

Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Audit Risk and Assurance Committee

Date: 14th June 2023 0930-1130

Minuted by: Diane Piper(DP), Governance Secretary, Redress Scotland

Committee Members

- Colin Spivey(CS) Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Interim Chair, Redress Scotland Board Member
- Neil Mackay(NM) Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Member
- Lynne Harvie(LH) Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Member, Redress Scotland Panel Member
- Catherine Dyer(CD) Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Ad-hoc, Non-executive Member

Participants

- Joanna McCreadie(JM) Redress Scotland Chief Executive
- Michael Stevens(MS) Redress Scotland Head of Finance and Resources
- Gary Gallacher(GG) Redress Scotland Head of Operations
- Michelle Nairn(MN) Redress Scotland Head of People
- Mel Lowe(MN) Redress Scotland Head of Policy and Improvement

By Invitation

- William Matthews(WM) Redress Scotland Interim Chair
- Gillian McCreadie(GM) Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland
- Martin Ritchie(MR) Director of Audit, TIAA

Agenda item 1. Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

1.1. Welcome and Introductions

The interim chair, CS, opened the meeting welcoming all attendees. CS advised that today's meeting is an additional meeting of the ARAC to review the internal audit reports and to plan for the signing off of the annual report and accounts.

This was the first meeting with Gillian McCreadie, Audit Scotland being present. Brief introductions were made.

1.2. Apologies:

There were no apologies noted.

1.3. Declarations of Interest:

CS noted that item 5.3 would require JM, GG and ML to leave the meeting while the paper was discussed.

No other notes of interest were declared.

1.4. Appoint survivor voice;

LH volunteered to consider the voice of the survivor during the meeting and to feedback at the end of the meeting.

Agenda item 2. Minutes of the previous meeting 18th April 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18th April 2023 were approved.

Agenda item 2.1 Matters arising from the previous meeting

Members were content that all matters arising from the last meeting were covered in the agenda or associated papers.

In view of the shortened meeting it was agreed that the expected agenda items around best value, fraud and cyber security will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Agenda item 3 Governance

3.1 Update from Oversight Board Meeting 2nd May 2023

CS noted that the minute from the Oversight board on the 2nd May had been circulated to all members. No further update was required.

Agenda Item 4 CEO Report

JM provided a verbal update to the committee advising that slides would be circulated following the meeting. Highlights from the report included progress on the one year corporate plan which was about to come to an end and be replaced by the 3 year corporate plan which is currently with ministers for approval. JM continued that the expectation is that printed copies of the 3 year plan will be available.

A summary of the update included the following;
Governance

The governance structure is in place and the role of Chair has been advertised and interview dates set. During the year key documents have been approved. The only one outstanding is the framework document which has been agreed by the Oversight Board and will now be sent to the sponsor team for forwarding to ministers for final approval.

Operations

The operations team have been busy, and are seeing a high level of applications coming through. Panel member recruitment for 15 new members is underway with the possibility of increasing the number of panel support coordinators to support this larger team. In order to stay off any possible delay in the process which could cause upset due to potential delays staff are now proactively contacting survivors with an update on their application. This has been seen as a positive step by survivors.

Standards around practice continue to be developed and it was noted that situations not covered by the legislation continue to emerge.

Policy and Improvement

This new team continue to expand their work load which includes the commissioned research by Andy Kendrick on corporal punishment, the development of the knowledge library and finding a process to categorise and where appropriate share the legal advice received from Harper MacLeod.

People Team

Have developed the training programme for all staff and members of Redress Scotland.

Wellbeing has been at the forefront of activity and a wellbeing calendar, resources and information meetings have been developed.

Finance

The finance team have reflected on the work of taking the organisation from a standing start to where it is today,

Redress Scotland is unique as the only fully digital public body. At the recent Scotland Futures Trust event there was a great deal of interest in how we work as a remote organisation.

A couple of IT breaches were noted but JM assured members that there was no loss of data and will be discussed fully at the Oversight board.

Several items were noted as coming forward to the next meeting; Scheme of Delegated Authority, Fraud and sharing of data policy from Scottish Government.

Business plans to support the Corporate plan will soon be available.

Actions- items to be included on the agenda for the next meeting include, best value, fraud and cyber security

4.2 Dashboard report

JM noted that the pace of applications we are receiving is close to the forecast provided by Scottish Government. Further forecasts have been received but more work will be undertaken before sharing these with the wider group. We are currently making 80 decisions per month however we do expect the pace to slow with the consequence that we may exceed our expected turnaround of 30 days.

JM concluded that most decisions are to award redress and 40% are at level 5.

JM confirmed that Scottish Government are to initiate a review of Glasgow City Council records in relation to the Fornethy survivors. At the moment we have not been advised of any changes to the scheme.

An incident has arisen where a person purported to be the Chief Executive of Redress Scotland communicated with a survivor. This will be investigated fully and a report shared at a future meeting.

There was a request from members to see the paper which outlines the requirements and options for the recruiting of additional panel members. JM will action this following the meeting.

Action -JM to forward options paper on the recruitment of panel members.

It was also noted that the members had requested an additional infographic to be included in the dashboard and this will be included intime for the next meeting.

Action – GG to ensure new infographic is included in the next dashboard report.

Agenda item 5 Financial reports

5.1 Period 2 Management accounts

MS advised that the usual monthly meeting with Scottish Government have been on hold because the first two accounting periods are seen as still allowing for adjustments from the previous accounting period to flow through.

The members were content with the management accounts as presented along with the detailed spreadsheets.

5.2 Draft Annual report and accounts 2022/23

CS advised that this item was not for a full discussion but to reassure members that work was underway. CS was pleased to note that this work was further on than anticipated. The process for sign off has still to be agreed and the proposal is to create a couple of workstreams in order to progress the work to be done before the AGM in August.

It was proposed that a meeting of ARAC be scheduled to look in detail at the accounts thereby providing the Oversight Board with confidence that detailed scrutiny has taken place. Working groups will also be created to review the annual report .

GM, from Audit Scotland, concurred with the process adding that Audit Scotland will shortly provide a more detailed timetable .

***Action – Additional ARAC meeting to deep dive into the accounts to be arranged
Working groups to develop the annual report to be established.***

5.3 Senior Staff Salaries- Restricted circulation

A separate minute is prepared for this item

Agenda item 6 Internal audit

JM, GG and ML re-joined the meeting

6.1 Internal Audit – reports

MR, TIAA, reported an excellent internal audit review looking at 3 key areas for financial scrutiny

- a) Payroll and expenses
- b) Budgetary control
- c) Creditor payments

All reports were marked as providing substantial assurance with only a couple of minor recommendations.

As a new organisation MR noted some challenges around the creation of a creditor payment system and recommended the creation of a purchase order process. MS

concluded and advised that a system has been identified which will be approved by Scottish Government in April next year.

6.2 Internal Audit Annual Report

The committee acknowledged the annual audit report and were content with the content.

CS thanked MR for his presentation and to the finance team for supporting this work

6.3 Audit Strategy and Annual Internal Audit Plan 2023/24

The committee approved the plan.

Agenda item 7 Strategic Risk register for Redress Scotland

JM advised that the changes recommended from the last meeting have now been incorporated.

JM and NM have met to discuss the creation of a Risk Taxonomy and NM shared his slides and the rationale for the creation of a taxonomy advising that it provides an extra level of assurance that all risk has been captured and once created will save time in the long run.

Agenda item 8 Work Plan and Action Tracker

8.1 Work plan with updates

The plan was approved as presented with the request that the work on delegated authorities be added to the plan.

Action; DP to add the Schedule of Delegated Authorities to the work plan.

8.2 Action log update

The action log was accepted as presented.

Agenda item 9 – AOCB

There were no further items for consideration.

Agenda item 10 Review of Meeting and Survivor Voice

LH provided a summary of the meeting and was pleased to report that the views of the survivor were at the heart of all discussions. Particular reference was made to the chief executive report which captured the emphasis on continual improvement and ensuring the voice of survivors is heard.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 12 noon