

## VARNDEAN COLLEGE

### MINUTES OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018 AT 9.00 A.M.

Present: Randall Anderson, Ayas Fallon-Khan, Philip Harland, Elaine French,  
Donna-Marie Janson

In Attendance: Louise Pennington

Apologies: Donna-Marie Janson

In the Chair: Randall Anderson

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

As given above.

#### 2. Declaration of Interests

None.

#### 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

#### 4. Matters Arising

a) Action Points from last the last meeting

- **IT Strategy:** The IT Strategy will be presented to the Audit Committee in the Autumn Term. **ACTION: Philip Harland**
- In response to a question from the Group, it was reported that the Anti-terrorism speaker was very good and had raised awareness of all terror related issues. It was suggested though that it would have been more useful if the pre-prepared presentation had had a local focus. The College has also had a recent visit from the Regional PREVENT co-ordinator. Have had visit from Regional coordinator from Prevent who drew SLT's attention to the issues arising from having such an open and accessible site.
- **Staff training on security issues** will be given to staff in September 2018 – Done.
- **Finance Regulations/procedures** – approved by Corporation October 2018.
- **Risk Register** – updates as minuted – Done.
- **Risk Assurance Map** – updates as minuted – Done.

## b) Rolling Action Plan from Audit 2017-2018

The progress since the last meeting was noted by the Group and the following additional points recorded:

- Finance Procedures and financial regulations – agreed at Corporation October 2018 – to be uploaded to the Website and circulated to Governors. **ACTION: Elaine French**
- The Group was informed that the audit reports from the March 2018 Audit visit were due to be issued shortly and that these would be presented to the next Audit Committee. **ACTION: Elaine French**
- General – Elaine French advised there were several audit points, most of which were housekeeping issues and that many of these had been on hold until the new MIS system had been embedded and tested. Now that it is up and running, the audit issues are being looked out as part of the DSATs and a follow up day with the internal auditors has been scheduled next week to go through any outstanding audit items. At this point Philip Harland explained the issues arising from having implemented a new system, reporting that the new software provided by Pro Solutions had created some challenges for the College, although the data transfer exercise had been successful without any issues. There had been problems for the end users in respect of certain tasks as the software has in some instances, been more sophisticated than required by the College. Further training for staff using the new system has been necessary and overall once staff have gained experience using this, it's expected to prove to be a useful tool, and will reduce the necessity for multiple input/entries etc.

## 5) Risk Management Annual Report

Elaine French presented the Report to the Group and confirmed that it had been updated to reflect changes made during the year, including key points raised during the year which have been included in section 2 and changes to the risk register which have been included in Section 3.

In response to questions raised by the Group, it was noted that consideration later in the meeting would be given to a different Risk Assurance Map format and that the final Map should form part of the latest Annual Report.

## 6) Review of Risks – Risk Register and Emerging Risks

The Group considered the latest risk register and the following changes to the register were recommended for approval. **ACTION: Elaine French**

It was noted that Nick Stubbs had been invited to the meeting in order to answer questions relating to the new significant construction/capital works risk. In response to various questions from the Group Nick Stubbs explained the health and safety responsibilities arising from a major capital project and the importance of taking the necessary measures and advice regarding H and S issues, with essential input at the pre-construction stage. Hence it was noted that Nick Stubbs would be involved in the initial meetings with contractors, once planning permission has been agreed and contractors appointed. It was recorded that during a project

the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) representatives may turn up on site at any time, unannounced, to check H and S issues or as a result of complaints etc.

As planning permission has not yet been granted for the STEM centre project, the College's preferred building surveyor, Crowther Overton Hart, has not yet developed a phased construction plan with a detailed timeline. At this point Philip Harland reported that the College had been informed that the Highways Agency had stated that in respect of the College's planning application and in light of a potential impact on the local highways, following the new building works, a section 106 would be submitted costing the College in the region of £100,000. The College will dispute this as although the square meterage of the College will increase overall as a result of the project, it would not increase the College's capacity to any significant level.

The Group was informed that the other two planning applications (land sale and sports pitch) were likely to be considered at the December 2018 Planning Committee meeting.

The new Risk relating to construction was agreed, to be entitled "failure to properly manage the risks associated with construction", with the impact agreed as a "6" and the likelihood as a "2", making this a B Category Risk. **ACTION: Elaine French**

### **A Category Risks**

**Risk HR2** Staff morale deteriorates as a consequence of heavy workload etc: - unchanged.

Philip Harland confirmed that staff morale remained fairly stable but may deteriorate owing to the favourable pay award made to school teachers (not FE teachers) which is part funded by government (as SFCs are classified within the private sector, the government would only offer this funding to those classified within the public sector i.e. schools/academies). Any decline in morale owing to this would probably relate to perception rather than a genuine impact as the majority of staff at Varndean were experienced and would not be entitled to benefit from the pay rise equivalent to be awarded to school teachers on lower pay scales. Regarding staff workload, this has been reduced slightly this year owing to a reduction in the average class size for most classes.

The Group considered whether there were additional controls which could be introduced in order to reduce the overall impact of the risk and in this regard Philip Harland explained what the College was already doing to provide support in terms of health and well-being facilities.

At this point the Group also discussed the SFC sector pay negotiations and Philip Harland explained the likely discussions and options which the SFCA may consider in their discussions with the Unions, starting with a 1% pay rise, but with a likely extension to this, incorporating another element (indicated at up to an additional 0.8%), depending upon a College's nature and affordability issues. The change in recent years in the SFCA representation from solely providing support to SFCs to extending this to SFC academies and Schools with significant sixth form provision. Again those staff members on lower income scales may be entitled to a higher percentage pay rise than the more experienced staff on a higher part of the scale. In response to a question from the Group, Elaine French confirmed that she would be modelling various pay options over the next two weeks to assist Governors' understanding, when the outcome of the national pay negotiations are known later in the year. **ACTION: Elaine French**

**RISK P1** There are insufficient resources of the right type available to meet accommodation needs. – unchanged.

The Group reviewed the controls and contingencies and it was resolved to add some additional wording within the controls section to reflect the fact that the College continues to make the maximum use of the facilities available via its programme of minor works. **ACTION: Elaine French**

**RISK F2** Risk of not growing owing to competition and demand affecting financial viability – it was noted that the was increasing its Student numbers (50 additional students for 18/19), although the number of IB Students has reduced from its target of 50, owing to disappointing performance in science for some students at Secondary School stage.

**RISK F4** Uncertainty caused by Government Policy – unchanged. Uncertainty regarding future immigration/visa issues in respect of International Students, was noted in light of Brexit.

**RISK C1** Failure to improve value added on BTEC courses – unchanged. Individual portions have improved significantly and the proportion of students achieving their target grade has improved, although the overall score largely remains the same. The value added in respect of A Levels overall has also reduced slightly.

**RISK C3** Inability to address increased demand for specialist support services – Philip Harland explained the various issues and demands placed upon the Additional Support provisions and that the College has decided to appoint a mental health worker at 0.5, which overall, owing to staffing adjustments, will only incur additional overall costs of about £3,000. This will be a great help to the Additional Support Department and also allow access to other essential resources including CAMS referrals etc. It was noted that the individual appointed would also be expected to be first aid trained.

## **B RISKS**

**Risk HR1** Inability to fill key staff roles – unchanged.

**RISK** Ability to improve overall college success rates – it was noted that reference to “success” should in fact read “achievement”. **ACTION: Elaine French**

The change to linear A Level qualifications was discussed in light of the risk wording and the difficulties arising from accurate comparisons with other Colleges. It was resolved to add the following wording within the Controls section: “seeking ways to reinforce student achievement at the end of year 1”. **ACTION: Elaine French**

**MA1** – the College is seeing improvements, but it was resolved to review next year whether to reduce the risk to a C category, post the next internal audit visit. **ACTION: Elaine French**

**MA2** – unable to retain sufficient staff at required levels. Philip Harland explained some of the challenges which the College was experiencing including the difficulties experienced in filling an IT Technician post, caused by the low salary on offer. He explained that SLT may have to review its support staff salary structures/complete a job evaluation exercise in order to improve this type of problem for some support staff posts which will have an impact on the budget.

**HR3** – as per the decision made at the last meeting, although this had been classified as a B risk, following the retirement of a number of SLT members, it was resolved to re-visit the risk next year, once the new Vice-Principal was in post. **ACTION: Elaine French.**

**P2** Inadequate Student social space etc. – including toilets and catering – unchanged.

**C and D CATEGORY RISKS**

No changes were recommended to the C and D risks within the Register.

**EMERGING RISKS**

None discussed.

**7) Risk Assurance Map – Review and Update**

Owing to time constraints, it was resolved to review the Risk Assurance Map at the Audit Committee meeting in November 2018, noting also that this would include a review of an alternative format assurance map. **ACTION: Elaine French**

**8) Date of Next Meeting**

To be agreed.

**9) Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**10) Enclosures**

The two enclosures were noted: a) Risk Group Terms of Reference and b) Risk Management Policy, and c) Risk Management Action Plan

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

Louise Pennington 29/10/2018