

**CJI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meeting Outputs**

Thursday 23 July 2020, 10:00am by video conference

**Attendees:**

<b>Independent member: (Acting Chair)</b>	Derek Anderson (DA)
<b>Independent member:</b>	Mairead McCafferty (MMcC)
<b>DoJ Sponsor Division:</b>	Adrienne Neill (AN) Heather Gallagher (HG)
<b>DoJ Internal Audit:</b>	Amanda Oliver (AO)
<b>NIAO:</b>	Pamela Dugdale (PD) NIAO
<b>External Audit:</b>	Dawn Johnston (DJ) Deloitte
<b>FSD:</b>	Joanne Jamison (JJ) FSD
<b>Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI):</b>	Jacqui Durkin, (JD) James Corrigan (JC) Meloney McVeigh (MMcV) Dr Ian Cameron (IC)
<b>A&amp;RAC Secretary:</b>	Linda Boal (LB) CJI

**Agenda Description / Comments**

**No**

**1 Introduction / acknowledgements**

DA welcomed everyone to the meeting conducted by video conference and noted apologies.

**2**

**Apologies:**

Garry Currie (GC) NIAO;  
Claire Robinson (CR) DoJ; and  
Ciara Currie (CC) Deloitte.

**3**

**Declaration of interest / Conflict of interest**

- None.

**4 Minutes of previous meeting – 9 April 2020 and matters arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

**Matters arising:**

Pt 6: CJI Audit Strategy – DJ, MMcV and JJ agreed to use the SFTP file transfer system.

Pt 8 Governance Statement – MMcV received feedback which was taken forward into the Annual Report and Accounts.

**5 Consider the (emerging) External Audit opinion (Audit Completion Report) for the financial year 2019-20**

- DJ advised that the draft report would normally be presented at this meeting, but given delay due to Covid-19, the file was yet to be reviewed. The audit has been carried out remotely over the secure network and was reviewed by CC from Deloitte.
  - The Annual Report and Accounts is subject to a final review, with no potential adjustments apparent at this stage. If any material issues or matters of significance come to light, DJ will share with MMcV and JJ by email.
  - The statement on future charges is currently outstanding.
  - While the timetable for this year is different, it is on track.
  - DJ is content with the references to Covid-19 included in the report.
  - A draft of the Final Report to Those Charged with Governance will be available for the next Audit Committee meeting.
  - MMcC stated that it was good to have this assurance and hoped the report would be available in advance of the next meeting.
  - DA congratulated everyone involved in getting the report to this stage under difficult circumstances.
  - JJ is awaiting DoF advice regarding the outstanding information which will be included in the report once available.
  - MMcV added that information on long-term expenditure trends is also outstanding (of which Deloitte is aware) and will be shared once available.
  - PD shared the NAO document giving guidance for ARACs on financial reporting and management during Covid-19. Members agreed that it contained information which would be beneficial to the Committee not only for this year, but also next year.
  - DA asked MMcV if the document contained procurement guidance relevant to CJI. MMcV will email a response to members once she has fully considered the contents.
- Action: MMcV**
- MMcV recorded her thanks to JJ for the work on the Financial Statements during the period of remote working and the current challenging working environment.
  - DA and MMcC echoed that sentiment, and included everyone involved in getting the report to this stage in the current unique circumstances.

**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 pointed to the minor changes in the document which had been shared in advance of the meeting.
- The Committee accepted the changes and agreed they be taken forward.

**7 Review and consider the Accounts**

- A full review of the file has not taken place just yet, but no issues of concern had been identified.
- DA noted JJ comments regarding the minor items yet to be included and asked the current position in relation to completion timelines.
- PD advised that the deadline for completion was mid-November so we were well on course.
- MMcC was happy with the feedback shared which gave reassurance.
- MMcV added that a few comments were being worked through and as the Annual Report and Accounts are required to be laid in the NI Assembly, this may have an impact on how we proceed.
- PD stated that the NIAO were in contact with the NI Assembly regarding the laying of Accounts during recess, as they were reluctant to delay Reports. A response has not yet been received.
- MMcV said that normal practice would require that once the Annual Accounts were signed by the Comptroller and Auditor General, they had to be laid in the Assembly within a specific timeframe.
- PD advised that the Comptroller and Auditor General will not sign Accounts unless they can be laid, hence the NIAO query regarding the laying of Accounts and NI Assembly recess. Once the position is clear, the Committee will be advised.

**Action: PD**

**8 Advise the Accounting Officer on signing the Accounts and Governance Statement**

- DA stated that he was content to approve the signing of the Annual Report and Accounts unless any issues of real significance were identified.
- MMcC added that it was important to receive the Annual Report and Accounts via email when she would then confirm to the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer her approval to sign.
- MMcV agreed to this process in order to progress the swift signing of the Annual Report and Accounts. If any area of significance is identified, a meeting will be arranged to discuss and that authority, with the caveat, was much appreciated.

**Action: MMcV/JC**

**9 Report from management on whistle blowing and fraud issues**

- MMcV advised of a nil return.
- Noted by all members.

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

- MMcV advised of a nil return. In response to Covid-19, a small purchase was made of PPE for use by Inspectors conducting fieldwork. This was done using the CPD supply list and was low level expenditure well below the PGN 04/12 procurement control limit guidelines for tenders.
- Noted by all members.

**11 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee Terms or Reference (c/f from April meeting)**

- MMcV advised that the document had been reviewed before April and was still fit for purpose.
- There were two points for consideration: one around membership and the second around Committee member appointments where the addition of 'by invitation' was suggested.
- JD queried if the option of 'by invitation' would be used after open competition and DA answered that it would be rather than open competition. JD said this was not her preference for identifying appointees.
- MMcC said it would be best practice to have an open process and noted her own organisation's process though remuneration is something that should also be considered.
- The Committee discussed the point and agreed the preference would be that members were recruited by open competition to ensure transparency and good practice.
- MMcV reminded members by way of background that CJI had sought to recruit individuals from a list previously held by DoF of candidates deemed appointable following a recruitment process. The list has expired and had not been updated. CJI then took the decision to approach suitable individuals who agreed to undertake the roles with only expenses being paid. JD said she was grateful to the current members, however, for future appointments her preference would be to attempt an open recruitment process.
- Members agreed to remove the suggested reference to 'by invitation' from the Terms of Reference.

**Action: MMcV**

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

- The Risk Register had been shared with members in advance of the meeting.
- MMcV gave an overview of the main points which included:
  - On site fieldwork;

- Alternatives to normal working practices and the lack of face-to-face meetings;
- The CJI Sustainability and Recovery Plan with the associated Risk Register;
- Inspection reports continue to be published and new work from the 2020-21 programme is commencing; and
- Recruitment of a new Inspector was delayed but is now being progressed.
- The risks now included reference to Covid-19 where appropriate.
- Appropriate controls are in place to address all risks identified in the Risk Register.
- MMcC agreed it was good practice to incorporate the impact of Covid-19 in the Risk Register and that it was positive to note the inspection programme was not significantly impacted at this stage.
- MMcV said that all CJI staff had the technology and ability to work remotely.
- JD added that Inspectors have been agile in maintaining contact with their networks in agencies and organisations through phone and video calls while working remotely. A number of inspection reports have been published and she is grateful for the work of the whole team and the efforts made to maintain CJI business. Fieldwork for new inspection work will present a challenge, but will be risk assessed, managed and kept under constant review.
- DA complimented the format of the Risk Register and highlighted potential risks around procurement during the Covid-19 epidemic.
- MMcV agreed, particularly around the procurement of PPE which had been managed remotely to ensure receipt of all the goods before payment was made.
- Members agreed the content of the Risk Register and the counter measures in place.

## 13 Update on recruitment exercise - Inspector Role

- JC gave an update on the recruitment. There were 71 applicants of which 40 met both the essential and desirable criteria. Candidates were then required to produce a video presentation from which 10 were selected for interview. Face to face interviews are scheduled for 20 and 21 August with the panel made up of JD, JC and MMcC. Social distancing and sanitising arrangements have been considered and will be managed on the day, candidates will be advised what to expect when attending for interview.
- Since the competition commenced, one part-time Inspector had indicated his intention to retire in September. CJI would wish to use this competition to potentially fill that vacancy.
- A business case will be sent to the DoJ requesting additional funding to increase this to a full time position.
- DA complimented the response rate and was pleased that face to face interviews were going to take place, with the required social distancing and safety measures in place.
- JD expressed her gratitude to MMcC for agreeing to sit on the recruitment panel as the appointment of a new Inspector to join the team was such an important investment that face to face interviews were preferable if well

managed. She added that effective induction and training remotely would be extremely difficult so the planned return to office was important and will be discussed and planned in advance.

- AN asked if there had been any benefit in the amendment to the Inspector salary scale and if it had had any impact on the recruitment exercise.
- JD replied that there was no impact in attracting a candidate pool, but it could prove useful at offer stage.
- AN requested for any anecdotal feedback to be shared with Sponsor Department.

**14 CJI response to Coronavirus-Covid 19.**

- JC advised that CJI had moved to a full working from home model which had proved very successful. The challenge now will be full recovery and minimising risks.
- Staff will return to office working on an ad-hoc basis beginning in August with a full return expected in September (although for some this will not be five days a week).
- Report drafting and publication has progressed largely as normal.
- Meetings are taking place remotely at present, but are planned to return to face to face with some organisations in early autumn.
- The CJI SMT are very pleased with how staff had adopted to this different way of working.

**15 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:**

<b>Government Procurement Card</b>		<b>Travel &amp; Subs</b>	
CI	£28.90	CI	£129.45
DCI	£0	DCI	£0

The above expenses were noted by all members.

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

- **Since the previous meeting (April, May and June)**

the following gifts and hospitality have been received;

- Nil.

the following gifts and hospitality has been extended;

- Nil.

The above information was noted by all members.

**17 AOB**

- AO noted that CJI internal audits usually took place during the last quarter of the year and asked if there would be an opportunity to bring these forward. AO will send MMcV the Terms of Reference for consideration and agreement.  
**Action: AO**

**18 Date of next meetings**

The dates of the 2020-21 meetings were agreed as:

Autumn - Thursday 15 October 2020 at 10am;

Winter - Thursday 21 January 2021 at 10am;

Spring – Thursday 22 April 2021 at 10am; and

Summer - Thursday 10 June 2021 at 10am.

Location: Block I, Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ, or by Video Conference.



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**Derek Anderson**  
**Acting Chairperson**

15 October 2020  
**Date**