

CJI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Meeting Outputs

Thursday 6 June 2024 in Knockview Buildings

Attendees:

Independent member: (Acting Chair)	Mandy Kilpatrick (MK)
Independent Member:	Cathy Galway (CG)
DoJ Sponsor Division:	Claire Robinson (CR)
DoJ Internal Audit:	Amanda Oliver (AO)
FPM	Suzanne Villiers (SV) Teresa Campbell (TC)
NIAO:	Catherine O'Hagan (CO'H)
FSD:	Joanne Jamison (JJ)
Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI):	James Corrigan (JC) Meloney McVeigh (MMcV) David MacAnulty (DMacA)
ARAC Secretary:	Linda Boal (LB) CJI

Agenda Description / Comments

No	
1	Introduction/acknowledgements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MK welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2	Apologies. Jacqui Durkin (JD).
3	Declaration of interest/Conflict of interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
4	Minutes of previous meeting – 18 January 2024 and matters arising. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed. Matters arising:

- Pt 5: ToR for other NDPBs ongoing.

5 **Consider the (emerging) External Audit opinion (Audit Completion Report) for the financial year 2023-24. (RTTCWG).**

- CO'H spoke to the paper and asked that JJ pass on NIAO's thanks to Michael Rafferty (FSD Accountant) (MR) for all his work on the audit.
- The report proposed that the Comptroller and Auditor General will certify the 2023-24 financial statement with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification.
- Due to the pre-election period restrictions, the Certificate will not be signed until 5 July 2024.
- SV outlined the Key Messages and TC gave an overview explaining the Audit Scope, Significant Risks and Findings from the Audit. There were no issues, misstatements or irregular expenses to report.
- There were two outstanding items relating to Assurance reports provided on the Shared Service organisations and documentation for one accrual. JC advised that outstanding documentation has been followed up with the external organisation and should be available for the end of this week.
- The Audit Committee was asked to review the findings, including the draft letter of representation and audit certificate.
- The Audit Committee were happy to endorse the Report.

6 **Discuss the implications of the result of the Accounting Officer's review of effectiveness of the system of control in relation to the Governance Statement.**

- MMcV advised of no major changes made by the Accounting Officer to the review of effectiveness of the governance framework contained in the Governance Statement contained in the Annual Report and Accounts.
- There were no further comments from members.

7 **Review and consider the Annual Report and Accounts.**

- JJ spoke to the draft Annual Report and Accounts report which had been prepared by MR. The draft accounts are with the NIAO. The Report comprises of three sections: Performance Report; Accountability Report; and Financial Statements. There are no significant changes to note in the format of the Annual Report and Accounts. The Report included Contingent liabilities in relation to public sector pensions (Injury to feeling claims) and Holiday Pay.
- The Audit Committee were invited to: note the content of the draft Annual Report and Accounts; consider if there are any comments or further changes to be reflected in the draft Accounts; note the timetable and the guidance on Remuneration Report disclosures.
- MK queried if the contingent liability rested with CJI or the DoJ and JJ confirmed it was with CJI.
- CG queried if CJI generated income and MMcV advised that they didn't other than small rebates generated through usage of the current Government Procurement Card under the current contract but sometimes CJI requested additional funding

to undertake specific work requested by the Minister but not included in the Inspection Programme.

- MK suggested that performance relating to timely responses to FoI requests and AQs, although low, be included in future reports and MMcV will action that.
- **Action: MMcV.**
- There were no further comments from members.

8 Advise the Accounting Officer on signing the Accounts and Government Statement.

- MK and CG advised the CJI Accounting Officer to sign the Accounts.
- **Action: JC.**

9 Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion and HR Support Audit Report

- AO presented the Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion.
- The summary of Internal Audit Opinions showed a Satisfactory rating for all audits.
- Internal Audit were struggling with their staffing position and attempting to recruit but this should not affect their work with CJI.
- The Internal Audit function was subject to an internal quality assessment (IQA) in August 2023. An EQA is required every five years and was completed by the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors. Both assessments concluded that the NICS IAS “generally confirms” (highest possible rating) to the IIA’s professional standards. The CJI Accounting Officer and ARAC members were provided with copies of both reports.
- A copy of the Internal Audit Annual Report 2023-24: DoF Shared Services together with covering note from Neil Gibson Permanent Secretary, Department of Finance were also shared with all members for information.

10 Update on CJI Chief Inspector recruitment exercise from Sponsor Department

- CR advised the recruitment exercise will be carried out centrally. The proposed timetable will be applications at end of July, with the sift in September, interviews middle of October and appointment at the end of October. This allows a gap for CTC clearance if required but an appointment can be made on an ‘at risk’ basis if necessary.
- The Board will comprise of two internal and one independent member.
- MMcV suggested that a three month notice period may be necessary and CJI need a CI in place to function. CR replied that if this was the case, contingency arrangements would include asking the current CI to stay in post longer.
- MMcV asked to be informed of the proposed salary as soon as possible for budgeting purposes.
- MK asked if there was any progress on the recommendations from the CJI Review in relation to the CI role and CR advised this was with the Minister for consideration.

11 Report summarising any significant changes to CJI’s Risk Register.

- The CJI Risk Register had been updated in May 2024 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.
- MMcV gave an overview of the Risk Register, highlighting the significant changes since the previous meeting which were:
 - Risk 1 – availability of staff for fieldwork interviews and to attend focus groups.
 - Risk 2 – longer lead in times to secure co-operation of inspected organisations. The reappointment or appointment of the new CI has been added. The website is CJI's biggest risk if funding for the Business Case and website is delayed causing disruption to functionality if hosting, licensing and security is compromised. The current fix expires 28 February 2025. MK expressed concern and suggested a work-back timeline would be useful to clarify key milestones ahead of the February deadline. The Business Plan and Inspection Programme has been submitted for permission to publish and MK asked this be brought forward to the next meeting to track the approval of the Inspection Programme and associated budget.
- **Action: LB.**
- Risk 3 – is linked to the budget. Should a Ministerial request for a review be received, it could not be met without additional funding. The loss of a designated FSD accountant resource to support CJI financial management was added as a new risk. This would result in delays in financial returns and level of advice provided to the CJI senior management. While mitigated by JJ's appointment the BCM is engaging with FSD to maintain accountancy support.
- MK and CG commended the Risk Register to the Committee.

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

- MMcV reported a nil return.

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

- MMcV reported a nil return.

14 **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.

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

- The reported information was noted by all members.

16 **AOB**

- There were no further points for discussion.

17 **Dates of next meetings.**

The following dates are proposed for the next meetings:

Autumn - Thursday 10 October 2024 at 10am;

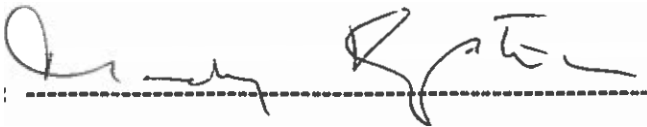
Winter - Thursday 16 January 2025 at 10am;

PROTECT



Spring - Thursday 10 April 2025 at 10am;
Summer – Thursday 5 June 2025 at 10am.
Please advise LB if these dates are not suitable.

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



Mandy Kilpatrick
Acting Chairperson

Date: 10 October 2024