

# Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting

on

**Tuesday 28 February 2023 at 1pm**

**at Head Office, Downpatrick**

<b>Present:</b>	David Knott – ARAC Chair Harry Wick – Board Member Kate Burns – Board Member (Teams) Lynn Gilmore – Board Member
<b>In attendance:</b>	Kevin Quigley – Chief Executive Belinda McCaughey – Accounts Administrator
<b>DAERA Sponsor Branch (Observer)</b>	Paddy Griffin (Teams)
<b>DAERA Internal Audit</b>	Eveline Doherty (Teams)

		Action
<b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b>		
	David welcomed all to the meeting.	
<b>2. Declaration of Interests</b>		
	David invited all to declare any interests they may have. No declarations made.	
<b>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022</b>		
	Minutes were agreed with one minor amendment – Point 11 on page 5 Action for Paddy Griffin. Belinda will amend minutes.  Minutes were formally approved by Harry and seconded by Lynn.	Belinda
<b>4. Matters Arising</b>		
	Kevin wrote to Owen Lyttle re Harbour Order.  David confirmed he is happy to fulfil the DP role under the MSMS. This should take an extra 3 days per year on Site. To be taken to Board for full approval.  Kevin will liaise with DAERA with regard to payment for these extra days.  Duty Holder Training – Kevin will compile a list of who has completed this for the next meeting.	Board  Kevin  Kevin

	Action
<p>Internal Audit Recommendations – all will be completed by 31 March 2023.</p> <p>All other matters arising are on the Agenda.</p>	Kevin
<p><b>5. Risk Register – February 2023</b></p>	
<p>Kevin spoke to the details in the Evidential Support Document. In particular:</p> <p>No 12 – Abandoned Vessels. Licence to dismantle the Enterprise in Kilkeel has been received.</p> <p>No 13 – NIEA licensing process with regard to dredging – there is no underlying change in regulations but interpretation by the regulator and subsequent process changes are seriously impacting harbour operations.</p> <p>Harry noted that stakeholders should be made aware that it is not the Authority that is holding this up. Kevin will address this.</p> <p>Kevin will organise a meeting with Paddy to talk through the challenges these changes will bring to the Authority. There is a concern that NIEA do not fully appreciate the gravity of the situation. NIFHA need to do everything in our power to ensure that the harbour remains open.</p> <p>Kevin noted that the longer term risk will escalate due to a greater range of contaminants being assessed. The need to dredge Kilkeel Inner Basin is now urgent.</p> <p>The committee had a full and frank discussion on the current NIEA approach and the impact this is having on dredging the harbours of Kilkeel and Portavogie. Also discussed was sea disposal and costs associated with land disposal.</p> <p>No 6 - Kevin advised the Committee that most staff in Ardglass and Kilkeel have joined Unite the Union and that strike action is being considered. This will need to be addressed. After a detailed discussion it was agreed that Kevin would add this to Risk No 6 – Organisational People and Resourcing in the Evidential Support Document and Risk Register.</p> <p>David confirmed he had some comments to make on the detail within the Evidential Support Document and will pass these on to Kevin after the meeting.</p> <p>Kevin updated the Committee on the following risks:</p> <p>Risk 2 - Kevin advised that although we have had a very good pelagic season there may still not be funds available for all that we wish to do.</p> <p>Risk 3 – Income is up but we still may not be able to dismantle boats in Portavogie before the end of March 2023. Budgets may need to be revised for DAERA year end outturn – we may not be able to draw down all of the monies anticipated.</p>	<p>Kevin</p> <p>Kevin</p> <p>Kevin</p> <p>David</p>

	<b>Action</b>
<p>Risk 7 – Cyber Risk. Kevin noted our procedures are robust. Training is underway to update staff on current risks.</p> <p>Risk 8 – Organisations are now taking a more robust view of policy and regulatory changes.</p> <p>Risk 9 – Funding. 2023/24 funding will not open until June 2023. Resources within NIFHA are limited and we may struggle if more than one major project comes to fruition.</p> <p>Risk 11 – Stakeholder Engagement. Kevin discussed the methods available to NIFHA to communicate with stakeholders. What worked in the past does not necessarily work today. Visits to the Harbour by Kevin are not as frequent as in the past.</p> <p>A quarterly or monthly newsletter may be one way to keep fishermen up to date with happenings. Kevin will explore this option. Paddy asked that Kevin liaise with DAERA prior to circulating information on dredging issues.</p> <p>The Committee agreed the Risk Register with one amendment to be made to reference Industrial Action. Will be taken to Board for approval at the meeting on 14 March 2023.</p>	<p>Kevin</p> <p>Board</p>
<b>6. H&amp;S Management System – Review of our Delivery</b>	
<p>Kevin advised that the Health and Safety Meetings will resume on 10 March 2023.</p> <p>Kevin spoke to the KPI review and Lynn asked if the two documents could be combined into one. Kevin noted that both documents had a different purpose and doubted that they could be combined, he will review this with a view to simplification.</p>	<p>Kevin</p>
<b>7. Review of Policies</b>	
<p>Kevin and Belinda outlined the simple step by step procedure taken when reviewing NIFHA policies.</p> <p>Going forward any amendments to policies will be shown as tracked changes.</p>	<p>Belinda</p>
<b>8. Policy List Update</b>	
<p>This was discussed and determined that a column showing frequency of review would be useful and should be added. The frequency of policy review varies with the type of policy, additionally a column showing date created is needed.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Management Policy will be updated during 2023/24.</p>	<p>Belinda</p> <p>Kevin</p>

	<b>Action</b>
The Policy for Prioritisation of Capital and Maintenance will be brought to the next ARAC meeting.	Kevin
<b>9. Anti Slavery Policy</b>	
Kevin noted this is a new policy. Whilst the fishing industry has issues around slavery this policy is specific to the Authority.  The committee discussed this, and it was decided to include a reference to any awareness of Slavery being reported to the appropriate Authority. Kevin will amend and this will be brought to the Board for Approval.  Lynn noted that the Sign off boxes at the end of the policy did not show the creation date. At a recent meeting within her Organisation this was flagged as in issue. Lynn will forward information to Belinda on this to enable an update to sign off boxes when policies are next reviewed.	Kevin / Board  Lynn
<b>10. Fixed Asset Policy</b>	
After a discussion it was determined that the policy should be updated to reference any Health and Safety issues of maintaining assets which had been fully depreciated. To be brought to the Board for approval	Belinda/ Board
<b>11. Staff Recruitment, Selection, and Promotion Policy &amp; Procedures</b>	
The committee confirmed this was a very substantial and thorough policy. It was discussed whether the Gender Pay gap should be referenced but this is more an Equality issue. No change required. To be brought to the Board for approval.	Board
<b>12. Internal Audit 2021/22 Recommendations Update</b>	
Kevin discussed the outstanding recommendations.  Abandoned Vessels procedures. This will be documented before the end of March 2023.  Timeline for Harbour Order. We currently don't have the powers to deal with issues in our harbours. Hence the need to amend the Harbour Order. This is an ongoing activity with DAERA.  NIFHA continue to support moving this forward.  Internal Audit for 2022/23 is due to commence at the start of March.	Kevin  Eveline
<b>13. HR Capacity Issues</b>	
Kevin updated the Committee on the issues around the harbours.	

	Action
<p>A staff member resigned in Ardglass and one of the Kilkeel Staff, who lives in Ardglass, has moved to this harbour. This has left a vacant post in Kilkeel. A current recruitment exercise for this vacant post resulted in no applications being received. Kilkeel Harbour Master is greatly under pressure.</p> <p>Portavogie team is in good spirits.</p> <p>In Ardglass the team is not in good spirits.</p> <p>A Health and Safety Admin Officer has been recruited and is showing good promise. This will hopefully ease the strain somewhat.</p> <p>Kevin expressed his thanks to Paddy for getting the Equality Case across the line.</p> <p>Kevin confirmed that staff in both Ardglass and Kilkeel have joined a Union. He has been advised by said staff that the intention is to go on strike in 3 months time. Kevin is taking advice on how to deal with the Union going forward.</p> <p>Kevin confirmed at a request from Harry that his personal capacity at this time was good.</p>	
<p><b>14. Minutes of Accountability Meeting on 29 November 2022</b></p>	
<p>These were taken as read and there were no questions.</p>	
<p><b>15. Any Other Business</b></p>	
<p>None</p>	
<p><b>16. Date and location of next meeting</b></p>	
<p>To be determined at Board Meeting on 14 March 2023.</p>	