

NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held via Teams on:
Thursday 8th June 2023 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT Paul Casey (Chair) TIA
John Barnes
Father Michael Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Justine Barlow - Principal
Caroline Goldingay – Taking minutes in the absence of the Governance Professional
Andy McCulloch – TIAA (Internal auditors)
Karen Petrillo – Director of Finance and Operations
Stephanie Compston (Wylie and Bissett)

1.00	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS	ACTION
1.01	Apologies were received and accepted from Graeme Brown and Susan Francis.	
2.00	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
2.01	There were no declarations relating to any agenda item	
3.00	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
3.01	Minutes from the Audit Committee meeting on 8 February 2023 had been circulated as part of the meeting bundle. They were agreed as a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them.	
4.00	REVIEW ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING from the meeting on 27.09.22	
4.01	<u>Minute 5.03 - TIAA Internal Audit dates 2023</u> Completed	
4.02	<u>Minute 5.05 - Internal Audit Annual Strategy and Plan 2022/2023 – to go to Corporation</u> Completed	
4.03	<u>Minute 8.06 - Risk Management Policy to go to Corporation</u> Completed	
5.00	AUDIT REPORTS - INTERNAL AUDIT ASSIGNMENT REPORTS - For information / Discussion Presented by Andrew McCulloch for TIAA	

5.01

Governance

Findings - Reasonable Assurance. Terms of Reference are in place, frequency of meetings is within timescale, meetings are quorate and there is a Governance Professional employed by the college .

The following recommendations are made:

1. That the incomplete Declaration of Interest be completed
 2. Appraisal procedure for Governors to be put in place. This is a priority 3 recommendation which will not affect the overall grading if not implemented
 3. Training Records be fully completed – currently only partially completed
- Comments
- 1 - This declaration has been completed. There is a system in place.
 - 2 - This is to ensure committee members have the correct skill set. Suggested that Chair and Governance Professional do the appraisals with 360° member appraisal for the Chair. TIAA to send suggested template.
- ACTION – to be considered by Full Corporation
- 3 - Training is not done on smart log. Investigate whether there is a better way to do this.

**Full Corp
Gov Prof**

5.02

Insurance

Findings – Substantial Assurance

Key Point – Insurance policy has not been out to tender for some time

The following recommendations are made

1. That the Financial Regulations be updated to include Insurance
2. Ensure college staff know what can be claimed through the insurance policy
3. Cyber Security Policy

Comments

- 1 - Governors agreed that the Financial Regulations should be amended
- 2 - Governors agreed that staff should be made aware
- 3 – Governors asked for a more detailed assessment from the brokers on the Cyber insurance premium – DF&O to arrange

**DF&O
Princip/ DF&O
DF&O**

5.03

Payroll

Findings – Limited Assurance in relation to the bureau (not a reflection on the college)

Comments

The Governors welcomed the report as the college has already identified issues with operational effectiveness and is in the process of identifying alternative provision.

The chair asked if staff were being paid correctly.

The Director of Finance and operations (DF&O) reported that LCC does not offer the facility for Notre Dame to validate the instructions sent before payments are made, meaning that corrections are made after the event rather than at the quality assurance point – this is one of the reasons that alternative provision is being sought. This report will be used to steer decisions to be implemented for April 2024.

DF&O

5.04

Safeguarding

The directors had not had sight of the final report as it was just being finished that day, but Andy McCulloch gave a verbal assessment to reassure governors.

Findings – Substantial Assurance especially with regard to the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Single Central Register and robust processes.

Recommended that there is some housekeeping to be done in relation to recording of training

It was agreed that the Internal Audit reports be verbally reported to Full Corporation when they are finalised

Gov Prof

Chair of Audit

8.00

EXTERNAL AUDIT 2022-23 - AUDIT PLANNING - For information

Presented by Stephanie Compston (SC) for Wylie and Bissett

The following points were noted:

- No changes are proposed. The approach will be substantive as before
- Benching marking will be carried out against other colleges in relation to
 - 3.3 for in relation to defined Pensions
 - Financial Viability
 - Regularity

These risks are standard for all colleges and not specific to Notre Dame

The Risk Matrix shows Notre Dame to be low risk.

Audit planning will look ahead of the current year to give a better picture.

The chair questioned how Financial Viability is dealt with when pay awards, funding and the overlap between T Levels and BTEC are still unknown.

The DF&O reported that projections have been run for 5.5%, 6% and 7% pay increases in the 2023/24 budget to test the sensitivity.

The chair asked about the change of year end resulting from the move from private to public sector. SC confirmed that at present the college year end is still the 31st July and that Wylie and Bissett would be reporting on that period. The chair asked SC about the actual figures for the Whole of Government accounts as of 31st March 2023 and SC confirmed that they would not be auditing these figures. DF&O confirmed that the budgets have been created in line with the Year-end of 31st July to 2024.

6.00

RISK REGISTER - For information/discussion

The chair asked if any changes had been made.

The Principal reported that SLT have worked through the individual workbooks and updated with any further mitigants but in order to ensure a consistent approach TIAA has been engaged to provide training to SLT, specifically around the scoring of risks. Once this training has been undertaken the workbooks risk scoring will be reviewed.

TIAA confirmed that there was no conflict of interested that they have been engaged in training for SLT. The purpose of the training is to explain what the scoring means and how it works, and not to undertake the scoring. Governors agreed that this was a wise course of action to ensure consistency and depth of understanding.

The Principal informed Governors that the register is constantly evolving. The workbooks are robust and will inform the summary booklet and good progress is being made.

The DF&O asked if it would be helpful to put updates in a different colour – it was agreed that this would be beneficial.

The Principal explained that quality and safeguarding are coded red because they are high risk areas, but the low number of red risks was gratifying and that the red risks are mitigated by robust systems.

The chair thanked SLT for the work being done and commented that it is clear that action is being taken where required and that good progress has been and continues to be made.

SLT

7.00 COLLEGE FINANCE For information/discussion

7.01

- Post 16 audit Code of Practice
This was approved at Curriculum and Standards
- Accountability Statement
This was approved at Curriculum and Standards
- Financial Regulations were included for information to the committee to show that the college had updated with the managing public money recommendations.
This will go to Finance and Physical Resources on 13.06.23.
The chair asked if the update regarding insurance would made in time for that meeting.
DF&O confirmed that it would be.

DF&O

9.00 ONS RE-CLASSIFICATION GUIDES TO CHANGES - For information/discussion

The guides referenced are in the meeting bundle

The chair asked if this was affecting Notre Dame.

Dir of F&O confirmed that they are not affecting us, but that they have been built into the financial regulations in case this changes in the future. We are aware of them and have controls in place.

10.00 POLICY REVIEW - To approve

IT Policy Statement

DF&O confirmed that this policy requires a complete re-write and to aid the process a digital strategy workshop is being held next week.

The chair noted that work was in hand to update this policy in order to keep it relevant.

11.00 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

DF&O reported the EFSA had written querying the wording used in the financial statements around regularity. Wylie Bissett had used the AoC wording, which the AoC had not updated when the latest version of the model accounts had been released by the ESFA. The AoC have now rectified this, and the correct wording is now in place.

10.00 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 10.01**
- Proposed calendar of meetings has been shared.
 - Move the meeting on 11.06.24 to 18.06.24

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Audit Committee meetings would continue to be held on Teams; the small number of members allows robust discussion to be maintained without having to meet face to face.

The meeting closed at 6.24pm.