



**TRUST BOARD  
SUBMISSION TEMPLATE**

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Trust Board Public</b>	<b>Ref No. 10</b>
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	<b>Chair: Audit Committee</b>	<b>Date: 6 April 23</b>
<b>• Audit Committee</b>		
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minutes of 11 October 2022 approved at Audit Committee meeting on 7 February 2023</li></ul>	
<b>Corporate Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety, Quality and Experience</li><li>• Service Delivery</li><li>• People and Culture</li><li>• Strategy and Partnerships</li><li>• Resources</li></ul>	
<b>Key areas for consideration</b>	For information	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For noting</li></ul>	



**Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting**

**11 October 2022 at 10 am**

**Boardroom, Non Clinical Building, RVH/Virtual via TEAMS**

**Present:**

Mr Gordon Smyth, Non-Executive Director (Chair)  
Professor Martin Bradley, Non-Executive Director  
Mrs Miriam Karp, Non-Executive Director

**In Attendance:**

Dr Cathy Jack, Chief Executive (virtually)  
Mrs Maureen Edwards, Director of Finance Estates and Capital Development  
Mrs Fiona Cotter, Co-Director Financial Services  
Mrs Nicola Williams, Head of Governance and Client Accounting  
Mrs Catherine McKeown, Head of Internal Audit (BSO)  
Ms Jennifer McCaw, Internal Audit (BSO)  
Mr Brian Clerkin, External Audit (ASM)  
Mr David Pickett, NIAO Graduate Trainee  
Mr Stephen Knox, External Audit (NIAO)  
Miss Marion Moffett, Executive Assistant  
Mrs Eileen Carson, PA, Minute Taker

**Apologies:**

Mrs Nuala McKeagney, Non-Executive Director  
Mr John McKeown, DoH, Sponsor Branch  
Ms Carol Blee, DoH, Sponsor Branch

Prior to the meeting, Audit Committee members held the annual confidential meeting with the NIAO, Internal and External Auditors.

Mr Smyth welcomed everyone especially Dr Cathy Jack and David Pickett (NIAO Graduate Trainee).

Mr Smyth also thanked Professor Bradley for acting as Chair at the previous Audit Committee in his absence.

**AC29/22 Minutes of the previous meeting**  
Members considered and approved the minutes with only one typing amendment on page 7. It was agreed that they would be approved formally at the next Trust Board meeting.

**AC30/22 Matters Arising/Action Log**

**a. AC13/22i – Management of Clients Monies IS Homes**

Mrs Williams provided an update on behalf of Miss Traub on the procedure for seeking the assurances from the nursing homes regarding access NI and pre-employment checks being carried out. Nicola Williams advised that it is within the regional contract and that all registered homes must be compliant with the Department of Health Care Standards 2015 which covers the verification process for staff in nursing homes. When recruiting from an employment agency the homes must ensure that those pre employment assessments and checks have been carried out. RQIA are responsible for the monitoring and audit of the homes to ensure compliance.

In response to a question from Professor Bradley, Mrs Williams advised that RQIA report their results of any inspection of homes on their website which is available to the public which the Trust also has access to and can review and monitor the reports.

**b. AC22/22**

**i. Management of Medical Devices 2021/22**

In Mr Hagan's absence, Mrs Williams provided an update on the management of medical devices action plan advising that out of 12 recommendations made by Internal Audit at the last Audit Committee meeting two have been fully implemented and have been verified by Internal Audit with the rest being work in progress. An update will be provided at the next Audit Committee meeting **Action:** Mr Hagan/Mrs Williams

**AC31/22 Chairman's Business**

**a. Conflicts of Interest**

No conflict of interest noted.

**AC32/22 Final External Auditors Report to those Charged with Governance 2021/22**

Mr Knox presented the Final External Auditor's Report to those Charged with Governance 2021/22 indicating that the results and issues were previously discussed at the Audit Committee. The Public Funds financial statements and Patients' and Residents' monies

accounts were certified by the C&AG on 1 July 2022 and they were laid in the Assembly on 6 July 2022. The Charitable Trust Funds financial statements were certified by the C&AG on 6 July 2022 and they were laid in the Assembly on 7 July 2022.

In relation to the unadjusted error of £26 million raised regarding holiday pay liability Mrs Edwards advised that there will be a regional approach to reporting it in the 2022/23 accounts which will be dependent on whether payment of holiday pay commences this year.

Members noted the report.

**AC33/22**

**Audit Committee Terms of Reference – Annual Review**

Mrs Williams presented the Audit Committee Terms of Reference with no amendments proposed. Mr Smyth to discuss with Mr McNaney having more NEDs on the Audit Committee to help ensure a full quorum. **Action:** Mr Smyth

*Approved:* Professor Bradley

*Seconded:* Mrs Karp

**AC34/22**

**NIAO Benchmarking Healthcare Services**

Mrs Williams advised that the Comptroller and Auditor General has commissioned a team to undertake an independent benchmarking exercise to examine the performance of healthcare services in Northern Ireland against that of the other three UK countries and the Republic of Ireland. The work will be used as the basis for the development of a health dashboard which could be accessed interactively by users of the NIAO's website. The objective of the work is to provide an overview of the amount NI, the 3 other UK countries and RoI spend on their respective healthcare systems and to measure (using a range of indicators) the value they receive for that expenditure. The target date for completion of work is March 2023.

In response to a concern from Mr Smyth regarding the accuracy of data back in 2016-17, Mr Knox advised that although it may be an issue they will take it on board and if any new data is provided they will caveat as need be.

Dr Jack welcomed this work and advised that the Trust is ready to go with their dashboard around waiting lists etc and SPPG are also working on a regional dashboard. Dr Jack requested more detail on the NIAO's dashboard for March 2023 to see what added value it would bring and was keen to understand how this benchmarking would work across the different jurisdictions. The Institute of Medicine's 6 metrics and quality should all be looked at. **Action:** Mr Knox

Professor Bradley advised that when considering how healthy NI's health system is against the rest of the UK and RoI, other factors like social policies and political decisions should be considered.

## AC35/22 Report of Internal Auditor

### a. Progress Report 2022/23

Mrs McKeown began by advising that due to staffing vacancies Internal Audit are seeking a deferral of a number of specific audits from the current year into 2023/24. The proposed deferrals are Financial Assessments (including Self Directed Support & Direct Payments) and Management of Independent Nursing Home contracts. She proposed pausing the Management of SAIs until January 2023 subject to resource availability at that time but will engage with the five Trusts on this in terms of a report that has just been released from RQIA. Internal Audit will keep management and Audit Committees regularly updated.

Dr Jack advised that that RQIA's review of SAIs suggests that the regional policy is not fit for purpose as a learning system and needs radical change. She suggested that an audit might not add value until the outcome of the Department's review.

The Audit Committee agreed the proposed deferrals.

*Proposed:* Mrs Karp      *Seconded:* Professor Bradley

#### i. Management of Cash Offices 2022/23

Mrs McKeown provided satisfactory assurance in respect of Management of Cash Offices 2022/23 with no significant findings. Management have accepted the recommendations. The Committee thanked Mrs Cotter and her team for all their hard work.

#### ii. Non-Pay Expenditure in Mental Health & Intellectual Disability Services Directorate 2022/23

Mrs McKeown provided satisfactory assurance in respect of Non-Pay Expenditure in Mental & Intellectual Disability Services Directorate 2022/23 with no significant findings. Management have accepted the recommendations.

In response to a query regarding the category Prison Service Non-AFC Nursing, this appears to be a coding error and may relate to health care assistants at Greerville Manor. **Action:** Mrs McKeown and Mrs Williams to check and amend if required.

In response to Mrs Karp's query regarding the appropriateness of £75 taxi journeys, Mrs Edwards advised that although it has been approved Mrs Kearney was reviewing to ensure the appropriateness. She noted that taxis are regularly used in mental health and children's services where this is the most appropriate form of transport. Mrs Williams advised that there is a meeting in the diary to discuss all the findings and review where necessary in the service area with Mrs Kearney.

In response to Mr Smyth's query on the DACs that were in excess of the limit, Mrs Cotter advised that she and her team will look at them specifically and identify any learning.

iii. **Management of Client Monies in Independent Sector (Residential and Nursing Homes and Adult Supported Living Facilities 2022/23)**

Mrs McKeown provided limited assurance for 2 out of the 8 homes (Dumbarton House and Jason Court) and satisfactory assurance on the other 6 homes. Mrs McKeown noted that she is happy to report satisfactory assurance for City View Court, previously known as Clifton Park nursing home, following 2 unacceptable assurances previously. Internal Audit are content that all the previous recommendations have now been implemented by the home.

The 2 significant findings:

**Dumbarton House** – a £2,000 overcharge to a client which the Trust had not been informed about therefore no action had been taken to rectify this. Receipts were not available to support purchases made totalling £1,625.68.

**Jason Court** – a lack of clarity around assessment of resident's capacity to manage their monies. Residents can withdraw money from their ledger but no supporting receipts were kept for any expenditure. 2 residents' bank cards and pins were held together with bank cards in the safe in Jason Court.

With regard to the findings Mrs Edwards assured the Committee that Mrs Kearney has now prepared an action plan to address all of the issues. Mrs Kearney can come to the next Audit Committee and provide an update and in the meantime Mrs Williams can send out a copy of the action plan to the Audit Committee. **Action:** Mrs Williams

Mrs Edwards assured the Committee that the Trust as always will be sharing the audit findings across all of the homes. This will also be raised at Executive Team.

In relation to City View Court home, although it received satisfactory assurance in respect of clients' monies it was noted that there are a number of other significant care issues around this particular home that have been discussed at Trust Board and are being addressed.

iv. **Fire Safety 2022/23**

Mrs McKeown provided satisfactory in respect of Fire Safety 2022/23. Management accepted the recommendations. Mrs Edwards assured the Committee that the ET briefing document will be updated to include the training numbers and percentages of Fire Risk assessments completed and outstanding. Fire training is included in the Trust's monthly QMS reports as well as Assurance Committee under statutory mandatory training. **Action:** Mrs Edwards

In response to Mr Smyth's concern regarding the lack of fire safety training figures available in one of the wards due to the Fire Office (Ward Sister) being on sick leave, Mrs Edwards agreed to address this

with Executive Team to ensure that fire safety training records are accessible by other staff. **Action:** Mrs Edwards

Mrs Edwards reassured Professor Bradley that in relation to his recent visit to the Royal ED and his concern over some evacuation procedures, she had confirmed that fire officers had already been out with the team and were agreeing mitigations/actions.

Mr Smyth commended Mrs Edwards and her team for their hard work in achieving the satisfactory result.

**b. Mid-year Follow Up Report 2022/23**

Mrs McCaw provided a summary of the mid-year follow up report.

Mrs McCaw reported that 79% of the audit recommendations are now fully implemented leaving 21% partially implemented. This year the 9 ICT cyber security recommendations have been removed and are included in Appendix A and therefore not included in the total numbers as they relate to the Department of Health as responsible officer.

In response to Mrs Karp's query on the priority one regarding Management of Medical staff, Mrs Edwards advised that this related to job planning. This would be one of the long standing audit recommendations Mrs Williams and Mrs Edwards would be bringing to the attention of Executive team.

With regards to the outstanding domiciliary care procurement recommendation, Mrs Edwards advised that the Department is working regionally on this.

Mrs Edwards agreed to ensure that progress is continuing on the 8 recommendations on the WHO checklist and provide an update at the next meeting. **Action:** Mrs Edwards

**c. Head of Internal Audit Mid-Year Assurance Statement**

Mrs McKeown presented the mid-year assurance statement to the BHSCT.

**d. BSO Shared Services Briefing Paper**

Mrs McKeown gave a summary of the BSO Shared Services briefing paper advising that Internal Audit carried out an audit on the Accounts Payable Shared Services and Business Services Team and provided satisfactory assurance for both.

Mr Smyth thanked Mrs McKeown on behalf of the Committee for her presentation of the Reports.

*Approved:* Mrs Karp

*Seconded:* Professor Bradley

**AC36/22**

**Audit Committee Self-Assessment of Effectiveness 2022/23**

Mrs Williams advised that HM Treasury recommend that the audit committees of all publicly funded bodies undertake regular self-assessment. The National Audit Office (NAO) has designed a checklist

for this purpose which assists audit committees in assessing their levels of compliance with a range of good practice criteria derived from the Treasury's Audit Committee Handbook.

A meeting was held on 22 September 2022 with Audit Committee members to collectively discuss and complete the checklist. At the end of the process all members confirmed their agreement of the responses. This year 100% positive response to all the good questions was achieved.

The Committee recommends that this Self-Assessment Report be submitted to the Trust Board for approval.

#### **AC37/22 BHSCT Draft Mid-year Assurance Statement as at September 2022**

Mrs Williams provided a summary on the Draft Mid-year Assurance Statement for the BHSCT. Mrs Williams advised that it will be presented to Executive Team on Wednesday 12 October to be submitted to the Department of Health no later than Friday 14 October 2022. Mrs Williams advised that Dr Jack has provided some feedback which they are working on so there will be some extension to some of the areas.

Dr Jack advised the need to comment on the resettlement delays in MAH, stem cell patient delays, ophthalmology and lung cancer delays, estate constraints, staffing issues and the backlog of safeguarding issues. Some Directors may not have highlighted all their divergences but this would be discussed at Executive Team on 12 October 2022.

Mr Smyth referred to the section on the Mental Capacity Act and asked how the Trust was going address the fact that it is receiving 38 referrals a month when we should it should be 30 daily. Mrs Edwards advised that she has written to Mrs Kearney for a more detailed update.

**Action:** Mrs Edwards

Mr Knox advised that the report was very informative but perhaps a bit long in areas, in particular around Neurology and MAH. The number of divergences could be numbered to aid review.

Dr Jack also agreed and advised that the document needs constant house keeping with divergences being closed and taken off. **Action:** Mrs Williams

The Committee noted the draft report.

#### **AC38/22 Direct Award Contracts April to September 2022**

Mrs Cotter provided a summary of the DACs from 1 April to 31 August 2022. Mrs Cotter reported that there were 94 DACs totalling £129m. Going forward only the new DACs will be highlighted at future Audit Committee meetings.

Mrs Cotter advised Mr Knox that legal challenges can be made regarding regional or local tenders.

Mr Knox commented that the report was very well laid out.

The Committee noted the report

**AC39/22 Fraud Update**

**a. Ongoing and new frauds report to Finance**

Mrs Williams provided a summary of on-going and new fraud investigations advising that 11 of the old cases are closed down with 11 new cases. Four of the new cases have been closed with 7 ongoing.

Mr Smyth thanked Mrs Williams for a well presented report which was easy to read with the new colour coding inserted.

In response to Mrs Karp's concerns over mismanagement of a resident's monies (3402), Mrs Williams advised that she would take this forward with the service area. **Action:** Mrs Williams

Mr Knox referred to Case 2903- allegation that locum staff member is working substantial number of back to back shifts. Mrs Williams advised that the fraud review showed that a number of concurrent shifts were in different locations which suggested no time for travelling between shifts.

In response to a question from Mr Knox, Dr Jack advised that according to the European Working Time Directive if it is a full live in shift you should not go over 13 hours without an 11 hour rest period. She noted that doctors can opt out of EWTD but have to declare a disclaimer to the GMC. The Trust can only make sure that doctors are working within the hours contracted in the Trust.

**b. Counter Fraud Services 2021/22 End of Report**

Mrs Williams provided a summary of the Counter Fraud Services 2021/22 End of Year Report.

**c. NIAO National Fraud Initiative Report 2020-22**

Mr Knox provided a summary of the NIAO National Fraud Initiative Report 2020-22

The Committee noted the reports.

**AC40/22 Any other Business**

Dr Jack thanked Mrs Cotter and Mrs Williams and the Audit Committee for all their hard work throughout the year.

Mr Smyth took the opportunity to thank Miss Moffett for her tireless work with the Audit Committee over the years and wished her a wonderful retirement, noting that she will be greatly missed.

**AC40/22 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 7 February 2023 at 10 am.