

**Minutes of the Audit Committee (AC) meeting AC23.2 by video-conference on Wednesday 20 March 2024  
Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge**

Present: Sebastian Rasinger (committee Chair), Gary Bourton, David Evans, Hugo Macey, and Alex Wong

In attendance: Yolanda Botham (Principal), Charlotte Hemmins (Finance Director), Jason Dear (DPO, part meeting)

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

**Ref** **Actions:**

**AC23.2.1 Apologies for absence**  
Apologies were received from Gavin Sheffield.

**AC23.2.2 Declarations of Interest**  
None.

**AC23.2.3 Request for any other business**  
None.

**AC23.2.4 Minutes of AC22.1 held on Wednesday 8 November 2023**  
With one small amendment the committee approved the minutes of the last meeting as a true and accurate record.

**AC23.2.5 Annual report on GDPR/Data Protection and Freedom of Information**  
The Data Protection Officer was present to present this paper, which was the first time the committee had considered a combined report on GDPR and Freedom of Information. He shared data with the committee on staff training and refreshers on GDPR.

The written report included information on 2 data breaches that had occurred since the last meeting. The committee heard that these were not reportable to the ICO however, these had been fully investigated. The two staff members concerned were being retrained, and College was piloting software to prevent similar reoccurrence. The software was expected to be rolled out for use in due course across College. There was one technical question from a Governor about the use of the platform and a short discussion followed about the use of the software.

The DPO also shared information with Governors about retention of records, sharing information about future plans to further limit data held on students after leaving College.

On Freedom of Information. He reported on the number of cases received by the College and the nature of these, which were common and some generic to other similar organisations.

He shared information on subject access requests, and then insight on CCTV requests (none this year) and information on how confidential waste was handled. A Governor asked for more detail on this and how

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audits were carried out on confidential waste, on which the DPO shared further information.

*The committee thanked the DPO for the report and he left the meeting at 5.25pm.*

**AC23.2.6 Report of incidents during 2022/23 and Business Continuity Plan (BCP)**

The Finance Director (FD) reminded the committee that the BCP was updated considerably at this point last year (the committee had reviewed the BCP in November 2022 and again in March 2023). There were no changes to the BCP and no incidents to report at this time.

A Governor asked if anything had occurred during the year which had led the senior managers to think about business continuity, other than what would be reported through the risk reporting; if there had been any near misses under the plan, and if the plan had been invoked due to eg. bad weather or anything else disruptive to 'business as usual', would there be any need to report under the plan. The Principal commented that the leadership team had talked about the College operating in the heat and the communications aspect of the plan had been tested.

The College had had a major new build, scheduled internet outages, and periods where there was no hot water due to water tank replacements. Had those things and others not been planned, they may have led to the plan being invoked, and may have led to business continuity incidents. In response to a question from a Governor, the FD confirmed that risk assessments had been carried out and contingency plans had been in place.

**AC23.2.7 Audit assurance mapping**

The leadership team updated the assurance map with assurances on or information on work-in-progress in some sections. The autumn term would see a further update for the AC. She drew out some updates in the report including SP1 recruitment, SP2 the environmental science course, and positive feedback from a recent JCQ inspection on maths GCSE, SP3 staff wellbeing, and SP4 resilience. The meeting focussed a little on a recent IT incident (laptop, potential cyber threat issue) that could have become a bigger issue had it not been handled swiftly. The meeting briefly referred to ongoing due diligence work and the possible benefits of the outcome of that work.

A Governor referred to the IT external audit that had been carried out. The FD informed the committee that a number of recommendations had come out of the special audit carried out by JISC. She advised that there was ongoing work and a further report would be made to the committee in due course. She added that insurance premiums were coming down for cyber security, as numbers of attacks were reducing, however College was not complacent and JISC's cyber recovery team would provide external support on incidents 24 x 7.

**AC23.2.8 Review Risk Register/Action Plan and termly update**

The FD focussed on changes in risk since the last report. One new risk had been added, on industrial action. Pay issues remained in the sector.

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At the time of the meeting no offers had been made nationally; its significance was not clear but and this was likely to remain on the risk agenda. The AC discussed level of possible employee pay claims expected and would look forward to further updates.

A Governor asked about other local developments that might impact on student admissions/numbers, along with level 3 qualification reforms, the timeline for these and the impact of a general election. The senior managers shared the College approach to curriculum reform. College was monitoring closely and handling communications around these issues with care.

The AC briefly discussed the risks associated with the academisation project and the role of the AWG (academisation working group) and the risks it was overseeing.

**AC23.2.9 Specialist (internal) audit reports**

External review of governance 2023/24. This was another opportunity for the audit committee (AC) to consider the report from the recent external review carried out. The whole Board had considered the report at its March 2023 meeting. The AC was keen to reiterate its thoughts about the report, that had been well made at the Board in March (on matters such as language used in the report, and the overlap with the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice, and other guidance), as well as pull out a couple of relevant recommendations in the report for further discussion, including the AC's 'risk assurance' role and how that differed from the Board's role, relationships between committees in this, tools available, risk appetite, and testing assumptions.

With the MAT project making progress, Governors would have an opportunity to rethink and shape the approach to governance, including risk and risk reporting, through the scheme of delegation.

**AC23.2.10 Any other business**

None.

**AC23.2.11 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be AC23.3 Wednesday 26 June 2024. The meeting closed at 6.20pm.