**Minutes of Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting held on 12 January 2021 @ 10am**

**In attendance:** Kieran Donnelly, Chair (C&AG)

Pamela McCreedy (COO)

Rodney Allen (Director)

Patrick Barr (Director)

Neil Gray (Director)

 Colette Kane (Director)

Suzanne Walsh (Director)

 Tomas Wilkinson (Director)

 Orla Kee (HR Manager) – agenda item 5

 Louise Donnelly (Secretary)

| **1.** | **Apologies**Apologies from Orla Kee were noted. |
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| **2.** | **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**There were no issues declared by members. |
| **3**. | **Minutes of Previous meeting and Matters Arising**Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 December 2020 were agreed and the matters arising updated.  |
| **4.** | **Risk Management****COVID 19 Risk Register**Colette advised there had been no change to the register since the last SMT in December and explained that due to recent lockdown restrictions and increasing rates of infection the focus will remain on the COVID risks identified, this will be kept under review and as to when the COVID risks can be merged within the Corporate Risk Register.A meeting of the Corporate Risk Register Working Group (CRRWG) has been scheduled for next week. SMT were asked to note this register will be presented to ARAC on 19 January 2021. |
| **5.** | **HR Roadmap Update**Apologies were noted from Orla Kee, this update will be deferred to the February SMT. |
| **6.** | **Technical Update**Suzanne provided an update on the following:* APC 01-21 – ‘Release of FAM 2020’ will be issued to staff today, it is recommended Audit teams take time to work through the contents of the circular and the application of new templates for their audits. Audit Managers are advised to discuss the changes with staff at scheduled team meetings.
* QCR progressing well with slight delays, it is anticipated that an update on reviews will be presented at the March SMT.
* There is continued liaison with the Treasury Officer of Accounts (TOA) and Departments on the impact of COVID 19 on the summer recess 2021 deadline and the statutory timetable for the end of year accounts. A meeting is being scheduled for next week, Suzanne and C&AG will attend.
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| **7.** | **Stakeholder Feedback from Anne McMurray**Members were provided with slides detailing stakeholder feedback on the Corporate Plan Development from Anne McMurray. Members noted the content of the slides. Pamela advised there would be final engagement with the Advisory Board and the Assembly Audit Committee before sign off on the plan. |
| **8.** | **Staff Survey 2020 – Report, infographic and way forward**Members welcomed the positive results from the recent staff survey and recorded thanks to everyone who took the time to complete it this year. Going forward four workshops for staff will be facilitated by Inspire to help develop a plan to follow up on actions arising from the survey, this action plan will also include any outstanding actions from the 2019 survey results. A report on the findings of the workshops will be presented by Colin Smith from Inspire to SMT on 8 February. |
| **9.** | **Ipsos Mori MLA Survey**Members noted the report and results presented, the C&AG welcomed the report and all agreed the results would contribute to developing a roadmap for continued and enhanced engagement with MLA’s and Assembly Committees. |
| **10.** | **Financial Procedures Manual**The financial procedures manual has been updated to reflect a number of improvements made to the NIAO’s financial and budgeting processes and financial policies and procedures. Rodney briefed members on key areas of note. In light of all changes made an awareness session will be held with Audit Managers and Directors prior to the new financial year commencing on 1 April 2021. Going forward financial procedures will be reviewed and updated by 31 January each year.  |
| **11.** | **Papers noted:*** ARAC Draft Agenda – 19 January 2021
* ARAC paper re Internal Auditor Procurement
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| **12.** | **AOB*** Next meeting 16 February 2021
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