

HARTLEPOOL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19th November 2025 at 5.30pm in Conference Room 5.

Present: Mr P Dodds
Mrs J Robinson (via Teams)
Ms E Warman

Also Present: Mrs L Robson (RSM) [via Teams]
Mr R Hanley (Validera) [via Teams]
Mrs K Dales [Head of Governance]
Mr D Williams [Vice Principal]
Ms E Rodgers [Head of Finance]

1	Meeting with external advisers only Not required.
2	Apologies for absence Mr G Riches.
3	Declarations of interest relevant to the business of the meeting There were no new declarations of interest.
4	Minutes of the previous meeting 26th June 2025 The minutes were approved as a true record.
5	Matters Arising and Actions N/A.
6	To consider the external audit findings for the year ended 31 July 2025 LR presented the report and told the committee that it is still in draft form and the final version will go to the Board. She said that work is ongoing to finalise the documents but that all the disclosure items still unresolved were presentational and would not impact on the bottom line. She said that she had no concerns about meeting the timescales for the Board meeting. PD commented that it is an excellent report and that he is happy to see that there was nothing material to note. The Audit Committee agreed to recommend that the report goes to the Board.
7	To consider the draft consolidated accounts and financial statements for year ended 31 July 2025 Confidential.
8	To consider the draft HBDC Ltd directors report and accounts for the year ended 31 July 2025 Confidential.
9	To consider the letter of support from the College to the subsidiary company DW told the committee that this was no longer required as there will be nothing to underwrite. The Committee noted the position.

10	<p>To consider and approve the 2025/26 Internal Audit Strategy</p> <p>RH presented the document and thanked the College for the good engagement with them which enabled them to understand and reflect the priorities for Internal Audit work. The document presented the proposed audits for 2025/26 and the following two years.</p> <p>DW said that he was very happy with the document.</p> <p>KD asked RH about the proposed Corporate Governance review in 2026/27 as the College will be required to undertake an independent governance review in the same year and would not want to see duplication. RH agreed and said that it should complement rather than duplicate and is happy to look at it.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Internal Audit Strategy.</p>
11	<p>WBG Annual report for 2025/26</p> <p>DW presented the report which documented the work undertaken during 2025/26 by WBG.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>
12	<p>To consider the audit committee's annual report for 2024/25</p> <p>KD presented the Audit Committee's annual report and reminded the committee that the section highlighted in blue needed consideration.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that after considering all of the information presented in the annual report, that they were happy with the effectiveness and could commend the report to the Board.</p>
13	<p>To consider the audit committee's self evaluation for 2024/25</p> <p>KD presented the audit committee self-evaluation.</p> <p>The Committee agreed with the evidence provided and commended the report to the Board.</p>
14	<p>To monitor QAPP updates</p> <p>DW presented the report and told the Committee that work was in hand to finalise the few still requiring approval.</p> <p>The Committee accepted the report.</p>
15	<p>To receive and consider any risk reports from committee's</p> <p>None.</p>
15	<p>To consider and approve the Risk Register</p> <p>DW presented the report which showed changes from the previous iteration in blue at the top. He said that he will work with Validera to review the document as part of their work.</p> <p>The committee approved the risk register.</p>

16	<p>To consider Procurement activity</p> <p>DW presented the report which highlights contracts given where the College's procurement policy has not or could not be followed and the reasons why this is the case.</p> <p>JR queried line 87 Texthelp as the commentary against the item did not make sense. ER agreed to clarify the difference between the two companies highlighted.</p> <p>The Committee accepted the paper.</p>
17	<p>Technical updates</p> <p>DW told the Committee that this will be a standing item going forward in order to keep the committee apprised of any new guidance or other changes. He also highlighted RSM's emerging issues paper which is really helpful and is always shared with the College's leadership forum.</p> <p>The Committee accepted the report.</p>
18	<p>Audit Tracker</p> <p>DW presented the document which gives the committee assurance that audit recommendations are being addressed.</p> <p>The committee accepted the report.</p>
19	<p>Any other business</p> <p>DW thanked RSM for their work with the College over a number of years.</p>
24	<p>To note the date and time of the next meeting:</p> <p>Wednesday 5th March 2025 at 5.30pm.</p>
25	<p>Meeting without external advisers</p> <p>Not required</p>

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CHAIR

Action points from the meeting on 19th November 2025

No	Item	By Whom	By Date
17	Clarify the narrative relating to the two companies in relation to Texthelp	DW/ER	March 2026