

MINUTES OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, ON MONDAY 28 MARCH 2011 COMMENCING AT 6.05PM.

PRESENT: Prof F Monds (Acting Chair)
Ms E Cavanagh
Mr L Gallagher
Mr W McBride
Mr A Smyth

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Murphy (Principal and Chief Executive)
Mr P McKeown (Director of Finance and Estates)
Ms G McCartie (Head of School, Hair and Beauty Therapy) for item 17.7
Mr M Melaugh (Head of School, Craft Services) for item 17.7
Mr M Pitt (PwC, Internal Auditor, Partner)
Mr R Monds (DEL Observer)
Mr S McCormick (NIAO, External Auditor)
Mr R Ross (NIAO, External Auditor)
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

The Acting Chair ascertained that there was no matter outside the stated business to be discussed.

17.1 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Mr D McMahon.

17.2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mr Pitt declared an interest in item 17.11.

17.3 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2011

It was proposed by Mr Smyth seconded by Mr Gallagher and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

Action: Secretary to arrange for the publication of approved minutes asap

17.4 MATTERS ARISING

None.

17.5 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

There was no business transacted under this heading.

[At this point it was agreed to consider item 17.7. Ms McCartie and Mr Melaugh joined the meeting for this item only.]

- 17.6 RISK MANAGEMENT: REPORT ON CORPORATE REGISTER (Ref: paper AC17.6)**
The Director reported that there was little change to the Register since the November report. The amendments suggested at that meeting had been incorporated into the appropriate risks. He commented on the present reality of the risk relating to managing potential redundancies. The Acting Chair suggested that not meeting benchmarks on curriculum delivery might have a higher impact than its present ranking. Members noted the report.
- 17.7 RISK MANAGEMENT: REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS**
- 1. School of Hair and Beauty Therapy (Ref: paper AC17.7.1)**
The Head of School mentioned the high number of students enrolling on courses. She referred members to the 4 risks identified on the Register and to the actions which were being taken to manage the risks. She explained the challenges presented by staff absence and the work involved in seeking to improve student retention. In reply to a question she said that meeting with the SMT had proved very constructive.
- 2. School of Craft Services (Ref: paper AC17.7.2)**
The Head of School referred to the 4 risks identified on the Register and to the actions being taken to minimise the risks. He mentioned the re-establishment of skills training in trades at Strabane with its new build. He also referred to the issue of changes in budget arrangements for VEP work. A member commented on the re-emergence of craft apprenticeships. The Acting Chair thanked both Heads of School for their very informative and helpful presentations.
- 17.8 INTERNAL AUDIT: STATUS REPORT (Ref: paper AC17.8)**
The Internal Auditor referred members to the report which indicated that no further reviews had been completed since the January meeting. He said that the 2010/11 plan was still on schedule.
- 17.9 DEL: PEER REVIEW OF FE COLLEGES' IA ARRANGEMENTS (paper AC17.9)**
Members noted the report which had been brought before the Committee previously.
- 17.10 NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE**
The Director explained that FE Colleges were now included in these investigations which sought to identify fraud by matching information from a range of sources. The External Auditor commented on its value in identifying high risk fraud. He also mentioned that results were a good indicator of control levels in an organisation.
- [At this point the Internal Auditor left the meeting.]
- 17.11 REVIEW OF PROVISION OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES**
The Director reported that the arrangement for the procurement of IA services for the sector as a whole would not be in place for 2011/12. The College's contract allowed it to re-engage the present provider for a further year. It was proposed by Mr Gallagher seconded by Mr McBride and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the contract with the present IA provider be extended for a further year. The External Auditor commented that he hoped that individual College needs would be taken into account in drawing up future IA plans.
- 17.12 PROPOSED DATES FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2011/12**

Members agreed that the suggested dates were acceptable.

17.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No business was conducted under this heading.

Date of next meeting: Monday 13 June 2011 at 5.30pm in Strand Road Campus.

There being no other business the Acting Chair closed the meeting at 7.00pm.

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____