

BASINGSTOKE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION

AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2025

Membership (5):	*	Charles Cardiff	External Member	Chair
		Caroline Baker	External Member	
	*	Beryl Huntingdon	External Member	
	*	Nicole Martin	External Member	Vice Chair
	*	Ian Ward	Staff Member	
	*	Pamela Woolgrove	External Member	
Quorum:		3 Members required	5 Members present	Meeting quorate
In Attendance:	*	Anthony Bravo	Principal	
	*	Simon Burrell	Clerk to the Corporation (Clerk)	
	*	Kath Howarth	Head of Apprenticeships (HoA)	
	*	Craig Mincher	MD of WBTC (MD)	
	*	David Moir	Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (DPFR)	
	t	Ryan Pearce	Scrutton Bland (Internal Auditor) (IA)	
Present at meeting:	*			
Telephone link:	t			

PART 1: NON-CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

874.	<p>WEST BERKSHIRE TRAINING CONSORTIUM (WBTC)</p> <p>The MD gave a presentation about WBTC. He advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The charity had been founded in 1983 to combat the (then) rising level of youth unemployment. There were, currently, 17FTE staff employed by WBTC WBTC had three strategic aims: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top support young people, especially those disadvantaged and disengaged, through Study Programmes to help build a brighter future. 2. Promote apprenticeships with young people and support employers to upskill their workforce. 3. To promote a sustainable and work environment for their employees in which they are encouraged to develop their skills and feel valued. Apprenticeship achievement rates for 2023/24 were 72% and were forecast to be 75% in 2024/25, against a national average of 60%. <p>At the end of the presentation the Audit Cttee sought clarification on a range of matters highlighted and also suggested that the MD make a similar presentation to the Corporation.</p> <p><i>(Craig Minchen left the meeting)</i></p>	<p>Corp/ Clerk</p>
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875.	APOLOGIES The were no apologies for absence.	
876.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no Declarations of Interest made.	
877.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING The Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Ctte held on 12 March 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.	
878.	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES There were no Matters Arising discussed that were not due to be considered elsewhere at the meeting.	
879.	INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE Written reports were received and considered. <p>1. Apprenticeship Recruitment Report</p> <p>The IA advised that his review had been assessed as “Significant Assurance”. He had made six recommendations, all graded as ‘low risk’. He advised further that the College had effective oversight of its apprenticeship recruitment framework, and that the recommendations made were to improve existing processes and to provide additional oversight on marketing activities and feedback outcomes.</p> <p>The HoA took the Ctte through the recommendations and outlined the actions being undertaken. She advised that there had been nothing raised that she had not been aware of. In particular, a new employer engagement strategy and a new marketing strategy had been developed and were operating smoothly.</p> <p>In response to a question from a Member the HoA advised that she had only been in post since September 2024. The Ctte noted that there had been good progress made since that time.</p> <p>In response to a further question from a Member the HoA advised that there were, currently, 643 apprentices on programme.</p> <p><i>(Kath Howarth left the meeting)</i></p> <p>2. Industry Placements Report</p> <p>The IA advised that his review had been assessed as “Strong Assurance”, and that no recommendations had been made. He advised further that the College had a clearly defined Industrial Placement Policy and Procedure in place that was subject to formal, periodic reviews to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.</p> <p>It was noted that the review had been undertaken in March 2025 when there were 506 students yet to start their work experience placements. It was suggested that, in future, a review would be better undertaken at the end of the academic year when the majority of students would have completed their placements, and that a better understanding of the process would be seen.</p>	

879. (cont)	<p>3. Internal Audit Progress Report 2024/25</p> <p>A written report was received for information and noted. The IA advised that five reviews had been completed and reported to the Audit Ctte. A sixth review (funding assurance) had commenced at the beginning of June 2025. The Follow-up Review on Previous Recommendations was scheduled to be undertaken in early July 2025.</p> <p>4. Risk and Assurance Charter</p> <p>A copy of the Internal Audit Mandate and Charter (Feb 2025) was received for information. The IA advise that it was based on the 'industry standard' and that there were no significant matters to report.</p> <p>5. Internal Audit Plan 2025/26</p> <p>A written report was received and considered. The IA advised that the Internal Audit Plan 2025/26 had been compiled following a review of the College's risk register, and discussions with the DPFR.</p> <p>The IA advised further that the proposed plan was based on 35 days, and covered:</p> <table><tr><td>Learner Recruitment (Adult Ed Budget and HE)</td><td>5 days</td></tr><tr><td>Cyber Security</td><td>5 days</td></tr><tr><td>ESFA Student Funding and Learner Numbers</td><td>5 days</td></tr><tr><td>HR Sickness Absence Management</td><td>4 days</td></tr><tr><td>Audit Ctte's Contingency Days</td><td>4 days</td></tr><tr><td>Purchasing to Payments & High Value Purchases</td><td>4 days</td></tr><tr><td>Follow-up of previous recommendations</td><td>2.5 days</td></tr><tr><td>Planning and control/Audit Ctte prep and attendance</td><td>5.5 days</td></tr></table> <p>TOTAL: 35 days</p> <p>With regards to the Audit Ctte's Contingency Days, the Ctte advised that it had concerns around employer engagement and on Aspiral's viability and learner numbers. It requested that a review be undertaken towards the end of the new academic year.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the CORPORATION that the Internal Audit Plan 2025/26, based on 35 days and covering the areas outlined above, be agreed.</p> <p><i>(The IA left the meeting)</i></p>	Learner Recruitment (Adult Ed Budget and HE)	5 days	Cyber Security	5 days	ESFA Student Funding and Learner Numbers	5 days	HR Sickness Absence Management	4 days	Audit Ctte's Contingency Days	4 days	Purchasing to Payments & High Value Purchases	4 days	Follow-up of previous recommendations	2.5 days	Planning and control/Audit Ctte prep and attendance	5.5 days	
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880.	<p>FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2024/25 AUDIT PLAN</p> <p>A written report was received for information. It was noted that the outline plan was based on the 'standard' action plan, and that no particular areas of risk or concerns had been raised by the FSA in developing the Plan.</p>																	

881.	RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK REGISTER A written report was received for information. The DPFR advised that the College's risk register had been reviewed, and risk scores updated to reflect the current position and plans for 2025/26. The DPFR advised further that since the last report, one new risk had been added: Q15 – The use of Artificial Intelligence by staff and students, and that one risk score had increased: S3 – The impact of funding changes [the College's grant for adult skills delivery had been cut by £200k for 2025/26 and this would require the College to cut £200k of provision]. The DPFR also advised that the highest risk was related to T levels and associated level 3 curriculum reforms. Whilst there had been some movement in government policy it was not deemed significant. However, the impact on the College of the level 3 reforms was expected to be profound. To date the challenge had been on recruitment, and enrolments in September 2025 would inform this risk assessment for the future.	
882.	USE OF COLLEGE SEAL The Clerk advised that the College Seal had not been used in the period since the previous meeting of the Audit Committee.	
883.	POST-PROJECT REVIEWS There had been no post-project reviews undertaken since the last meeting of the Audit Committee.	
884.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS Wednesday 26 November 2025 Wednesday 4 March 2026 Wednesday 10 June 2026	
885.	CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING The Confidential Minutes of the Audit Cttee meeting held on 12 March 2025 were confirmed as correct records and were signed by the Chair.	
886.	CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES There were no Confidential Matters Arising discussed that had not been considered elsewhere at the meeting.	
(6.48pm)	Meeting closed	

NOTE: General acronyms/references used in the Minutes include:

AI = Artificial Intelligence
MD = Managing Director

FSA = Financial Statements Auditor
WBTC = West Berkshire Training Consortium