

Agreed Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Held on Friday 1st October 2021 at 9.00am

Present: Simon Enoch (Chair), Vince Romagnuolo, Asa'ah Nkohkwo (from 9.55am)

In Attendance: Frances Rutter (CEO/Principal), Maria Vetrone (Deputy Principal Finance & Resources), Cliff Shaw (Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality), Sandra Dessent (Clerk to the Corporation), Mike Cheetham (RSM), James Whybrow (RSM)

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| 1.21 | 1.0 Apologies for Absence | | |
| | Lamé Verre sent apologies for absence. | | |
| 2.21 | 2.0 Declarations of Interest | | |
| | The following declarations were received: <u>Frances Rutter</u> : Unremunerated Director of NESCOT Enterprises Ltd. (NEL) <u>Sandra Dessent</u> : Salaried staff member of NESCOT Enterprises Ltd. (NEL) | | |
| 3.21 | 3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters arising | | |
| | The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 th July 2021 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair. Matters Arising <table border="1" data-bbox="338 1361 1385 1615"> <tr> <td>Clerk to arrange additional meeting in the Autumn term Action complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Annual Cycle of Business for 2021/22 to be amended to include additional meeting Action Complete</td> </tr> </table> | Clerk to arrange additional meeting in the Autumn term Action complete | Annual Cycle of Business for 2021/22 to be amended to include additional meeting Action Complete |
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| 4.21 | 4.0 Apprenticeship Review | | |
| | The CEO/Principal outlined the background to the review and acknowledged the need to plan for growth and develop a new, streamlined model utilizing the sales team as a single point of contact. The Internal Auditors RSM summarised how they undertook their remit to review the effectiveness of the apprenticeship provision and their key findings resulting in 20 recommendations, which the College had considered, agreed, and designated responsible owners and implementation dates. | | |

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The key findings were summarised as follows:

- The lack of an apprenticeship strategy with clear outcomes, roles, responsibility, and accountability performance metrics could be limiting the ability of the College to deliver effective and profitable apprenticeship provision
- A recommendation to review the approaches to engaging employers and establish industry coordinated employer engagement strategies covering all aspects with clear action plans and performance metrics which can be monitored through the CRM.
- A recommendation to review the use of resources for the apprenticeship provision and transition from silo working to setting up an apprenticeship working group, with clear terms of reference to ensure that business objectives can be achieved.
- Requirement for an overarching apprenticeship strategy detailing the key priorities and aims, replacing the current arrangement where individual faculties produce a strategy detailing the key priorities in their area.

The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality had produced an Apprenticeship Strategy and Business Plan which was shared with the Committee.

The Committee discussed the audit report and outline strategy and agreed that apprenticeships were an important aspect of the College's business, which enabled the College to engage with a wide range of employers and stakeholders and generated a pipeline to additional opportunities, for example the supporting of Kickstart programmes.

The Committee was informed that an assessment of the current provision had taken place and the courses with minimal take-up and low profitability had been discontinued.

The importance of keeping Corporation informed of progress in developing a new strategy was emphasised, and it was noted that, now that the audit report had been finalised, the outcomes would be reported through the Curriculum & Quality Committee and subsequent Corporation meetings. The Senior Staff Performance & Remuneration Committee would also monitor progress through the CEO/Principal's appraisals.

The Committee was given assurance that accurate declarations and submissions were being made to the ESFA, and any discrepancies would be reported through the external auditors.

The management processes for monitoring the apprenticeships were discussed, particularly in relation to assessors who work off-site, and it

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| | <p>was acknowledged that further work was needed to assess the individual practices and performance of individual managers.</p> <p>It was concluded that a detailed action plan was needed setting out individual responsibilities and timescales.</p> <p>The Commercial Director (due to be appointed in November 2021) would be accountable for apprenticeship innovation and growth and work closely with the Deputy Principal Curriculum & Resources who would be accountable for delivery of the provision.</p> |
| 5.21 | 5.0 Any Other Business |
| | <p>The Committee was provided with a copy of the briefing from the ESFA regarding the College Accounts Direction and the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice.</p> <p>The Chair of Audit reiterated the responsibilities of the Audit Committee to provide robust and fair challenge through effective questioning and the necessity to press for clarification when the information provided appears partial or unclear.</p> <p>The importance of being kept up to date on new practices was also discussed and it was subsequently agreed that the Clerk would invite the Internal Auditors, RSM, to present an update on their remit and market trends to Corporation in the Spring Term.</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 10.20am.</p> |
| 6.21 | 6.0 Date and Time of the Next Meeting |
| | Friday 3 rd December 2021 at 9.00am. |

Decisions:

1. The development of an Apprenticeship Strategy to be monitored through the Curriculum & Quality Committee and Senior Staff Performance & Remuneration Committee through the CEO/Principal's appraisals.

Actions:

1. The Clerk to arrange for Internal Auditors RSM to present to Corporation in Spring Term 2022.