

**CONFIRMED**  
**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL'S 59<sup>TH</sup> AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 2018 AT 2PM IN EQUALITY HOUSE, 7-9 SHAFTSBURY SQUARE, BELFAST, BT2 7DP**

**Present:** Rory Campbell (Chair), and Don MacKay (Board Member)

**In Attendance:** Ms Jacqueline Irwin (CEO), Mr Gerard McKeown ( Director of Finance and Personnel), Ms Tracey Wilson (Finance Officer), Ms Jo Adamson (HR Manager), Tracey Wilson (Finance Officer) Ms Kathy Doey (NIAO), Ms Elaine Allen (TEO), Mr Johnathan Buick (ASM).

1. **Apologies:** Delia Close (Board Member), and Kim Moylan (TEO)

**2. Minutes**

Minutes of the 58<sup>th</sup> Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were approved by members. **(Appendix 1)**

**3. Matters Arising**

None

4. **Audit Investigation into Funded Group** **(Appendix 2)**

No further progress has been made on this issue. The TEO had raised questions previously which CRC have responded to.

Currently awaiting a response from TEO

**5. Risk Register**

Ms J Irwin presented the updated Risk Register to the Board.

Board members noted the following:

- Three risks remain on register: Political; Resources and New Policies.
- Politics and Resources remain red, and New Policies remains amber.
- Under 'Resources' there is reference to delay in 'Pay Remit' process. The CRC Board have requested a paper to be presented at March's Board Meeting, setting out the timeline of this issue.

Ms J Irwin expressed her thanks to TEO staff for their input in progressing the Pay Remit issue.

Ms E Allen reiterated TEO's attempts to progress this issue, stating that Ms G Killen had written to TEO Departmental Solicitor's Officer with a copy to TEO Departmental Accounting Officer.

- VES – The 2017/18 scheme remains on schedule. One member of staff has already exited through the scheme, and another due to exit at the end of March.
- Ms J Irwin stated that she is reasonably sure that CRC will have the opportunity to bid the Public Sector Transformation Fund in 2018/19. However, a review of CRC staff roles and responsibilities not reviewed in the 2016 Organisation Review is planned to be completed first.
- GDPR – Mr G McKeown updated the Committee on the progress of preparations ahead of the introduction of GDPR. Preparations are well under way. Mr G McKeown presented the first staff briefing in March, and is currently reviewing the data that CRC hold. Chair stated CRC appear to be in a good position.

Committee considered the Risk Register and agreed that the two red risks should stay red.

## **6. Internal Audit**

Mr J Buick presented to the Committee, two audit reports:

He made particular reference to the following from the Review of Human Resources report:

- Good HR policy procedures. CRC are due to align with NICS HR procedures.
- Two low priority three recommendations were made and accepted.
- Review recorded a 'Satisfactory' outcome.

Mr J Buick made particular reference to the following from the Grants Administration and Distribution Review (with specific focus on North Belfast Scheme) report:

- Satisfactory Memorandum of Understanding in place TEO
- Satisfactory claims processing
- One recommendation was made and accepted.
- Review recorded a 'Satisfactory' outcome.

Ms J Irwin thanked all staff, Gerard and Jo in particular, for their work on these audits.

Chair thanked Mr J Buick and ASM for undertaking and presenting the results of these audits.

Mr J Buick stated that there are two final audits in progress, the results of which should be ready to present at the next ARAC meeting.

## **7. Register of Audit**

Mr G McKeown presented to the Committee the updated Audit Recommendations tracker, and made reference to two particular matters:

Application of No Better off (inc Pay Remit)

Committee noted that a paper will be presented to the Board regarding the Pay Remit.

Ms J Irwin informed the group that TEO have requested a meeting to discuss how to progress a business case with the intention resolving '*No Better off*'.

#### Loss request

A loss request has been submitted to TEO, hope to have this issue resolved by the end of March, and for that to be reflected in the accounts.

A tidy up of reserves paper will be presented at the next full Board meeting.

### **8. Service Continuity Plan**

Mr G McKeown presented to the committee the updated Service Continuity Plan (SCP).

The committee noted the following:

- The IT agreement with ECNI allowed CRC to revise the plan.
- The alternative site CRC will use in the case of an emergency will be Screen NI.
- The SCP is scheduled to be tested in May

### **9. Dept of Finance Guidance**

The Committee noted the two guidance notes for the Department of Finance.

### **10. Direct Awards**

No direct awards to report

### **11. Small purchases**

The Committee noted the 'Small Purchases Without a Price Check' report.

### **12. AOB**

- Mr G McKeown brought the Committee's attention a letter which CRC had received from an MLA which outlined an anonymous allegation towards a Core Funded group.
- Having reviewed the conditions of the Letters of Offer awarded to the group since the 2014/15 financial year, subsequent work reports and the Community Relations Council's evaluations of work delivered by the funded group, CRC found nothing to substantiate the claims.

TEO had received correspondence making the same allegation previously.

At this point Mr Buick Left

- Mr G McKeown informed the Committee that the internal audit contract will be coming to an end in March 2018. DFAP have drafted a Business Case and put out a tender. The procurement process is scheduled to allow for the contract to be awarded in advance of the April ARAC to allow the newly appointed internal auditor to attend.

A discussion followed regarding the number of day's audit we can request in the tender. The Committee agreed to that the Invitation to Tender and subsequent contract should allow the Committee to vary the scheduled internal audit days from 12 to 18 days (inclusive) per financial year.

Chair thanked everyone for attending.

13. Date of Next Meeting:

12<sup>th</sup> April 2018

24<sup>th</sup> May 2018