

Minutes of the Audit Committee of the Governing Body of Carmel College held on Tuesday, 10 March, 2009 at 10.00 am



carmel
college

Present: Miss Kath Boullen
Mr Brian Coxhead (Chair)
Mr Donal McCormack

College Personnel: Mrs Michelle Williams

In attendance: Ms Sue Harris, Internal Auditor, Baker Tilly
Mrs Alison Fishwick, Acting Clerk in the absence of Mr John Perry

1. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

2. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Fr Paul Glover and Mrs Carole Williams.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting of 24th November 2008**

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly.

4. **Matters Arising**

Agenda Item 8 – Financial Management and Control Evaluation

The Director of Resources confirmed that an *All Staff* Inset on the Financial Regulations has been planned.

5. **Recommendations of the Internal Auditor: Progress Report**

There are no outstanding recommendations to be implemented.

6. **Reports from the Internal Auditor, Baker Tilly:**

(i) Follow Up of Previous Recommendations

The Internal Auditor referred to Page 2 of the report which stated that the College has implemented all of the recommendations made.

Governors enquired about the timing of CRB references. The Director of Resources explained that there is now a second organisation known as the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) which has been created to provide a joined-up approach to approving the employment of staff. The College is not allowed to recruit any person unless they are registered with this Agency.

(ii) Corporate Governance

The Internal Auditor referred to Page 1 of the report which states that the College has an adequate Corporate Governance framework in

place in relation to the areas tested. Three minor control weaknesses were highlighted which related to appointments and the induction process for Governors.

(iii) Fixed Assets

The Internal Auditor referred to Page 1 of the report which states that the College has adequate fixed asset arrangements in place. Three control weaknesses relating to the maintenance of fixed asset records have been highlighted. The Internal Auditor referred to Page 2 which states that the controls in place over the system, as currently operating, provide good assurance that risks material to the achievement of the College's objectives are adequately and effectively managed.

In respect of Recommendation 2.1.1 on Page 9 the Director of Resources explained that it can be difficult sometimes to encourage Departments to take ownership of their assets but it was hoped that by implementing the new system with the new build it will act as a fresh start. Part of staff inset will be dedicated to introducing the new system. The Internal Auditor added that the system is working there are just some areas for improvement.

(iv) Risk Management

The Internal Auditor referred to Page 1 of the report which states that the College had adequate Risk Management arrangements in place and the control objectives identified for this review have been addressed by management. Two minor control weaknesses were identified relating to the publication of the Risk Management Policy and the responsibilities of the Heads of Faculty in relation to Risk Management.

The Internal Auditor referred to Page 2 of the report which states that the controls in place, as currently operated, provide good assurance that risks material to the achievement of these control objectives are adequately and effectively managed.

The Committee noted the Reports

7. Risk Management of New Build

The Director of Resources took Governors through the Risk Register which is updated regularly and risks are removed as they are managed. There is an attempt on the Register to quantify financially the impact of the risk.

Further to the previously circulated LSC statements and Parliamentary Written Statement, Governors enquired about the situation in respect of funding for Phase 2. The Director of Resources updated Governors on the current status. In summary, the LSC's National Committee postponed decisions on the capital build projects as there are insufficient funds available for the number of projects. At the LSC meeting on 4th March the LSC approved a number of College projects but all remaining projects will be subject to prioritisation following consultation via the sector. The Director of Resources added that the College feels it has a very good case particularly as Phase 1 was planned with Phase 2 in mind and included the design of the main entrance to the

College. The College will do all that they can to lobby but the situation remains a risk to the future of the planned accommodation strategy.

Governors recommended that the College should lobby in the most effective way possible; indeed, the College may need to be assertive in their approach. Those individuals/bodies lobbied should also be reminded that the College has Beacon status and is among the best performing Colleges in the country. This matter will be discussed at the Corporate Management Team meetings and a full report is expected at the Full Governing Body meeting on the 24 March.

The Committee noted the Reports

8. Future Agenda Items

There were no topics that the Governors wished to consider at future meetings at this stage.

9. Any Other Business

a) Funding Audit Review

Governors noted that the LSC had commissioned Baker Tilly to carry out a Funding Audit Review of Colleges and Carmel College was included in the recent audit cycle. The verbal feedback from the Review, which was very much sample based, was very positive with very few recommendations. The Director of Resources commented that the College was pleased that they were able to respond and cope with the Review and would like to place on record her thanks to the MIS Team. The full report will be presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

b) Framework for Excellence

Governors noted that there has been no feedback yet from the LSC, although it appears that Framework for Excellence is changing overall and the way it is going to be used. Governors noted that an overall grade will not be provided and a number of the financial dimensions will be deleted.

c) Baker Tilly

The Internal Auditor informed Governors that Peter Mills has now left Baker Tilly and Suzanne Dewhurst will be returning to this role.

10. Date of Next Meeting 2nd. June 2009

Signed on this day:
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By the Chair:
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