

MINUTE Meeting date: Tuesday, 21 July 2020

IN ATTENDANCE ONLINE

- Mike McCormick, Chair
- Paul Walker
- Lorna Johnston, Executive Director & Accountable Officer
- Elaine McLean, Business Manager (items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 only)
- Claire Gardiner, Senior Auditor, Audit Scotland
- Andrew Munro, Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body's Head of Internal Audit (items 1, 2, 3 and 6 only)

ITEM	CONTENT	ACTION
STANDING ITEMS		
1.	<p>WELCOME, APOLOGIES and DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all attendees.</p> <p>There were no apologies and no declarations of interest were made.</p>	
2.	<p>DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The draft Minutes from the meeting on 18 May 2020 were approved.</p>	
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The Committee noted that all the matters arising from the meeting on 18 May 2020 had been completed or were on the agenda for discussion.</p>	
RISK REGISTER		
4.	<p>STANDARDS COMMISSION: BUSINESS RISK REGISTER 2019/20</p> <p>The Committee noted the updates made to the Risk Register 2019/20. The Committee reviewed the risk scores for each risk and agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the probability of risk five (concerning a failure to ensure appropriate procedures and controls in place for statutory and best practice requirements) be reduced to a two (with the overall score reduced to a six) as the external auditors have confirmed verbally that the Accounts for 2019/20 were compliant with the FReM and an equality impact assessment policy has been introduced. • that the probability of risk six, which concerned a loss of confidence in the overall ethical standards framework be reduced to a three (with the overall score reduced to a 12) as arrangements have been finalised for online Hearings to be held and livestreamed while Covid-19 related restrictions remain in place; the Standards Commission's section 16 policy has been amended to make it clear that no action will be taken if it is satisfied that breaches of the Codes are inadvertent, technical and admitted; and a direction had been sent to the Ethical Standards Commissioner requiring her to provide information about the progress of investigations to assist the Standards Commission to identify the number of cases that were likely to be referred. • that the probability of risk seven (concerning a lack of engagement with the Standards Commission) be reduced to a two (with the overall score reduced to a six) as the Respondents in all nine scheduled cases were engaging with the Hearing process. <p>The Committee agreed that the remaining risk scores should not be altered.</p>	

	<p>Mr Munro then introduced his report on the Standards Commission’s payroll provision arrangements. Mr Munro confirmed that, in his view, the Standards Commission had taken appropriate steps to identify an economic, effective and efficient payroll and pension service in light of the impending expiry of its existing contract. Mr Munro advised that he was recommending that the Standards Commission now formally ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body to consider a full shared service arrangement for payroll and pension services, based on an appropriate memorandum of understanding and from a mutually convenient date. The Committee asked the Executive Team to action this recommendation and to seek a realistic timetable and project implementation plan from the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Munro for his assistance and attendance at the meeting.</p>	Executive Team
ANY OTHER BUSINESS		
7.	<p>EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE</p> <p>The Committee noted that Audit Scotland’s appointment as external auditor was due to end in 2020/21 but had been extended to cover the year 2021/22, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, to avoid any avoidable further disruption to the Standards Commission’s financial reporting.</p>	
NEXT MEETING		
8.	<p>The Committee noted it was next due to meet on 18 January 2021.</p>	