



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of Audit and Risk Committee

Date: 23 April 2021

Venue: by Zoom

Attendance:

Committee	Moling Ryan (Chair), Ronan Nolan, Melanie Pine
Secretary	Mark Nother
Executive	Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Aoife Clabby, Clare Kelly, Claire McElroy
Visitors	Vincent Tao, Partner, Crowleys DFK (Internal Audit Provider) - for item 4 only

1. Closed Session

Committee members did not exercise the standing option to conduct a closed session.

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Committee Chair thanked Clare Kelly for her work to-date as Secretary and Mark Nother was appointed to the role by the Committee.

The meeting agenda and the minutes of the last meeting were approved, unchanged. The Committee received an update and assurance that the issue of prompt payments – arising in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 – has been adequately addressed and it was agreed that a further, comprehensive update on prompt payments would be provided to the Committee at the June meeting.

The Chief Executive provided an update to the Committee on recent issues and events, including: progress against the Business Plan 2021; the thirteenth report to the Minister for Justice on the performance by the Garda Síochána in relation to the policing of COVID-19; the scheduled Authority meeting to be held on 29th April 2021; and, issues pertaining to the future return of staff to the office.

There were brief discussions around correspondence contained in the March iteration of the Chief Executive's Report and Operation Faoiseamh.

3. Governance

The Executive provided an overview of the Governance Framework Review – undertaken as a result of an internal audit recommendation – and a number of proposed changes and updates to the Framework and associated documents were outlined.

The Committee recommended further, minor adjustments and approved the documents being presented to the Authority in the May meeting, subject to these changes being made.

4. Audit

Ahead of the Internal Audit Provider (IAP) joining the meeting, the Committee received an update from the Executive and agreed a number of items for discussion with the IAP.

The IAP presented the updated draft of the External Review of Board Effectiveness. The Committee acknowledged the quality of the Review, with particular reference to inclusion of elements of challenge and reflection for the Authority. A concern was raised, based on the contents of the Report, on the timeliness of Authority receiving the agenda and papers ahead of meetings as well as the volume of information given to the Authority. In response, the IAP assured the Committee that this finding referred in the main to the timeliness of Garda materials. Relatedly, the Chief Executive outlined ongoing work by the Executive to reduce the volume of papers provided for Authority meetings, where possible. The Committee also acknowledged that the nature of the oversight role of the Authority, in particular the extent of its scope, necessitated a heavy volume of materials.

The IAP also notified the Committee of an update made to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, which requires the inclusion of three further questions in similar, future reviews. It was agreed that the Review would be provided to the Authority for its meeting on 29th April 2021.

The receipt of the Audit Universe from the IAP was noted by the Committee, who was thanked for the work undertaken to date. A short verbal update was provided to the Committee on the three year audit plan within the document, with specific reference to the inbuilt agility of the approach suggested. It was agreed that the proposed three year audit plan would be tabled for detailed consideration and discussion at the June Committee meeting.

The draft terms of reference for the Review of COVID-19 Impact on Business Operation for Financial Year 2021 were discussed with the IAP and feedback on the scope provided. It was agreed that the IAP would engage directly with the Executive to finalise the terms of reference and begin the audit.

5. AOB

There were no items raised under AOB.