

CJI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Meeting Outputs

Thursday 18 January 2024 in Knockview Buildings

Attendees:

Independent member: (Acting Chair)	Derek Anderson (DA)
Independent Member:	Mandy Kilpatrick (MK)
DoJ Sponsor Division:	Claire Robinson (CR)
DoJ Internal Audit:	Martin Hampton (MH)
FPM	Teresa Campbell (TC)
NIAO:	Catherine O'Hagan (CO'H)
FSD:	Michael Rafferty (MR)
Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI):	Jacqui Durkin (JD) James Corrigan (JC) David MacAnulty (DMacA)
ARAC Secretary:	Linda Boal (LB) CJI

Agenda No	Description / Comments
1	Introduction / acknowledgements. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● DA welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly the new members Teresa Campbell, Catherine O'Hagan and Martin Hampton who was representing Amanda Oliver.● On behalf of the Committee, DA expressed his and Mandy Kilpatrick's sincere condolences to Meloney McVeigh on the recent death of her husband.
2	Apologies. Amanda Oliver, (Internal Audit) and Meloney McVeigh (CJI).
3	Declaration of interest/Conflict of interest.

- None. The Chair advised that Point 7 on the Agenda regarding the Chief Inspector recruitment should move to the last point when JD and JC would preclude themselves from the discussion as they had previously declared an interest.

4 **Minutes of previous meeting – 5 October 2023 and matters arising.**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

Matters arising:

- All actioned.

5 **Report summarising any significant changes to CJI's Risk Register.**

- The CJI Risk Register had been updated in December 2023 following a review by CJI staff and distributed to ARAC members in advance.
- The three main risks remain as Quality of inspection product; CJI's Relevance to/within the CJS and the Resilience and Sustainability of CJI.
- JC gave an overview of the Risk Register, highlighting the changes since the previous meeting which were:
- Risk 1 – Inspected organisations failing to comply with statutory obligations to provide information in a reasonable timescale and are obstructive during the inspection. The CI is addressing this in the course of inspection programme consultation meetings and it will continue to be monitored going forward. Preparations are being made for the ISO Accreditation audit on 25 January.
- Risk 2 – the CJI website is now very old with security risks. The maintenance and support contract is also coming to an end. The need for a new website has been identified as a pressure for some time and DoJ have confirmed there will be no additional money for it. A temporary fix will be put in place but it is not a longer term nor value for money solution and CJI will continue to engage with DoJ regarding future funding.
- Risk 3 – The issue of resilience and sustainability is linked to resources and budget. CJI anticipate a budget cut next year with its fixed costs rising, some inescapable costs have increased by 30%. The Business Support Team are operating with reduced resources. HR policy support is unaffordable and can only be met on a case by case basis as they arise.
- MK said the Risk Register was a very thorough document and was content with the planned actions. The web site is a big concern and the pressure of limited resources is concerning on a small team, especially at this time of the business year and asked if there was scope to get any help.
- DA stated organisation lack of co-operation and delay in responding was disappointing.
- JD believes there was a fundamental issue regarding understanding CJI's statutory remit and powers, that the information sought was invariably information that organisations should have to hand and should be utilising themselves, but agreed it is disappointing.
- DA stated CJI have the full support of the Committee and will monitor the situation.
- DA shared the concerns around the CJI web site and hopes an appropriate solution can be found but the Committee will continue to monitor this point. He

added that budget pressures have a disproportionate impact on small organisations.

- JD said that the anticipated budget pressures impact on developing an Inspection Programme that meets statutory obligations, adequate coverage and high risk areas. A prison inspection may not be able to proceed due to lack of funds which is a concern given the risks involved and known issues with a higher prisoner population.
- DA suggested that the Northern Ireland Prison Service should consider an independent inspection as essential.
- JD added that as United Kingdom NPM members, CJI need to demonstrate places of detention are being adequately inspected in Northern Ireland. She is deeply concerned and has raised this with the Permanent Secretary and Director of Access to Justice.
- MK commented that international bodies refer to CJI/NPM reports to inform their own reports.

6 **Review the overall CJI Assurance Framework.**

- DA commented that the Framework document contained everything one would expect to see including the three lines of defence.
- MK agreed and added she attended a Government Internal Audit meeting in November when an Assurance Statement was said to be critical to assurance.
- DA stated that this was a model of best practice.
- JC informed members that the document had been reviewed in January this year and would welcome any views on how it could be improved.
- CO'H agreed that the document was very useful and would like to see the Assurance Framework document show how it links into the Risks to clearly demonstrate how they are covered.
- **Action: JC**
- DA agreed and stated all risks should equate to the Assurance document.
- TC agreed it was very useful background information.

7 **Consider the Committee's own effectiveness in its work.**

- The Self-Assessment checklist had been completed. DA advised the new members that this was a reduced version of the National Audit Checklist and was more relevant to CJINI. He was satisfied that it had been completed accurately and reflects the Committee covering all the correct items and was in compliance with best practice with no gaps evident. He added that it was good practice to complete this every year.
- DA suggested the document should be checked against the National Audit checklist, which had been recently updated, to ensure we did not miss anything.
- **Action: JC**
- CO'H agreed the reduced list makes sense.
- MK endorsed DA's comments.

8 **An update on the nine-month set of accounts.**

- MR advised that work was underway and there were no issues to report.

9 **Report from management on whistle blowing, matters of concern and fraud issues.**

- JC reported a nil return.

10 **Report from management on any direct award contracts.**

- JC reported a nil return.

11 **Report summarising the expenses submitted by the Chief Inspector, the Deputy Chief Inspector and all other CJI Staff.**

- The report, which detailed expenses incurred by the CI and Deputy CI was noted by all members. JD noted that her expenses included an international conference in Dublin where she was a guest speaker and she and Rachel Lindsay travelled together.

12 **Review of CJI's gifts and hospitality register.**

- The reported information was noted by all members.

13 **AOB**

- MK gave a brief and useful overview of the GIAA event she attended in November. The meeting covered the following items:
 - Concerns that post Covid the number of reports signed off pre recess had dropped to 60%;
 - Encouraged early engagement;
 - A focus on climate and current issues;
 - Four themes were identified as relevant: Capacity and capability; Cyber attack; Organisational culture and Productivity & efficiency;
 - Policy for ransom request in the event of a cyber-attack;
 - A presentation on AI and its use for Risk Registers and Audit Reports;
 - There is a need for an agreed definition of AI and a strategy for its use; and
 - An opportunity for various bodies to feed into a planned consultation on Global Audit was noted.
- JC advised that the recruitment for a new non-executive member will begin with assistance from Sponsor Department.
- CR confirmed that the DoJ Permanent Secretary will circulate this to other Permanent Secretaries on behalf of CJI.

14 **CJI Chief Inspector recruitment and salary update from DoJ.**

- JD and JC left the meeting at this point.
- There was a discussion around the recruitment and terms and conditions for a new Chief Inspector when the current term of office expires in November 2024.
- CR confirmed that she is meeting with the team who will carry out the recruitment exercise next week.
- Various points around salary, term of office and the risk to implementation of accepted recommendations from the DoJ Review of CJI were discussed by Committee members and it was agreed CR would provide a further update at

the Autumn meeting. CR also invited the non-executive members to email her with any further queries.

- **Action: CR**

15 **Dates of next meeting.**

The dates of the next meetings are as follows:

Spring – Thursday 11 April 2024 at 10am, it was noted this would be the Chair’s final meeting;

Summer – Thursday 6 June 2024 at 10am.

Location: Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ



Derek Anderson
Acting Chairperson

11 April 2024
Date: