

AGENDA

**C&AG's Advisory Group Meeting
Friday 28th November 2014 at 1.30pm
Conference Room 2nd Floor**

SECTION 1 – PRELIMINARY/ADMINISTRATION

1. Apologies
2. Declaration of conflicts of interest
3. Minutes of meeting held 13th June and matters arising

SECTION 2 – UPDATES

1. Minutes from NIAO Executive Team meetings;
 - 15 May 2014
 - 9 July 2014
 - 29 July 2014
 - 18 September 2014
 - 21 October 2014

SECTION 3 – BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

1. Business Restructuring Paper

SECTION 4 –AOB

MINUTES OF C&AG'S ADVISORY GROUP MEETING THURSDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2014

Present Kieran Donnelly (Comptroller & Auditor General - Chair)
Mary Halton (Non Executive Member)
Paul Douglas (Non Executive Member)
Áine Gallagher (Non Executive Member)
Janet Sides (AAG Division A)
Eddie Bradley (AAG Division V)
Brandon McMaster (Director Corporate Services)

Apologies Louise Mason (AAG Division F)

In Attendance Joe Campbell (Secretary)

The Advisory Group discussed:

- Preliminary/Administration Issues
- Role of Advisory Group
- Minutes of Executive Team Meetings
- Business Improvement Project

1. Preliminary/Administration

Apologies - An apology was received from Louise Mason.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest - There were no issues declared by members which would be in conflict with the agenda for the meeting.

Minutes of meeting held 13 June 2014 and matters arising - Minutes of the meeting were agreed.

2. Role of Advisory Group

C&AG, in his role as Chair, welcomed the new non Executive Members to the Advisory Group. Given that this was their initial meeting, the roles and responsibilities of the group were discussed.

C&AG explained that he was only temporary Chair and that this would be filled on a permanent basis by a non Executive Director; he explained that it was not possible for the same individual to hold the posts of Chair of the Audit Committee and Advisory Group. This appointment will be made by the C&AG and endorsed by the NI Assembly Audit Committee.

3. Minutes of Executive Team Minutes

The minutes of the Executive team meetings of:

- 15 May 2014
- 9 July 2014
- 29 July 2014
- 18 September 2014
- 21 October 2014

were considered by the Group. It was noted that the minutes of 29 July 2014 set out the purpose of each of the leadership subgroups, reflecting the make-up of the balanced scorecard:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Quality
- Delivery
- People

It was explained that this approach had been adopted as the Office had previously been overly focused on delivery at the expense of the other areas. With the adoption of the scorecard, the Office will develop metrics and collect and analyze data relative to each of these perspectives.

4. Business Restructuring

BMcM briefed the meeting on the paper provided to members. He set out the context of the paper and its key principle objectives:

- (1) Greater flexibility and innovation in the use of resources to meet business needs.
- (2) Job enrichment, career development and succession planning
- (3) Removing the functional silo mentality to create greater corporate cohesion.
- (4) Autonomy, empowerment and enhanced decision making.
- (5) Enhanced client focus.

He explained that the financial position which the office, as well as the wider public sector, finds itself in, only exacerbated the need for restructuring to take place.

He informed the meeting that since the issue of the restructuring paper, a Project Initiation Document (PID) had been produced to identify key activities, set milestones and co-ordinate the project.

The four key steps in the restructuring process were identified as:

- Establishment of clusters
- Review of financial audit approach
- Development of IT and data management processes
- Delivery of Training

This approach has been endorsed by the Executive Team and has been communicated to the wider Office through a whole of office address. There were also a number of avenues for staff to provide feedback: TUS, branch briefings, the Employee Engagement Forum as well as approaching him directly. The next key step in the process will be to confirm the cluster structures – this will be completed and communicated to staff by 12 December 2014.

In moving the project forward, PD proposed that the Office should appoint a “Change Champion”. C&AG welcomed the suggestion and undertook to consider this with the wider Executive Team.

The meeting agreed that, by Summer Recess, they would have a greater sense of the success of the project, particularly in the flexible use of staff. To achieve this, it was agreed that the resourcing requirements for financial audits and essential VFM work be identified and prioritised by the clusters. This would determine the extent of flexibility required and inform the training programme and timing of same. It was also recognised that time had to be set aside to ensure work balance as the initial cross fertilisation of staff took place.

In relation to the review of the financial audit approach, it was confirmed that the review of the financial audit manual, the delegation of audits and the efficiency agenda were all being driven forward by the Technical Director.

5. AOB

The date of the next Advisory Group meeting and its agenda will be agreed and communicated by the Secretariat.