

THE BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 JUNE 2025

Members Present:		
Dan Tout	Board Member & Chair of the Committee	
Ian Jones	Board Member	
Saba Rubaei	Board Member	
Kim Welsh	Board Member	
Neethu Stephen	Co-opted Audit Committee Member	Apologies
Sarah Hutchings	Chief Operating Officer	
In attendance:		
Chris Mantel	Alliotts (External Auditors)	
Daniel Hussain	Validera (Internal Auditors)	
Gavin Shirley	Director of MI & Funding	
Mark Davis	Director of IT Services	
Marianne Barnard	Director of Governance	

PART A

		Actions
032-2425	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Committee Member Neethu Stephen.	
033-2425	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest noted.	
034-2425	PART A MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING The Committee reviewed and approved the Part A minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2025, as a correct record. RESOLVED: The committee approved the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 4 February 2025.	
035-2425	FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT PLANNING MEMORANDUM (ALLIOTTS) Chris Mantel from Alliotts confirmed the arrangements for the audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2025, for Bournemouth & Poole College. Identified risks were set out in the document presented by Alliotts, and these were reflective of previous years, these included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ongoing building works at the Bournemouth Campus, which it was noted was fully funded by the DfE, the building would be transferred into the college at fair value to be recognised as a gift in kind with some ancillary capital costs funded by the college Legal action to recuperate replacement costs and damages associated with the roof leakages at the Poole Campus continued to be investigated. Work to replace roof had been commissioned at c£1.6m 	

	<p>Alliotts noted the importance of following due process and accurately reporting senior post-holder remuneration, which had been highlighted from the FE Commissioners report into Weston College of Further and Higher Education, where the remuneration accruing to the previous principal and CEO was not fully disclosed in the financial statements. The Director of Governance confirmed the colleges Search and Governance Committee had recently reviewed the report in detail and the item would be on the Board agenda for the meeting on 26 June 2025, to ensure all Board Members were informed.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The report from Alliotts was received and noted.</p>	
036-2425	<p>INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS</p> <p>Validera presented the following internal audit reports:</p> <p>i) Bursary & Learner Support Substantial Assurance with one recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College should consider the benefit of including the statement of informing the DWP within the Bursary Award Letter to reminder learners of their obligations, benefiting learners who may have not remembered this obligation from their application stage. This was accepted <p>ii) Payroll, Expenses & Benefits Adequate Assurance with two recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance internal policy management, the Colleges may wish to introduce a renewal monitoring schedule. This schedule will ensure that all key internal policies are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. This was accepted • The claim form should be amended to require the claimant to confirm that they have complied with the Policy requirements (that requires drivers to have a valid driving licence, MOT and hold business use insurance that covers passengers if appropriate), and this could be backed up with an annual declaration from frequent claimants. This was accepted <p>It was noted by the COO that the payroll process had been reviewed and no recommendations made which is reassuring given the recent implementation of a new payroll system.</p> <p>iii) Risk Management Adequate Assurance with a number of recommendations. To be covered under item 040-2425</p> <p>RESOLVED: The committee received and noted the update on the internal audit reports.</p>	
037-2425	<p>INTERNAL AUDIT – FOLLOW UP</p> <p>i) Internal Audit Progress Report</p> <p>Validera provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Bentley had joined Validera in February 2025 as a new Director of Funding Assurance; Karl was a well-known and respected subject matter expert in education funding 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In February 2025 Validera formed a joint venture company with HB&O Accountants, the company Validera HB&O was structured to benefit from the respective skills and experience of both firms, providing a new external audit service solution specifically for the education sector <p>Progress against Internal Audit Annual Plan was noted and it was confirmed that the Work Experience audit would shortly be scheduled and would be completed before the end of the year.</p> <p>ii) Internal Audit Risk Actions Tracker</p> <p>It was noted that the college maintained the tracker and Validera completed an audit on this annually.</p> <p>The COO confirmed that items completed had recently been greyed out and noted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health & Safety items had been on the tracker for some time, however had recently been completed • Once Validera has audited the tracker and confirmed the items noted as being completed, these would be closed <p>RESOLVED: Committee Members received and noted the latest updates on internal audit follow up.</p>	
038-2425	<p>INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2025/26</p> <p>Validera provided a verbal update on the internal audit annual plan for 2025/26. The COO had been in discussion with Validera and the audits on the draft list were as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Key Financial Controls - exact areas to still to be discussed HR Health Check (systems) IT Cyber Security Follow up audit <p>An additional audit around Student Records and Curriculum Planning was also being considered, however it was agreed that there would be no value in auditing areas Alliotts already covered. Other areas for consideration were around apprenticeship learning support, staff utilisation and student progression.</p> <p>It was agreed that a clear plan would be developed further and would come back to the committee for approval. It was also noted that the committee could change and approve audits during the year if necessary.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The committee received and noted the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2025/26.</p>	
039-2425	<p>CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN</p> <p>The COO presented the updated Critical Incident Management Plan.</p> <p>The purpose of the document was to establish a structured and effective method for responding to critical incidents that may impact the College. This included outlining roles, responsibilities and procedures to ensure safety, secure College infrastructure and facilities, minimise disruption and maintain the College's reputation.</p>	

	<p>The objectives of the plan were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect staff, students and others • Secure the College’s infrastructure and facilities • Maintain the College’s reputation • Resume core business activities as soon as possible <p>A number of incident scenarios were defined up front with owners identified who had responsibility for maintaining the related response plan.</p> <p>The committee discussed access to a paper copy of the plan and the option to access via an App. It was noted that the App was hosted by a third party, therefore in the event of a cyber event impacting College infrastructure, users could still access the document via their mobile phones.</p> <p>It was noted that individuals across the college had different duties in the event of an incident, however processes were kept as consistent as possible across the different incident scenarios, to support staff to act quickly and calmly. The committee discussed ideas to incorporate staff training using visual pieces, decision trees, tables and flow charts.</p> <p>An observation was made by a committee member who reported that there had been a critical incident at one of their services recently. A number of staff had taken things into their own hands, for example multiple calls were made to emergency services, when there was a process in place for this.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The committee received and discussed the updated Critical Incident Management Plan.</p>	
040-2425	<p>RISK MANAGEMENT</p> <p>i) Updated College Risk Register</p> <p>The following changes had been made to the latest version of the Risk Register, following recommendations from the recent internal audit of risk management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of response strategy (Treat, Tolerate, Transfer or Terminate) • Fuller definitions of the levels of impact to include quantification of impact • Revision of residual risk assessments where the impact had previously been adjusted post mitigation <p>Further recommendations from the audit to be considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation for the Audit and Risk Committee to consider splitting risk appetite and setting this by category to provide a more nuanced steer on acceptable risk levels. Categories suggested were Governance, Financial, Reputational, People/ Resources, Compliance/Regulatory, IT and Safeguarding. It was agreed this would be discussed offline initially between the COO and the Committee Chair and brought back for agreement at a future meeting. • Risk Management Training – for Corporation Members to be considered and Validera have offered to assist if needed • The risk previously covering Health and Safety and Critical Incidents had been split into two so both risks could be assessed individually and reported more easily to the relevant Committees 	

	<p>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM RECORDED IN PART B</p> <p>Committee Members asked about the red items and the plan to move to green. The COO confirmed that where it was possible to identify items where mitigation was possible, these were actioned, however when it was the external environment driving the risk, it was harder and it would not always be possible to map a path to green.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Committee Members reviewed and noted both the College and the DfE/BPC/Kier Risk Registers.</p>	
041-2425	<p>RSM FURTHER EDUCATION – EMERGING ISSUES</p> <p>The RSM publication: Further Education - Emerging Issues, was received and noted by the Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED: the report was received and noted by the Committee.</p>	
042-2425	<p>CYBER THREAT REPORT</p> <p>The Cyber Threat Report was presented by the Director of IT Services and the following key points noted:</p> <p>Accreditation: Planning capital and revenue requirements to replace workstations or extend support for those workstations (approximately 1000) which would not be compliant by October 2025 was underway.</p> <p>Data protection: It was noted that the college had received more requests in 2024/25, than in the previous year.</p> <p>Vulnerability Scan: The next penetration testing was planned for during July 2025.</p> <p>Cyber Attacks: The college’s internet and email protection blocked most malware and phishing attacks. Since the last meeting a further 2,800 (2.4%) emails had been blocked post-delivery each week (2,400 when last reported)</p> <p>Cyber Awareness: Termly staff cyber newsletters highlight threats and these had been delivered in October 2024, March 2025 and May 2025.</p> <p>Staff phishing campaigns were conducted termly, using differentiated testing.</p> <p>The committee discussed the use of AI in phishing emails and therefore a previous red flag – to look for grammatical mistakes, was now less common.</p> <p>The recent cyber attacks experienced in the retail sector were noted.</p> <p>The Director of IT confirmed he was part of a JISC network and regularly received detail on current cyber security themes, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFA techniques that were not strong enough • Attackers spending a lot of time gathering personal information • Attackers spending a significant amount of time inside an organisations system before an attack • The increasing use of AI <p>The committee noted the voluntary Cyber Governance Code of Practice, recently published (April 2025) by the National Cyber Security Centre. The code was aimed at boards and directors of both public-sector and private organisations and covered Risk Management, Strategy, People, Incident</p>	

	<p>Planning and Assurance & oversight. In addition, there was a Governors Toolkit and a Cyber Governance Training package. Whilst this was voluntary it was agreed that this was something that the college should adopt. It was agreed that the team would progress this work and bring this back to a future meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Committee received and noted the latest Cyber Security Report.</p>	Director of ITS
043-2425	<p>FRAUD REGISTER</p> <p>The COO gave a verbal update and it was noted that there had not been any incidents Of fraud.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The committee noted the update.</p>	
044-2425	<p>COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PLAN– 2025/26</p> <p>Committee members discussed the draft Terms of Reference and Work Plan for 2025/26. This was being presented to the committee for any initial comments, however this would be reviewed further over the summer months.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The committee noted the draft Committee ToR and Work Plan for the committee in academic year 2025/26.</p>	
045-2425	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of AOB.</p>	
046-2425	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING:</p> <p>The next meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee would be held on 25 November 2025, this would be a joint meeting with the Finance & Resources Committee and would be held via Teams.</p>	
047-2425	<p>EVALUATION</p> <p>It was noted that the Committee had undertaken the required activities.</p>	
<p>Daniel Hussain left the meeting at 10.20</p> <p>Chris Mantel left the meeting at 10.20</p>		
048-2425	<p>CONFIDENTIALITY</p> <p>Confidential points were recorded in Part B minutes.</p>	