



Northern Health  
and Social Care Trust  
**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 at 2 pm  
Boardroom, Trust Headquarters, Bretten Hall – via Zoom**

Present: Mr Billy Graham, Non-Executive, Chair  
Mr Paul Corrigan, Non-Executive Director  
Mr Glenn Houston, Non-Executive Director

In Attendance: Mr Owen Harkin, Director of Finance  
Mrs Tracey McCaig, Assistant Director of Finance  
Mrs Sinead O’Kane, Assistant Director, Governance  
Mrs Caroline Armstrong, Head Accountant  
Mrs Catherine McKeown, Internal Audit BSO  
Mr David Charles, Internal Audit BSO  
Mr Stephen Knox, Northern Ireland Audit Office  
Ms Laura Murphy, Northern Ireland Audit Office  
Mr Neil Gray, Northern Ireland Audit Office

1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b>  Kerry Hudson, DoH	
2.	<b><u>Conflicts of Interest</u></b>  There were no conflicts of interest noted.	
3.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b>  The minutes of the meeting 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.	
4.	<b><u>Matters arising</u></b>  <b>4.1 Action Log</b> The Committee noted the action log.  Plan for Directors presentations to the committee was agreed. The committee wish to revisit General Surgery in early 2021.	T McCaig
5.	<b><u>Audit Committee Draft Annual Report</u></b>  The draft Annual Report was noted by the Committee, Mr Houston requested an addition to demonstrate that Directors responsible for the 2 unacceptable audit reports were invited to present action plans to the committee and significant progress has been made.	T McCaig



6.	<p><b>NHST Annual Report &amp; Accounts 2019/20 – for approval and recommendation to the board.</b></p> <p>Mrs McCaig presented the annual report and accounts to the committee and advised that there were no significant amendments from the draft presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> June meeting.</p> <p>Mrs McCaig highlighted the Governance statement which included information relating to COVID which is included now for HSC organisations.</p> <p>2 new divergences have been added since the draft and the Committee discussed the details surrounding the Fit testing Audit. Mr Harkin advised 353 staff required a further Fit Testing appointment it was noted that this was a Regional issue.</p> <p>Mr Graham thanked Mrs McCaig and her team and noted this was a very comprehensive report.</p> <p><b><u>Notes to the accounts</u></b></p> <p>Mrs McCaig highlighted the additional wording under the Land &amp; Property re-evaluations section and highlighted note 24, 'events after reporting period', noting the reference to the working time regulations and carry over of leave for 2 years.</p> <p>The Committee formally approved the 2019/20 Annual Report and Accounts (consolidated) and Letter of Representation for submission to Trust Board.</p>	T McCaig
7.	<p><b><u>CTF Trustees Report &amp; Accounts 2019/20 – for approval and recommendation to the Board</u></b></p> <p>Mrs McCaig presented.</p> <p>There have been no significant changes since the draft was shared with the Committee in May, the Charitable Trust Funds Committee have also had an opportunity to review the draft in detail.</p> <p>The report and accounts were noted by the Committee. Mr Corrigan noted this was comprehensive report.</p> <p>The Committee formally approved the 2019/20 CTF Trustees Report and Accounts for submission to Trust</p>	T McCaig



	Board.	
8.	<p><b><u>Internal Audit</u></b></p> <p><b><u>8.1 Progress Report 2019/20</u></b> The committee noted the 2 reports which remained in draft format, management responses have been received and it is expected that these will be tabled at the October Committee meeting.</p> <p><b><u>8.2 Internal Audit Plan 20/21</u></b> Mrs McKeown presented. Mrs McKeown noted the need to remain flexible and that the plan would continue to be kept under review over the Summer months.</p> <p>Mrs McKeown noted that although the team were working mostly remotely there didn't seem to be any issues, communication is key in this but confident this will work well.</p> <p>Mr Harkin recorded his thanks to Mrs McKeown and the team for their support and flexibility of the validations and advisory role which has been welcomed by the NHSCT.</p> <p>The revised Programme was noted by the Committee and it was agreed Mrs McKeown will engage with the Chair prior to the October meeting to update on progress and any changes to the programme.</p>	<p>C McKeown</p> <p>C McKeown</p>
9.	<p><b><u>External Audit Business</u></b></p> <p><b><u>9.1 Draft report to Those charged with Governance</u></b></p> <p>Mr Gray thanked the Trust and Audit staff in their support producing this in difficult circumstances.</p> <p>Mr Knox took the committee through this report and noted no significant findings relating to the Annual Report &amp; Accounts or the Trustees Report and Accounts. There were a number of findings graded priority 2 and 3 relating to Accruals, Staff in Post, Variance Payroll monitoring, Contract information and prompt payment which management were reviewing.</p> <p>Payroll accruals will be pulled forward to the front of the report. Discussion took place with regards to</p>	



	<p>variance monitoring process as Mrs McCaig advised this process had previously been agreed across the HSC. As part of agreeing the response to the report the Trust will need to review whether BSO have undertaken the monitoring as per the policy.</p> <p>Mr Houston requested that the management response dates be added and it was advised this would be completed for the final report, Mr Corrigan noted he was content with this report.</p> <p><b><u>9.2 NIAO Forward Work Programme for noting</u></b> The programme was noted by the Committee.</p>	Mrs McCaig/Mr Knox
10.	<p><b><u>2019/220 Annual Procurement Report (Draft)</u></b></p> <p>It was agreed to hold this report until the October meeting after PALs have added additional information.</p>	T McCaig
11.	<p><b><u>Register of Single Tender Actions</u></b></p> <p>The STA register was reviewed by the Committee, all green a number of large STA linked to Laboratory.</p>	
12.	<p><b><u>DoH Circulars</u></b></p> <p>The DoH circulars were noted by the committee.</p>	
13.	<p><b><u>Fraud Liaison Officer Report</u></b></p> <p>Mrs McCaig presented the report to the Committee. Four new cases of suspected fraud were noted since the last report, with 1 case closed.</p> <p>Mrs McCaig advised that the FLO continued to press parties to bring cases to a resolution and highlighted the Fraud Awareness activity and risk assessment plans.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	
14.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>The committee thanked Mrs McCaig and the team for their work producing the reports especially during the difficult COVID period, as well as to Internal and External audit colleagues for their support in new ways or working.</p>	



## Northern Health and Social Care Trust

	<p>Mrs Welsh was welcomed to the Committee and Mr Graham provided Mrs Welsh with an overview of how the Committee are undertaking business, Mrs Welsh acknowledged that the Committee was efficient well respected throughout the organisation. Mrs Welsh thanks the Committee, Internal, External Audit and finance colleagues for their hard work.</p>	
15.	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> October 2020, 2:00pm via Zoom</p>	