

The Henley College Corporation

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held on Monday 13 March 2023 at 10.00 via remote participation		
Members Present: Brian Fennelly Dr Tim Lincoln Chris Murray In attendance: Mark Griggs Dakshita Takodra Jim McCaffney Jacky Gearey	Independent Member/Chair Independent Member Independent Member Co-opted Finance & Resource Controller (FRC) for items 2.3, 2.5 and 2.7 TIAA Ltd for item 2.4 Health & Safety and Security Manager (HSS) for item 2.6 Clerk	
	Agenda Items	Action by
	Opening of meeting The meeting opened at 10.00 and the Chair welcomed everyone.	
	Apologies for Absence 1. Nick Inglis 2. Satwant Deol – conducting interviews 3. Eamonn Egan –conducting interviews There were no other apologies.	
	Declaration of Interests There were no declarations of interest to those contained on the members register.	
2.1	Minutes of Previous Meeting (i) The minutes of the meeting the 7 November 2022 The committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting 7 November 2022 were an accurate record of the meeting held. Resolved that the Committee agreed that the minutes of 7 November 2022 were an accurate record of the meeting held.	
2.2	Matters Arising from Previous Meetings Item 1.2 - Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) – FRC explained that there had been issues with the desktop scenarios ready due to Covid absences. The Chair wanted confirmation that the DRP would be completed within the next month and in particular before the next Board meeting 27 March. FRC said that this would be done. The committee talked about the possible rise in covid, however the HSS said that this was not an issue in the College currently and for reassurance all guidance measure regarding cleaning and personal hand sanitation was still being followed in addition HR had also confirmed that Covid sickness was low. Item 1.6 - add additional risk regarding the appropriate representation on key sub committees to the risk register – FRC confirmed that this was still to be added. Item 1.9 - add a new risk under governance regarding use of personal emails for college business – FRC advised that this would be sense checked with the Head of IT and an update at the next meeting. TIAA to also confirm provide advice on this at next meeting.	

The Henley College Corporation

	<p>Item 1.10 - the draft Annual Fraud Assessment to be on the summer audit meeting agenda. Closed All other matters arising from the previous meeting had been closed and there were no further issues.</p>	
2.3	<p>Notification of any concerns (e.g. Fraud, Whistleblowing) The FRC confirmed that there were no concerns.</p> <p>Resolved that there has been no notification of fraud or Whistleblowing concerns within the College</p>	
2.4	<p>Internal Audit Reports First assurance review completed on the governance - strategic control. The scope of the review considered the arrangements in place through which the College controlled the review, implementation and monitoring of strategic plans. TIAA provided reasonable reassurance noting that the use of the strategic tracker was a good tool. TIAA commented that the supporting documentation and observations confirmed that the Board had been involved at an appropriate level and exercised strategic steer. The key strategic findings covered were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there were adequate processes in place for review and monitoring of the College Strategy and the College had exceeded its aims and targets in a number of areas. There is room for improvement in relation to reporting and communicating more effectively the progress against strategy, KPIs and risks; • the Strategic Tracker needed updating with any underlying or additional actions/references as appropriate; • management should provide relevant clear and comprehensive commentary in the strategic tracker, for amber or red rated activities to include any reasons for performance levels, mitigations, further planned actions and to support ratings and percentages; and • further tangible measures for completion/success needed to be identified for objectives on the strategic tracker as appropriate. <p>TIAA said that the risk register and KPIs need to be annually revisited so that they are tied into the strategic tracker. It was also noted that any comments on the strategic tracker could be viewed by Ofsted to evidence that the College is doing what it says.</p> <p>The Chair said that the issue of effective SLT reporting had been raised at the last Board meeting, FRC said that the level of clarity of communication was not great. Since that meeting the SLT have been looking at how they tie in the strategic tracker, KPIs and risk register with a view to updating and decluttering these documents to provide more clarity with accurate and easy to read data and commentary. Taking on board the observations and feedback from the Board, the SLT have produced the first new suite of documents to be presented at the next board meeting. The In-year tracker referred to at the last Board meeting is to be dropped as it was not working as a standalone document. TIAA said this was about enabling the SLT and that the evidence needed to be brought to the fore and populated effectively. The committee agreed and felt that this was a matter of urgency and needed to be embodied within the culture of the organisation. There were no further comments. The Chair thanked TIAA for the interesting report.</p> <p>Resolved that the Internal audit report on strategic governance was received and</p>	

The Henley College Corporation

	noted by the committee	
2.5	<p>Risk Management The Risk Management Group minutes were taken as read and there were no questions.</p> <p>The FRC advised the committee that the risk register was to be updated and cross referenced with the strategic tracker and KPIs with the addition of a separate column for commentary on the risks. It was felt that the whole process needed to be reassessed for effectiveness with the observation that the register was too big covering both operational and strategic risks and that these needed to be separated out. Furthermore only strategic risks with a commentary and rating score needed to be presented to the Board. Ideally TIAA advised that the risk register should be mapped out grouping the risks under the strategic aims and then for this to be revisited. This to be discussed at the next Risk management Group meeting.</p> <p>As the Risk Management Group held their meetings termly, the Chair questioned whether this was an effective forum in which to discuss this. FRC said that the whole process was to be reassessed for effectiveness at the next meeting to which the Chair would be invited. There were no further questions.</p> <p>Resolved that the Risk Register was received and noted by the committee</p>	
2.6	<p>Health & Safety Report The HSS Manager advised the committee on all the work that had been done this term including the fire evacuation and associated risk assessments and the maintenance updates to include the new access points for safeguarding using ID cards. This had now meant that it was now no longer possible for the general public to cut through the Deanfield campus as a short cut to the town Centre.</p> <p>Whilst the committee commended the work done on the physical aspects of keeping students safe, they asked about their safeguarding aspects including wellbeing. The HSS Manager advise of the processes in place to address this including a weekly meeting with the HSS staff and the DSL and his team which covered: weekly inspections; a log and working with the student body. Going forward the committee asked if these issues could be added to the HSS report. The HSS Manager confirmed that this would be addressed.</p> <p>The Chair asked how the student voice was captured regarding site safeguarding and the evidence to support this. HSS Manager walked through the process explaining what the welfare and pastoral teams would do and that annual student surveys have repeatedly evidenced that students feel safe and are cognizant of being in a welcoming environment.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the HSS Manager and his staff for all their hard work.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>(i) The Health& Safety Report was received and noted to the committee (ii) HS to report on the safeguarding soft issues in termly report</p>	
2.7	GDPR Update	

The Henley College Corporation

	<p>Since the last meeting there had been one GDPR subject access request which was currently being referred to the DPA at TurnITon. Due to some issues this request had not been replied to within the stipulated time period of one calendar month from receipt of request, although the person making the request had subsequently informed. Whilst there was a provision that if information was complex or the individual has made a number of requests, the time limit can be extended by two months. This unfortunately had not been immediately communicated. The Chair asked that should such an occasion arise in the future that communications be rapid. The FRC agreed.</p> <p>Resolved that the GDPR update was received and noted by the committee</p> <p>Dakshita Takodra left meeting at meeting 11.05</p>	
2.8	<p>Update on co-opted member recruitment</p> <p>Tony Sanderson had now permanently stepped down from his position of co-opted Committee member. The Chair expressed his and the committee's appreciation for his support and advice over the years he had been on the committee and that he would write to him regarding this.</p> <p>At the previous meeting it was asked that the Clerk endeavour to find a replacement co-opted member with the requisite audit experience to sit on the committee following the previous incumbent's departure. The Clerk outlined the actions that had been taken to include: an advert on the website, expressions of interest sought via parental communications, the use of the Board's network, approaches to various accountancy firms but there had been no responses except from organisations wanting remuneration in return for audit work.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that a member of the committee was required to have the requisite skills experience, with committee members concerned about this and the immediacy of this being resolved. Various options were discussed with the Clerk who agreed to pursue the suggestions offered.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the update on co-opted member recruitment was received and noted by the committee (ii) Clerk to make approaches to organisations discussed (iii) the Chair to send a letter of appreciation to Tony Sanderson 	
2.8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
2.9	<p>Items to be taken forward to next Corporation Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Risk register 	Clerk
2.10	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5 June 2023 	
	<p>Meeting Closure</p> <p>The meeting closed at 11.20</p>	