison provided an update in relation to the DWP Apprenticeship hub programme and the queries raised over the Apprenticeship Levy as match funding. Mr Harrison explained that a response was awaited. The matter remained unresolved and the College remained very cautious about what was within the accounts; it was noted that around £500,000 provision had been made in relation to the matter.	

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51	The Committee noted that there were three pending Article 125 desk-based audits for the SSW programme.	
52	Resolved: The Committee noted the update in relation to the DWP Apprenticeship hub programme.	
	AC/24/109 Internal Audit Reports	
53	Mr M Harvey, ICCA provided the internal Audit Reports.	
54	In relation to the apprenticeship sign up process report, Mr Harvey explained that he completed the audit himself. He had previously done the mock funding audit and was therefore able to track through the introduction of the system; the review had assessed the structure and strategy and the sign-up process and had looked at the process and then conducted a sample review to test in the way the mock funding audit would be undertaken.	
55	The report had received Substantial assurance and one low recommendation had been made. Mr Harvey explained that, on the testing, two small errors on the form had been identified; one where the Apprentices employment status did not appear to have been declared and one where the learner identification box had not been ticked by the Enrolling Officer.	
56	As part of the eligibility check, the College must check that the apprentices must spend time in the UK, it was expected that this would be assessed and confirmed and checked in advance of the formal sign up.	
57	It was noted that Management responses had been received and accepted.	
58	Mrs R Court, External Governor and Chair of the Committee commented that it did seem that the system had been implemented smoothly and addressed the risk which it was hoped it would address.	
59	Mr R Lewis, RSM explained that the findings were consistent. RSM would be publishing a review on themes identified within the sector by RSM as funding auditors for the ESFA. This would be presented to the next meeting.	Action: RSM July 2024
60	Mr Reeve asked when an error is identified and a recommendation followed up with Management action, whether action was retrospective.	

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61	Mr Harrison explained that the approach was to ensure that there was clear operation of the rules going forward, the aim would be to ensure that current year files were correct, then a retrospective review would be undertaken.	
62	Committee members noted the management response; to ensure that every student had eligibility checks and the responsibilities of ICCA in relation to the follow up work. Mr Harvey confirmed that as part of the follow up work, ICCA would be looking for evidence about how this had been completed and reviewed.	
63	In relation to the FECTF Estates Capital project, Mr Harvey explained that the review of stage 5 had been completed; this covered: tendering and contract award, value for money, contracting, the project plan, financial planning and budgetary control and risk and project management reporting. Committee members noted that substantial assurance had been provided with no issues or recommendations raised.	
64	Mr Reeve asked why full assurance had not been provided? Mr Harvey confirmed that substantial assurance was the highest assurance level which could be provided.	
65	Mrs Court asked whether this would be provided to the Finance and Resources Committee as they had oversight of the capital project. It was agreed that this would be referenced in the Finance and Resources Committee meeting and the report circulated.	
66	Committee members noted the historic reports for completeness.	
67	Committee members also noted the response to the action and the Chairs sign off and report to the Board via the Chairs Report process.	
68	Resolved: Committee members received the internal Audit reports.	
	AC/24/110 – Review of Internal Audit	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance against Key Indicators 2022/23 	
69	Mr Harrison referred to a series of KPIs which had been reviewed, he was pleased to report that all had been	

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70	<p>achieved as stated and he happy with the service provided.</p> <p>Mr Stone asked whether the Internal Audit annual opinion included any assessment of culture. Mr Harvey confirmed that the assessment was controls based only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of Key Performance Indicators 2023/24 	
71	Resolved – Committee members approved the Key Performance Indicators 2023/24.	
72	<p>AC/24/111 – Review of External Audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance against Key Indicators 2022/23 <p>Mr Harrison referred to a series of KPIs which had been reviewed, he was pleased to report that all had been achieved as stated and he happy with the service provided.</p>	
73	<p>In Year two there was reference to some late information / documents requested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of Key Performance Indicators 2023/24 	
74	Resolved – Committee members approved the Key Performance Indicators 2023/24.	
75	<p>AC/24/112 – Schedule of Policies considered by the Board and its Committees and Annual Report</p> <p>Mrs Taylor-Holmes presented the report and explained the transition work being undertaken to move responsibility for the management of the review of Policies into the executive secretarial team function.</p>	
76	Mrs Taylor-Holmes explained that the items in red were those which were new for consideration by the Finance and Resources Committee and Board.	
77	It was agreed that strategies relating to this Committee would be considered for the report in future years for completeness.	Action: Mrs Taylor-Holmes March 2025
78	Resolved – Committee members received the report.	

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	AC/24/113 – Business Continuity update	
79	Mr Harrison provided the update.	
80	Mr Harrison explained that the report also included the IT Disaster Recovery Plan which had been renamed from the IT Business Continuity Plan.	
81	It was noted that there had been an internal audit recommendation that the College should turn off the entire IT system off and then test recovery. There had been processes to test the recovery of the IT system written into the Plan.	
82	Mr Harrison confirmed that the College did undertake a test: there had been a planned fail-over due to the requirement to turn off the electricity and the systems did switch off and turn back on.	
83	Mr Harrison provided the new Business Continuity Plan; the aim was to produce a Plan to anticipate some of the challenges and the interruption to business and to be an accessible document to be used in different circumstances.	
84	The Plan included the main circumstances which may impact business continuity.	
85	Mr Scully asked for deadline date in relation to the replacement of switches. Mr Harrison confirmed that would be progressing well and was being done during holiday periods to reduce the impact. No major problems had been identified.	
86	Mr Scully asked whether the internal telephone system asked was independent or linked to the network and therefore whether if the IT system was compromised whether this impacted on communication? Mr Harrison explained that the College was currently looking at replacing the current system which was independent and moving to network based. Mr Harrison explained that the College would consider options including grab bags with fully charged mobile phones to ensure that communication was not compromised.	
87	Mr R Dunk, External Governor referred to the reference to short term use of cloud options. It was noted that it was becoming more and more difficult to procure systems which were not cloud based which resulted in a greater dependence on internet connection. Mr Harrison confirmed	

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	that the College was moving towards more cloud-based systems.	
88	Mrs Grainger asked about the College readiness in relation to 'Martyns Law'. Mr Harrison explained that the College was working closely with Local Council and looking at implications as part of the Estates strategy. It was noted that this area remained under review.	
89	Mrs Court referred to the helpfulness of skeleton communication materials / standards to prevent the need from having to draft from scratch in the event of an emergency. It was agreed that Mr Harrison would liaise with the marketing team. Mrs Grainger offered support.	Action: Mr Harrison / Marketing / Mrs Grainger July 2024
90	Mrs Court also suggested that it would be useful to review some broader scenarios which would create a system of testing of the plan to learn from the operation of that.	Action: Mr Harrison July 2024
91	Mr Harrison commented that both were helpful suggestions. Mr Harrison also noted that there was an outstanding recommendation in relation to media training, and confirmed the SLT would be attending media training shortly.	
92	Committee members commented that it was really pleasing to see progress in this area.	
93	Resolved – Committee members approved the Business Continuity Plan and the IT Disaster Recovery Plan.	
	AC/24/114 Risk Management	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Register 	
94	Committee members noted that the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee meeting taken place and feedback in relation to first aid trained staff had been provided to the Committee and linked to the risk discussion in relation to Health and Safety. It was noted that the Finance and Resources Committee meeting was scheduled for 25 March.	
95	Mr Harrison referred to the three risks where the residual score had reduced; planned income because the College had grown income, the danger of funding audit clawback as the College had gained reassurance following the audit and in relation to the legislative breach as the Health and Safety review had not identified any issues. It was noted	

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	that this would be reviewed again to ensure that this reflected the Committee discussion. In relation to the health and Safety risk (H&S15) it was agreed that Mr Harrison would consider the rating of the risk (increase to 2x5) and review the description of the risk. It was suggested that the transition period may impact on the management of the risk.	Action: Mr Harrison April 2024
96	It was agreed that Mr Harrison would update the risk register to ensure that the headings are carried forward throughout the document.	Action: Mr Harrison July 2024
97	It was noted that risk H&S15 would be discussed at the Board due to Board responsibility for Health and Safety.	
98	Mr Lewis referred to the major risks in the sector; challenges around cyber security, sustainability and environmental issues and the potential for a change of government which may impact on funding or investment in estates.	
99	Mrs Court questioned when emerging risks became part of the risk register as an additional risk. Mr Harrison confirmed that the risk register was reviewed on a termly basis and brought to the Committee. The risk register was discussed at SLT and emerging risks reviewed. In relation to public cash – F2 – Mr Harrison confirmed that this was included and the position continued to be monitored. Mr Harrison explained that there was a Government spending review coming up and it was thought unlikely that there would be an increase in public spending.	
100	Mr Reeve asked about environmental management / sustainability. There was a Sustainability risk at C17. Mr Harrison explained that one of 6 P's within the strategy was Planet; there had been a Governor Development session on this matter in February.	
101	Mrs Taylor-Holmes confirmed that the Sustainability strategy was reviewed by the Finance and Resources Committee meeting in November.	Action: Mr Harrison July 2024
102	Mrs Court commented on the development of a heat map which could show all the risks on one page or summary of the risks. Mr Harrison agreed to consider this.	
103	Resolved: Committee members received the RSM 'Emerging risk radar' publication; January 2024.	

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104	Resolved; Committee members approved the items on the risk register with a number of suggestions made.	
	AC/24/115 - Items to be reported to the Board	
105	The Committee had approved the Business Continuity Plan and the IT Disaster Recovery Plan.	
106	<p>It was agreed that the following would be reported to the Board for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Received Health and Safety update and the external review. ➤ Update on funding audit ➤ Audit recommendations – update on report – no outstanding actions. ➤ Two internal audit reports with substantial assurance received. ➤ Assessed performance and set indicators for Internal and External Audit ➤ Business continuity discussion – pleasing to see improvements in the area. Number of suggested further improvements discussed. ➤ Highlighting to Board – high risks and what risks were changing 	
107	Mr Stone agreed to present feedback to the Board as Mrs Court was unable to attend the Board meeting.	
	AC/24/116 – Dates of Future Meetings	
108	Audit Committee – MONDAY 1 July 2024	
	AC/24/117 - Meeting in the absence of Management	
109	Committee members discussed the Apprenticeship Sign-up Process internal audit. It was noted that this had been undertaken before the implementation of the Aptem system and the testing was on paper-based evidence packs. ICCA did 'walk through' the new system, however, were unable to test against this.	
110	It was agreed that it would be useful to consider what, if anything, could be reviewed to assess the effectiveness of the new system. It was agreed that this would be considered when reviewing the internal audit plan for 2024/25.	Action: Committee July 2024

Signed as a true and accurate record

Rachel Court, Chair

Date 1 July 2024