



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LINCOLN COLLEGE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD AT LINCOLN COLLEGE ON TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 15.00 HOURS

Present:	Tim Godson Lucy Goodier Peter Price	Chair Vice Chair (via Teams)
In Attendance:	Sarah Adams Thomas Dannatt Claire Love Stephen Pringle Paul Oxtoby Tmasyn Lawton	Clerk to the Board of Corporation Group Director (Finance and Commercial) Group Head of Finance Wylie & Bisset (via Teams) RSM UK Audit LLP (via Teams) Director of Apprenticeships (<i>item 39/22 only</i>)
Apologies:	Dean Graham Graham Gillespie	Wylie & Bisset

33/22	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Dean Graham and Graham Gillespie.
34/22	ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST It was reported by the Clerk that notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum was present. Accordingly, the meeting was declared open. There were no declarations made.
35/22	MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2022 The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 were checked for accuracy and matters arising. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed accordingly.
36/22	MATTERS ARISING AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS 22/22 – agreed to add that the scoring cannot be changed without a loss of benchmarking data 22/22 – working on card only at The Drill – hoping to implement this shortly 25/22 – still issues regarding Teacher Pensions and the returns due at the end of March. RSM are being liaised with to come in and complete the return with payroll. There are still some issues being worked through with payroll and the Access team but progress is being made. The LGPS is now all ok. It was felt that they initial key relationships were with those in sales and there is slow follow up on issues. There were no matters arising. The Chair asked to raise an item under urgent business.
37/22	FRAUD, IRREGULARITY, IMPROPRIETY AND WHISTLEBLOWING There was nothing to bring to the attention of the Committee.

38/22 SCHEDULE OF THE AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING REPORT

The monitoring report had been circulated and contains 15 recommendations. It was noted there were 2 new recommendations in relation to the Estates Management report and 3 items highlighted for potential removal with the approval of the Committee.

It was noted there were some items without amended implementation dates. It was agreed that the report should go to ELT so that they could see what points are not being cleared.

Action: Audit Recommendations Monitoring Report to be reviewed by ELT

Discussion took place on those items remaining on the report. The importance of signing items off in a timely manner was highlighted.

1/2 Risk Management – these items link together. They are beyond the implementation date but there is an action plan to address. Risk Strategy has been developed. In relation to Risk Appetite it had been difficult to decide on a framework. A meeting is to be held with ML and then this will be brought to Board for review. There is a timeline for approval and this will be circulated

Action: timeline to be circulated and completion dates added

3 No date has been added for final implementation. It was agreed that the RO should be liaised with and invited to the next meeting should this not be completed at this point

Action: Donna Moorhouse – to be invited to the next meeting should this not be completed.

Noting the next meeting will not be held until the end of June it was agreed that the Clerk would carry out a refresh of the report in May.

Action: refresh of report to be completed in May

4/5 The actions were agreed for removal

6 Completion date to be specified – it was agreed this should be the end of June 2023 (ie end of academic year)

7 The Clerk confirmed that the next HE Committee will receive the HE Themes report and will also confirm when these are received for P&Q Committee

Action: Clerk to confirm receipt of reports at HE and P&Q

8/9/10/11 It was noted that these were prior to the ONS decision. All processes and procedures will need a review and to be brought up to date in relation to MPM. Workshops are being attended and training is ongoing. A new post has been agreed in the Finance Team. Implementation dates will be amended when it is clear when these will be

Action: Head of Finance to add amended implementation dates

12 Payroll reports are not yet available to distribute for budget setting. It was confirmed this is Finance documenting the process that is required to be followed

	<p>13 An implementation date of March 2023 was proposed. This is to be on the agenda for ELT tomorrow. It was explained there has been a drift at P5 and a need to ensure that ELT are comfortable with circulating monthly management accounts to all budget holders. This may cause concerns and therefore ELT approval is required</p> <p>14/15 Noted and one to be removed.</p> <p>Action: items flagged as green to be removed</p>
<p>39/22</p>	<p>RISK REGISTER</p> <p>The Risk Register had been circulated to the Committee for information.</p> <p>[Tmasyn Lawton joined the meeting]</p> <p>DEEP DIVE – APPRENTICESHIPS</p> <p>The Chair reported on his experiences with other training providers. The Vice Chair also reported on the apprentices at her organisation.</p> <p>It was explained that the Committee invite Risk Owners to the meeting to discuss in more detail their Risks, including if they are receiving the appropriate support from ELT. Questions had been provided in advance in relation to the employer experience and these were outlined.</p> <p>TL provided some background. There is a strategy in place to become the first-choice training provider for the East Midlands, including improving the quality of provision linked to digital skills and bringing these into the 21st century. The move from Frameworks to Standards in 2020 was explained. Frameworks were continuous assessment and achievement was higher. Standards have been designed by employers and a move to End Point Assessments (EPA). Learning is on the job and classroom based. The EPA is agreed with the employer and assessor. It was explained that assessors will become trainers. Once agreed this is 'gateway' and the learner is ready for the EPA which could be an exam or professional discussion and each awarding body agrees their appropriate EPA. Learners can fail at this point. There has been an impact of moving from Frameworks to Standards and achievement rates nationally have gone down. In 2019/20 these were 64% and they have declined by 10% because learners aren't achieving their EPA or there are more breaks in learning which might be because standards are longer. They are more rigorous and more off the job training is required. Retention is lower and this is also nationally. The Knowledge Ladder is specifically looking at retention in Construction where learners are more likely to be at risk and additional support is being provided. If the learner completes then funding is drawn down but should they leave then retention and achievement is impacted. Learners at risk are monitored and additional support is put in place.</p> <p>HR, H&SC and Dental are the biggest risks as an integrated qualification included. Learners can get their qualification but often don't then complete their EPA as they can leave and get a job once they achieve their integrated qualification. Employers should encourage the learners to complete their EPA also.</p> <p>EPAs were discussed in further detail. EPA organisations were involved in the move from Frameworks to Standards. A new EPA coordinator has been appointed to set up policies and procedures within the College. Between 15 and 20 EPA organisations are worked with at any point in time and there are 61 different Standards being offered currently.</p>

It was asked if the learners were being treated as individuals and it was explained there is the 'right person, right course, right employer' mantra. It was explained that some employers bring a regular number of apprentices year after year. The BD Team was explained and the role they carry out. The Vice Chair reported on individual feedback received by the apprentices at her organisation. All learners have an EILP (Electronic Individual Learning Plan) on Smart Assessor which is tailored to individual needs. Initial assessments take place to see if any additional support is required.

Achievement rates were reported. 159 have completed and only 4 failed so a 97.5% pass rate. Of these 41.5% were with distinction and 8.2% with merit and these are classed as 'high grades'.

The TLS (top level scorecard) was explained. This is refreshed every six weeks or so. The improvement in forecasting was outlined. The Apprenticeship Accountability Framework (AAF) has replaced minimum standards and is new. There is a dashboard on ProMetrix which shows the current position. Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR) is not yet confirmed for this year. This will provide the national data and how the College fits against benchmark.

Apprenticeships Gold Group was reported on and input from ELT in the past. There are good relationships and support from other departments. There could be more of a focus on sales. T levels it is felt are a potential conflict as these need industry placements. There is only a small pool of employers and the need for industry placements, work experience and apprentices. There should be one point of contact for each employer to save duplication and a need to be 'joined up' across the College.

It was asked if there were any risks not on the register, for example on recruitment and numbers. It was responded there are currently only 30 live vacancies which is quite low and there is a need to find more employers. The key employers were outlined. There are often over 1,000 apprentices and over 600 employers being worked with and this is mainly SMEs. There are learners nationally.

Any risk around achievement is largely driven by embedded qualifications. When the data is available this will provide like for like benchmarking. It was confirmed that not all have a separate qualification and the aim is to ensure completion and final EPA. Funding is drawn down for completion but it is also important to have achievement and QAR data. It was confirmed this can be benchmarked against other organisations through the Bob Hill Consortium.

[Tmasyn Lawton left the meeting]

40/22 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

Estates Management

[Nick Pettit joined the meeting]

The Estates Management Audit Report had been circulated and was taken as read. The audit had reviewed the strategic and operational arrangements including maintenance of assets, safety and compliance and the procurement of contractors. The make up of the Estates Team which has 90 staff members was provided. The Estates Strategy and Development Projects were outlined in the report. Six main objectives had been reviewed.

The overall conclusion was substantial assurance with only 2 recommendations and 15 areas of good practice.

	<p>The medium grade recommendation linked to asbestos management and inspections and the low grade was in relation to the monitoring of remedial actions for servicing and inspections.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the detail included on the background and strategy which provided a good overview of the team.</p> <p>The property strategy, refresh programme and maintenance programme were explained including how this needs to be aligned to the finances.</p> <p>The importance of maintenance was stressed. It was agreed that a lack of maintenance costs more in the longer term as problems get worse.</p> <p>It was explained that a Design Team and Project Manager are appointed for each project, with different ones used depending on the delivery approach. Discussion took place on Deans which was refurbished in 2012. The use of the Spa, etc was discussed, together with the Safeguarding issues.</p> <p>It was queried what 'low risk' equates to in relation to asbestos and how are these risks being mitigated. The procedures in place were explained. High risk and low risk is related to whether people go near the area and what type of asbestos it is. The Policy should be reviewed yearly. A competent person should be employed and this then be signed off by the Head of Estates which is in hand. A crib sheet has now been produced which clearly states what asbestos is where. A Health and Safety Compliance checklist is also in the process of being signed off. This will be carried out on a quarterly basis. An example was given of plant rooms and that contractors will need to sign off that they are aware of what asbestos there is and where it is.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Plan for the year was considered. Payroll and HR are due in April and Apprenticeships in May so both will come to the June meeting. Follow up and Stock Control and Overall Financial Controls will take place in July and be reported to the Autumn meeting.</p>
41/22	<p>STATUTORY ACCOUNTS SIGN OFF – PROGRESS UPDATE</p> <p>An update was provided on the current position. The team are doing well providing answers to the questions but the same issues remain linked to going concern, KSA and cashflow. Key issue is uncertainty looking forward relating to the decision making rules within the DfE and Treasury. Once these are answered there will be the ability to progress. Currently the filing deadline has been extended to the end of February. Finance Committee are meeting this week to approve the request for an extension to the end of March. It was noted that the end of March also runs to the end of the fiscal year.</p> <p>Answers from DfE and Treasury will provide certainty and give the College the comfort it requires. There is now assurance that letters of support can be provided. There has also been confirmation that operating in KSA is not classed as novel, contentious or repercussive.</p>
42/22	<p>BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK MODEL</p> <p>The current Board Assurance Framework had been circulated. The document clearly shows all areas of assurance including that from external organisations. The Committee were asked to feed back any comments.</p>

	<p>It was asked how the levels are rated and it was explained this was purely based on the number of assurances. Balance sheet review, management accounts review, etc were discussed as good levels of assurance.</p> <p>The Committee agreed this was an important document and helps to articulate the risks to the business. Key points to be considered include if there are any gaps in the assurance, are the dates recent enough and are you comfortable with any gaps.</p> <p>It was also felt that a summary document would be useful drawing out the key items for information.</p> <p>Action: to be reviewed for the next meeting</p>
43/22	<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p><u>Health and Safety Committee Minutes – 9 February 2023</u></p> <p>The draft minutes of the H&S Committee had been circulated for information. There were no questions.</p>
44/22	<p>RISK MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Nothing to report and no meetings held. The next meeting is scheduled for 28 February 2023.</p>
45/22	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>The Chair explained that he had read the letter sent to Karl McCartney MP and the reference to performance bonds. It was noted they are not on the balance sheet but are a contingent liability. It was asked if there was anything that should be known about that should trigger this. What implications and cascade down would there be for the College. It was explained there were no concerns. It was felt that this could be a regular item for assurance.</p> <p>Action: it was agreed to add this as a standing item</p> <p>Discussion took place on the Committee objective and review against the Audit Code of Practice. The Chair, Vice Chair and Peter Price agreed to meet to consider this and report back to the next meeting.</p> <p>Action: meeting to be arranged in relation to ACOP Action: next agenda as a review against the code</p>
46/22	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Date of Next Meeting: the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 27 June at 15.00 hours</p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 16.52 hours.</p>