

VARNDEAN COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2017 AT 9.00 A.M.

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

In Attendance: Louise Pennington

Apologies: Jill Arnold

In the Chair: Randall Anderson

1. Apologies for Absence

As given above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th May 2017

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

4. Matters Arising

a) Action Points from last the last meeting

- 7/10/16 and 5/5/17 item 4 Commissioning IT Audit and staff training on IT Security Matters: The letter from the Internal Auditors, following their IT audit work, was received this morning. In summary the IT work was completed over one day on site with the IT Team. They looked at our network, IT hardware and software and their findings were as follows: – IT Team demonstrated skills and knowledge of the environment and have the management skills to maintain a competent service level. The firewall solution works well, together with the anti-virus and malware. All systems and hardware appear to be up to date – having sampled 5 computers; also saw evidence of a regular updating of servers/computers' patching. A separate penetration test was completed in December 2016 and the auditors were satisfied with the outcome from this. In conclusion the auditors assessed the College to be low risk from cyber attack and all the policies, procedures and back up systems were up to date. Recommendations:- The back up recommendations regarding access to server has been actioned. The College should also prepare formal IT Strategy which SLT are considering at the moment. **ACTION: ELF/PH** It was also recommended that the College should introduce forced password changes – this has also been actioned. All recommendations were graded as housekeeping priority 3.
- 5/5/17 Item 5 risk Management Action Plan - Staff morale and pay negotiations: Philip Harland reported at the SFCA Summer conference, it was decided that a pay offer of

1% could be made by Colleges, but this has been rejected by the Unions. Following this, the SFCA has asked Colleges to determine alternative pay offers and it was noted that this would be discussed at Corporation. **ACTION: Philip Harland**

- 5/5/17 Item 6 Review of Risks/Risk Register/Emerging Risks - Emerging Risks – investigate insurance options re terrorism and associated risks: Elaine French updated the Group reporting that very few Colleges were taking out terrorism insurance as it's not seen as giving value for money. On-going discussions are being held within the sector regarding terrorism in schools and colleges and Elaine French attended an emergency planning workshop for schools in September at Sussex University where there were also discussions on anti-terrorism. Following this the anti-terrorism speaker will be invited to give training session to College staff (Governors too). **ACTION: Elaine French** The College will also be re-visiting the proposal to issue ID lanyards to all Students, noting that it has proved to be successful at BHASVIC.

b) Rolling Action Plan from Audit

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

- Financial Statements – no actions to date.
- Internal audit – no change since last meeting, except to record that budget-holders have received training (audit point 2) and with immediate effect all budget-holders will receive a monthly report on the status of their budget and training details to be added to the Intranet – **ACTION: Elaine French**. Philip Harland has also given a presentation to Heads of Schools regarding the College's overall financial position.

5. Risk Management Annual Report

Elaine French informed the Group that she had prepared the Report for the first time following Nicholas Carr's retirement and highlighted a couple of points – a) Key issues section – there are insufficient resources of the right type to meet accommodation needs which is becoming a more significant risk bearing in mind the increase in student numbers this year. In this regard, SLT are reviewing the issue and intend to formulate a strategy to manage this. B) Actions during the year – virtually unchanged section but with revision to dates and deadlines. Regarding Item d (Risk scenario)– this will commence next week with SLT, followed by Heads of School, Assistant Heads of School and Business Support with the intention of completing the task by the end of the Autumn Term 2017 (NB revise annual report date. **ACTION: Elaine French**

Following a request from the Group, Elaine French agreed to add marked up changes to any future reports. **ACTION: Elaine French**

The Group noted the contents of the revised Risk Management Action Plan which was attached to the papers, as an appendix.

6. Review of Risks – Risk Register and Emerging Risks

The Group considered the risk register for 2016/2017 which was presented by Elaine French and the following changes were recommended. **ACTION: Elaine French**

RISKS

A Category Risks

Risk HR1 Inability to fill key staff roles – the risk is already at the maximum level. The College has been successful in using the Times Education Supplement (TES) for recruitment of teaching staff, having paid £5,000 for the annual subscription for its on line service. 6 College jobs were advertised on the TES and were appointments made arising from this resource. The strategy for teaching recruitment on a national level has therefore worked well.

Key support staff – The College has introduced a strategy of not replacing on a like for like basis, but to reassign specific tasked roles as they become available which has saved money but does create an additional workload and potentially increased pressure on staff. Where staff take on additional tasks, additional pay may be awarded and also where a role is changed significantly, a job is then re-evaluated, but in some instances it's offer as a short term development opportunity. To ensure that knowledge and expertise acquired by existing staff approaching retirement or otherwise, is not lost, SLT has introduced a strategy to ensure continuity is maintained. For example within the Finance Team, Elaine French is passing on certain accounting work to others within the department to share knowledge and working practice. Likewise within SLT, the Deputy Principal is also aiming to share knowledge and transfer certain tasks to others further down the management scale. It was agreed that the Controls section of the register should be updated to record this information. **ACTION: Elaine French**

Risk HR2 Staff morale deteriorates as a consequence of heavy workload etc. – also refer above. Controls should remain unchanged. Philip Harland explained the usual staff mindset which is usually one of relief at the start of the year, that student numbers have been achieved and jobs are secure. As the year moves forward, morale may deteriorate as there is increasing pressure on some staff for example as a result of an increase in class sizes, but without an increase in facilities/resources e.g. number of Chromebooks per student. This is particularly the case regarding sufficient resources within Art subjects and account also has to be taken to the fact that even though there are additional students, funding for those additional students won't be received until the following academic year. Further work is being done in house within IT and Finance, to assess IT facilities and their usage in order to determine, where there aren't additional funds available immediately to increase resources needed, whether a better management system could be introduced to ensure that the sharing of resources is applied in the right areas and at the right time, based on usage analysis.

RISK P1 There are insufficient resources of the right type available to meet accommodation needs – refer above. It was resolved that the Controls/Contingency Arrangements sections should be updated to reflect the resources issues minutes above. **ACTION: Elaine** Regarding accommodation needs, although additional classroom space is needed, the most urgent curriculum requirement is for laboratory space. At this point Elaine French updated the Group on progressing the proposal for introducing a modular science block which was due to be in place for September 2017, noting the various issues which have hindered the project including

costs of additional ground work needed to remove air raid shelters which proved to be prohibitive. Consequently, SLT opted to follow an alternative proposal to merge three huts, currently used for maths, to form a laboratory space which will proceed but at a later time scale owing to a delay in progress following an asbestos survey which requires floor tiles to be removed first. The intention will be to have the new laboratory ready for early in January 2018. Current timetabling has been adapted to accommodate students in the meantime. The Corporation will be updated of the various changes at its October meeting. The Group also discussed VAT on building projects and other options for reducing costs and Ayas Fallon-Khan agreed to send a report regarding modular unit options to Philip Harland, Randall Anderson and Elaine French. **ACTION: Ayas Fallon Khan.**

RISK F1 Financial Instability resulting from efficiency gains required by Government – It was resolved to recommend reducing the risk as the College is more financially stable (owing to an increase in student numbers). Impact – revise from 6 to 3 and Likelihood from 3 to 2. Overall risk score therefore 6, moving it to a Category C risk. It was also resolved that the statement in the Contingency arrangements “Look at alternative sources of funding etc.” should be deleted **ACTION: Elaine French**

RISK F2 Risk of not growing owing to competition and demand affecting financial viability – Philip Harland advised the Group that the real risk was in the medium term e.g. 2019 September, reflecting student numbers and funding position. An Accord meeting (MET, Varndean and BHASVCI) was held last week the Colleges’ capital build plans were discussed noting that notwithstanding the demographics, all were based on seeking to increase 16-18 student numbers, being a requirement of the capital bid funding application. The limited space which Varndean now has this year following an increase in the overall student cohort was revisited which impacts social space, catering facilities, teaching rooms including laboratories (as referred to above) and other facilities such as bathrooms. A further update will be given at Corporation. It was agreed that within the Controls section, these issues should be recorded. **ACTION: Elaine French**

RISK F4 Uncertainty caused by Government Policy – unchanged.

RISK C1 Failure to improve value added on BTEC courses – Philip Harland reported that the results were marginally better this year for BTEC and that value added had increased slightly by one point, moving the College to “less than satisfactory” which was an improvement on the previous year. There have been some more significant areas of improvement for example in business where value added this year is 4 and the achievement in this area has increased in terms of numbers achieving D or D *. However it was recognised that there was still some way to go regarding the improvements needed.

RISK C3 Inability to address increased demand for specialist support services – Philip Harland reported that the Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service had met with College representatives on Friday and that consideration would be given to establishing a service level agreement to assist in the Support area at the College. This organisation also has access to various other services which may then also be available to the College. It was agreed to add this information to the Contingency Arrangements column: **ACTION: Elaine French**

Contingency Risks

C2 Ability to improve overall College success rates – overall result is marginally down this year (by 0.2%), but this reflects a move to linear A levels.

At AS level the success rate has also reduced but this only reflects the fact that there are fewer students taking AS, being 600 entrants (compared to 2,000 plus normal) and next year there will be no AS exams.

MA1 Critical Incident Plans not fully embedded or tested– progress will be made on this in Autumn and Spring, with scenario testing this term and revised plan in Spring 2018 – details to be added to Controls section. **ACTION: Elaine French**

MA2 The College is unable to retain sufficient staff at the required levels/quality etc. – retention not seen to be an issue at moment. It was agreed that details regarding the TES arrangements (refer above) should be included in this item. **ACTION: Elaine French**

HR3 SLT and Directors potentially lack the capacity and experience to deliver the Strategic Plan – it was agreed that text should be added stating that SLT was exploring and developing some revisions to responsibilities rather than a reorganisation with minor changes to roles and responsibilities to ensure adequacy and continuity; add text to Controls/Contingencies. **ACTION: Elaine French**

P2 Inadequate Student social space etc. – refer relevant details in minutes above. It was noted that additional tables, chairs and benches had been introduced around the College for the benefit of Students and further sites will be identified this term to extend this. Common Room layout may also be updated in order to maximise the space utilised.

C and D CATEGORY RISKS

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

EMERGING RISKS:

The Group discussed a potential new risk, namely “damage to reputation”. Philip Harland explained that following information provided to the local neighbours regarding the College’s proposed land development a number of negative responses had been received. It was suggested that consideration should be given to whether publicity relating to this, could damage the College’s reputation and impact upon Student numbers. Ayas Fallon-Khan agreed to liaise with Philip Harland regarding the planning application consultation process and liaison with the press. It was also noted that Philip Harland had discussed the land development with Caroline Lucas MP to explain the funding position and need to seek income from other sources in order to invest in the site for the benefit of the community. **ACTION: Philip Harland/Ayas Fallon-Khan**

It was agreed to add the “Risk to Reputation to College with Land Proposal” with a likelihood of 3 and an impact of 4. (B Risk) **ACTION: Elaine French**

6. Risk Assurance Map – Review and Update

The Map was reviewed and it was agreed that it should remain unchanged. **ACTION: Elaine French**

7. Risk Management Policy

The contents of the Policy were considered and agreed that there should be no changes at present. **ACTION: Elaine French**

8. Date of Next Meeting

8th May 2018 at 9.00 a.m.

9. Any Other Business

It was resolved that the Group should continue to meet twice per year.

There was no other business.

10. Enclosures

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

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

Louise Pennington 9/10/2017