



Audit Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of 03 February 2022¹

Attendance & Declaration of Interests

Audit Committee:

Ms Patricia Byron (Chair), Ms Ilona McElroy, Ms Anne Marie Walsh Mr Liam Irwin, Mr Gary Tobin.

Internal Audit (IA):

Mr Dermot Byrne (Head of Internal Audit), Ms Busola Laiyemo (Audit Manager & Secretary to the Committee).

The meeting was held virtually via WebEx.

Declaration of Interests:

There was no declaration of interest in any item on the agenda for the meeting.

Agenda item 1 – Minutes and action points arising from the meeting of 08 December 2021

(i) Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 08 December 2021.

(ii) Action points

The Secretary gave a verbal update on the action points from the last meeting. The Committee noted the Risk Committee's proposal to schedule meetings at regular intervals, perhaps every second Monday of the relevant month in the Quarter. It was agreed that confirmed dates should be circulated to the Committee when available.

¹ A glossary of acronyms is included at Appendix B

In relation to the Audit of the Administration of the Running Costs of the Disabled Drivers Medical Board of Appeal (DDMBA), the Secretary confirmed that the scope of the Audit has been broadened to include both pay and non-pay costs as per discussions at the last Audit Committee meeting.

The Committee acknowledged the briefing note provided by the Principal Officer for the Indirect Taxes Section and the updates in relation to the DDMBA were noted.

In relation to the draft IA plan for 2022, the Committee noted that the Executive Board (EB) decided that the proposed Review of Culture should be removed from the plan for this year to give the EB more time to consider it and possibly carry it out next year. The comment by the C&AG in relation to an audit of Central Funds has also been added to the draft Audit Plan for 2022.

The Secretary confirmed that the Corporate Office is aware that the membership tenures for two external members is nearing the end. The Committee deliberated on the possibility of staggering members' start and end dates from a corporate governance and continuity perspective. It was agreed that it would be beneficial if at least one of the members could remain on the Committee for a few more meetings. Internal Audit should liaise with the Corporate Office to explore this suggestion **(Action point 2)**.

Agenda item 2 – Progress of audits against plan

The Secretary outlined the progress of the Internal Audit Plan for 2021, stating that 291 days out of the 300 audit days planned for the year had been delivered as at the end of January. It was confirmed that the 300 days would be delivered in full as per the Service Level Agreement between Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) and Department of Finance (DFIN).

The Committee noted that the remaining audits on the 2021 Plan were nearly completed and that last set of draft audit reports will be presented at the next Audit Committee meeting.

Agenda item 3 – Audit Committee Administration

(i) Risk Committee update

Internal Audit attended the January Risk Committee meeting as an observer as per usual practice and provided verbal update of the key points discussed. The Audit Committee noted that a new Head of Risk team has been appointed. It was agreed that he should be invited to give a presentation at the next Audit Committee meeting in order to facilitate a crossover between the Risk function and the Audit Committee **(Action point 3)**.

(ii) Freedom of Information requests (FOI) / Protected Disclosures update

The HIA confirmed that there was no FOI request and no Protected Disclosure in the period since the last Audit Committee meeting.

Agenda item 4 – Annual planning and reporting

(i) Draft 2022 Internal Audit Plan

The HIA briefed the Committee on the updates to the draft IA Plan 2022 based on the comments from the Executive Board. It was noted that the Review of Culture and the follow up Audit of Learning and Development that were previously in the draft Plan have now been replaced with the Audit of Pay bill and the Audit of Workforce planning. The HIA also gave an update on the initial planning underway for the Assessment of Financial Management Shared Service System On-boarding Arrangements in DFIN and DPER.

The Audit Committee discussed the governance roles and reporting lines of the Internal Audit function, the Accounting Officer and the Committee in relation to finalising the program of audits for the year. It was clarified the HIA reports directly to Accounting Officer and is under the oversight of the Audit Committee.

(ii) Audit Committee Charter 2022

The Committee approved the annual Charter for 2022 and it was agreed that the Secretary should arrange signatures as per usual practice (**Action point 4**).

(iii) Internal Audit Annual Report for 2021

The Secretary briefed the Committee on the main highlights of the Internal Audit Report. The Audit Committee noted the movement of Internal Audit recommendations during the year and it was emphasised that a majority of the recommendations outstanding at the end of the year had only minor control weaknesses.

It was agreed that the Committee's acknowledgement of the effort of Management in implementing Internal Audit recommendations should be conveyed through the appropriate channels (**Action point 5**).

(iv) Draft Audit Committee Annual Report for 2021

The Committee noted that the draft annual report for 2021 was factually accurate. It was agreed that the Chairperson's statement to be included in the report should be circulated to members for comments before submitting the report to the Secretary General (**Action point 6**).

Agenda item 5 – AOB

The dates below were agreed for 2022 meetings.

- Monday 25 April
- Monday 18 July
- Thursday 13 October
- Thursday 08 December

It was agreed that the next meeting on Monday 25 April would be in person in the Department's office in Miesian Plaza unless otherwise notified.

END

Appendix A

Action Points Identified at the Audit Committee Meeting of 03 February 2022

No.	Action Required	By Whom	When
1	Circulate the dates of Risk Committee meetings to the Audit Committee when available.	Secretary	When available
2	Liaise with the Corporate Office to explore the possibility of extending the membership term of at least one of the external members.	HIA	Immediately
3	Invite the new PO in charge of the Risk team to give a presentation at the next Audit Committee meeting in order to facilitate a crossover between the Risk function and the Audit Committee.	Secretary	For the next meeting
4	Arrange signatures for the annual Charter for 2022 as per usual practice.	Secretary	Immediately
5	Convey the Audit Committee's acknowledgement of Management's effort in implementing Internal Audit recommendations through the appropriate channels.	Secretary	Immediately
6	Circulate the Chairperson's statement to be included in the report to members for comments before submitting the report to the Secretary General.	Secretary	When available

Appendix B

Glossary of terms and acronyms

DDMBA Disabled Drivers Medical Board of Appeal

DFIN Department of Finance

DPER Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

EB Executive Board

FOI Freedom of Information

HIA Head of Internal Audit

IA Internal Audit