

# Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting

on

**Wednesday 21 February 2024 at 1.00pm**

**In Harbour Masters Offices, Portavogie**

<b>Present:</b>	Kate Burns (KB) – ARAC Chair Lynn Gilmore (LG) – Board Member Harry Wick (HW) – Board Member
<b>In attendance:</b>	Kevin Quigley (KQ) – Chief Executive Belinda McCaughey (BMCC) – Accounts Administrator Robert Ryans – Board Member

	Action
<b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b>	
LG welcomed all to the meeting. Apology received from David Knott (Board Member) and Eveline Doherty (DAERA Internal Audit).	
<b>2. Declaration of Interests</b>	
No declarations made.	
<b>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023</b>	
Minutes were approved.	
<b>4. Matters Arising</b>	
Review of Project List – considerable work has been carried out. The List has been shared with the Producers Organisations for feedback. DAERA have also been sent a copy. This includes horizon scanning.  KQ confirmed that David Lindsay is still the CCTV Project Manager.  The Corporate Plan will address the need for extra resources in the form of staff. This may be paused until the quinquennial review is carried out.  All other matters arising have been completed or are on today's agenda.	
<b>5. Risk Register – February 2024</b>	
KQ gave an overview of the Register – in particular:  The Health and Safety Admin role is again vacant. It is hoped to appoint a replacement early in April 2024.	

	Action
<p>Income in the second half of the year is likely to be lower than anticipated, although Pelagic Landings have been strong. There is still a general risk around crewing of vessels.</p> <p>Dredging Costs – Climate change has resulted in near all year-round dredging.</p> <p>Pay Increase for 2022/23 was approved and paid in January. Weekly paid staff got a substantial sum for back pay and are no longer on minimum wage.</p> <p>KQ is spending more time out in the harbours which has resulted in better relationships with the staff. There is no measurement method in place to record staff morale.</p> <p>No 10 – Environmental Issues. The committee discussed this risk, and it was determined that KQ would move any reference to storms into Risk 14.</p> <p>No 12 – Abandoned Vessels. Whilst there are less abandoned vessels the risk of more vessels becoming abandoned has increased.</p> <p>No 13 – Inadequate Dredging. After an update from KQ it was determined that this Risk should be reamended to state that increased dredging will happen.</p> <p>No 14 – Extreme weather events. This is a new risk on the Risk Register. Any reference to storms should be revised to read “extreme weather events”.</p> <p>HW updated the Committee on the current state of play with regards to crewing. Consideration is now being given to classing crews as seasonal workers.</p> <p>The Risk Register with above amendments will be taken to Board meeting in March for approval.</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>KQ</p> <p>KQ</p> <p></p> <p>Board</p>
<p><b>6. Marine Safety Management System – Review of our delivery</b></p>	
<p>KQ noted that the only amber within the Implementation Review is “ensuring safe access to port for recreational users”. The onus would be to show that we were negligent should an incident occur.</p> <p>Review of our delivery – KQ spoke to the oranges. In particular:</p> <p>2.1.1 - Permit to Work. These are in place within the harbours for more dangerous activities.</p> <p>5.2.4 – Emergency Response Exercises. These are conducted in all weathers. There is a need to carry these out in all three harbours.</p> <p>7.1.1 – Number and scale of marine accidents. Sinking of Galena in Kilkeel has resulted in the need for the vessels to turn and face the river</p>	

	<b>Action</b>
8.2.2 – Dredger Workboat classification. There has been a change in how the dredger is to be classified. Currently recoded as load line but this may change to workboat code.	
<b>7. Port Waste Management Plan</b>	
<p>KQ updated the Committee on the changes to the Port Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the Port Waste Management Plan in detail.</p> <p>The heading “General Issues – All Harbours” is to be placed before ‘International Catering Waste’.</p> <p>Once this change has been made the ARAC committee confirmed that they were satisfied with the updates to the plan – no need to take to the Board for approval.</p>	BMcC
<b>8. Review of Policies</b>	
<p><u>Raising a Concern Policy</u></p> <p>KQ gave a background to the changes within this policy.</p> <p>Whilst a concern raised under this policy would be an extremely unlikely event, if it did happen then we would seek outside guidance.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the policy. KQ will amend section 18; removing the need to involve an external organisation for initial assessment.</p> <p>This policy will – subject to the changes to Section 18 – will brought to the Board Meeting in March for approval.</p>	KQ  Board
<b>9. Industrial Relations</b>	
KQ confirmed this is the final version of the agreement which was previously approved by the Board for ARAC members’ reference.	
<b>10. HR Issues</b>	
<p>KQ updated the committee on the Pay increases made to all staff.</p> <p>The Pay and Grading Review is with DAERA. Events are speeding along, and the levels of increase are narrowing. Within this review the creation of a special grade is difficult and will not be an option due to the current funding issues. A revised business case addressing differentials may be more appropriate.</p> <p>Morale has improved with KQ out in the harbours more frequently.</p> <p>With the NIFHA aging workforce, illness and ailments amongst staff is becoming more prevalent. We have several staff on light duties or reasonable adjustments. At times resources are very stretched.</p>	

	<b>Action</b>
<b>11. Internal Audit 2022/23 Recommendations Update</b>	
<p>BMcC updated the Committee.</p> <p>There are currently five recommendations at Priority Level 2.</p> <p><b>Financial Memorandum</b> – Draft Partnership agreement in progress. Workshop on this will take place on 29 Feb 2024.</p> <p><b>GDPR Training</b> – Complete.</p> <p><b>Information Asset Register</b> – This is in place.</p> <p><b>Data Retention and Disposal Register</b> – Combined with the Information Asset Register into one document. Available to view in the Downpatrick office.</p> <p><b>Emergency Response Exercises</b> – Work In progress to document these.</p> <p>All recommendations will be completed by 31 March 2024.</p>	
<b>12. DAERA Accountability Meeting on 26 October 2023</b>	
<p>KQ advised the committee that these meetings will now take place every quarter instead of six monthly.</p> <p>KQ discussed the details of this meeting and the increasing governance requirements on the Authority.</p>	
<b>13. Review of Harbour Health and Safety Minutes</b>	
<p>No questions on these minutes. For reference purposes.</p>	
<b>14. Any other Business</b>	
<p>KQ advised that the Chair will decide at the next Board Member which Board Member will serve on each committee.</p>	
<b>15. Date and location of next meeting</b>	
<p>To be determined at next Board Meeting.</p>	