



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

19 June 2019

## **Minutes of the Audit & Risk Management Committee Meeting**

Present:

Joe McKnight, Chairperson

Graham Shields

Eddie Rooney

Helen Ferguson

David Russell, Chief Executive

Lorraine Hamill, Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs)

Rebecca Magee, Personal Assistant (Minutes)

Tim Johnston, NIO

Ruth Logan, Ernst Young (agenda items 1-5, and item 8)

Jonathan McNeill, Ernst Young

Anthony McKibbin, Grant Thornton

Caroline Mendes de Costa, NAO (by phone)

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from Claire Martin and Colin Caughey from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were declared.

### **3. Chairman's Business**

3.1 The Chairman had nothing to report.

### **4. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2019**

4.1 The minutes of the Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting held on 11 March 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

### **5. Matters arising from 11 March 2019**

- 5.1 The move to Account NI is ongoing. There were changes to the portal needed to use Account NI that has caused a delay with training now required (item 5.1 of the March minutes refers).
- 5.2 The Commission has agreed with the Equality Commission NI to create a persons with disabilities reference group, with two meetings a year, the first hosted by the Equality Commission and the second by the Human Rights Commission (item 5.3 of the March minutes refers).
- 5.3 Ernst Young provided a report/update on the interim audit (item 8.1 of the March minutes refers).
- 5.4 A new risk relating to Chief Commissioner and Commissioners appointments has been added to the Corporate Risk Register (item 9.2 of the March minutes refers).
- 5.5 The GDPR audit has been carried out and the report is awaited. This will be shared with the committee before the next meeting (item 10.1 of the March minutes refers).
- 5.6 Grant Thornton are to report back on what items need to be recorded on the Gifts and Hospitality Register (item 13.2 of the March minutes refers).
- 5.7 Training on the Managing Unacceptable Behaviour from Members of the Public policy will take place in the next couple of months. The Chief Executive is currently looking at training providers. There have been no further incidents of unacceptable behaviour to report (item 15.2 of the March minutes refers).

## **6. Director (Finance, Personnel & Corporate Affairs) Report**

- **Financial Expenditure as at 31 May 2019:**

- 6.1 The Director provided an overview of the financial report to 31 May 2019; this included an update to the accrual for the 2018 pay award that was confirmed on 6 June 2019.
- 6.2 The Director reported that the Commission has still not received formal confirmation of the budget for 2019-20. It is anticipated that the formal confirmation will be issued in the week following the NIO June special monitoring round.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that the Business Plan for 2019-20 had not yet been published due to the lack of formal confirmation of the budget.

- **High Value Purchases as at 31 May 2019:**

- 6.4 The Committee noted and discussed the High Value Purchases to 31 May 2019.

- **Absence Statistics as at 31 May 2019:**

- 6.5 The absence statistics as at 31 May 2019 were reviewed.

## **7. Annual Report and Accounts 2018-2019**

- 7.1 The Director presented the Annual Report and Accounts 2018-19. These were approved by the Committee.

## **8. National Audit Office update**

- 8.1 The Committee was updated on progress and minor amendments from the audit and discussion followed on the Audit Completion Report on the 2018-19 Financial Statement Audit. It was noted that there were no indications of fraud as a result of management override of controls and there were no unadjusted misstatements.

## **9. Internal Audit update**

- 9.1 Grant Thornton provided an update on the internal audit report. The GDPR audit has taken place –a draft report should be available for circulation to Committee members before the next meeting.

**Action: Director (Finance, Personnel & Corporate Affairs) to provide further information to Grant Thornton in order to receive the final report.**

## **10. Corporate Risk Register 2019-20**

- 10.1 The Chief Executive updated the Committee on the Commission's risk register which included the additional risks agreed at the last meeting.

**Action: NIO and Director (Finance, Personnel & Corporate Affairs) to discuss the financial risk register as this will be looked at by NIO for monitoring.**

## **11. Expenses of Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive**

- 11.1 The Committee reviewed the expenses of the Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive and approved the claims.

## **12. Any other Business**

- 12.1 Signing of the Annual Report and Accounts 2018-19 is to take place between 5 and 18 July 2019.
- 12.2 As the Cabinet Office has recently replaced the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, amendments are to be made to the Commission's Code in line with the new Cabinet Office version.

**Action: Director (Finance, Personnel & Corporate Affairs) to amend the Commission's Code of Conduct.**

**Action: Chief Commissioner to share amended Code of Conduct with Commissioners.**

- 12.3 The date of the next meeting is 23 September 2019 at 10.00am in the Commission's offices.

The meeting closed at 11:20am