

COMMISSIONER FOR OLDER PEOPLE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (COPNI)

AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 1 JUNE 2020 AT 10.00AM
VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:

MEMBERS

Gerard Campbell (Chair)
Joseph Campbell
Professor Dolores O'Reilly

IN ATTENDANCE

Eddie Lynch (Commissioner, COPNI)
Evelyn Hoy (Chief Executive, COPNI)
Melissa Barlow (Department for Communities)
Andrew Moore (Northern Ireland Audit Office)
Catriona McHugh (Moore NI – Internal Audit)
Helen Gault (Finance and Governance Manager, COPNI)
Judith Kelly (Office Manager, COPNI)

Agenda Item 1: Apologies Joanna Gray (Department for Communities)	NOTED
Agenda Item 2: Chair's Business a) <u>Conflicts of Interest</u> No conflicts of interest were declared	NOTED
b) <u>Fraud</u> No incidents were reported in this period.	NOTED
c) <u>Register of Gifts and Hospitality</u> There were no items for this period.	NOTED
d) <u>Register of International Conferences & Events</u> There were no items for this period.	NOTED
e) <u>Direct Award Contracts</u> The 2 items were noted.	ARAC 06/20/2e NOTED
f) <u>Whistleblowing</u> No incidents were reported in this period.	NOTED

<p>Agenda Item 3: Draft Minutes of Meetings & Action Tracker</p> <p>a) <u>Draft Minutes of 9th March 2020</u> Those present accepted the accuracy of the minutes.</p> <p>b) <u>Action Tracker for 9th March 2020</u> The one action (ACT 174) is not yet complete.</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/3a APPROVED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/3b NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 4: Matters Arising not already on the Agenda There were no matters arising.</p>	<p>NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Commissioner's Update</p> <p>a) <u>Engagement</u> As Covid 19 has halted engagements the Commissioner outlined the high number of media requests he has given including 13 TV interviews, 65 radio interviews e.g. BBC Newsline, TalkBack, Belfast Telegraph, RTE etc. COPNI has also featured in 95 press articles. The Commissioner outlined that in N.I 80% of people who have died from Covid 19 were over 75 years of age and 50% of all Covid 19 deaths have been in care home settings. The Commissioner updated the members following his recent meeting with DoH.</p> <p>b) <u>Accountability Meeting</u> The Accountability meeting was held on 26 May 2020 via Zoom. All accountability papers were provided for this meeting, however the discussion was mainly about the challenges, risks and impact of covid 19 on the work of the Commissioner's office.</p> <p>c) <u>Budget 2020/21</u> A budget of £1,002k has been confirmed. The Senior Management Team are reviewing the business plan due to the impact of Covid 19. However, this should involve a reallocation of budget and not additional in year bids.</p> <p>d) <u>Report on Chair & Members annual performance assessments</u> All assessments have been completed.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>NOTED</p> <p>NOTED</p> <p>NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 6: Chief Executive's Update – Emerging Issues</p> <p>a) <u>Working from Home</u> The Chief Executive reported a smooth transition to the new working arrangements. It has been a good test of the business continuity plan.</p> <p>b) <u>Staffing Issues</u> Recruitment for two Legal Officers is progressing. Shortlisting has taken place and interviews will take place using Zoom. When this is complete the recruitment of the job share Office Manager will take place. Consideration will then be given to the Administration Officer post</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>NOTED</p>

<p>(maternity cover) and whether this will proceed. Lisa Rice, Communications & Engagement Manager has given birth to a baby boy & the members passed on their congratulations. The team workload is disproportionate as the Legal and Communications & Engagement teams are exceptionally busy and the remainder of staff are working around 80% of capacity.</p> <p>c) <u>Senior Management Team</u> The Senior Management Team have daily meetings via Zoom and records have been kept regarding decisions made.</p> <p>d) <u>Finance and Expenditure 2019/20</u> Helen Gault detailed that there were year-end pressures – both resource and capital. (£7k and £2k) These have been advised to DfC. Joe Campbell asked about the fruitless payments regarding non-attendance at a conference in London, their treatment in the financial statements and the treatment of year end pressures. Evelyn Hoy advised the decision not to travel was taken due to Covid 19 and payments were non-refundable. H Gault explained that the fruitless payments would be classified in the expenditure note – travel, conferences and other staff costs. There would also be a special payments note. With regard to the year-end pressures, this has been highlighted to the department and COPNI are waiting for advice as to any further action required.</p> <p>e) <u>Finance and Expenditure 2020/21</u> Helen Gault outlined the key points to note. The main item was that capital expenditure of £1k has been made in replacement IT equipment to allow working from home. It was highlighted that DfC has approved expenditure of £10k capital at risk.</p> <p>f) <u>Quarterly Performance Report January – March 2020</u> The report was noted.</p> <p>g) <u>Quarterly Assurance Statement January – March 2020</u> The report was noted.</p> <p>h) <u>Business Plan 2020/21 – Progress on Objectives</u> Evelyn Hoy discussed the plan in detail. Covid 19 has impacted on the engagements we attend and COPNI’s engagements will change but may not necessarily decrease. There is a need to consider the length of time people will be affected by the virus and how COPNI can provide support.</p> <p>i) <u>Complaints</u> There were no complaints in the period.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/6d NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/6e NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 03/20/6f NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/6g NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/6h</p> <p>NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Risk Matters</p> <p>a) <u>Corporate Risk Register Quarter 1 2020/21</u> Evelyn Hoy outlined the main points from the register, highlighting that covid 19 risks had been added in line with the categories of risks outlined</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/7a NOTED</p>

<p>in the risk register. Dolores O'Reilly enquired about the information from staff exit interviews and Evelyn Hoy confirmed this information is circulated to the Senior Management Team but that staff progression is limited in COPNI due to the size of the organisation. Evelyn Hoy advised there was a data breach and the investigation is ongoing. Joe Campbell enquired about the data breach & Evelyn Hoy advised she will update ARAC once the investigation is complete.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 8: Update from Department for Communities</p> <p>There was nothing further to report.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 9: Update from Northern Ireland Audit Office</p> <p>Andrew Moore advised the audit strategy will remain and that NIAO have experienced delays while working from home in receiving documents back from other organisations. Joe Campbell asked if there was a risk to the audit timeline and Andrew replied there is no change anticipated but will contact COPNI if things change.</p>	<p>NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 10: Update from Internal Audit</p> <p>a) <u>Case management report</u> Catriona McHugh provided a summary of the report. There was a satisfactory assurance rating with 2 recommendations</p> <p>b) <u>Prior Year recommendations summary report</u> Catriona McHugh provided a summary of the report.</p> <p>c) <u>Internal Audit Annual Assurance Report</u> Catriona McHugh provided a summary of the report. There was a satisfactory assurance rating for the year.</p> <p>d) <u>Audit Plan 2020/21</u> Catriona McHugh outlined the audit plan which was approved by the members.</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/10a NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/10b NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/10c NOTED</p> <p>ARAC 06/20/10d NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 11: Audit Recommendations – progress to date</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/11 NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 12: Accountability and Financial Management Guidance Update</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/12 NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 13: COPNI Updated Policies</p> <p>The four policies listed in the report were noted. Gerry Campbell noted the good policy management in place within COPNI.</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/13 NOTED</p>

<p>Agenda Item 14: Revised ARAC Secretariat Procedures</p> <p>Helen Gault outlined the key changes. The revised procedures were accepted.</p>	<p>ARAC 06/20/14 NOTED</p>
<p>Agenda Item 15: Any Other Business</p> <p>Gerry Campbell, on behalf of the members, congratulated Eddie Lynch on his reappointment for a 2nd term as Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland. Gerry commented on the supportive and engaging relationship that exists with The Commissioner. The members look forward to working with him over the next four years.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 16: Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Monday 7th September 2020 at 1.30pm</p> <p>The meeting closed at 11.40am</p>	

Signed:
Chairperson



Date: _____ 07-09-2020 _____