

LIBRARIES NI

SCHEME SPECIFYING THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO BE DISCHARGED AND THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

In this Scheme:

"the Authority" means Libraries NI

"the Committee" means the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of Libraries NI

"Standing Orders" means the Standing Orders of Libraries NI

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Libraries NI hereby make the following Scheme specifying the duties and responsibilities to be discharged and the procedure to be followed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. It is subject to alteration or amendment at any time by resolution of the Authority.

2. Functions

- 2.1 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will advise the Authority and Accounting Officer and is required:
- a. to monitor the Authority's internal control, risk management and corporate governance arrangements against compliance with relevant guidance and best practice and consider the effectiveness of the Internal Audit strategy and periodic plan in addressing the Authority's risks;
 - b. to review the Authority's Risk Management Strategy and Corporate Risk Register to ensure that all corporate risks are being identified and appropriately managed and to review any material changes to the organisation's strategic risks;
 - c. to review the accounting policies and any identified changes to them, the accounts, and the annual report of the Authority including the process for the management review of the accounts prior to audit, and management's letter of representation to the external auditors;
 - d. to review the Chief Executive's Assurance Statements;
 - e. to contribute to, and review the content of, the draft annual Governance Statement;
 - f. to report annually to the Board of the Authority on the External Audit Statement (Report to Those Charged with Governance) in respect of

the Accounts, the state of the Authority's finances and the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's arrangements for internal control

- g. to consider all relevant reports by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (or the appointed external auditor) including reports on the Authority's accounts, achievement of value for money and the response to the Report to Those Charged with Governance;
 - h. to review the Northern Ireland Audit Office's (or the appointed external auditor's) Audit Plan;
 - i. to review the terms of reference and resourcing of Internal Audit.
 - j. to review the periodic plans of Internal Audit, and material changes to these plans, work performed (and consequent audit reports) and a comparison with work planned, key issues emerging from the work of Internal Audit, the Head of Internal Audit's Annual Opinion and Report and any implications arising from the findings and opinion expressed in the annual report;
 - k. to review quality assurance reports on the internal audit function
 - l. to monitor the management response to audit recommendations and the adequacy and implementation of all outstanding audit recommendations (including internal and external audit recommendations);
 - m. to review anti-fraud and anti-bribery policies, whistleblowing processes and arrangements for special investigations and make recommendations to the Board;
 - n. to consider any other matters where requested to do so by the Accounting Officer or Chairperson of the Authority;
 - o. to review periodically the Committee's own effectiveness and report the results of that review to the Authority;
 - p. to review ongoing reports on 'Mission Critical Projects'; and
 - q. to review 'Direct Award Contracts' authorised by the Accounting Officer.
- 2.2. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will provide the Authority and Accounting Officer with an Annual Report, summarising its conclusions from the work it has done during the year.
- 2.3. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee may request a report or investigation of any matter within its Terms of Reference.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The Committee shall consist of not more than eight members of the Authority.
- 3.2. The Committee may co-opt members who are not members of the Authority in the event that specialist expertise is required and not available otherwise to the Committee.
- 3.3. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be any Member of the Committee (with the exception of the Board Chairperson) who is a Member of the Board and who has been elected by the Members. Should the Chairperson be a Councillor Member then the Vice-Chairperson should be a non-Councillor Member (and vice-versa).

4. Quorum

- 4.1. A quorum shall consist of three members of the Committee (the three members may include any ex-Officio member).

5. Meetings

- 5.1. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will meet a least four times a year. The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee may convene additional meetings, as he/she deems necessary;
- 5.2. The Authority or the Accounting Officer may ask the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to convene further meetings to discuss particular issues on which they want the Committee's advice.
- 5.3. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meetings will normally be attended by the Accounting Officer, the Director of Business Support, The Head of Internal Audit, representatives from External Audit and representatives from the Sponsoring Department.
- 5.4. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee may ask any or all of those who normally attend but who are not members to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters;
- 5.5. In exceptional circumstances the Committee has the authority to alter the location of meetings and when necessary to convene meetings remotely using video conferencing technology. Any such remote meeting will constitute an official, formal meeting of the Committee.

6. Access

- 6.1 The Head of Internal Audit and the representative of External Audit will have free and confidential access to the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

7. Procedure

- 7.1 The procedure shall be in accordance with Standing Orders.
- 7.2 A copy of the minutes of each meeting of the Committee shall be sent to each member of the Authority with the agenda for the following meeting of the Authority or, in the event of that agenda being issued less than four working days after the meeting of the Committee, with the agenda for the next following meeting of the Authority.

This Scheme was reviewed and adopted by the Board at its meeting on 7 July 2022 and shall come into operation with effect from that date.

Sealed with the common seal of Libraries NI in the presence of:

Professor Bernard Cullen, Chairperson

Jim O'Hagan, Chief Executive