

MINUTES of the MEETING of the AUDIT COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, Main Campus, on Tuesday 24 November 2015

PRESENT: Hazel Allen, Robbie Bain, Carolyn Caddick, Elaine Harris,
Louise James
CHAIR: Robbie Bain
APOLOGIES: John Wilson
ATTENDING: Principal
Director of Corporate Services
Director of Organisational Development
Stuart Inglis, Henderson Loggie
Michael Lavendar, Scott Moncrieff (by VC)
College Secretary

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2015

The minute was **AGREED** as a correct record and was approved and signed.

2. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

A draft of the Audit Committee's annual report to the Board of Management, as required under the Audit Code of Practice, covering the Committee's activity, and the work of the College's internal and external auditors in 2014/15, was discussed by the committee.

The Committee **AGREED** that the report was an accurate reflection of what had been undertaken during 2014/15 and subject to a small amendment to the conclusion paragraph, **APPROVED** the report for presentation to the Board of Management.

3. POLICIES

a) DATA PROTECTION

A report by the Quality Officer advised that the revised policy had been discussed and approved for progression at Scrutiny Panel on 11 May 2015 and Senior Management Team on 17 September 2015.

The only amendment was that the review date had changed to three yearly instead of annual.

The Committee **APPROVED** the revised Data Protection policy.

Hazel Allen entered the meeting during discussion of the following item.

b) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

A report by the Quality Officer advised that the revised policy has been discussed and approved for progression at Scrutiny Panel and Senior Management Team.

Two minor amendments had been made, namely a date change and a renumbering within section 4.

The Committee **APPROVED** the revised Freedom of Information policy.

4. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

a) STUDENT ACTIVITY DATA 2014/15

The Sums Audit Guidance issued in July 2015 requested that colleges obtain from their auditors their independent opinion on the accuracy of the FES return. Mr Inglis advised that in accordance with the guidance, Henderson Loggie had reviewed and recorded the systems and procedures used by the college in compiling the returns and had assessed and tested their adequacy. Three recommendations had been made and these were outlined in the action plan.

The report by Henderson Loggie was submitted to the SFC on 9 October 2015 and in their opinion

- The student data returns had been compiled in accordance with all relevant guidance
- Adequate procedures were in place to ensure the accurate collection and recording of the data; and
- on the basis of their testing they could provide reasonable assurance that the FES return contained no material mis-statement.

The Committee **NOTED** the report and requested that the Learning and Teaching Committee be made aware of the clean audit and of the very minimal adjustments which had been made in the sums data.

b) STUDENT SUPPORT FUNDS 2014/15

Mr Inglis explained that the scope of the audit reviewed the college's further education discretionary fund, further and higher education childcare fund and bursary return for the 2014/15 academic year.

Two issues relating to bursary payments had been brought to the attention of the SFC in the covering letter from Henderson Loggie. However, Mr Inglis confirmed that Henderson Loggie were able to certify the fund statement for the year end and had submitted it to the SFC without reservation.

The Committee congratulated all those concerned with the receipt of a clean audit report.

5. RISK REGISTER AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

A report by the Director of Corporate Services provided an update of risk management and business continuity within the college. The risk register was reviewed at the SMT meeting on 18 November 2015, where 11 strategic risks were identified. The two highest risks were the potential reduction in HE unit of resource and the risk of financial instability within UHI. The owner of each risk had still to be identified as were the actions to minimise risk and this would be presented to the next meeting in February 2016.

The Committee discussed at some length the need for the Board to consider the risk appetite of the College. The Committee requested the College Secretary to

make arrangements for a facilitated session on risk appetite, perhaps as part of a Board Away Day.

The business continuity plan for the college was in the process of being revised in recognition of the move to Beechwood, as well as the move from the old Balloch buildings to the new building. One of the key changes was in terms of the new ICT infrastructure. Due to various delays with contractors and telecommunication suppliers the college was not yet in the planned ICR business continuity position. This was being addressed urgently by senior management as well as by relevant contractors and suppliers.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

6. GALLIFORD TRY FACILITIES MANAGEMENT (GTFM) MONITORING REPORT

A report by the Director of Corporate Services advised that the latest monitoring report which had been received from GTFM was for September 2015. The October report had been delayed and the College were taking appropriate steps to resolve these and a range of other ongoing issues which were highlighted in the report by the Director of Corporate Services.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

Michael Lavendar and Carolyn Caddick left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

7. ICT SYSTEMS UPDATE

A report by the Director of Corporate Services provided information relating to planned programmes of works and to reactive maintenance by the ICT Services department. Whilst the core ICT services were functional, at both the main Inverness Campus and the Scottish School of Forestry, work was still on-going to provide a fully working and stable ICT, from providing a more resilient infrastructure and connectivity, through to display solutions and new requests from staff to utilise their new work space more effectively.

Specific projects highlighted in the report included

- UHI Intranet solution
- Shared Services
- UHI future desktop project
- SharePoint (Records Management and Intranet)

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

A report by the Director of Organisational Development provided a quarterly update on matters pertaining to health and safety for the period 1 August to 31 October 2015 as follows:-

- Colin Gibson, the Health and Safety Manager had left the organisation at the beginning of November and the post was currently being covered in an interim capacity by Jane Ling who had considerable experience gained in both the public and private sector.
- Safety Management System (HSG 65) was functioning from the Plan, Do aspects of the quality framework. The Interim Health and Safety Manager

would be carrying out a review to identify a plan with would include Check, Act aspects of the management system.

- During Quarter 1 there were 29 reported Accidents/Incidents/Near Misses, one of which was a RIDDOR reportable injury.
- A review will be carried out of the health and Safety Matrix to identify updates required and to identify progress against the plan.
- Fire Risk Assessment Reports are available for the Beechwood Campus, the Nursery and the new School of Forestry and a number of actions were being taken forward.

The Committee **NOTED** the position. In view of there being an interim Health and Safety Manager in place, it was **AGREED** that Henderson Loggie discuss with the College the timescale for the Health and Safety audit which was programmed for March 2016.

9. MEETING OF UHI AUDIT CHAIRS

The Chair referred to a meeting of UHI Audit Chairs which he had attended on 2nd November. A draft minute had been prepared and this was tabled at the meeting. The Chair proposed that the College should share audit papers and minutes with UHI, as requested.

This was **AGREED**.

10. OUTSTANDING AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

A report by the Director of Corporate Services advised that all but two of the outstanding internal audit recommendations for 2014/15 were now completed. In addition, the list of follow-up recommendations showed that 24 had been followed up, 14 of these being fully implemented, 8 partially implemented, 1 considered but not implemented and 1 with little or no progress made to date.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

11. COMPLAINTS - QUARTERLY REPORT

A report by the Quality Manager provided an overview of recorded complaints during Quarter 1 of 2015-16 (1st July – 30th September 2015). As this period encompassed the move to the new campus building, there was an increase in reported complaints relating to snagging issues and general estates issues during the initial settling in period. Of the 28 complaints received 14 (50%) were facilities/estates related.

The report also made reference to the complaints policy and procedure, to frontline reporting and to learning from complaints.

Elaine Harris left the meeting.

12. MINUTES OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEES

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of the Meetings of the following Management Committees

- a) Health and Safety Committee held on 2 October 2015
- b) New Campus Steering Group - 8 September 2015

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 1 March 2016 at 8.30 a.m.

The Committee Members recorded their thanks and appreciation to Robbie Bain as this would be the last meeting of the Audit Committee which he would chair, prior to him stepping down from the Board of Management at the end of December 2015.

Signed by the Chair:



Date:

1/3/2016

