

Meeting of the Audit Committee

Date:	20 March 2023	Room number	Via Teams
Present	Bim Osunsami (Chair), Bal Panesar (Vice-Chair), Nick Kavanagh (NK) Jahaid Zaman (JZ)		
In attendance	Debbie Greenidge (Interim Executive Director - Finance) (IEDF) Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Paul Goddard (Scrutton Bland) (PG) Andy Forbes (Chair Designate) (invited to observe by the Committee) (AF) Andy Cole (Interim Principal/CEO) (invited to attend by the Committee) Wijay Pitumpe (Interim Chief Finance Officer) (WP) Ryan Pearce (Senior Audit, Scrutton Bland) (Observer)		
Apologies	Mark Eagle (MacIntyre Hudson) (ME)		
Circulation	Audit Committee/Corporation		

1.	Welcome and apologies for absence The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies for absence were received from Mark Eagle, MacIntyre Hudson.			
2.	Declarations of Interest Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. None were anticipated.			
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 26 September 2022 and Notes from the Audit discussion 12 December 2022 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2022 and Notes from the Audit discussion held on 12 December 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record. Approved: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2022 and Notes from the Audit discussion held on 12 December 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.			
4.	Matters arising Outstanding actions from the September Audit Committee Meeting:			
	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
	7.	Action plan highlighting how much work is involved and when this could be achieved for the PDR review recommendation to be presented at the November Audit Committee alongside any quick wins. The Chief People Transformation Officer to attend.	CGO/CPTO	21 November 2022
				Included under matters arising – March 2023

4.	<p>The Vice-Chair reported on the key issues discussed at the December Audit Committee meeting/informal discussion regarding the going concern and confirmed that agreement on approval of the financial statements had been reached.</p> <p>In relation to the outstanding action from the September meeting regarding the PDR Process, the Chief People Transformation Officer (CPTO) advised that the completion rate for PDR's in 2021 was 55%; 82% for 2022 and currently stood at 88% due to changes in line management or vacant posts which had missed input for the PDR year, however, the target was 100%.</p> <p>The Interim Principal/CEO noted the update on the quantitative side but referred to the qualitative issues highlighted in the Ofsted report and Post Inspection Action Plan advising of the need to review both inputs and outputs. The CPTO stated that for 2022-23 changes had been made to the process to improve the quality and alignment to the College objectives. All line managers had been tasked to set objectives within four different categories: developing self, developing and supporting others, quality and sustainability. The PDR timeframe had also been shortened from 12 months to 8 months removing the mid year review.</p>
5.	<p>Matters requiring College staff to withdraw There were no matters requiring College staff to withdraw.</p>
6.	<p>Audit Committee Update The Chief Governance Officer (CGO) reported that the Co-opted member of the Committee had now been appointed as a full member of the Board of Corporation and, after a skills review, it had been agreed would sit on the Policy & Resources Committee going forward. Additional co-opted members for the Audit Committee would be sought.</p> <p>The CGO recorded her thanks to the Internal Auditors, Scrutton Bland, for their support and flexibility over the last few months when several changes had been made to audit schedules due to staffing issues and additional support had been received.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be noted.</p>
7.	<p>Internal Audit Reports:</p> <p><u>Human Resources – Recruitment and Selection</u> The CPTO provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Train – function to help – not straight forward to implement until a full review could take place • Candidates notified by application process – picked up by HR – not an automatic offer of interview which may need to be considered in the future when looking at EDI policies. • Single central register – changes implemented in terms of process. <p>In response to a query from the Chair, the CPTO advised of the need to recognise recruitment challenges within policies and confirmed that the policy would be completed within the next few months.</p> <p>The Vice-Chair stated that the action plan to correct the actions had passed and asked for confirmation that the actions had been completed. The CPTO replied that the recruitment policy was still being progressed. Several meetings had been held regarding the recommendation pertaining to JobTrain and this was confirmed as completed. The Vice-Chair advised of the need to ensure defined dates were set against tight targets.</p> <p>AF stated that the recruitment of teaching staff was a number one priority post Ofsted and queried the much shorter gap between appointment and starting than between shortlisting and interview. Most staff were on at least a one month notice period therefore an average of under 30 days was surprising. The Interim Principal/CEO advised that the data showed that half of the sample consisted of internal hires</p>

and agency hires. It was agreed that PG would look into this further and share the analysis with the Committee.

In response to a query from the Chair, it was confirmed that the recommendations would be completed by the June Audit Committee meeting – update to be provided at the meeting.

Action: PG to provide analysis of sample considered for the HR audit.

Action: Confirmation of completion of HR recommendations to be provided at the June Audit Committee meeting.

Health and Safety

PG highlighted the following key points for the Health & Safety (H&S) audit:

- Review undertaken in October 2022– limited assurance – one high and three medium risk recommendations.
- Some specific gaps relating to the Broadway Theatre.
- High risk recommendation a reflection of the important safety checks that needed to be completed.
- 13 risk assessments outstanding – some of the areas the assessments were in place but had not been updated
- Management responses were a thorough reflection of what needed to be done.
- Due date was November 2022 – time and speed of recommendations/dates was correct.

The CPTO advised that a significant amount of work had taken place and a H&S update on all aspects of this area, particularly the work of the Broadway Theatre would be provided at the March Corporation Meeting. Clearer and increased accountability was now evident within the team and good progress had been made with risk assessments and improved reporting.

NK stated that the report was quite alarming particularly with reference to the tests that had not been undertaken and asked whether the Estates Department looked after the College sites independently or whether this was the responsibility of the Department overall. The CPTO replied that H&S worked collaboratively with Estates which reported to the Interim CFO. However, on an interim basis H&S was being line managed by the CPTO.

AF advised of the need to be alert to potential risks around H&S in relation to apprenticeships, work experience and forms of activity where learners were on programme. A level of assurance was needed that the right processes were in place to ensure safety for work placements. PG confirmed this this had not been a focus of the audit but could be considered for future audits. The CPTO advised that this was a recognised risk and a specific member of the H&S team with the remit to work with employers to ensure suitable systems and policies were in place had been recruited.

The Vice-Chair stated that this area was very high risk and a high reputational issue, the Committee needed to see what had tangibly been done. The Chair added that it would be clearer to have a completion % as it appeared that the recommendations were not quite 100% completed. The Chair requested that an update on the status of the work completed/outstanding be provided to inform the March Board meeting.

Action: Update on completion of recommendations to be provided to the Committee in advance of the March Corporation meeting – to include percentages where the recommendation has not been fully completed and proposed timelines for completion.

Examinations

PG presented the following key points:

- Assurance level of 'Green' - significant assurance
- Good framework in place

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two specific low risk recommendations –tutors not consistently being quick enough with updating e-tracker and assessors to demonstrate they had taken on board all the IV comments – control to say they have been acted upon but these were unsigned. • Effective management responses • Added value point re GCSE invigilator training <p>AF queried whether apprenticeship end point assessments were in scope for this review as it would be useful to know the College’s position re the management of this. PG confirmed that this had not been included in the scope and would be linked in with the funding audit work but not audited from an exams perspective, however it would be ensured that this was picked up. The CGO would liaise with the Interim Principal/CEO on including end point assessment in apprenticeship reporting.</p> <p>Action: CGO to liaise with the Interim Principal/CEO on including end point assessment in apprenticeship reporting.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
8.	<p>Internal Audit Annual Report 2021-22</p> <p>PG reported that this was a backward look on the key opinions for the year on risk, control, governance and effectiveness. A green assurance level had been provided overall – there had been a red assurance level for the funding report but this had not been significant enough to affect the overall assurance opinion.</p> <p>The Committee were referred to the summary of the individual audits and the overall assurance levels provided. PG advised that the findings were used to inform the Annual Report of the Audit Committee and to provide assurance when considering the Financial Statements. Benchmarking compared to other clients was explained and it was noted that both strong assurance and limited assurance were not considered lightly. PG thanked the College for its engagement and advised that all audits would be completed by the end of the academic year.</p> <p>AF stated that he liked the form of the report which was readable and digestible. The Chair added that the findings and overall position were clear. The Chair recorded her appreciation to PG for ensuring an internal audit presence at all of the meetings adding that the Internal Auditors had been a valued partner in their first year.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
9.	<p>Subcontracting Controls Assurance Draft Report 2021-22</p> <p>The CGO presented the report which was for Information only advising that the recommendations had been implemented. PG advised that the subcontracting standard as at 31 July carried a higher profile. The Interim Principal/CEO reported that there was now the added complication of contracted provision with the GLA and relevant compliance. Further feedback on this would be reported in due course.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
10.	<p>Risk and Fraud Update</p> <p>The Interim CFO reported that the risk management strategy, policy and risk register were being reviewed alongside the Board Assurance Framework and a draft would be presented at the June Audit Committee Meeting. The Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery policies were also being reviewed for submission at the next meeting.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the work underway to review the risk register which would include new risks aligned to the Post Inspection Action Plan. It was noted that the Draft would not be completed for the March Corporation meeting.</p>

	Agreed: That the current update be received.
11.	Matters requiring Auditors to withdraw There were no matters requiring Auditors to withdraw.
12.	AoB The Committee agreed that online meetings worked well for the Committee but one face to face meeting needed to be scheduled annually. It would be considered whether the June meeting would be face to face based on availability nearer the date of the meeting.
13.	Date and time of next meeting – Tuesday 26 June 2023, 4pm

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions, expertise and engagement. The meeting closed at 5.15pm.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
7.	Analysis of sample considered for the HR audit to be provided.	PG	ASAP	Complete
7.	Confirmation of completion of HR recommendations to be provided at the June Audit Committee meeting.	CGO/CPTO	26/06/23	
7.	Update on completion of recommendations to be provided to the Committee in advance of the March Corporation meeting – to include percentages where the recommendation has not been fully completed and proposed timelines for completion.	CPTO	24/03/23	
7.	CGO to liaise with the Interim Principal/CEO on including end point assessment in apprenticeship reporting.	CGO/CEO	ASAP	

Signed.....
Bim Osunsami (Chair)

Date.....