



Notre Dame

CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

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Principles: *Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership*
Virtues: *Trust, Wisdom, Kindness, Justice, Service, Courage, Optimism*

Minutes of the Audit Committee held on Microsoft Teams on:
Wednesday 6 March 2024 at 5.00PM

PRESENT Paul Casey (Chair)
 John Barnes
 Father Michael Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Justine Barlow - Principal
 Karen Petrillo - Director of Finance and Operations
 Denise Hark – Clerk to Corporation

		ACTION
1.00	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS	
1.01	There were no apologies for absence received from governors.	
2.00	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
2.01	There were no declarations of interest made regarding items on the agenda.	
3.00	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS	
3.01	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 September 2023 and the minutes of the Joint Audit and Finance Committee meeting held on 29 November were agreed as a correct record and are approved for signature.	
4.00	REVIEW ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING from the meeting held on 27 September 2023	
4.01	<u>5.01 Audit Reports</u> Audit reports were discussed at the Corporation meeting.	
4.02	<u>5.02 Governor Appraisals</u> Governor appraisals were discussed by Corporation and a decision was deferred.	
4.03	<u>5.03 Insurance</u> Advice from internal audit around communicating wording to staff regarding an insurance claim would only involve Estates staff. The DFO noted that evidence of this would be required. The Principal agreed to include it in her address to staff. <u>Action:</u> The DFO to remind the Principal to include it in her address to staff.	

4.04 5.03 Payroll
Two parallel pay runs have been carried out with the new provider to address any issues. Full training would take place on 19 March 2024 with the changeover becoming live on 1 April 2024. The DFO reported that the project is on track.

4.05 8.02 Reserves
Expenditure from reserves was approved at the Corporation meeting in December 2023.

REVIEW ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING from the Joint Audit/ Finance & Physical Resources Meeting on 29 November 2023

4.06 3.06 Planned Maintenance
Quotes for the planned maintenance survey was discussed by the Finance & Physical Resources Committee and the cheapest quote of £15,600 was approved. This work would be done in 3 days over the Easter holiday break. The DFO noted that governors and auditors would have comfort in how much needs to be put aside in reserves for maintenance.

Q: Will the reports give an indication of the timescale of work to be carried out?

A: This would plan the work over 5 years showing what is critical and what can be completed later. Contractors will not be required for all of the work as the Estates team is able to do some of the plastering and internal decorating work. The Chair advised that any savings made by using the Estates team should stay in the account in case there were any changes to the team or any unforeseen circumstances.

5.00 **AUDIT REPORTS**

5.01 The DFO reported that there had not been any internal audit reports received since the last meeting due to staffing difficulties experienced by the internal auditors.

5.02 An internal audit of GDPR had taken place between 4 to 6 March and three further internal audits were planned to take place during March and April. These were: Estates Compliance; Student Experience and Health and Safety. All four audit reports would be reviewed by the Audit Committee at the next meeting.

5.03 The DFO noted that following a benchmarking exercise with NORVIC the college was paying the lowest daily rate for internal audit.

6.00 **COLLEGE FINANCES**

6.01 The DFO reported that the College finances were looking healthy. At the meeting of the Joint Audit and Finance & Physical Resources Committee it had been agreed to look at spending some of the reserves on developing the mezzanine floor in the hall; this would provide more classrooms in the library space.

6.02 External verification is required for the level of planned expenditure. Quotes have been sought for a Space Utilisation report from School Property Matters and from the DfE consultant Arcadis. The quote has not yet been received from Arcadis as they required a full CAD drawing with room numbers. AHR have now updated this report and it has been sent to Arcadis.

- 6.03** A meeting took place on 9 January 2024 with AHR to discuss exploratory work on the building foundations. They had confirmed that the foundations are sound.
- 6.04** The planned start date of the project is 25 November 2024 as this is not during peak usage period of the hall. This would be a 16-week project with completion at the end of March 2025.
- 6.05** A meeting had taken place with AHR on 28 February 2024 to look at a revised design. This would need to be approved by the Finance & Physical Resources Committee.
- 6.06** The cost of a full and measured survey will be £6.5K and the feasibility study will be 33K.
- 6.07** The project would go out to tender following approval in the summer term.
- 6.08** Q: Are there any issues with lead times?
A: AHR had indicated that there would not be any issues with timescales.
- 7.00** **RISK MANAGEMENT**
- 7.01** The DFO presented the Risk register and noted that changes had been highlighted in yellow on the report. It was noted that the SLT generally only review the risk numbers annually.
- 7.02** **Catholic**
References in the existing controls to the Episcopal Vicar for Education being a Foundation Governor to be removed as Father Timothy is no longer a Foundation Governor.
- 7.03** **Quality**
Reference to the planned Canonical review to be deleted.
Concerns over defunding remains a risk. There are plans in place for this area.
- 7.04** **Recruitment**
Applications increased by more than 200 compared to January 2023.
A robust Admissions policy is in place.
A curriculum planning meeting is planned.
- 7.05** **Legal**
Full staff training took place on GDPR on 17 February.
- 7.06** **Finance**
There had been a risk around debt levels. These had been low, but this is no longer a risk as colleges are no longer able to borrow commercially. This risk will now be removed from the register.

7.07

Staffing

Recruiting staff, particularly in maths, was challenging. Golden Hellos had been offered in this area which had worked well. This was one of the mitigants which had been approved by the Chair of Corporation.

Q: Has this had any knock-on effect on staff in other areas?

A: No. This had been checked with HR. It is the nature of a scheme which is time-limited. There are 50% fewer teachers who have trained in maths, the difficulty is also around geography and the willingness to travel.

Q: Would it be possible to recruit apprentices?

A: This would only be applicable for support staff. There is currently an apprentice in the IT department, and one is being considered for Finance.

Q: What about Teach First?

A: They only fund places in secondary schools.

Q: Could the college appoint someone studying a PGCE?

A: This would have to go through an ITT provider, and they only offer subjects taught in secondary schools. The college does a lot of work with Leeds Trinity University and have appointed someone who had come through that route who had then decided to teach post-16.

There are initiatives in place to retain staff.

A TES wellbeing survey is run every month.

7.08

IT

An updated inventory system is being investigated in order to track all assets. The College has advertised 3 times for an Assistant IT Manager. The post had been offered and the successful candidate had decided not to take up the post.

7.09

Estates

Campus refurbishment is ongoing.

An independent review of capacity will be carried out.

A full asbestos report had been carried out with the college receiving a full bill of health.

An internal audit of property estates management is planned which will look at compliance.

7.10

Governance

A Governance Professional is now in place.

An external review will take place this academic year.

The Chair is working on succession planning.

All governors are using Notre Dame email addresses which is mitigating the cyber risk.

8.00 POLICY REVIEW

The following policies were presented for review:

8.01 Risk Management Policy

There had been no change to the Risk Management Policy which aligns with the Risk Register.

Agreed: That the Risk Management Policy is approved.

8.02 ICT Acceptable Use Policy – Staff

Paragraph 5 of the policy had been amended to state that when a member of staff registers a device, they must make sure that it is up to date.

The DFO clarified point 16.3 regarding college mobile phones. These are mobile phones which are used for trips.

Agreed: That the ICT Acceptable Use Policy – Staff is approved.

8.03 ICT Acceptable Use Policy – Students

Q: In paragraph 2, which refers to bring your own devices, do we not ask the person to have anti-virus software and a firewall?

A: Yes. This is covered in section 2.2.

The DFO noted that multi-factor authentication is required for Cyber Essentials.

Agreed: that the Acceptable Use Policy – Students is approved.

9.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.01 There were no items of Any Other Business raised.

The Chair noted that he had started a new job at the College of Resurrection and advised that this would not present any conflict of interest.

10.00 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

10.01 The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 18 June at 5.00pm on Teams.

The meeting at closed at 6.12pm.