

## HARTLEPOOL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

### Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June at 5.30pm in Conference 4

**Present:** Mr P Dodds [Chair]  
Ms J Robinson  
Ms E Warman

**Also Present:** Ms A Cowan (Wbg) [via Teams]  
Mrs L Robson (RSM) [via Teams]  
Mrs K Dales [Head of Governance]  
Mr D Hankey [Principal]  
Mr D Williams [Vice Principal]  
Ms E Rodgers [Head of Finance]  
Mr S Hall [sfb group – observing]

<b>1</b>	<b>Meeting with external advisers only</b> Not required.
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Mr L Cranston.
<b>3</b>	<b>Declarations of interest relevant to the business of the meeting</b> There were no new declarations of interest.
<b>4</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meetings:</b> - <b>6<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b> The minutes were approved as a true record. - <b>6<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> The minutes were approved as a true record.
<b>5</b>	<b>Matters Arising and Actions</b> Complete.
<b>6</b>	<b>Internal Audit Progress</b> AC presented the report and reported that all audits have now been completed and the audit report which will come to the next meeting will give a clean audit opinion.  The committee accepted the report.
<b>7</b>	<b>To Consider Wbg reports</b> Confidential.
<b>8</b>	<b>External Audit Plan</b> LR introduced the report which summarises RSM's approach to the audit for year ended 31 July 2025, including planned scope, timetable, materiality and key audit risks.  The Committee approved the Audit Plan.
<b>9</b>	<b>Emerging Issues</b> LR introduced the item which is for information only as it gives a highlight of issues facing the Further Education sector.

	<p>PD asked whether the income testing report was shared with staff. DW commented that all of the emerging issues reports go the College Leadership Committee which will then disseminate more widely.</p> <p>The Committee received the report.</p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Audit Tracker</b></p> <p>DW presented the report and requested that two of the audit recommendations be removed. Firstly the requirement for a Procurement Strategy. DW said that the College follows procurement rules and uses procurement frameworks as necessary and said he felt that a strategy would not add any value to the process. JR asked what the criteria for awarding contracts. DW said that responses are weighted to include quality and service alongside price.</p> <p>The second one to be removed related to having a centralised lessons learnt log for Business Continuity incidents. DW said that it was felt that it is better to have departmental logs as that is where actions will need to be taken. All incident reports are taken to College Leadership Committee and Audit Committee so they are considered more widely.</p> <p>The Committee approved the removal of the two recommendations.</p> <p>The Committee accepted the report</p>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Procurement Activity</b></p> <p>Confidential.</p>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>To monitor QAPP updates</b></p> <p>DH presented the report and told the Committee that all outstanding policies have been reviewed and will be approved in July either at the Board meeting or at College Leadership Committee as appropriate.</p> <p>The Committee accepted the report.</p>
<b>13</b>	<p><b>To consider and approve the Risk Register</b></p> <p>DW presented the report which shows amendments from the previous iteration at the top. The new internal audit provider will be reviewing the register once they start with the College in August.</p> <p>The Committee approved the report.</p>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>To receive and consider any risk reports from committee's</b></p> <p>None.</p>
<b>15</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>None.</p>
<b>16</b>	<p><b>To note the date and time of the next meeting:</b></p> <p>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 5.30pm</p>

17	<b>Meeting without external advisers</b> DW told the committee that Validera, the new internal audit provider, is keen to meet the committee and complete an audit needs assessment. Once dates have been agreed with Validera, an ad hoc committee meeting will be put in the diary. It will probably be a Teams meeting.
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**CHAIR**