

**Minutes of Norton Radstock College Audit Committee meeting
held on Tuesday 5 July 2011 at 6.00pm**

Present: Mr M Suddaby (Chair) MS
Ms S Barter SB
Mr J Wilkinson (from 6.25pm) JW

In Attendance: Mrs S Arayan (Principal) SA
Ms J Barber (Finance Director) JB
Mrs C Bamford (Clerk) CB
Ms K Williams (RMS Tenon Group) KW

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Jenny Clifford, Janice Kurton and Alun Thomas.

There were no declarations of interests.

**2. Minutes of Audit Committee meeting held on 24 November 2011
for approval**

The meeting unanimously agreed to approve the Minutes.

3. Matters arising

The report was noted

4. Internal Audit Report for information

a. Learner number systems

KW took the meeting through the report explaining that College management had raised the need to ensure that sample testing covered not only the College's core delivery but also the partnered provision.

KW noted that in order to reflect the relevant assurances on each of the funding elements the opinions have been separated but still resulted in an amber/green outcome for both learner numbers and partnership provision.

KW went through the recommendations summary detailed in the report.

MS queried how the categories were assigned, KW confirmed that this was based on the auditors judgement and experience.

b. Follow up of previous Internal Audit Recommendations

KW explained that they had undertaken a review of the internal audit plan for 2010/11 to follow up progress made to implement previous internal audit recommendations.

KW confirmed that other than a superseded recommendation all others had been implemented.

MS expressed thanks to the executive team for ensuring actions had taken place to implement all recommendations.

c. Internal Audit Progress Report

KW explained that this paper produced a report on work done this year.

d. Updated Strategy for Internal Audit 2011/12

KW explained that the strategy sets out the approach taken to update the internal audit strategy for 2011/12 and also provides an update to the existing five year strategy and a more detailed plan for 2011/12.

KW took the meeting through the three key areas discussed with management.

MS asked members to refer to item 3 in the report which details considerations for the Audit Committee. Members endorsed the plan.

MS queried if data protection had been checked as an element of risk by the Audit Committee. KW stated that she would check past records and report back. If necessary this can be included in future audit plans.

Action: KW A7111

The above reports were noted

5. Report on Risk Management and update on top ten risks for information

JB went through the report which provides an update on risk management and presents the current top ten risks. She explained that the College's overall risk management approach continues to be effective and risks are recorded at both corporate level and departmental level.

JB noted that she had asked KW to work with her over the summer to look at how the risk management process can be combined with self-assessment in a more effective way so that risk management at school level will add value rather than being a duplication of effort. JB commented that they will also look at whether any other aspects of best practice can be introduced.

JW queried if the College would be looking at risk being a part of each schools self-assessment. KW confirmed that this would be the case, embedding risks from a bottom-up approach and harmonising existing arrangements to engage all staff.

MS queried if the risk management process was shared with all staff. JB confirmed that the Quality Co-ordinator has regular meetings with Heads of Schools to go through the relevant risks but this was at a high level.

The committee reviewed the top ten risk report. MS queried the categorising of the level of risk and whether there was further action required. KW commented that an assurance column could be added to the report. She noted that there was lots of detail on the internal controls but no evidence given to provide assurance that it is happening.

JW added that governors need to ensure that all risks are monitored and assurances need to be provided.

MS commented that he felt that the College had a good process in place to identify risks and report them to governors. He felt that controls were identified but that the College was missing the questions of 'what next' and whether the controls are sufficient.

MS also noted that there were far too many risks on the register and although all issues need to be dealt with they should only be recorded on the register if a real risk to the College or threatens the existence of the College.

The committee endorsed the approach and will review the revised risk register when updated.

6. Discussion on Anti-Bribery policy and review of Register of Interests Policy and Gifts and Hospitality register.

The Committee noted that the anti-bribery policy came into effect from 1 July 2011.

JB and SA stated that they would assess the level, nature and extent of risks of bribery to the college and draft a policy to be brought back to the September 2011 Governing Body meeting.

Action: JB/SA A7112

The committee reviewed the Register of Interests Policy and Gifts and Hospitality register. After discussion it was decided that a recommendation should be put forward to the governing body to increase the value of exempt items to £25 and that the gift register should be reviewed by the Audit committee on an annual basis.

Action: CB A7113

7. **Any other business**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Next meeting planned for Wednesday 23 November 2011 6.00pm.