

Chair	Neil Yeomans
Corporation Members	Cynthia Griffin
Co-opted Members	Thana Nathan
Officers	Gerry McDonald: Group Principal & CEO Suri Araniyasundaran: Deputy CEO Jamie Stroud – Finance Director
Apologies	Nazia Faiz
Minutes	Elsa Wright – Director of Governance

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1	Welcome and Introductions The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2	Apologies for Absence Nazia Faiz had sent apologies as she was travelling and unable to join remotely. These were accepted by the committee. Paul Goddard was not attending the meeting but would be leading a session on risk at the Corporation Strategy Day.
3	Declaration of Interests None received.
4	Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 7 December 2021 The minutes of the meetings were agreed as drafted.
5	Matters Arising and Action Points from the Meeting The Deputy CEO confirmed that the bank had refunded the student who had been the victim of fraud.
ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, DECISION OR ACTION	
6	Internal Audit Assignment Reports The internal auditor introduced the first report on income and debtors where the level of assurance was reasonable. There were two medium recommendations which had received a positive management response. Staff had now been trained and the interface between the systems was updated on a daily basis. The aim was to get rid of direct debits and move to continuous payment authority. The system would be automated using software to help minimise errors and increase the speed of payments. Governors asked about the sample size. There had been issues with around half of the samples, but the management response would eliminate many of these. The Deputy CEO confirmed that value of all overdue debtors was less than £250k. The procurement, purchasing and payments audit had received a significant level of assurance with only one low level recommendation around updating the procurement

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	<p>guidelines. The Deputy CEO confirmed that this was in hand. Governors congratulated the purchasing team for their work. In response to questions, the Deputy CEO confirmed that the procurement process looked at value for money as well as quality and service using framework agreements for high value purchases.</p> <p>The distance learning audit had been requested by the Deputy CEO to monitor progress and to ensure that the data held on the ILR was accurate. The level of assurance was reasonable with two medium and two low level recommendations. Numbers had fallen from a peak of 2,500 learners last year to around 1,500 in the current year. Target value was £750k with expenditure currently at £250k. There had been some big improvements made by the MIS team but there were areas for further work including managing withdrawals. The process to reconcile the ILR with eAssessor was being automated and increased training and checking were in place. The CEO confirmed that he had followed up the recommendations with the GED Apprenticeships & Business Development earlier that day. The audit had been helpful to identify where further improvements could be made and these were in hand.</p> <p>The internal auditor confirmed that the Health and Safety Audit had been completed and there were no changes to the workplan at this stage. It was helpful for the committee to see the 5 year rolling plan.</p>
7	<p>Attempted Fraud</p> <p>The Deputy CEO updated the committee on the earlier fraud where a student from the College had handed over his card details having been contacted by someone saying they were from the College. The bank had refunded the student in full.</p> <p>There had been a phishing attempt to get approval for purchasing goods but this had been reported to IT. A second attempt would have been needed to secure payment. Governors asked how staff were kept informed about fraud. The Deputy CEO explained that test emails were sent out to check if staff reported or responded to requests. Follow up emails the offered advice to staff about what to look out for and how to report suspicious emails. It was agreed that this should be looked at in more detail as part of the cyber security audit.</p> <p>Action – Deputy CEO to include testing and staff response as part of the cyber security audit</p>
8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Deputy CEO informed the committee that the college was being audited by the ESFA. This was a standard audit which took place every 4 years but could take place at any point in the year. The audit looked at 30 records in each funding stream and within each record there could be almost 60 items to review. It was time consuming, but the ESFA used the same software as the college which made the process more straightforward. The Deputy CEO was confident of a good outcome</p> <p>The CEO reported that the ESFA had now concluded a two year investigation into claims made by a former training provider at Epping. The provision had been closed down at merger. The ESFA had originally asked for £150k to be repaid and this had been reduced to £48,000. This could be challenged but the College would have to pay for a complete audit of every record. The provider had delivered the wrong qualification and had then tried to get another provider to deliver the correct one. The College had provided further evidence to mitigate the claim but it was likely that the College would have to pay. It was expected to be resolved by the end of April.</p>

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9	Date of next meeting The next meeting was scheduled for 14 June 2022
10	Confidential items See part 2 minutes