

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH 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 31 JANUARY 2011 COMMENCING AT 5.40pm.

PRESENT: Mr W McBride (Acting Chair)
Mr L Gallagher
Mr A Smyth

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Murphy (Principal and Chief Executive)
Mr P McKeown (Director of Finance and Estates)
Ms S Traynor (Head of School, Early Years, Children & Young People)
(for item 16.6)
Ms K McLaughlin (Head of School, Hospitality, Tourism and Sport)
(for item 16.6)
Mrs H Smyth (PwC, Internal Auditor, Manager) (from 5.50pm)
Mr R Monds (DEL Observer)
Mr S McCormick (NIAO, External Auditor)
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

Due to the absence of the Committee Chair it was proposed by Mr Gallagher seconded by Mr Smyth and agreed that Mr McBride should chair the meeting

16.1 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Prof F Monds.

16.2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No member or attendee declared a conflict of interest in the business of the meeting.

16.3 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2010

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

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

16.4 MATTERS ARISING

15.4 Initial review of draft annual accounts. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to deal with this matter later in the year.

15.6 Corporate Governance as a risk. It was suggested that this matter could be included within DEL's Review of FE Governance.

15.10 Re-scheduling of IA reviews. It was noted that the IA Status paper contained a re-scheduling of business.

16.5 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

There was no business transacted under this heading.

[Ms Traynor and Ms McLaughlin joined the meeting for the next item only. Ms Smyth joined the meeting during the next item.]

16.6 RISK MANAGEMENT: REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS

1. School of Early Years, Children and Young People (Ref: paper AC16.6.1)

The Head of School referred members to the 4 risks identified on the Register and to the actions which were being taken to manage the risks. She emphasised the importance of maintaining contact with employers and the efforts being made to widen participation. In reply to a question, she said that there was some uncertainty over the possible affects on the work of the School should there be reductions in primary and post-primary schools' budgets.

2. School of Hospitality, Tourism and Sport (Ref: paper AC16.6.2)

The Head of School referred to the 4 risks identified on the Register and to the actions being taken to minimise the risks. She mentioned the high cost of sports courses, although recent acquisition of on-site facilities had helped to reduce some costs. She said that a balance had to be obtained between cost, quality and viability. She also referred to the academic challenge of courses experienced by some students.

The Acting Chair thanked both Heads of School for their very informative and helpful presentations.

16.7 INTERNAL AUDIT: STATUS REPORT (Ref: paper AC16.7)

The Internal Auditor referred members to the report which indicated that 3 reviews of the 2010/11 plan had now been completed. She mentioned the reviews which are still to take place including the re-scheduling of the review of procurement.

16.8 IA: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Arrangements for the management of reputational risk (Ref: paper AC16.8)

The Internal Auditor referred members to the report on the review which had been given a 'substantial' assurance rating with two priority '3' recommendations both of which have been accepted by management.

16.9 DRAFT COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (Ref: paper GB21.13)

The Principal referred to the draft plan, its clearly identified targets and its wide circulation for consultation. He said the final draft would be presented to the Governing Body at its next meeting.

16.10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The External Auditor advised members that, in future, NIAO would be auditing NWRC in-house.
2. The Principal expressed concern that the annual consultancy return required by DEL does not distinguish between obligatory consultancy and voluntary consultancy.

Date of next meeting: Monday 28 March 2011 at 5.30pm in Strand Road Campus.

There being no other business the Acting Chair closed the meeting at 6.55pm.

Signed: _____

(Acting Chair)