

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, LIMA VADY CAMPUS, ON THURSDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2007 AT 4.15 P.M.

PRESENT: Mr D McMahon (Chair)
Miss E Cavanagh
Prof F Monds

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr E Beattie (GB Chair)
Mr S Murphy (Director) from 5.00.p.m.
Mr P McKeown (Assistant Director, Finance) from 5.00pm
Mr M Pitt (PWC, Internal Auditor) from 5.00pm
Mr D McClelland (Acting Secretary)

Mr Beattie assumed the Chair and welcomed all to the meeting. He emphasised the importance of the Audit Committee working with a degree of independence and objectivity.

1.1 APOLOGIES

Apology was received from Mr H Faulkner

1.2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Mr McMahon was proposed as Committee Chairperson by Prof Monds and seconded by Miss Cavanagh. Mr Mahon accepted the position and thanked members for their confidence in him. He then assumed the chair.

1.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the terms of reference set out in the Articles of Government. It was agreed to recommend them to the Governing Body together with the following additional term of reference:

- To be responsible for monitoring of and advising on the management of risk in the college

Members also noted reference in the Audit Code to their responsibilities.

As members considered risk would play a prominent part in the work of the Committee, it was proposed by Prof Monds seconded by Miss Cavanagh and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the Committee be known as the Audit and Risk Committee.

It was noted that terms of reference for the internal auditor had formed part of the original tender document.

1.4 COMMITTEE POWERS

Members considered that the broad nature of their work would be to make recommendations to the Governing Body. However they requested that they be allowed to amend the annual number of days activity of the internal auditor, should circumstances warrant, without reference to the Governing Body.

1.5 ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING TO THE GOVERNING BODY

It was agreed that draft minutes of Committee meetings together with papers considered would be circulated to all members of the Governing Body. In addition a report from the Chair of the Committee would be made at the next Governing Body meeting. Further, it was noted that the Committee is required to furnish an annual report on its work to the Governing Body for approval and to forward it to DEL.

1.6 ATTENDANCE OF COLLEGE STAFF AT AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that

- the Director, the Assistant Director (Finance) and the Internal Auditor would normally attend Committee meetings
- the Committee would have the right to call on other members of staff to attend meetings if considered necessary

At this point in the meeting the Director, Assistant Director (Finance), Internal Auditor joined the meeting and were welcomed by the Chairperson.

1.7 DISCUSSION WITH INTERNAL AUDITOR

Mr Pitt outlined the contents of the draft 3 year internal audit strategic plan for the College. He made reference to

- the key objective of providing assurance to the Governing Body on the adequacy of the College's internal control systems and the effectiveness of their operation
- sources of assurance apart from internal audit
- the differing categories at which internal audit would operate
- the mapping of internal audit work on to the College's risk register
- a draft of areas of work which could be undertaken during the next 3 years
- a draft of detailed work for the present year.

During discussion which followed members agreed that the risk register for the College should be updated. The Director indicated he would seek to do so for the next Governing Body meeting. Members considered they would then be in a position to assess the draft plan and agree amendments if required at the next Committee meeting.

1.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No further business was conducted.

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 5.40pm

Signed: _____

(Chair)

Date: _____