

Minutes of the PSI Audit and Risk Committee held on-line due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, on the 21st September 2021.

Agenda Item 1 – Private Committee Time

Issue
The Committee met in private session at the start of the meeting. No members of PSI staff were present.

Agenda Item 2 - Attendees & Apologies

Name	Role	Present (Yes/No)
Dr. Paul Gorecki	Committee Chair	Yes
Ms. Fiona Walsh	Committee Member	Yes
Mr. Liam Burke	Committee Member	Yes
Mr. John Given	Committee Member	Yes
Mr. Peter Dewhurst	Committee Member	Yes
Ms. Niamh O'Regan	Committee Member	Yes
Members of PSI staff in attendance included:		
Dr. Cheryl Stokes	Head of Governance and Programme Delivery	
Mr. Éanna Ó Lochlainn	Governance and Planning Officer	
Dr. Lorraine Horgan	Head of Corporate Services	
Mr. Renaud Deworst	HR Lead	
Mr. Dan Burns	Acting Business Transformation Project Manager (for agenda item 8(b))	
Mr. Brendan Flynn	Finance and Operational Performance Manager (for agenda item 9)	
External Attendee		
Mr. Tony Cooney	Partner, Governance Risk and Compliance, Crowleys DFK (for agenda item 5)	

Colour code: *Red—for decision; Green—for discussion; Blue—for information*

Agenda Item 3

Issue

The Chair invited members of the Committee to declare any conflicts of interest with regard to any of the items scheduled for discussion at the meeting before it commenced.

Information

Members of Committees of Council are subject to Section 9, Schedule 1, of the Pharmacy Act 2007 regarding disclosures of interest, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the meeting agenda.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

No conflicts of interest were declared by any member of the Committee, with regard to the items scheduled for discussion at the meeting.

Agenda Item 4

Issue

Request for Approval of the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on the 1st of June 2021

Information

The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on the 1st of June 2021 had been circulated to Committee members in advance of the meeting, and that no amendments had been received.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

Decision Approved: The Committee approved the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 1st of June 2021, on the proposal of Ms. Fiona Walsh, seconded by Ms. Niamh O'Regan.

Agenda Item 5

Issue

Request for Approval of the Internal Auditor's Report on the PSI's Procurement, Purchasing, and Payments

Information

A copy of the Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Mr. Tony Cooney, attending on behalf of the Crowley's DFK, informed the Committee that the findings of the audit indicated that significant assurance could be placed on the adequacy and operating effectiveness of controls to mitigate and/or manage risks to which the audit area might be exposed. Apart from 4 low priority rated findings, the auditor found that controls tested operated satisfactorily during the review period. The Committee queried whether terms and conditions of legal contracts with external service providers were reviewed by PSI legal advisers in advance of issuing them and were informed that it did not, as most contracts were awarded via the Office of Government Procurement drawdown facility, but that on occasion if circumstances arose where it was thought prudent to do so, the PSI's Legal Affairs Team is consulted on the terms of certain service contracts. The Committee queried the basis on which the test sample used during the audit was selected, and was informed that the test sample was selected on a random basis, but that the exact percentage of total contracts the sample represented was unknown but that this information would be circulated to the Committee after the meeting. The Committee was also informed that one or two procurement competitions tested had no infringements detected but that the exact figure would be circulated to the Committee after the meeting. The Chair suggested it would be useful to have the basis on which test sampling was done, incorporated as a standing item in all future internal audit reports.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

Decision Approved: The Committee was satisfied with management's response to the findings and approved the Internal Auditor's Report on the PSI's Procurement, Purchasing, and Payments, on the proposal of Mr. Liam Burke, seconded by Ms. Fiona Walsh.

Agenda Item 6

Issue

Update on the Implementation of Internal Audit Recommendations

Information

Dr. Cheryl Stokes updated the Committee on progress relating to the implementation of internal audit recommendations, with 5 recommendations being proposed for closure as the internal audit recommendations had now been completed. The Committee asked for an update on the Fitness to Practise Case Management System which had previously been flagged as not fit for purpose. The Committee was informed that remedial measures which would address the issue, would be completed under phase 2 of the business transformation project.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The update was noted by the Committee.

Agenda Item 7

Issue

Updated PSI Risk Management Framework

Information

Dr. Cheryl Stokes and Mr. Éanna Ó Lochlainn presented a draft Risk Framework to the Committee. The Committee was informed that the document represented the next iteration of the PSI's risk management processes and policy, which sought to embrace enterprise risk management across all the PSI's core processes. The Committee asked for further information regarding the thinking behind the concept of opportunity risk and noted that category of risk champion would apply to all members of PSI staff. It also asked for clarification regarding the weighting of the risk matrix. The Committee welcomed the monthly, as opposed to quarterly, review of both the corporate, and business area, risk registers.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

Overall the Committee commended the Framework, and made a number of suggestions for improvement, and agreed to review the revised draft at its next meeting, with a view to tabling a final draft for approval at the Council meeting in December.

Agenda Item 8(a)

Issue

PSI Corporate Risk Register

Information

Dr. Cheryl Stokes updated the Committee on PSI's Corporate Risk Register, a copy of which had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. The Committee noted the backlog of fitness to practise inquiries, arising from delays in convening them, due to the COVID-19 global pandemic before an online platform was put in place to conduct inquiries remotely. The Committee was assured that inquiries were now taking place since earlier this year and that the backlog was being worked through, however it was noted that online inquiries were taking longer to conclude.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The update was noted by the Committee.

Agenda Item 8(b)

Issue

Review of the Corporate Services Risk Register

Information

The Committee was informed that there was a red risk relating to the external vendor servicing the Business Transformation Programme, which could have a negative impact on the timeline for the delivery of the programme. The Committee queried if contingency plans had been made for power outages and were informed that this scenario was included in the PSI's Disaster Recovery Plan, and Business Continuity Plan. The Committee was provided with an update on penetration testing of the PSI's IT systems, and its on-going cyber security programme. The Committee was informed that planning for return to office-based work at PSI House was progressing, subject to the framework to be agreed following the conclusion of on-going negotiations between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the trade unions.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The update was noted by the Committee.

Agenda Item 9

Issue

Q2 Financial Management Accounts to 30 June 2021.

Information

Mr. Brendan Flynn updated the Committee on the Q2 Financial Management Accounts to 30 June 2021, a copy of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Committee was informed that total income for the period was €3.60m which was under budget by €434k or 11%. Total direct payroll costs for the period were €1.551m, which was €318k or 17% under budget. Total temporary agency staff costs for the period were €242k, which was €28k or 13% over budget.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee requested a breakdown of the pay costs which were being capitalised as part of the Business Transformation Programme to be provided at its next meeting.

Agenda Item 10

Issue

Reports on major incidents, near misses, and lessons learned, and acted upon.

Information

Dr. Cheryl Stokes informed the Committee that no accidents, incidents, or near misses had occurred in the PSI since the last meeting of the Committee.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The update was noted by the Committee.

Agenda Item 11

Issue

Report to Council.

Information

The Committee reviewed the decisions it had made at the meeting.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee agreed to submit a Report at the next meeting of Council outlining the material decision it had made at the meeting.

Agenda Item 12

Issue

Any Other Business

Information

The Committee was informed that a presentation would be provided by the Registrar on the new organisation structure at its next meeting.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

None

The meeting finished at: 12:00 noon

Signed:

Chair

Date