

**28 June 2018 at 10.00am**

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

**Present:** Joe McKnight, Chairperson  
Helen Ferguson  
Eddie Rooney  
Graham Shields

David Russell, Chief Executive  
Colin Caughey, Director (Legal, Research and  
Investigations and Advice to Government)  
Lorraine Hamill, Director (Finance, Personnel and  
Corporate Affairs)  
Claire Martin, Director (Communications, Information  
and Education, Public and Political Affairs)  
Barbara Smith, General Administrator (Minutes)

Anthony McKibben, Grant Thornton  
Leanda Thompson, Northern Ireland Office (NIO)  
Lorraine Andrews, Northern Ireland Office (NIO)

Robert Pogose, National Audit Office (NAO) (by telephone)

## **1. Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were recorded.

Apologies: Paul Oliffe, NAO  
Jonathan Broadley, NAO  
Andrew Scholes, NIO

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 No Declarations of Interest were declared.

## **3. Chairperson's Business**

- 3.1 There was no Chairperson's Business.

## **4. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 14 March 2018**

- 4.1 The minutes of the Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting held on 14 March 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **5. Matters Arising from 14 March 2018**

- 5.1 *Premises (Paragraph 6.0 of the 14 March 2018 minutes refers)* – the Chief Executive provided an update on the current plan in relation to the premises and agreed to report back to the Committee if any significant change occurred.
- 5.2 *Fraud Awareness Training (Paragraph 6.0 of the 14 March 2018 minutes refers)* – this item is to be carried forward.

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

- **Financial Expenditure as at 31 May 2018**

6.1 The Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) provided a detailed overview of the financial report, including opening and closing accruals and prepayments, commitments to the end of the financial year and provided information on any variances in expenditure.

- **High Value Purchases as at 31 May 2018**

6.2 The Committee noted the High Value Purchases to 31 May 2018.

- **Absence Statistics as at 31 May 2018**

6.3 The absence statistics as at 31 May 2018 were reviewed and it was noted that there was no current long-term sickness.

- **Freedom of Information**

6.4 The Director (Communications, Information and Education, Public and Political Affairs) advised the Committee of a high volume of recent Freedom of Information requests received from one individual. The Committee was further advised in relation to the current agreed response to these requests and informed the position would be reviewed in October 2018, based on the volume of any further Freedom of Information requests received from this individual.

## **7. Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2017-18 for approval**

7.1 The Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2017-18 were approved by the Committee.

## **8. National Audit Office – Audit Completion Report on the 2017-18 Financial Statement Audit – Robert Pogose, NAO**

8.1 The Committee was updated on progress and minor amendments from the internal audit and discussion followed on the Audit Completion Report on the 2017-18 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. Timings were agreed for Accounting Officer sign-off of the accounts for submission to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

## **9. Internal Audit – Anthony McKibben, Grant Thornton**

- **Review of Finance and Human Resource System**

9.1 The Committee was updated on the Review of Finance and Human Resource System audit. The Committee was advised that Management had accepted all the recommendations and envisaged immediate implementation.

9.2 Discussion followed on the consideration of outsourcing to Account NI to fulfil a variety of finance functions. It was agreed that the Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) would review the timeframe in relation to this and that this item would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Committee.

**Action:** The Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) to

review the timeframe in relation to Account NI and include this item for discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.

- **Internal Audit Review of the Statutory Remit and Operations**

9.3 The Committee was updated on key findings from the Internal Audit Review of the Statutory Remit and Operations and were advised of a 'Satisfactory' assurance rating. Discussion followed in relation to minor amendments required to the report. The Committee acknowledged the usefulness of this well produced report and agreed it would be important for the report to be discussed at the next Commission meeting, particularly in relation to the triennial review and staff resources.

## **10 Corporate Risk Register 2018-19 and Discussion on Financial Risk Titled 'failure to meet accounting performance reports'**

10.1 The Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) and the Chief Executive updated the Committee on the Commission's risk register.

10.2 Discussion followed specifically in relation to the risk entitled 'failure to meet accounting performance reports'. The Committee agreed the organisation would seek to meet with the appropriate parties to raise their concerns and seek to reduce the level of reporting.

**Robert Pogose (NAO) left the meeting.**

## **11 Annual Statement of Assurance**

11.1 The Committee noted the Annual Statement of Assurance.

## 12 GDPR

12.1 The Committee was updated on the work which has been undertaken in relation to GDPR compliance. It was agreed to include this as a standing item on the agenda going forwards.

**Action:** The Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) to include this as a standing item on the agenda.

## 13 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Effectiveness Checklist

13.1 The Chairperson proposed undertaking work on the checklist alongside the Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) for discussion at the next meeting. The Committee agreed with this proposal.

**Action:** The Chairperson and the Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) to undertake work on the checklist for discussion at the next meeting.

## 14 Expenses of Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive

14.1 There were no expenses for approval.

## 15 Any Other Business

15.1 The Chairperson thanked Leanda Thompson, NIO for all her work with the NIHRC and wished her well in her new position.

## 16 Close

16.1 The meeting closed at 11.43am.

**Next meeting date Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 10.00am.**