

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meeting Outputs

Thursday 9 April 2020, 10:00am by video conference

Attendees:

**Independent member:
(Acting Chair)** Mairead McCafferty (MMcC)

Independent member: Derek Anderson (DA)

DoJ Sponsor Division: Claire Robinson (CR)

NIAO: Pamela Dugdale (PD) NIAO

External Audit: Dawn Johnston (DJ) Deloitte

Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI): James Corrigan (JC)

A&RAC Secretary: Linda Boal (LB) CJI

Agenda Description / Comments

No

1 Introduction / acknowledgements

MMcC welcomed everyone to the meeting (conducted by way of video conference) and noted apologies. Participants have been limited to allow for the swift progression of key business. Where possible, information has already been shared electronically and comments returned by email from those not participating in the video conference.

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Apologies

Garry Currie (GC) NIAO.
Amanda Oliver (AO) Internal Audit.
Adrienne Neill (AN) DoJ.
Ciara Currie (CC) Deloitte.
Joanne Jamison (JJ) FSD.
Jacqui Durkin (JD) CJI.
Meloney McVeigh (MMcV) CJI.
Ian Cameron (IC) CJI.

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Declaration of interest / Conflict of interest

- None.

4 Minutes of previous meeting – 23 January 2020 and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

Matters arising:

Pt 5: Risk Register - Typographical errors noted within the document have been amended and where appropriate a timeframe for action noted in the Risk Appetite/Further actions column.

Pt 12: Business Case – CR has forwarded the DOJ Economist response to MMcV for her response.

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

- MMcV had advised in writing that the Risk Register had been reviewed by the staff group. This was carried out electronically. CJI has updated its Risk Register to take account of the impact of the Coronavirus crisis on its operations and potential impact on the health of staff and our current recruitment competition. The impact and likelihood scores have also been updated to reflect the current situation. CJI will keep the impact of this risk under review. Comments are invited against the risks noted on the Register, scoring and mitigating actions proposed by CJI.
- MMcC noted inclusion of CoVid19 pandemic impact, issues and mitigation measures in place.
- MMcC also noted inclusion of social media updates in the risk register since the last meeting when CJI was to address having a social media presence. MMcC asked if this has been addressed and now in place?
- JC confirmed that CJI have opted to set up a Twitter account and MMcV is taking this forward.
- DA confirmed he was happy with the updated Risk Register.

6 CJI Audit Strategy for 2019-20 as prepared by the NIAO

- MMcC referred to the note from HM Treasury which had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting.
- MMcV had advised the Committee that CJI is seeking to prepare for the progression of the external audit in line with the proposed timeframe but this work is more challenging given the current remote working arrangements.
- DJ confirmed that the Strategy was shared with the Committee in January. At that time, the impact of Covid 19 could not have been predicted. The Strategy will need to be amended to take account of the current situation including changes to the proposed timetable. Flexibility will be required and there will be an impact on year end around liabilities, disclosures, balance sheet etc.
- MMcC agreed it was a difficult situation and asked JC if staff had access to the necessary documentation.
- JC confirmed that CJI have remote access to much of the necessary documentation, but that JJ in FSD did not.

- PD advised that there was a shortage of secure laptops in DoJ generally, and they were awaiting further guidance around reporting requirements from HM Treasury.
- DJ stated that they would need information on income and expenditure and balance sheets. She will contact MMcV and JJ to discuss what is achievable in the current circumstances. Deloitte is using a system called Connect to facilitate the gathering of relevant information.

Action: DJ

- MMcC suggested this could be difficult when staff do not have access to secure laptops to access the necessary information.
- DJ also advised that there is an increase in cybercrime at this time and staff need to work to ensure the security of data and information.

7 Consideration of the Internal Audit reports for the 2019-20 financial year.

- MMcC referred to the two internal audit reports on HR and IT.
- MMcV had advised that the two internal audits had taken place during 2019-20, (copies of which were distributed to members in advance). Both Internal Audits received a satisfactory audit opinion.
- MMcC referred to point 2.2 of the HR report which recommended that like other ALBs, CJI may wish to consider contacting HR Connect via their Sponsor Branch.
- CR confirmed that they had already considered this point and that a member of their team will now be the contact point and Sponsor Department will act as the conduit for CJI in relation to matters with HR Connect.
- JC confirmed this was a helpful move.
- DA reminded members that CJI have had issues with HR Connect in the past and the situation should continue to be monitored.
- All members agreed that the solution provided by Sponsor Department was the best way forward.

8 Review of the draft CJI Governance Statement for inclusion in the 2019-20 Annual Report & Accounts.

- MMcV had advised that CJI is preparing its Governance Statement for inclusion in the 2019-20 Annual Report & Accounts. When complete this will be shared with the ARAC members for comment in advance of inclusion within the draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2019-20.
- MMcC suggested that the line regarding Covid 19 could perhaps be expanded to highlight more the adverse impact on the ability to conduct inspections and also reference the role / response of DoJ in supporting the CJI approach.
- MMcC also suggested including a note in relation to CJI NPM responsibilities and a potential risk going forward in respect of Brexit after the interim transition period at end December 2020.

- The Committee agreed and MMcV will update the Governance Statement to reflect these points.
Action: MMcV
- All members agreed they were content with the Governance Statement, once the suggested amends are included.

9 Overview of work ongoing in the preparation of the 12-month set of Accounts for CJI.

- JJ had provided an update for the Committee advising that work to close off the 2019-20 financial year is continuing to the best of her ability with limited resources. The preparing of the financial statements will commence following close off on the system on 7 April 2020. Every effort will be made to prepare this information to the best standard as possible with the limited resources available at this time, within the original timetable, however this could be subject to change with any future directions received from DoF.

10 Update on recruitment exercise - Inspector Role.

- MMcV provided an update to members in advance of the meeting. CJI's Business Case to recruit a new Inspector was approved by sponsor branch on 3 March 2020. The recruitment campaign was launched on Thursday 19 March 2020, with a closing date for completed applications of 5pm Friday 17 April 2020. Weekly updates are being received from the recruitment partner (Grafton Recruitment) regarding interest and engagement with the campaign. CJI intends to proceed to shortlist candidates to be invited for interview after the competition closes but will review the position to take into account Government imposed restrictions on movement and social distancing linked to the Coronavirus crisis to establish if interviews would be able to go ahead as planned towards the end of May or will be postponed. CJI intend to engage as fully as possible with candidates to ensure interest in the role is retained.
- Members agreed that CJI need to follow advice regarding the progression of the recruitment exercise.
- JC suggested that the sift could still take place, but that interviews would not proceed as planned in the current circumstances. CJI will await further advice on how best to proceed.
- MMcC noted other organisations are considering conducting interviews online which may be a possibility.

11 Report from management on whistle blowing and fraud issues.

- MMcV advised of a nil return.
- All noted.

12 Report from management on any direct award contracts

- MMcV advised of a nil return.
- All noted.

13 Report summarising the expenses submitted by the Chief Inspector and the Deputy Chief Inspector.

MMcV provided the relevant figures as undernoted:

- **Since the last meeting – CI and DCI:**

Government Procurement Card		Travel & Subs	
CI*	£510.24	CI	£139.55
DCI	£15.40	DCI	£6.50

- **For the financial year 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020**

Government Procurement Card			Travel & Subsistence		
	CI	DCI		CI	DCI
Year					
2019-20	£2,128,84*	£305.55	£398.55	£142.97	

The above expenses were noted by all members.

17 Review of CJI's gifts and hospitality register.

- **Since the previous meeting (January, February & March)**

the following gifts and hospitality have been received;

- Nil.

the following gifts and hospitality has been extended;

- Nil return

- **Gifts & Hospitality for the financial year 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020**

Gifts & Hospitality Given = £0

Gifts & Hospitality Received = £30

Amazon vouchers received from School of Law QUB for assistance with research and were donated to the Christmas raffle in aid of Lifeboats.

The above information was noted by all members.

18 AOB

- There were no further points for discussion.

19 Date of next meetings

The date for the next meeting is as follows:

Summer - Thursday 4 June 2020 at 10am.

Members will be advised in advance what form this meeting will take.



Mairead McCafferty
Acting Chairperson

Date: 23 July 2020