

Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting

on

Thursday 06 June 2024 at 10am

In Head Office, Downpatrick

Present:	Maynard Mawhinney (MM) – ARAC Chair David Knott (DK) – Board Member Robert Ryans (RR) – Board Member
In attendance:	Kevin Quigley (KQ) – Chief Executive Belinda McCaughey (BMcC) – Accounts Administrator
DAERA Sponsor Branch (Observer)	Jenny Weir (JW) (Teams)
DAERA Internal Audit	Eveline Doherty (ED)(Teams)

	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies	
MM welcomed all to the meeting. All present introduced themselves around the table. Apologies received from Harry Wick and Lynn Gilmore.	
2. Declaration of Interests	
No declarations made. MM reminded all that declarations must be up to date and completed at least annual. All Board members are requested to ensure they have completed the online declaration within the last 12 months. BMcC will send a reminder to those who have not completed this declaration.	BMcC
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024	
Minutes were approved.	
4. Matters Arising	
All action points have been completed and were brought to the March Board meeting.	
5. Overview and Emerging Issues	
KQ spoke to this paper. In particular:	

	Action
<p>Funding – Deficit currently unfunded and DAERA is unclear of how to progress. On the Capital side a list of projects has been submitted to the grants team but so far only the Portavogie Slipway Project will take place.</p> <p>Slipway Access is an Health and Safety Issue which will need to be addressed. There is currently no funding for the FSDP.</p> <p>Fish Pass – KQ discussed ownership issues and ways to move forward. A meeting is scheduled for 13 June 2024.</p>	
<p>6. HR Capacity Issues</p>	
<p>KQ confirmed a replacement Admin Officer is now in place and working well.</p> <p>Both KQ and David Lindsays workload has eased slightly but BMcC's still remains high. A new senior member of staff needs to be appointed.</p> <p>The Quinquennial Review will address staffing levels and capacity and should show that we are under resourced.</p> <p>JW confirmed looking at levels of staffing will be within the scope of the Review.</p>	
<p>7. IIP Report</p>	
<p>This was due to be reviewed 18 months ago. Online results from a staff questionnaire were not favourable - issues around low pay and communication with KQ not providing updates.</p> <p>Renewal was deferred for 12 months. 2nd Online questionnaire has taken place and results are much improved.</p> <p>MM asked would Board presence in harbours make a difference? KQ confirmed not always easy to have the meetings in harbours but visits by individual Board members would be appreciated by staff.</p> <p>This will be brought to the Board for discussion.</p>	Board
<p>8. Risk Register – May 2024</p>	
<p>MM noted his appreciation for the way the Risk Register is presented. Use of colour coding and arrows to show trends combined with the evidential support made for ease of reading.</p> <p>It was noted that since the last meeting there was a suggestion to remove risks and shorten the register. MM confirmed this should be left as is at the moment – defer to the next meeting.</p> <p>KQ spoke to the Evidential Support document and discussed changes since the last presented Register.</p> <p>No 3 – Failure in MSMS. The need for all Board members to be trained was discussed.</p>	

	Action
<p>HR has organised training to take place tomorrow for some Board Members and training for the remainder will be organised for later in the year.</p> <p>No 9 – Environmental Delivery. Environmental Officer has returned from maternity leave. She is very capable.</p> <p>No 11 – Abandoned Vessels. Decommissioning has stalled at the moment. There is a need for an updated Harbour Order. Also legislation needs to be put in place to stop owners just walking away from their vessel.</p> <p>Inadequate Dredging. This risk has been removed from the register as dredging is ongoing.</p> <p>DK asked about combining Risks 12 and 13 into one Risk? Both relate to damage to Infrastructure. KQ gave the background as to why there were two separate risks and noted that the risk register is reviewed on a monthly basis.</p> <p>RR commented that overall 7 out of the 13 risks had improved since the last Register. Funding is key to a few of the risks.</p> <p>Risk Register was approved to take to the Board Meeting on 28 June 2024.</p>	Board
9. Annual Report on the Work of the ARAC Committee	
<p>This report was taken as read.</p> <p>Change to be made to the number of possible meetings for DK as once he became Acting Chair he was unable to attend the ARAC meetings. BMcC will make the changes.</p> <p>Report was approved and will be presented to the Board.</p>	Board
10. Audit Committee Self Assessment	
<p>Due to the changes within membership of the Board this has been deferred to December.</p>	
11. Draft Governance Statement	
<p>This statement is included with our Annual Report and Accounts.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the statement and it was determined that a change should be made in relation to the timescale for approval of the refreshed Corporate Plan. KQ will make the changes.</p>	KQ
12. Internal Audit	
<p>ED gave an overview of the Annual Report and Opinion as provided by Internal Audit. Overall a Satisfactory Audit Opinion was given.</p> <p>KQ spoke to the recommendations 2 new ones (level 2) and 2 partially implemented from last years audit.</p>	

	Action
<p>KQ thanked ED and her team for their courtesy and professionalism during the Audit.</p> <p>Training was discussed and Committee decided that required training for Board Members is under the remit of the ARAC committee and details should be presented to the next meeting.</p> <p>ED gave an overview of the Internal Audit Needs Assessment and Audit Plan for 2024/25. Committee agreed to the Plan.</p>	KQ
13. Conflict of Interest Register	
<p>MM reviewed the register prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Discussed at 2 above.</p>	
14. Minutes of DAERA Accountability Meeting on 26 April 2024	
<p>KQ spoke to this and answered questions raised by the Committee.</p> <p>MM confirmed he had discussed diversification with Stephen Welch (SW Chair of NIFHA Board) prior to this meeting the possibility of meeting with Down Council to see if they would be able to give us any help. MM will discuss with KQ and SW in the Autumn.</p>	
15. Policy List Update	
<p>KQ advised the reasons behind bringing this list to the ARAC meeting.</p> <p>DK agreed that the purpose of the list is to show that everything is done on a timely basis.</p> <p>The current list shows a few policies which have not been updated within normal timescales. These will be addressed prior to next meeting.</p>	BMcC / KQ
16. Review of Policies and Procedures	
<p>No updates since the last meeting.</p>	
17. NIFHA Equality Scheme – 5 year Review	
<p>KQ updated the committee on the background to the scheme.</p> <p>The report was taken as read and approved.</p>	
18. Health and Safety Management System External Audit	
<p>KQ confirmed we are generally pleased with the results of the Audit. Minor Recommendations which were made are either completed or underway.</p>	
19. Internal Audit of Harbour Health and Safety – Portavogie	
<p>KQ discussed and gave assurance to the Committee that items unable to be addressed have now been actioned.</p>	

	Action
<p>Procedures are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Checklists are carried out by our own staff. b. The Harbour Master reviews these and ensures work required is carried out. c. Internal Audit Review is carried out by NIFHA Admin Officer on a quarterly basis. 	
20. Review of Harbour Health and Safety Minutes	
<p>These documents are for reference purposes only to inform the ARAC committee of what happens at Health and Safety Meetings in the harbours.</p>	
21. Any Other Business	
<p>KQ gave an update on a recent accident which occurred in Kilkeel involving a staff member driving a FLT. KQ also confirmed staff are fully training before using FLT in harbours.</p>	
22. Date and location of next meeting	
<p>To be determined at next Board Meeting.</p>	