

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF  
THE AUDIT COMMITTEE  
HELD VIA TEAMS AT 5.30PM ON THURSDAY 18 MARCH 2021**

**Present:** Mr M Stone (Chair)  
Mr A Brown  
Mr A Gold  
Ms A Peters-Day

**In Attendance:** Mr G Dixon (Vice-Principal Finance and Resources)  
Mrs J Matthews (Director of Governance)  
Ms J Butterfield (TIAA)  
Mr D Roper-Newman (Data Protection Officer)

		<b>ACTION</b>
	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
M20/28	There were no apologies for absence. The Chair welcomed Ms Peters-Day to her first meeting.	
	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
M20/29	There was a declaration of interest from Mr Brown in relation to Craven District Council and Ms Peters-Day as an employee of West Yorkshire Combined Authority.	
	<b>GDPR POLICY AND UPDATE</b>	
M20/30	Mr Roper-Newman presented the updated GDPR Policy and the GDPR update and it was noted that there had been eight incidents since January 2020, all of which were related to single individuals, and in two cases the individuals concerned had been informed. There had been no requirement to inform the ICO in any cases. A question was asked about cookies on the College website, and it was noted that currently visitors to the website were asked to opt out of cookies. Mr Roper-Newman agreed to review the website and cookies to ensure that it was compliant.	<b>VPF&amp;R</b>
M20/31	A question was asked about whether the number of incidents was above average, and Mr Roper-Newman reported that there was a generally good level of assurance from those statistics and that it showed a management awareness of GPDR and its requirements. It was noted that the Committee received an annual report on incidents although anything serious would be highlighted immediately.	
M20/32	A member queried whether the policy contained enough information about how it related to staff and students and it was reported that a one-page summary would be sent out to all staff after the policy was approved. It was suggested that having laminated copies of the one-page summary available around the College would be good practice, and it was agreed to explore that.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b> <b>VP F&amp;R</b>
M20/33	A question was asked about who the Chief Risk Officer referenced in the policy was, and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) agreed to clarify who that postholder was.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b>
M20/34	The Committee noted the reference to the data protection audit and asked when the Audit Committee would see the results from that. Mr Roper-Newman reported that he would do a comprehensive audit in 2021/22, which would be reported to the Committee.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b>
M20/35	It was noted that staff and Governors had been asked to complete iHasco GDPR training and a question was asked about whether Mr Roper-Newman had reviewed that training for suitability. He confirmed that he had and it was important for all staff to complete an	

annual update.

M20/36 The Committee **approved** the updated GDPR policy and Mr Roper-Newman left the meeting.

#### **REPORT ON MATTERS FROM THE BOARD**

M20/37 The Chair reported that the previous Chair of the Board, Mr Mabbitt, had now resigned, and Dr Stephen Morton had taken over from 1 January 2021.

M20/38 The Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) updated the Committee on the sale of the High Street building and it was noted that there had been delays due to the searches.

M20/39 In terms of the wider landscape, the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that the biggest challenge for the College was the AEB and the impact of devolution. A question was asked about whether the changes to Craven District Council would have an impact and it was noted that those would not occur until 2023 at the earliest.

#### **MINUTES OF 26 NOVEMBER 2020**

M20/40 The minutes of the meetings held on 26 November 2020 were approved.

#### **MATTERS ARISING ON THE MINUTES OF 26 NOVEMBER 2020**

M20/41 The Committee noted the action tracker circulated and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that there were a number of long-standing recommendations that would not move to green until the annual reviews had been completed.

#### **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS**

##### **Purchasing and Payments**

M20/42 Ms Butterfield introduced the Purchasing and Payments internal audit report and it was noted that progress on the previous recommendations had been reviewed. Reasonable assurance overall had been given and it was a priority for those previous recommendations not yet implemented to be completed by the end of March 2021. A follow up review would take place in June to confirm that they had been implemented.

M20/43 A question was asked about the Priority 2 recommendations and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that three of the five had been completed but that the Finance department had been busy implementing a new finance system which would improve controls. A question was asked if the recommendations would be completed by the end of the month and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) confirmed that they would be.

##### **HR**

M20/44 The Committee had received the HR audit report and it was noted that reasonable assurance had been received overall. A question was asked about the risk associated with some of the findings and whether that could be clearly reported to allow an understanding of the scale. Ms Butterfield agreed to include the impact and risk of findings in future.

M20/45 A question was asked about how the need for segregation of roles in HR would be addressed and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that the Finance department currently supported the payroll manager but that a 0.5FTE post was planned for the HR department to provide back up. Additional checks could be put in place from the Finance team, if necessary, and an additional check was already in place through the payroll bureau.

M20/46 A member suggested that there may be an opportunity for colleges to pool their

**TIAA**

	resources to help with segregation of duties, particularly in non-competitive areas, and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) confirmed that the College was considering collaborative opportunities and would consider this.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b>
M20/47	It was noted that a third review covering exams had taken place although the report was not yet ready for circulation. It was confirmed that substantial assurance had been given in this review.	
	<b>UPDATE ON AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
M20/48	Members had received an update on progress on audit recommendations and it was noted that the biggest outstanding issue was information assets mapping so that the College had a comprehensive view of where all the data was held.	
M20/49	A question was asked about progress with the Careers and Guidance post and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that it was currently being advertised and an update should be available at the next meeting.	
M20/50	A Governor challenged when would there be improvement in relation to the trial balance reconciliations and it was reported that whilst there had been progress, there was still work to do.	
	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	
	<b>Risk Register</b>	
M20/51	The risk register had been circulated and it was noted that AEB and the Equine Unit were the two biggest risks currently facing the College. The ESFA currently required 97% of the funding to be delivered for AEB and the mid-year position projected 74% delivery. In 19-20 there had been clawback for delivery under 68% and the 20-21 position was currently awaited. Members noted that AEB was an important topic for the current mayoral election campaigns and it was suggested that the risk register should reflect the potential impact of the mayoral appointment and the resulting strategies in this area.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b>
M20/52	The Committee discussed the Equine Unit and issues around the planning application. It was noted that a review of the planning department at Craven District Council had taken place and a new Chair of the Planning Committee appointed. It was noted that the Principal and CEO had been in touch with the Chief Executive of Craven District Council directly and some progress was being made. It was suggested that the changes at Craven District Council should be included in the risk register along with any risks associated with the role of the Data Protection Officer who was employed by Craven District Council. The Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that Mr Roper-Newman was leaving Craven District Council and a discussion around succession plans would be required.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b>
M20/53	A Governor challenged the risk level in relation to maintaining the stability of the College since that was now better mitigated. Although it was improved, it was recognised that it remained a high risk and it was noted that cash flow information was circulated weekly to members of the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee. The Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) agreed to include the Chair of the Audit Committee in that circulation and to review the level of that risk with the Principal.	<b>VP F&amp;R</b>
	<b>Risk Appetite</b>	
M20/54	Following a request from the Committee, a paper on risk appetite had been circulated and it was noted that risk appetite was likely to evolve over time. It was recognised that at this stage there were no quantitative measures and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) would look to add those.	
M20/55	Members agreed that the document was useful in indicating where the College needed to	

be cautious and where it might be less risk averse. It was suggested that it might be worth developing a portfolio of areas where the College could be willing to take more risk, although it was recognised that there was a need to have resources available in order to do so. It was agreed that it would be useful to identify which plans the risks would affect and to have impact assessments beyond equality. It was also agreed that future students should be added to the Reputation section.

**VP F&R**

M20/56 The Committee agreed that it was a positive document that it was happy to support, and consideration would now be needed as to how to present it to the Board.

**VP F&R/DG**

**Review of meeting**

M20/57 The Committee reviewed the effectiveness of the meeting and agreed that it had been well chaired, with well-presented papers and discussions were both supportive and challenging. The Chair encouraged the internal auditors to contribute to discussions whenever they felt it appropriate.

**Date of next meeting**

M20/58 Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 5.30pm on Thursday 24 June 2021.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.