

## THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE, SOLIHULL

### Audit Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 19 April 2016 at 4.30pm.

**Present:** Katie Chester [in the chair], Luke Banks

**Clerk:** Janice Hamilton  
**Secretary:** Janet Parkes

**In attendance:** Karen Gentles [RSM], Clare Sutton [Director of Finance] for item 5  
Paul Ashdown [Principal], Martin Sullivan [Vice-Principal] for item 7

**1 Apologies** were received and accepted from Peter Farrow, David Munton and Nick Simkins.

**2 Declaration of Interests**

The Clerk must be informed of any changes to members' declaration of interest form as and when a change takes place. Governors must declare the nature and extent of any financial and personal interest in any agenda item and must take no part in the consideration of that item or vote on any question with respect to that item, or form part of the quorum. Governors must withdraw where requested to do so by a majority of the members of the Board present at the meeting.

The Chair informed the meeting that the Clerk attends all Board and Committee meetings. If she is requested or required to answer questions or to present a paper in her role as Vice-Principal, a Temporary Clerk will be appointed for that part of the meeting.

*Resolved:* there were no declarations of interest.

Governors noted the College Mission and guidance on presentation of papers.

**3 Minutes of previous meeting** held on 1 December 2015 were agreed and signed.

**4 Matters arising**

Item 17, Review of the Meeting: suggestion for a future agenda item is to receive an update on the cyber risks. Martin Sullivan is attending the meeting to cover this at agenda item 7.

**5 Implications of FRS102 on Accounting**

The Finance & General Purposes Committee had received the same document at its meeting on 8 March 2016. Clare Sutton had modelled the revised format and did not foresee any issues for the College. Should the College become an academy, the new education SORP would not apply as we would come under the charities SORP. Luke Banks gave his support for the document.

*Resolved:* to bring forward agenda item 7.

**7 Risk Management Mid-Year Monitoring Report**

It was noted that all risk owners were in attendance at the meeting to answer questions. Confidential and minuted separately.

## **6 Implications of Academisation and joining a Multi-Academy Trust**

Confidential item, minuted separately.

*5.10pm Clare Sutton left the meeting.*

*5.15pm Martin Sullivan left the meeting.*

## **8 Internal Audit Reports**

Karen Gentles introduced the reports. Confidential and minuted separately.

## **9 Audit Action Plan**

Completed actions were noted and will be removed from the action plan.

## **10 Performance Indicator Questionnaires for Internal Audit**

It was pleasing to note that all questionnaires were positive.

## **11 Assurance Mapping to inform Internal Audit Planning for 2016/17**

Confidential and minuted separately. Karen Gentles will draft the internal audit plan for next year for discussion with the Clerk prior to submission to the next meeting of this Committee for approval.

## **12 Strategic Priority Dashboard**

There is one strategic priority, risk management, which is monitored by this Committee. Progress against the milestone was noted.

## **13 Independent Access to the Committee**

The information was confirmed as accurate.

## **14 Determination of Confidential Items**

*Resolved:* that the following documents and minutes be confidential and minuted separately: item 6 implications of academisation and joining a MAT; item 7 risk management mid-year monitoring report; item 8 internal audit reports; item 11 assurance mapping.

*Resolved:* that the following documents be confidential: item 5 implications of FRS102 on accounting; item 9 audit action plan; item 10 PI questionnaires; item 12 strategic priority dashboard; item 12 independent access to the Committee.

## **15 Review of the Meeting**

The Chair drew attention to the proformas, and invited members to complete the form and hand to Janet Parkes at the end of the meeting. Two out of a possible two forms were returned, both with positive responses.

## **18 Date of next meeting: 28 June 2016**

The meeting closed at 5.55pm.

**Released into public domain 27 March 2017**

## **7 Risk Management Mid-Year Monitoring Report**

Paul Ashdown highlighted risk 3a which should now move to 3 x 3 and to amber, as compared to last year we are below on the number of student interviews and offers. However, we are expecting improved progression into year 13.

Martin Sullivan highlighted risk 2c, as smaller fields for staff interviews and lack of experienced cover teachers. Martin Sullivan drew attention to risk 8 regarding information security which is new for this year, and the possibility of breaches of information were discussed. Staff training will take place in July to ensure that staff are aware of the importance of safe passwords, screen locking, and keeping data (both electronic and paper) safe. Katie Chester asked if the College has policies and procedures in place. Martin Sullivan said there is a raft of policies and procedures for information security, all of which are due to be updated following new data protection regulations to be issued shortly. In response to a question from Katie Chester, Martin Sullivan said that ICO documents are used as checklists. He said that laptops are taken home by staff on occasions and log-in is via remote desktop. There is no system in place to prevent staff from putting data onto a memory stick. Katie Chester suggested a system for tracking this, and will liaise with Martin Sullivan in this regard. We do have information exchange protocols with external people, eg trade unions, and they are provided with encrypted data. There had been a gap in filling the vacancy for the second web developer which had triggered risk 7a.

Clare Sutton reported, in relation to risk 4, that the College has just achieved 100% score for financial health.

## **8 Internal Audit Reports**

- 8.2 Safeguarding & Prevent: compliance was checked against DBS requirements and the Prevent Duty. A positive report, green opinion, two medium and one low priority recommendations, two of which were already on our own internal Prevent action plan.
- 8.3 Follow Up: good progress with previous recommendations had been noted, with some outstanding actions being superseded.
- 8.4 FE Benchmarking: this report provides an indication of how the College is performing against itself in recent years, and with other institutions, against which it is performing well. Some of our internal audits are advisory to help us improve our processes, and this report will help inform us on choices for audit next year.
- 8.5 Progress Report: performance against this year's plan was noted. Internal auditors are next due in College in May, and the plan is on track.

## **11 Assurance Mapping to inform Internal Audit Planning for 2016/17**

The Clerk reminded the Committee that these documents had been prepared after tracking our internal processes and external audit over the last few years. Agreed areas for next year are: Careers and Dyslexia quality marks (not provided by RSM); governance and risk management; HR progress including staff development processes; IT infrastructure and developments. Katie Chester suggested the inclusion of information security broadened out to include protection of information

and this was agreed. Discussion took place on trips and visits as these are potentially high risk for the College. It was confirmed that risk assessment is part of the approval process for every trip and visit. Trips abroad always include a very senior member of staff. Whilst there is a rigorous process in place, we cannot foresee the unexpected and the College puts its trust in staff who take responsibility for students on trips and visits. It was agreed that this would be a useful area to audit.