

Minutes of Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting held on 11 May 2021 @ 10am

In attendance: Kieran Donnelly, Chair (C&AG)
 Rodney Allen (COO)
 Patrick Barr (Director)
 Neil Gray (Director)
 Colette Kane (Director)
 Suzanne Walsh (Director)
 Tomas Wilkinson (Director)
 Louise Donnelly (Secretary)
 Barry Mitchell (Audit Manager) – agenda item 6.3

The C&AG welcomed members to the first socially distanced meeting held at Bradford Court.

1.	Apologies No apologies were noted
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 20 April 2021 were agreed and the matters arising updated.
4.1	Operational Performance Report A report detailing key performance outturns for the public reporting and financial audit programmes from 1 April 2020 to 30 April 2021 was presented by Rodney Allen. SMT noted the content.
4.2	Handling Correspondence – Quarterly Update A paper prepared by the Counter Fraud Unit to update SMT on Raising Concerns and MLA Correspondence was presented by Rodney Allen. The COO will monitor caseload progress with members of the Directorate at their scheduled one to one meetings. The C&AG will be kept apprised. Members were requested to keep the Counter Fraud Unit updated on individual case progress.
4.3	Contract Management Tomas Wilkinson provided an update to members in relation to one of the Office's contracted audit suppliers. The Operational Management Team (OMT) will continue to monitor developments at their weekly meetings, the C&AG was advised that OMT would consider next steps in the procurement process and other options in the coming weeks.
4.4	Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Forward Work Programme The PAC Forward Work Programme for April to July 2021 was presented, discussion followed regarding possible additional sessions proposed in coming weeks.
4.5	Survey of Audited Bodies 2021 Rodney Allen presented a paper summarising proposals for the 2021 Survey. Members agreed the proposals presented and minor amendments were agreed to the wording of

	some questions. Next steps will be to issue the updated questionnaire to audited bodies this week via email. It is anticipated the results will be included in the Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21.
4.6	Draft Three Year Public Reporting Programme The draft Three Year Public Reporting Programme was presented for consideration, discussion followed concerning resourcing. Minor amendments were agreed. Rodney Allen will circulate the revised final draft to members for approval.
5.1	Corporate Report The Corporate Report was presented to update SMT on Finance, HR and Business Support. Specific points noted were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance 2020-21 Forecast - Members were asked to note the current budget position and the ongoing audit of the year-end financial statements. • HR Recruitment – The planned intake for Graduate Trainee Accountant recruitment has been increased. The C&AG was apprised of discussions taking place at OMT considering future recruitment strategy. Attendance Management - Members were asked to note the positive absence figures per employee in the rolling period 1 May 2020 to 30 April 2021.
5.2	Technical Report Suzanne Walsh provided an update on the following key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Control - APC 04-21 - Findings from the 2020 Financial Audit and Value for Money Quality Control Review Process has been issued to staff. • Covered Persons - The Technical Director has issued a minute to confirm that the covered persons review has been completed and safeguards have been put in place where necessary. • International Standards on Quality Management (ISQM 1 & 2) - Following the recent meeting of the ISQM PAF group on 23 April the Technical Team will hold a separate workshop with OMT later this month.
5.3	SBRI Data Analytics Update Barry Mitchell from the Data Analytics Team was welcomed to the meeting. Barry provided an update to members on the SBRI project. The C&AG and members thanked Barry for the update, all agreeing they found it informative and worthwhile.
5.4	Risk Management COVID 19 Risk Register The COVID 19 Risk Register was presented by Colette Kane, all changes agreed by SMT in April were highlighted in red for member's convenience. The updated register had previously been presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) on 4 June. ARAC Risk Workshop ARAC have requested that a risk workshop is scheduled early in the autumn to consider the risk management process, specifically risk appetite.

	Corporate Risk Register SMT had agreed to revert to the Corporate Risk Register at the April meeting. The Corporate Risk Register Working Group will meet next week to commence this process with a view to presenting a first draft of the revised Register to SMT on 15 June.
5.5	SMT Self-Assessment Report The C&AG briefed members on the results of the SMT self-assessment exercise. The overall conclusion is that SMT is performing effectively with some scope for further improvement. Members endorsed the following actions to be taken forward: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider reshaping the agenda to align SMT business with the corporate priorities and business plan with the Chair to actively seek further contributions from members. 2. Provision of information/data on performance in a more accessible format. 3. Consider how we can improve interaction/communication between SMT, the Advisory Board and ARAC. 4. Review the level of detail provided in financial management papers.
5.6	Complaints Policy A revised Complaints Policy was presented by Rodney Allen. SMT considered and approved the policy subject to minor amendments, once updated the Policy will be shared with Trade Union Side) for comment.
6.	Matters noted:
6.1	Draft Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Minutes
6.2	Policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Fraud Policy • Fraud Response Plan • Raising Concerns Policy • Crisis Management Plan
7.	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next meeting 15 June 2021 @10am.