

Minutes of Meeting of Audit & Risk Committee

Date: 10 October 2017

Venue: 90 North King Street, Dublin 7.

Attendance

Committee: Moling Ryan (Chair), Melanie Pine, Ronan Nolan

Secretary: David Murphy

Executive: Helen Hall (Items 1.2 - 1.4), Aileen Healy, Clare Kelly

Visitors: Tony Cooney – Internal Audit provider, Crowleys DFK for Item 1.4 (part)
Gerard Enright –Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General for Item 1.4 (part)

1. The following matters were considered and discussed as set out in the agenda:

1.1. Closed Session – Committee members only

1.2. Chair's opening remarks

- Apologies;
- Agenda;
- Minutes;
- Log of Actions;
- Chief Executive's update.

1.3. Governance

- Annual self-assessment evaluation for Authority;
- Annual report for Audit and Risk Committee;
- Audit Committee Workplan 2018.

1.4. Audit

- Financial Report – September 2017;
- Estimates 2018;
- Internal Audit Update;
- Internal Audit Reports;
- Internal Audit Workplan for 2018;
- Meeting with senior Auditor C&AG re 2016 Appropriation Account and Management Letter.

1.5. Risk

- Review of Risk Register and consideration of risk.

1.6. AOB

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

The minutes of 18th July 2017 were approved and cleared for publication. The Committee log of actions was reviewed and progress on actions noted.

The CEO updated the Committee on the ongoing work of the Authority, its resources and on progress in achieving the corporate priorities for 2017.

3. Governance

The Committee reviewed progress on implementing the actions arising from the Authority self-assessment evaluation and discussed plans to undertake the evaluation at the end of 2017. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to have the evaluation facilitated externally. It was agreed that the Committee would review the arrangements for the evaluation in December with a view to carrying it out in conjunction with the Authority Strategy Day in January.

The Committee reviewed the draft Audit & Risk Committee Work Plan for 2018, and will provide further comments with a view to finalisation in December. It was agreed that a draft of the Committee's annual report to the Authority be prepared for consideration in January 2018 in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

4. Audit

The Committee reviewed the Financial Report for September 2017 and discussed the adequacy of resources for 2018. The increased estimate provision for 2018 was welcomed. It was agreed that the Committee would review a category of expenditure in greater depth each quarter from Quarter 1 2018.

The partner of the Internal Audit provider joined the meeting for the Internal Audit item and updated the Committee on the ongoing internal audit work in relation to two draft reports.

There is some outstanding work in relation to the audit of ICT which had not been completed due to material which had not yet been provided in relation to an outsourced service. It was noted that access to this material is now available to Internal Audit and the work is to be undertaken in the coming weeks with a view to finalising the review.

In relation to the draft report on appointments processes, Committee Members noted that the scope of the audit was covered without any material issues arising and the internal auditor expressed confidence to the Committee that systems were adequate and being complied with, the draft report did not provide a statement of positive compliance with internal control systems and other requirements. It was agreed that this would be of assistance in providing assurance to the Committee and the Accounting Officer. Management explanations will be provided and the report finalised in the coming weeks.

It was noted that the next Internal Audit would be a review of the complaints process.

The Committee met with the C&AG internal auditor without the Executive present. The auditor discussed his report on the C&AG audit of the 2016 Appropriation Account for the Authority's Vote. Points made included that:

- Proper books of accounts were kept;
- The Appropriation Account was in agreement with the books of account;
- All the information and explanations considered necessary were obtained;
- The audit files were in good order;
- There were no key accounting issues meriting comment;
- There were some minor adjustments detected and corrected;
- It was noted that during 2016 there was no internal audit function or risk management systems in place; and
- Explanations were provided for each issue raised.

The auditor expressed the importance of preventative controls as part of the internal control system and the need for evidence that this is tested by internal audit.

5. Risk

The Committee reviewed the Risk Register and discussed the matters giving rise to changes in the register and the impact on the risk rankings. The Executive updated Members on plans to embed the risk management system throughout the organisation in the planning and conduct of all activities. It was agreed that a report on the 'red' (Extremely high and high) strategic risks would be provided to the Authority each month.

6. Other Business

A Committee meeting is scheduled for 13 February, 2018. It was proposed that an additional meeting would be held in December on a date to be confirmed in light of a number of items arising.