**Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 4pm**

**Present:** Marie Lang (Chair & Governor)

Carol Cooper-Smith (Governor)

Mark Fogarty (Governor)

George Graham (Governor)

Emma Dawson (Co-opted member)

**In attendance:** Heather Jackson (Clerk)

David Akeroyd (Deputy Principal Development & Productivity)

Tony Johnson (Vice Principal Corporate Services)

Laila Lawton (Vice Principal Finance)

Anastasia Mullen (RSM)

**PART I** – *For Publication*

| **Minute** |  |
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| **PROCEDURAL MATTERS** | |
| **A23/001** | **Agenda Item No. 1: Quorum**  The meeting was quorate. |
| **A23/002** | **Agenda Item No. 2: Apologies for Absence**  Apologies were received from Ken Merry, Gavin Batty and Richard Buckby |

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| **A23/003** | **Agenda Item No. 3: Declarations of interest**  Emma Dawson declared an interest in agenda item 5. |
| **A23/004** | **Agenda Item No. 4: Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022**  The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022 were approved. |
| **A23/005** | **Agenda Item No. 5: Election of Member**  Emma Dawson left the meeting.  The Chair presented a paper on the permanent election of the co-opted member Emma Dawson for a period initially of four years and to a maximum of eight years in line with the College’s standing orders and instrument and articles.  It was **RESOLVED** to elect Emma Dawson as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee.  Emma Dawson returned to the meeting. |
| **A23/006** | **Agenda Item No. 6: Matters arising**  There were no matters arising. |
| **A23/007** | **Agenda Item No. 7: Rolling Action List**    It was noted that the revised financial regulations would now be presented to the committee in June. |
| **A23/008** | **Agenda Item No. 8: Notification of items of any other business**  There were no other items of business |
| **A23/009** | **Agenda Item No. 9.1: Progress Report**  Anastasia Mullen presented the Progress Report. It was noted that work was on target with scoping meetings and a timetable agreed.  Governors noted the briefing papers and discussed the requirements of the ESFA subcontracting standard and were assured that the College were already discussing the requirements and would be fully compliant. A meeting had already been held with RSM to discuss the approach and reporting.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the Progress Report. |
| **A23/010** | **Agenda Item No. 9.2: Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery**  Anastasia Mullen presented the Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery report. The audit had identified no areas of weakness and provided substantial assurance.  Governors discussed the sample and it was noted that all departments follow the same process and plans are discussed twice yearly alongside risk and succession planning at business planning and performance review meetings. It was noted that business continuity planning was a normal part of business at the College. It was also noted that the College holds a scenario planning exercise every two years using external input to test plans and systems.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery Plan. |
| **A23/011** | **Agenda Item No 9.3: HE Student Data Framework**  Anastasia Mullen presented the HE Student Data Framework report. The report had identified two low and one medium recommendation.  Governors discussed the report and noted that it was important that errors were minimal. Controls are being put into place including additional data checks.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the HE Student Data Framework report. |
| **A23/012** | **Agenda Item 9.4: Key Financial Controls – Purchasing and Creditors**  Anastasia Mullen presented the Key Financial Controls Report. Two medium priority management actions had been agreed.  Governors discussed the new supplier processes and noted that additional controls had already been implemented. Levels of authority to amend details were discussed and it was noted that there were varying levels of authority within the team that supported and monitored changes.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the Key Financial Controls Report – Purchasing and Creditors. |
| **A23/013** | **Agenda Item No. 9.5: Benchmarking Report**  Anastasia Mullen presented the benchmarking report. The  benchmarking provides a comparison against the numbers of actions agreed, and the assurance opinions provided in similar audits performed across the sector in the RSM client base. It was noted that the College performs better than most of RSM’s other clients.  Governors discussed the approach to auditing by the College and the difference that they made on practices and procedures. It was agreed that the audit process was based on risks identified by the College and that they applied appropriate rigour and added value.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the Benchmarking Report. |
| **A23/014** | **Agenda Item No 10: Board Assurance Framework**  The Vice Principal Corporate Services presented the Board Assurance Framework.  Governors noted that IT disaster recovery continues to be a threat with daily attempts to access college systems. Governors discussed the risks that students presented. Training was given as part of the tutorial programme and additional systems to increase security were being investigated. It was agreed that the committee would be updated on plans at the next meeting. The committee discussed the process of backing up date, security of data and how the College could minimise loss.  A new model was being explored to increase student engagement with English and maths with new staff resource being recruited.  The risks around Apprenticeships had reduced due to effectiveness of the business development department in generating apprenticeship sales.  It was noted that the Covid risk had now been removed.  It was **RESOLVED** to note Board Assurance Framework. |
| **A23/015** | **Agenda Item No 11: New Risk**  The Vice Principal Corporate Services discussed the potential risk of disruption through strikes. It was noted that the College had good relations with staff through the Joint Consultative Committee and although there had been some union meetings no formal contacts had been made as yet. The College continued to monitor the risk.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the new risk.  Mark Fogarty left the meeting at 5pm. |
| **A23/016** | **Agenda Item No. 12: Clerks Monitoring of Audit Recommendations**  The Clerk presented the Monitoring of Audit Recommendations report.  It was noted that all recommendations had been implemented.  It was **RESOLVED** to note the Clerks Monitoring of Audit Recommendations report.  David Akeroyd, Laila Lawton and Tony Johnson left the meeting. |
| **A23/017** | **Agenda Item No. 15: Any other business**  There was no other business. |
| **A23/018** | **Agenda Item No. 16:** Date and time of next meeting    **Tuesday 13 June 2023** |

The meeting ended at 17:05

**Signed (Chair): …………………………………………………………... Dated: ………………………………………………..**