

GOVERNORS & VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Iain Turri [Chair], Marie-Claire Harper, Richard Powell [3]

ATTENDING Peter J Harrison [Clerk to Governors], Phillip Berry [Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources], Lee Glover [Haines Watts – Auditor], Elisa Williams [Head of Data & MIS].

APOLOGIES: James Creamer [1]; and Irene Mortimer [Haines Watts – Auditor]

Absent Without Apology: None

Circulation: All Governors, & Clerk to Governors unless CONFIDENTIAL.

Documents Circulated/Tabled* at Meeting:

Document [A] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Risk Register January 2023 – circulated previously

Document [B] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Validera Internal Audit Risk Management 2022/2023' – circulated previously

Document [C] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Validera Internal Audit Progress Report March 2023' – circulated previously

Document [D] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Outstanding Audit Report March 2023' – circulated previously

Document [E] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Freedom of Information Annual Report 2022/2023' – circulated previously

Document [F] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – ESFA Code of Practice Review' – circulated previously


ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	AGREED ACTION
1. Welcome	<p>1.1 Welcome: The Committee Chair Iain Turri welcomed everyone to the virtual MS Office Teams™ meeting, which had had to be postponed to today due to the recent Office For Standards in Education inspection. New Governor Roger Bridgeman has been assigned to this Committee but is in the process of gaining access to the College services and may be expected to join the next meeting</p> <p>1.2 Quoracy: Later the meeting was declared quorate [3/6].</p> <p>1.3 Apologies: James Creamer [1]; and Irene Mortimer [Haines Watts – Auditor</p> <p>1.4 Absentee without apology: None</p> <p>[NOTE – The items of business may be taken in a different order to facilitate the business, but the Minute record retains the original order of the Agenda]</p>	
2. Declarations of Interest	<p>2.1 Governors’ Pecuniary Declarations 2022/2023: No new declarations were made.</p>	
3. Minutes Previous Meeting	<p>3.1 Open Minutes of Previous Meeting [24 November 2022]: The Minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were passed for electronic signature and for publication on the College website.</p> <p>Action – Clerk to Governors to upload agreed signed Minutes</p>	<p>Clerk to Governors</p>
4. Actions Review [Agenda not itemised]	<p>4.1 Regularity Self Assessment Questionnaire 2021/2022 [Minute § 10.2 Nov 2022]: The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] confirmed the action had been completed.</p> <p>4.2 Risk Management Policy & Procedure [Minute § 11.2 Nov 2022]: The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] confirmed the action had been completed.</p> <p>4.3 Whistleblowing Policy [Minute § 11.3 Nov 2022]: The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] confirmed the action had been completed.</p>	

Actions Review [Continued....]	4.4 Audit Committee Annual Report [Minute § 12.1 Nov 2022]: The Committee Chair had submitted the Committee Annual Report to the Board of Governors and the matter was accepted by the Board at the meeting in December 2022.	
5. Matters Arising	5.1 None	
6. College Risk Management Review	<p>Document [A] – ‘St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Risk Register January 2023 – circulated previously</p> <p>6.1 Review Risk Register Audit Committee Review: The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] presented the report and reminded the Committee that the Register is reviewed in College in June and January each year. The version here represents the changes made in January 2023. Several items where ‘further action’ is planned were noted. The RED/AMBER residual risks were considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1.8 Relating to Student numbers and declining demographic ▪ 2.7 Student outcomes and progression ▪ 2.9 Staff resources and recruitment ▪ 3.1 Poor Student Attendance/Retention and consequent loss of funding ▪ 4.4 Retention of high-quality Staff ▪ 4.5 Governors skills set insufficiently broad ▪ 5.1 Catholic Student numbers ▪ 6.1 Academisation impacts ▪ 6.3 Management Information System [MIS] use of data ▪ 6.8 Fire or disaster ▪ 6.13 National Funding Rate [RED] ▪ 6.14 Changes in Student recruitment opportunities due to new post-16 centres being opened ▪ 6.15 Staff Pension liabilities becoming onerous on College finances ▪ 6.17 Reduction in Student numbers and health impact on funding ▪ 6.21 Lost of Funding as Applied General Qualifications withdrawn ▪ 6.22 Financial stress and inflation impact ▪ 6.23 Office for National Statistics [ONS] changes of status and impact on funding and commercial loans <p>The Committee discussed and queried some of the risks identified to confirm the mitigation actions taken. Reference was made to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ § 5.1 Recent appointment of College Chaplain ○ § 6.1 The Sports Development and progress being made is positive 	<p>Next Agenda Standing Item</p>

College Risk Management Review [Continued...]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ § 6.13 Higher Needs Funding issues with the Bristol City Council and representations being made ○ § 6.21 The campaign to retain the Applied General Qualifications [AGP] to mee the needs of Students not suited to take A-Level or T-Level qualifications <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	
7. Internal Audit [Haines Watts] [re-branded Validera]	<p>Document [B] – ‘St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Validera Internal Audit Risk Management 2022/2023’ – circulated previously Document [C] – ‘St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Validera Internal Audit Progress Report March 2023’ – circulated previously Document [D] – ‘St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Outstanding Audit Report March 2023’ – circulated previously</p> <p>7.1 Haines Watts Internal Audit Strategy [Update] [Minute § 9.8 Nov 2022]: Lee Glover [Validera – Auditor] presented the report and noted the business name ‘Validera’ has been re-branded to better reflect what the company does.</p> <p>In reference to the content of the report, which is deemed to be ADEQUATE overall, the following matters were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Areas of Good Practice aligned with the six Strategic Objectives ▪ Areas for improvement – The format of the Risk Register might be improved to provide greater clarity ▪ Original dates for action should be retained for the Governors’ Audit Committee to review if action not taken on time ▪ The lack of a Risk Appetite Statement ▪ Rather than aligning further action dates with the end of the Academic year they might be aligned when Management can deliver ▪ The management of public monies now had a high profile in ‘Public Sector’ organisations such as the College has now been designated, examples mentioned included: Senior Staff Pay; Compensation; Disposal of Assets <p>It is expected that the Education Skills Funding Agency will be issuing guidance in the form of a Financial Handbook in March 2024, which will need to be considered carefully as it will be more than just guidance.</p> <p>In discussion:</p> <p>[1] The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] agreed there were a number of useful points in the report although not all the recommendations have been agreed by the College management, largely as the Risk Register is seen as a communication tool rather than a control mechanism, and re-formatting the Register along the lines suggested would be lengthy and unlikely to provide benefit as a means of communication in a</p>	

Internal Audit [Continued....]	<p>relatively small organisation like the College. The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] offered two examples where Staff had, on their own initiative, addressed a risk situation, as an example of the imbedded nature of the way risk is approached in College. Good leadership is the 'key' factor.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p> <p>7.2 Internal Audit Interim Progress Report: Lee Glover [Validera – Auditor] presented the second report, and reminded the Committee that the auditor function is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen the systems of control ▪ To provide assurance to Governors <p>The Committee might wish to consider a formal 'Appetite for Risk' document as one way of managing and controlling risk in the College.</p> <p>The Committee noted the progress of work and the reports to be presented to the next meeting.</p> <p>7.3 Review Outstanding Audit List: The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] presented the report. The items listed have either been dealt with or management is undertaking further action. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Continuity – Disaster Operations Group training – completed ▪ Estates – environment policy – completed ▪ Cyber Security – additional items in the Cyber Security Policy – completed ▪ GDPR – some recommendation completed, and others are in progress ▪ Governance – Governors Skills Audit – completed and ongoing ▪ Safeguarding –all completed <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	<p>Executive Director Finance & Next Agenda</p>
8. College Matters	<p>Document [E] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Freedom of Information Annual Report 2022/2023' – circulated previously</p> <p>8.1 Freedom of Information Annual Report 2022/2023: The Assistant Principal [Finance & Resources] presented the report, noting there had been only five applications, fewer requests than in previous years, with the greater majority being 'commercially inspired', which were declined for that reason.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	
9. Policy Reviews	<p>9.1 None Identified:</p>	<p>Executive Director Finance & Next Agenda</p>

10. Committee Matters	<p>Document [F] – ‘St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – ESFA Code of Practice Review’– circulated previously</p> <p>10.1 Committee Terms of Reference [Minute § 3.1 November 2022]: Richard Powell reported he had reviewed the revise Post-16 Audit Code of Practice and is of the opinion that the current Terms of Reference for this Committee are fully compliant. However, a further review of the of Code of Practice is promised and the Committee might review this at the next meeting. Action – Iain Turri [Committee Chair] & Clerk & Next Agenda</p> <p>10.2 Evaluation of Effectiveness of the Audit Committee [Minute § 12.4 Nov 2022]: Iain Turri noted with the numbers of members serving the Committee it might be best to leave this topic until the summer or autumn meeting. Although the latter meeting is always a heavy business meeting. Action – Iain Turri [Committee Chair] & Next Agenda</p> <p>10.3 Committee Briefing Next Meeting: One suggestion was the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice, or alternatively that might be a simple agenda item in the usual manner. Iain Turri and Richard Powell will review the situation in the light of developments. Action – Iain Turri [Committee Chair] /Richard Powell & Next Agenda</p> <p>10.4 List Audit Committee Topics for Board of Governors: Iain Turri noted that the next scheduled meeting is only weeks and away so it was agreed he would present a the repot to the Board of Governors for both meetings in July. Action – Iain Turri [Committee Chair]</p> <p>10.5 Audit Committee Recruitment [Update]: The search continues but the situation has eased in the light of the recent recruitment of new Governors. The Committee noted the position.</p>	<p>Iain Turri [Committee Chair] Clerk & Next Agenda</p> <p>Iain Turri [Committee Chair] & Next Agenda</p> <p>Iain Turri [Committee Chair] /Richard Powell & Next Agenda</p> <p>Iain Turri</p>
11. Other Business [Not Notified]	11.1 None	
12. Correspondence	12.1 None	

13. Next Meeting	Wednesday, 14 June 2023 at 16:00 hrs [Subject to confirmation]	Clerk/ All Governors
Minutes of Meeting Prepared	Peter J Harrison [Clerk to Governors] Thursday, 4 May 2023	
Minutes Agreed	<p>Minutes agreed as true and accurate record</p>  <p>Signed: _____ Committee Chair</p> <p>Wednesday, 14 June 2023</p>	