



Minutes of the VSS Audit and Risk Committee
Tuesday, 23 January 2018, 12.30 pm
Seatem House, Belfast

ARC Members Present:

Colm Doran (CD)	ARC Chair
Richard Solomon (RS)	Board Member
Bertha McDougall (BMcD)	Board Member

VSS Officers in Attendance:

Margaret Bateson (MB)	CEO and Accounting Officer
Andrew Walker (AW)	Head of Corporate Services
Caroline Armstrong (CA)	Finance and Governance Manager

Other Officers in Attendance:

Colin Moffett (CM)	TEO
Kathy Doey (KD)	NIAO (External Audit)

Apologies:

Seamus Magee (SM)	Board Member
Marie Matthews (MM)	TEO
Pauline Poots (PP)	Ernst & Young (Internal Audit)
Tomas Wilkinson (TW)	NIAO (External Audit)

A Apologies

A1 Apologies were received from SM, MM, PP and TW.

B Minutes of Previous Meeting

B1 The minutes of 7 November 2017 were agreed.

B2 The minutes of 12 December 2017 were agreed.

C Action Points

The VSS provided an update on the outstanding action points:

- 20.6.17: AP1: The recent recruitment for this position was unsuccessful. The VSS is compiling a Business Case to consider its options.
- TEO Checklist: ARC Chair attend Dept Workshop: The ARC Chair confirmed this was scheduled for 31 January 2018.
- TEO Checklist: Bi-laterals: These have been scheduled for 1 March 2018

D Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interests were declared.

E Accounting Officer Update

The Committee requested an update on the following:-

E1 CEO Exception Report

MB provided an update on the key strategic issues including:

- Progress against Business Plan targets: 27 out of 30 targets are on track for completion by 31 March 2018. The 3 targets that will remain outstanding relate to Disability Aids and 2 new schemes: Trauma-Focused Physical Activity, and Literacy and Numeracy. This is primarily due to the longer than expected establishment of new networks, structures and processes in 2017/18. This year is the first year of a 3 year (VSP) and 4 year (PEACE IV) programme. These will therefore form a particular focus in terms of proactive outreach in Year 2 - 2018/19.

E2 Progress against Budget

VSS Budget: Annually, nearing the end of quarter 3 the VSS is able to establish an accurate projection of out-turn. At December 2017, the VSS forecast an underspend primarily arising from Disability Aids and Psychological Therapies due to lower than anticipated numbers coming forward. Mitigating action has been taken and a call was issued to VSS funded organisations. It is expected that Letter of Offer Addendums can be issued by 31 January 2018 to offset the forecast underspend.

E3 Strategic Risk Register

MB provided an update on the current risks and indicated that 2 new risks had been added at December 2017 month end with 4 risks closed. The Committee were content with the mitigating actions being taken.

F Quarterly Reports

F1 Quarterly ALB Report

The Committee noted this report.

F2 Quarterly Assurance Statement

The Committee noted this report.

F3 Quarterly M&E Report

The Committee noted this report.

G Internal Audit Update

G1 2017/18 Internal Audit Strategy – DRAFT (Revised)

The Committee requested an update from the VSS in PP's absence. AW indicated that the audit plan had been revised since the first draft presented in December 2017 to include testing on GDPR within 2017/18, but re-assured the Committee that the overall number of contracted days remains unchanged.

The Committee were content to approve the Strategy document.

H External Audit Update

H1 2016-17 Report To Those Charged With Governance - DRAFT

KD presented the Report to those Charged with Governance for 2016/17. Nine recommendations were made, briefing the Committee on the 2 recommendations that were partially accepted.

The Committee were content with the VSS management responses in this regard, particularly the actions being taken by the VSS to address all recommendations made.

The Committee congratulated VSS staff on getting the accounts laid by the 31 December deadline.

I Standing Agenda Items

The Committee requested CA present these papers.

I1 2016/17 ARC Self Assessment Report and Action Plan

CA provided an update on the 5 outstanding actions, indicating that the majority of these should be closed by March 2018.

I2 ARC Training Update and Requirements

The Committee noted the update.

I3 Gifts and Hospitality Update

The Committee noted the update.

I4 Compliance Update

The Committee noted the update and discussed the actions taken to date regarding the 3 outstanding debts.

I5 Procurement Update

The Committee noted the update and were re-assured that the VSS are utilising more NICS Shared Services and, where necessary, are engaging in longer term contracts when a procurement exercise is required.

J Any Other Business

J1 Departure of Finance and Governance Manager

The Committee congratulated CA on her recent job offer within the NHSC and conveyed its appreciation at the improvements in governance and controls over the past 3 years, in particular, her support to the Committee during her time.

K Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 19 April 2018.