



MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

GROUP RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Group Risk & Audit Committee held on Tuesday 15 November 2022 at 17.45hrs via Teams. A Closed Session took place at 17.00hrs followed by the Joint meeting with the F&R Committee.

Present: Mr C Reynolds Chair
Mr C Reeves
Mrs C Richardson
Mr J Williams

In attendance: Ms C Burkin Clerk to the Governing Body
Mr S Cook Principal/CEO
Mr L Glover Haines Watts
Mr J Mawby Exec Director of Curriculum & Quality
Mr M Peat Exec Director of Finance & Estates
Mrs N Wakefield Mazars External Auditor.

1 Declarations of Interest

All members' interests are numbered and referenced on the Declaration of Interest log dated 11 October 2022. The register is kept by the Clerk.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs L Snedden.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2022 & Confidential minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2022 & Confidential minutes, Paper GBGR&A22/587a, were accepted as a true record and signed electronically by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising and Outstanding Matters Report

Members discussed Paper GBGR&A22/588, the Outstanding Matters Report.

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- No 1. ETF Modules regarding – members are encouraged to complete the relevant modules – **Ongoing** – L Snedden reported by email that she had completed some of the modules and found them useful. C Reeves agreed as he had also completed these.
- No 2. Risk Management – the items under this matter have been **completed**.
- No 3. Risk Policy 2022/23 – this has been reviewed as part of the internal audit and Haines Watts will recommend updates to M Peat – **Ongoing**.
- No 4. External Auditors – change to Tax Team – M Peat reported good relations with the new team – **Complete**.
- No 5. Strategic Risk Management Report – S Cook to circulate to members details of the support students are receiving to assist with the cost of living crisis – **Outstanding**.
- No 6. Internal Audit Reports – **Completed** under item 9.

Members accepted the report and the recommended actions arising from it.

5 Strategic Risk Management Report - Paper GBGR&A22/589

Simon Cook presented the Strategic Risk management report which summarised the current Strategic Risk register. He highlighted the key changes since last reported:

- Changes to six risks in total as a result of an Exec review and feedback from the last meeting.
- Changes to the risk rank order (highest risk to lowest risk).
- Suggestions for assurance and prioritisation at the next meeting.


S Cook informed members of a debate at F&R Committee and the agreement that Cost-of-living crisis is mainly regarding inflation pressures and therefore he will be reflecting and renaming the relevant risks. Members discuss other items effected by inflation and how this would impact the register. They also discussed specific risks and agreed some amendments. Members asked S Cook to amend but to be mindful to keep the register a manageable size focused on strategy

Action: S Cook

M Peat informed members that the College is carrying out a sensitively analysis to highlight where savings can be made and this will focus on risk. The outcome may also impact the register.

Members asked for assurance around competitor threats and parental engagement. S Cook informed members of the College’s parental engagement plan. J Mawby assured members that the College trackers leavers and records destinations. He informed members of the strengthened team in student welfare to ensure support it available for individuals as required.

Members requested further assurance regarding growth of the subsidiary company, and it was agreed that members would meet outside the meeting to

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discuss what assurance they require and ask the Managing Director to report back. Members felt this may require an extra meeting to focus on one item.

Action: Governors/Clerk

6 Deep Dive – Ofsted Pilot & External Assurance – Paper GBGR&A22/590

Simon Cook introduced the paper which provided a background by way of reminder to the pilot Ofsted inspection, and J Mawby informed members of progress made on the issues raised:

- Systems – improvements in tracking were made during the Pilot and there are plans to install a bespoke system 2023/24 to meet the College’s needs.
- LAC - A designated caseworker was appointed during the Pilot.
- Channel – all referrals have been followed up and will be closed by the end of the academic year.
- Tutorial programme – the team has been restructured and are now part of the Safeguarding and Welfare Team. The programme delivers safeguarding themes amongst the other traditional items.
- Training – extra training and support is available to staff.

Members were assured by the progress made and noted the involvement and support of the Safeguarding Governor. J Mawby shared his confidence in the new systems and processes enabling the College’s to better report and carry out analysis.

Members noted the summary of how the College will be changing the way it demonstrates the impact on local skills needs to support the statement from the Governing Body.

Members thanked S Cook and J Mawby for the update.

7 Draft GR&A Annual Report 2021/22 – Paper GBGR&A22/591

Members were reminded that it is a requirement of the College to send this report to the ESFA by the end of December each year.

The Committee reviewed the draft Annual Report which included information about the Committee including its activities and self-assessment, the amended Terms of Reference, approved by GB July 2022. It reported no financial irregularity during the year with good value for money and no concerns are highlighted.

The report gave assurance that the Committee is adequate and effective, and members were requested to offer comments. L Glover offered some amendments and C Reeves offered to work with the Clerk to prepare the

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document for signing. The final draft will be shared with the Chair for comment before recommendation to the Governing Body.

Action: C Reeves/C Burkin

8 Information Security Report (GDPR) – Paper GBGR&A22/592

Due to connectivity issue Hazel Foreman was not able to join the meeting to present the report which provided an overview of the number of requests recently received and the number of identified data breaches. The Information Security report also included an update on departmental changes and moves forward.

Members noted some questions to ask H Foreman outside the meeting.

Action: Clerk to inform H Foreman

The Chair was able to inform members of the details for the Medium Risk - Some Impact & Reasonable Likelihood and there were no concerns raised.

Members thanked H Foreman for the update.

Shirley Collier left the meeting.

9 Internal Audit Reports - Paper GBGR&A22/593 - 600

Lee Glover from Haines Watts, introduced the following reports:

- Budgetary Control (GBGR&A22/593) – overall assurance - Substantial.
- Student Records Apprentice On-boarding (GBGR&A22/594) - overall assurance - Adequate.
- Risk Management (GBGR&A22/595) - overall assurance – Adequate. L Glover offered to work with the College to review and update the Risk Management Policy. Haines Watts also offered to support the College in reviewing the risk register without it becoming too onerous and will following up on the risk appetite to agree a consensus that can be presented to the Governing Body.

Action: L Glover/M Peat

- Environmental Reporting (GBGR&A22/596) - overall assurance – Adequate – good practice in this area.
- Stakeholder Engagement - Student Voice (GBGR&A22/597) - overall assurance – Adequate.

Members were concerned that some of the internal audit processes had experienced some difficulties. They asked the Exec to work with Haines Watts to ensure these are resolved and that the reports presented, give the Committee the required assurance.

Action: M Peat

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The Follow Up (GBGR&A22/598) review had been issued to management as a Discussion Draft Report and once finalised will complete the Internal Audit work for 2021/22. The report will be shared with members once available.

Action: M Peat

The Internal Audit Annual Report (GBGR&A22/599) was also presented. Based on the work performed by Haines Watts they offered their conclusion as to the adequacy and effectiveness (or inadequacy and ineffectiveness) of the College’s risk management, control and governance processes.

Overall, their opinion, based upon the reviews performed during the year, the College has:

- adequate and effective risk management.
- adequate and effective governance; and
- adequate and effective control processes.

The 2022/23 Internal Audit Strategy (GBGR&A22/600) was presented for approval. Members queried the increase in number of days and were assured this was a maximum with flexibility within the year. It was requested and agreed, that the audit briefs would be shared with the College and once agreed with the manager responsible, the Committee would have sight of them. Members asked M Peat to review the strategy with L Glover before approval.

Action: M Peat/L Glover

Members **approved** the strategy in principle with the above noted.

Members thanked Haines Watts for the reports.

10 Any Other Business

There were no items.

Members agreed/amended the agenda for the meeting scheduled for Tuesday 7 February 2023.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7 February 2023 on Teams.

The meeting closed at 19.47

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