

### **Audit and Risk Committee**

# Wednesday 14 February 2024 10am to 1pm Hybrid Meeting (Pacific Quay and Teams) Minutes of meeting

### **Present:**

Sarah Pumfrett Non-executive Member (Chair)
Keith Rosser Non-executive Member (KR)
Stephanie Glavin Non-executive Member (SG)
Lesley Muirhead Non-executive Member (LM)

## Attending:

Gerard Hart Chief Executive

Laura Robertson Deputy Chief Executive

Nicola McBain Director of Corporate Services

Lynne McMinn Interim Strategic Director – Programme Delivery

[REDACTED] Senior Internal Audit Manager

[REDACTED] Internal Audit Manager

[REDACTED] Head of Finance

[REDACTED] Head of Corporate Governance

[REDACTED] Senior Manager – Deloitte

**Observers:** [REDACTED] – Governance Manager

**Secretary:** [REDACTED] - Executive Assistant and Governance

Manager

Disclosure

Apologies: None

# Welcome and apologies

**1.** The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee welcomed everyone to the meeting, no apologies were noted.

## **Registers of interest**

2. No new interests were disclosed. The Chair requested that the Register of Interests be shared with members in advance of the next meeting.

New action: Register of interests to be shared with members ahead of the next meeting.

### Previous actions and minutes

- **3.** Previous minutes were noted as a true reflection of the meeting. One formatting change was advised.
- **4.** Updates were provided on all open actions.
- **5.** The following actions were agreed for closure:

Action 05/August (Annual Report and Accounts): Lessons learned paper shared out-with committee.

Action 03/December (Risk): Chair attended risk briefing on 9 February.

**Action 07/December (Contact Details):** Details shared action proposed for closure.



**Action 08/December (People Survey Results):** People Survey Results shared as a below the line paper with DS Board. DS Board meeting 27 March agenda to discuss People Survey Results.

# **Chief Executive update**

- **6.** The Chief Executive advised he was content with the day to day running of the agency.
- The National Barring Service continues to function well and work through caseloads.
- 8. 2024 to 2025 budget allocation was referred to and the Chief Executive explained engagement was ongoing between Disclosure Scotland and the Scotlish Government and there is an incredible amount of pressure in Scotland, across every portfolio in government.
- **9.** Moving on, the Chief Executive advised that Disclosure Scotland is being recognised as a strong performing organisation, with a short documentary planned for publication.
- **10.** While successes should be celebrated, we must remain laser focused on our mission of keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.
- 11. The Chief Executive outlined the importance of policy and technological projects working in harmony to deliver the Act. The implementation of the Interim Strategic Director Programme Delivery is supporting that work.
- **12.** There are three major projects:



- Removal of Alfresco Alfresco was implemented in 2019 and limits our ability to innovate our technical process. Removal will be a massive moment for Disclosure Scotland.
- Moving to one platform, rather than running dual platforms will provide significant savings. This will take time, but costs will start to reduce over time.
- Digital results will put the power in the hands of the citizen. This is a key fundamental part of delivering the Act.
- **13.** The Chief Executive noted his confidence on Act delivery. implementation will be an iterative process that will meet legislation and we will iterate on it from there.
- **14.** In the last month, three major pieces of software have been delivered. This new delivery cycle is positive.
- **15.** The Chair enquired about the 14-day target on producing certificates, and how this is communicated to the public, and overall target perception. The Key Performance Indicator was challenged, in the context of operational delivery.
- **16.** The Deputy Chief Executive noted the reduction in staff over time, and advised this Key Performance Indicator will be reviewed following implementation of the Act.
- **17.** Customers do want to know how many days it will take to receive their certificate, but we need to review overall messaging.



- **18.** The Chief Executive advised that the message should be that we provide a service to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, it should not be that we sell disclosures.
- **19.** KR moved the conversation on asking what the transparency and governance at Audit and Risk Committee meetings in relation is to Act timelines.
- **20.** The Deputy Chief Executive advised the members that all of Disclosure Scotland's projects are in the process of being re-baselined, including the Act.
- **21.** There is work being done with the Head of Change Management and programme managers across the digital space.
- **22.** There are no specifics to bring to today's meeting but there will be updates that can be brought to future ARC meetings.

New action: Update on Act projects to be brought to the next meeting.

### Finance update

- 23. The Head of Finance advised the paper provides the finance update up until 31 December 2023, and they would provide a verbal update for January 2024.
- **24.** Capital for January sitting at £7.6 million pounds and noncash is coming out the same.
- **25.** RDEL is down, sitting at just over £13 million pounds and the reason for this is due to a savings agreement with Amazon Web Services, with a significant saving of £40,000 pounds per month.



- **26.** Savings are also being seen coming through in terms of postage due to online applications, with January postage costs being down by 20 percent on December. As we ramp up online applications, we will see more savings.
- **27.** Everything else is where it is meant to be. Earlier in the year we approved £50,000 pounds extra in the grant for VSDS.
- **28.** Income for January came in at 96% of forecasts, with no current concerns at the moment.
- **29.** Capital was a concern in November and December 2023 where we dropped against budget. However, in January spending increased allowing us back on track.
- **30.** In January we had 20% of budget left with another two months remaining within the financial year. We are expecting an underspend.
- **31.** The organisation is considering any critical workstreams that can be taken forward in 2023 to 2024. To date additional temporary staff have been recruited to support operational backlogs.
- **32.** The Chair added that they should do the same for any big project work that can be brought forward in this budget where big gains can be had.
- 33. The Head of Finance moved on to the Budget 2024/25 paper. The budget allocation was noted by the Committee. It was advised that further budget work was ongoing internally to reduce pressures and also close engagement with Scottish Government.
- **34.** Knowns are the pay award and the 35-hour working week that comes into effect in October 2024.



- **35.** We are also considering our income streams and have been asked to look at recharge across the Scottish Government.
- **36.** LM referred back to a question asked at the previous ARC by SG, asking for consideration of legally committed and non-legally committed spend. This is being examined.
- 37. The Chief Executive added that there is a lot of work done where expenditure can be cut, however recharge on a positive note removes the income pressure from Disclosure Scotland. There should be a check done on where there is discretionary income available.
- **38.** The Chief Executive acknowledged that during conversation with the Chair that they had provided good ideas. All of this will be fed into further advice/engagement with Scottish Government.
- **39.** The Chair advised that preparing the ground now for the future will help.
- **40.** KR questioned what is next for the ARC and where do we go next to get clarity for baselines and what does this mean, as it feels like we still do not understand.
- **41.** The Head of Finance advised the next steps is the budget being approved by the Leadership Team and a review of IT expenditure. We are also part of a wider Scottish Government timetable dealing with the budget.
- **42.** There are certain things such as the pay award that are non-negotiable and we have a compulsory no redundancy agreement. Further recruitment controls have been implemented.

- **43.** The Chair added that it has to be made clear the consequences of not receiving the budget required and ensure that these discussions are formally documented.
- **44.** The Director of Corporate Services advised that the marketing of basic disclosures has started, and other things have been spoken about at the Board ad-hoc sessions.
- **45.** There is a meeting planned for Tuesday 20 February with our finance partner, however an update has been requested before the end of this week from them.
- **46.** Board and ARC members will be kept informed, and an ad-hoc session will be held once we know the position.

New action: Board ad-hoc session to be held and include all nonexecutive members once update available on 2024 to 2025 budget position.

### **Quarterly review of Risk register**

- 47. The Head of Corporate Governance advised members that since the last audit and Risk Committee he has met with the Chair and KR to discuss improved ways of reporting. This includes on the slide deck:
  - cause and impact added to each slide
  - controls in place, following on from feedback from the last ARC
  - updates will always be collected; however, only significant updates will be reported to the ARC



- the score shown on each risk is the current score (net score) after our controls are in place. We will look to update the slide to show:
  - original score (pre controls in place)
  - o current score
  - o target score
- **48.** Risk 24 and 26 dealing with current financial budget allocations have now been rescored and will be closing. These will go to Formal Leadership Team at the end of February.
- **49.** KR noted the positive changes.
- **50.** He raised that the cyber security risk update previously stated that there was to be a new security architect join the team, and asked what the next steps are.
- **51.** He was advised that adding a new permanent security architect is a positive step allowing the overall Digital Directorate increased capacity within a number of critical workstreams.
  - New action: Review Information Governance issue report for future meetings. For cyber assurance invite independent risk accreditor to future meeting to present role and value add.
- **52.** KR added that the report does not mention that Disclosure Scotland has an independent accreditor, providing assurance to all our systems each month.



- **53.** KR went on to raise a second point, that on digital staff the update does not marry up with the closing statement. This information was included within the Audit Recommendation tracker but was not included in this report.
- **54.** The Head of Corporate Governance advised that both Digital risks are in the process of being reviewed and will move over to the new strategy. He added that this risk is not about our reliance to stop an incident happening, it's about how we recover from an incident should one take place.
- **55.** SG raised a point regarding the ERP project stating could the risk scoring be too high.
- **56.** The Head of Corporate Governance advised that was not the case and is down to the language used within the risk itself. SG suggested that the wording of the risk could benefit from being reframed.
- 57. The Chair advised that they were impressed with how the risks are being presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and once these are matured, they will make for easy discussion.

### Information governance

- **58.** The Deputy Chief Executive advised the committee that this paper is prepared by the Data Protection Officer and Head of Cyber Security.
- **59.** She stated that the paper requires development, and she will collaborate with the authors and the Head of Corporate Governance to establish this.

New action: Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Governance, Data Protection Officer, and Head of Cyber Security to work together to



# improve reporting and bring out the salient points to bring to the Audit and Risk Committee.

- **60.** The Deputy Chief Executive pointed out that Quarter 3 was the busiest in terms of data breaches for the reporting year and a deeper dive to underpin the issues is required.
- **61.** Departmental Data Protection awareness sessions continue, with detailed conversations taking place with the individual's concerned. Thankfully, none of the breaches have had to be reported to the Information Commissioner.

New action: Deep Dive to be commissioned within Protection Unit into data breaches, on what, how and prevention measures.

- **62.** The report provided did not advise of any security incidents in December, this is to be double checked for accuracy and updates on other states incidents were provided verbally.
- 63. A discussion was had on when/where incidents of this nature would be escalated for Board awareness. The Director of Corporate Governance noted this has been discussed and is within current procedures to do so. Further information can be shared with Board and Audit and Risk Committee members.

# Quarterly review of fraud and bribery

- **64.** The Director of Corporate Services advised the committee that there have been no fraud incidents or attempts in the last quarter.
- **65.** The Fraud and Bribery Group met twice during this period and have undertaken a review of the maturity model, which has now moved up a level.



- **66.** The group are pleased to see things moving upwards and are planning the work for the coming year, looking at extending membership of the group.
- **67.** There was a potential case last quarter with a direct debit in Finance. This was picked up quickly, and because it was not internal fraud the group were able to use this as a test case to examine controls.
- **68.** The Scottish Government are publishing a new fraud toolkit in the next few weeks and will be adopted by the group during the middle of the new financial year.
- **69.** The Governance Manager added that they have reached out to others within the Scottish Government governance group regarding the USA Fraud standard and this is not something that is used or considered within Scottish Government.

Meeting stopped at 12:10pm for a break and resumed at 12:22pm

### **Internal Audit update**

- **70.** The Senior Internal Audit Manager advised the committee that there was not much to update in terms of progress and aware that that the ARC met just before the festive period.
- **71.** They went on to say that things are in a good place for Internal Audit so far this year, and Key Performance Indicators work will commence this year.
- 72. The Senior Internal Audit Manager wanted to record his thanks to Disclosure Scotland in this year, accommodating the auditors and ensuring that documentation was readily available when required.



- **73.** The new Internal Audit standards have been released with under a year to comply. The Internal Audit team are doing a mapping exercise within their department to establish if further work is required from them.
- **74.** KR raised the point regarding client fees in paper 6.1, section 2.1.2, stating that he is reading this that Internal Audit are under the same pressures as other Scottish Government departments.
- **75.** The Senior Internal Audit Manager advised his department are currently reviewing the process as Internal Audit is just one of the Shared Services that Disclosure Scotland use. There will however be an uplift in client fees for 2024 to 2025.
- **76.** The group then discussed why an executive agency, such as Disclosure Scotland are charged for shared services within the Scottish Government when they are part of the main Scottish Government.
- **77.** The Senior Internal Audit Manager welcomes the challenge and said they would feed this back.
- 78. Moving on, the Director of Corporate Services advised that a technology review on the platform re-engineering has been taking place this week. The Interim Director of Strategy Programme Delivery is yet to be interviewed and is planned to take place tomorrow.
- **79.** Good conversations have taken place between Internal Audit Manager and External Audit (Deloitte) on horizon scanning.
- **80.** The Internal Audit Manager also said that successful conversations have taken place with members of Disclosure Scotland's senior team, who came prepared, making it an effective and efficient meeting.



- **81.** These plans were then taken to Digital Assurance Office, to ensure that the work aligned with their plans.
- **82.** The audit plan is under consistent review and any amendments will be made known to the Audit and Risk Committee.
- **83.** The Chair asked for confirmation from the Chief Executive Officer, that they were content that the right risks are being covered.
- **84.** The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that they had reviewed and signed off on the audit plan.
- **85.** The Chair asked for confirmation from the other ARC members SG, KR and LM that they were comfortable with the plan.
- **86.** SG confirmed there were no concerns from them.
- **87.** KR pondered on culture and values at Quarter 4, stating that these are crucial moving into 2025.
- **88.** The Chair questioned if Quarter 4 is the correct timing for this item?
- **89.** The Chief Executive advised that he felt that Quarter 4 was the correct timing for this item.
- **90.** The Chair acknowledged that everyone was content.
- **91.** The Internal Audit Manager moved on to advise that there is a change in the structure of the Internal Audit team and the Senior Internal Audit Manager will be moving on.



- **92.** The Internal Audit Manager will remain the audit manager for Disclosure Scotland and Louise Carmichael (LC) will take over as Senior Internal Audit Manager for Disclosure Scotland.
- **93.** The Senior Internal Audit Manager advised this will be put formally to Disclosure Scotland and he will ensure a full handover is provided to LC.

### **External Audit update**

- **94.** The External Audit Manager (Deloitte) advised that this is the second year acting as external audit for Disclosure Scotland and there has been a big learning curve for them in terms of the last year.
- **95.** They stated that a key point for them is that Disclosure Scotland ensure that the accounts are available for them on day one of their field work, 10 June 2024.
- **96.** The Head of Finance advised that the base of the information will be available to external audit for this date.
- **97.** The External Audit Manager advised that they try to avoid overruns as much as possible and only review three versions, which is standard across the board.
- **98.** In terms of audit itself we are ahead of the curve, with completion of planning, business processes and controls work.
- 99. External Audit are scheduled to begin four weeks of field work between 10 June to mid-July, with completion before the August Audit and Risk Committee meeting.



- **100.** Auditing of the financial statement and wider scope work is scheduled for the first week of July and this will be led by the same person as last year, providing continuity.
- **101.** Last year external audit had a significant risk over expenditure. This year it has been reduced to high risk, as Deloitte do not consider this a significant risk. In terms of the wider scope this would be financial stability.
- **102.** The Chief Executive advised the key thing is to emphasise that Disclosure Scotland is part of the Scottish Government and the same legal entity. Where its money moving inside of government and this is not a going concern for us, however previous auditors in the past failed to understand this.
- **103.** The External Audit Manager advised that their focus will be on how Disclosure Scotland manages the gap.
- **104.** The Chair enquired if the Audit and Risk Committee would see the narrative of the Annual Report and Accounts before External Audit.
- **105.** The Head of Corporate Governance advised that a draft has historically been brought to a shorter July ARC meeting for review.
- 106. The Director of Corporate Services interjected that we would need to look at timetabling and it may not be possible for the ARC to see the full narrative before Deloitte, but assured the committee that the narrative goes through high quality checks via the Leadership Team. It then goes through checks between Disclosure Scotland and External Audit to ensure that it meets all the legislative requirements and terms of performance.



New action: Head of Corporate Governance to look at timelines with possibility of ARC members reviewing the draft narrative before going to external audit.

### Audit recommendation tracker

**107.** The Head of Corporate Governance started off by addressing the precommittee questions submitted by the Chair in advance of the meeting advising that he will provide full answers and share as an out of committee update with members after the meeting.

New action: Head of Corporate Governance to share answers to the Chair's questions as an out of committee update.

- **108.** Key highlights of the Audit recommendation dashboard:
  - Six overdue Internal Audit recommendations outstanding owners feel there is a path to closure, and Head of Corporate Governance has challenged the owners on the completion dates.
  - One External Audit recommendation which is proposed for closure which can be seen on slides four and five of the dashboard.
  - Budgetary information recommendations have been added to the dashboard.
  - Collaboration audit recommendations has been added to the dashboard.
  - Target dates are being updated for all recommendations.



- Update received today from Cyber Security who are looking to be at point of testing in June with their end date just shortly after the end of June.
- 109. The Deputy Chief Executive will provide a closing statement for a number of the open recommendations, including Safeguarding, out of committee. They explained that there was a safeguarding audit that took place in 2022, and a recommendation from this was for a new operational training team to be established. This at the time did not apply to the Protection Unit. The wording is slightly misleading, as this was purely based on manual workarounds that were put in place, to ensure that there were appropriate quality assurance processes. Things have since moved on.
- **110.** As we implement the Target Operating Model (TOM) it is not reasonable for us to implement a quality assurance process for a departmental construct that will no longer exist, due to a couple of actions that relate to a structure from years gone by.

New action: Deputy Chief Executive is reviewing all current actions; these will either be rescoped based on the position of the Agency now or noted for closure.

### Any other business

- **111.** KR expressed his gratitude to the team for the Assurance Mapping document as a below the line paper on the agenda.
- **112.** The Head of Corporate Governance advised his thanks will be provided to the team that completed the work up to this stage.



**113.** The External Audit Manager queried when the accounts are signed, and the Chief Executive confirmed that it is normally done after the ARC meeting in August.

# **Meeting reflections**

**114.** The Chair expressed better timing for agenda items would be better going forward.

New action: Head of Corporate Governance and Secretariat to look at agenda item duration when planning next meeting.

115. The Chair advised members that they had submitted questions ahead of the meeting to the Corporate Governance Team and would encourage others to do so to provide management with the best opportunity to answer any questions.

Next meeting: 29 May 2024 10am to 1pm in office with hybrid option by exception.





Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
Action 05/February: Assurance Mapping	Head of	31 May 2024	07-Feb-24: Below the Line paper
Collate all the existing Leadership Teams' thoughts on the	Corporate	<ul><li>revised</li></ul>	included in February Audit and Risk
Assurance Mapping template and then come back to the	Governance	date	Committee. Deep dive will not be done
Audit and Risk Committee with one agreed template and			until we have all Business plan
the detail of why that template has been selected. A deep			information for 24/25
dive on assurance mapping to be included in a future Audit			Revised date of action May 2024.
and Risk Committee meeting.			Action ongoing
			Action ongoing
Action 05/August: Annual Report and Accounts	Head of	before 14	<b>14-Feb-23:</b> ARC agreed action closed -
Share the Annual Report Lessons Learned with the	Corporate	February	paper has been shared.
committee as a below the line document at the next	Governance	2024 ARC	
meeting.		meeting	Closed
Action 06/August: Risk	Head of	Following	07-Feb-24: Risk presentation updated,
Risk Register updates to be reviewed and consolidated.	Corporate	meeting	presentation reviewed by KR and will be
	Governance		reviewed by SP and SG ahead of the
			Audit and Risk Committee meeting.





Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
			Action Ongoing
Action 09/August: Fraud Update the Bribery risk assessment.	Director of Corporate Services	[blank]	16-Jan-24: This action will be considered at the next Counter Fraud and Bribery meeting.
			Action Ongoing
Action 01/December23: Finance  Head of Finance to share budgetary ask mapped against service outcomes at next ARC - review according to budgetary position once know and qualify expected return on digital investment for 2024/2025 and explore potential savings (and impact).	Head of Finance	[blank]	06-Feb-24 we are currently in negotiations with SG regarding next years budget and there was a deep dive session with the board on the 31/01/24 to confirm that the actions we are taking at this stage is correct due to the funding gap. The final budget will be shared with Board and ARC once finalised. There are expected benefits



Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
			relating to each project but depending
			on our level of funding for 2024/25, it
			will have an effect on what we are able
			to achieve.
Action 02/December23: Fraud	Director of	February	16-Jan-24: This action will be
Director of Corporate Services to identify if Disclosure	Corporate	2024	considered at the next Counter Fraud
Scotland have any requirements under FCPA	Services		and Bribery meeting.
			Ongoing
Action/03/December23: Risk	Head of	[blank]	<b>07-Feb-24:</b> Risk briefing planned for 09-
Head of Corporate Governance to invite Chair to risk	Corporate		Feb-24
briefings	Governance		14-Feb-24: Committee agreed to close
			action as it. Action Closed
Action/04/December23: The Deputy Chief Executive to	To be set up	[blank]	25-Jan-24: Meeting scheduled for 15
take Chair through the accreditation process.	by CGT		February 2024





Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
	LR/SP to		
	meet		
Action/05/December23: Risk	Head of	14 February	07-Feb-24: The Head of Corporate
Head of Corporate Governance and Director of Corporate	Corporate	2024	Governance will look to schedule time
Services to meet with non-executive members on Board	Governance		with the Director of Corporate Services
paper presentation.			to review paper presentation with Non-
			executive Board members in March
Action/06/December23: Internal Audit	Internal Audit	February	08-Feb-24: due to unforeseen
Internal Audit Manager to set up meeting with ARC Chair	Manager	2024	absences within the IA team this
			meeting will be held after the ARC
			meeting.
Action/07/December23: Secretary to pass Chair's contact	Secretary	February	08-Feb-24: email and mobile number
details to Internal and External Audit		2024	shared
			Action Closed



Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
Action/08/December23: Board	Secretary	31 January	06-Feb-24: People Survey Results
		2024	shared as a below the line paper with
Proposed Agenda item for DS Board 2024 to discuss			DS Board for reading. DS Board
results of people engagement following the People Survey			Meeting 27 March agenda to include
results.			agenda item to discuss People Survey
			Results
			Action Closed
		00.14	
Action/01/February: Chief Executive Update	Head of	29 May 2024	[blank]
	Change		
Update on Act projects to be brought to the next meeting.	Management		



Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
Action/02/February: Finance	Director of	Once budget	[blank]
	Corporate	position	
Board ad-hoc session to be held and include all non-	Services	available	
executive members once update available on 2024/25			
budget position.			
Action/03/February: Risk Register	Deputy Chief	29 May 2024	[blank]
	Executive/AR		
Review Information Governance issue report for future	C Secretariat		
meetings. For cyber assurance invite independent risk			
accreditor to future meeting to present role and value add.			





Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
Action/04/February: Information Governance	Head of	29 May 2024	[blank]
	Corporate		
Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Governance,	Governance		
Data Protection Officer, and Head of Cyber Security to			
work together to improve reporting and bring out the			
salient points to bring to the Audit and Risk Committee.			
A sticus (OF) Falamana Information O community	Data	04 Manala	Philosophia
Action/05/February: Information Governance	Data	31 March	[blank]
	Protection	2024	
Deep Dive to be commissioned within Protection Unit into	Officer		
data breaches, on what, how and prevention measures.			
Action/06/February: External Audit	Head of	31 March	[blank]
	Corporate	2024	
	Governance		
	and		





Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
Head of Corporate Governance to look at timelines with	Governance		
possibility of ARC members reviewing the draft narrative	Manager		
before going to external audit.			
Action/07/February: Audit Recommendation Tracker	Head of	29 February	[blank]
	Corporate	2024	
Head of Corporate Governance to share answers to Chairs	Governance		
questions as an out of committee update.			
Action/08/February: Audit Recommendation Tracker	Deputy Chief	29 May 2024	[blank]
	Executive		
Deputy Chief Executive is reviewing all current actions;	and Head of		
these will either be rescoped based on the position of the	Corporate		
Agency now or noted for closure.	Governance		



Action	Responsible	Due by	Status
Action/08/February: Meeting Reflection	Head of	29 May 2024	[blank]
	Corporate		
Head of Corporate Governance and Secretariat to look at	Governance		
agenda item duration when planning next meeting.	and		
	Secretariat		