

ABERDEENSHIRE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

AUDIT COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 25 FEBRUARY, 2019

Audit Committee Members:

Provost W Howatson (Chair), Councillor D Robertson; and Ms R Little.

Apologies: Ms A Anderson.

In attendance:

Mr D Hekelaar.

Officers: Mr A Sharp, Chief Finance Officer, Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board; Mr D Hughes, Chief Internal Auditor, Aberdeenshire Council; Ms A MacDonald, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland; Mrs A Wood, Partnership Manager (Central), Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership; and Ms J McRobbie, Committee Officer, Aberdeenshire Council.

1. SEDERUNT AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reported that, in terms of the previous decision to expand the membership of the Committee, Mr Tony Cox, Mr David Hekelaar, and Ms Inez Kirk had expressed interest in serving as non-voting members on the Committee. Pending the formal approval of their appointment by the Integration Joint Board on 27 February, 2019, the Chair welcomed Mr Hekelaar to the Committee.

The Chair called for Declarations of Interests and no interests were declared.

Apologies were submitted from Ms A Anderson.

2. STATEMENT OF EQUALITIES

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Audit Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF AUDIT COMMITTEE OF 12 SEPTEMBER, 2018

There was circulated and **approved** as a correct record, subject to clarification of Item 8, that the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair would be by the Audit Committee, not the Integration Joint Board itself, the Minute of Meeting of 12 September, 2018.

4. INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

There had been circulated a report dated 20 February, 2019 by the Chief Finance Officer providing an update on the proposed extended membership of the Committee, (a) reporting the name of non-voting members of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) who had expressed an interest in the role, (b) updating the NHS Grampian membership, following the retirement of Eric Sinclair; (c) requesting the appointment of a Chair and Vice-Chair; and (d) asking for consideration of quorum to be recommended to the IJB.

After discussion of the appointment of Chair and the time period extension in cases of business necessity, the national approach to quorum in terms of non-voting members; and having noted that, if the Chair were to remain a Council partner, the Vice-Chair would require to be either Ms Anderson or Ms Little of NHS Grampian, the Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to recommend to the Integration Joint Board the formal appointment of Mr Tony Cox, Mr David Hekelaar, and Ms Inez Kirk;
- (2) that additional governance information be sought and circulated as a matter of urgency on the approach taken to non-voting members and quorum, in order that the IJB may reconsider the Terms of Reference for the Committee; and
- (3) in terms of business continuity in a period of changing membership, that Provost Howatson be confirmed as Chair of the Committee, and that the Vice-Chair be either Ms Anderson or Ms Little of NHS Grampian.

5. UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE

There had been circulated a report dated 15 February, 2019 by the Chief Finance Officer, requesting members' consideration of updated Terms of Reference for the Committee. Having noted that the issue of quorum had been deferred for additional information on governance, the Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to approve in principle the revised Terms of Reference, subject to the inclusion of the phrase "or their designated representatives" in Section 5.1 after "The Chief Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Internal Auditor"; and
- (2) to defer for further consideration the issue of Quorum in the context of non-voting members, (Section 2.1).

6. MEETING DATES FOR 2019

There had been circulated a report dated 15 February, 2019 by the Chief Finance Officer, requesting the consideration of meeting dates for 2019 which would meet the operational timescale requirements of the Committee's function. Having noted that the Committee was required to meet at least four times a year, and that there had been initial discussion of having Audit Committees meet on the same days as the scheduled Development Sessions, the Committee **agreed** that meetings be scheduled for the undernoted days and times:-

- Wednesday 19 June, 2019 -2.30pm (at the conclusion of the formal Integration Joint Board of that day);
- Wednesday 21 August, 2019 – 10.00 am; and
- Wednesday 27 November, 2019 – 2.30pm (at the conclusion of the Development Session for that day.)

7. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

There had been circulated a report dated 18 February, 2019 by the Chief Internal Auditor, requesting the consideration of Internal Audit reports relating to (a) the Integration Joint Board's Risk Management Process (Report No. 1931 – February, 2019) and (b) the Council's Social Work Financial Assessments (Report No.1920 – November, 2018). Having heard further from the Chief Internal Auditor that the second report had already been considered by Aberdeenshire Council's Audit Committee on 13 December, 2018, there was discussion of the size of the sample in the Social Work Financial assessment, and the Service justification for not introducing the periodic review of a sample group; and, in terms of Report No. 1931, the processes by which the Integration Joint Board was to continue to evolve its risk management processes. The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) that in respect of Report No. 1920, information be provided to members on the scale of the sample and the justification for the service proposed course of action, and to delegate to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, any further action required; and
- (2) to note, in all other respects, the terms of the report.

8. ABERDEENSHIRE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD 2018/19 DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

There had been circulated a report dated February, 2019 by Audit Scotland, detailing Audit Scotland's draft audit plan for the Integration Joint Board for 2018/19, identifying the risks and planned work within a proposed audit scope and timetable.

Having heard further from the External Auditor, there was discussion of the reporting thresholds of materiality when looking at financial statements; and the escalating process by which any concerns would be raised with the Integration Joint Board, the Committee **agreed** to note the draft Audit Plan 2018/2019.

9. LETTER FROM AUDIT SCOTLAND ON ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2017/18

There had been circulated a letter dated 19 December, 2018 from Fraser McKinlay, Controller of Audit, commenting on the Integration Joint Board's performance, considered in a national context, for 2017/18. The letter highlighted (a) the improvement in managing emergency admissions, delayed discharge, growing numbers of people being supported to live independently and the benefits of the Virtual Community Ward and the Joint Equipment Store; (b) the need for the Board's next Strategic Plan to clearly identify priorities, outcomes, and targets in order that progress can be measured and monitored, and include longer term horizon scanning as well as assessing the impact of service redesign on staff, communities, and resources; and (c) commending the refresh of the Committee's remit, membership, and scope of business in support of providing the Board with assurances on the robustness of existing governance arrangements.

Having heard further from the External Auditor, the Committee **agreed** to note the feedback provided and **welcome** the national acknowledgement of the success of the Virtual Community Ward and Joint Equipment Store projects.

10. AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT ON HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE INTERGRATION (UPDATE ON PROGRESS)

There had been circulated an Audit Scotland national report, dated November, 2018 by the Accounts Commission, reporting progress on the Health and Social Care Integration across

Scotland, recognising progress, challenges to success, and making recommendations at both a government, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), and local Board level. The Committee heard further from the External Auditor of this being the second in a planned sequence of three national reports on Health and Social Care; the first considering preparations for the creation of the Integration Joint Boards (IJBs), and the third to focus on measuring the impact of the IJBs on the delivery of health and social care across Scotland.

There was discussion of the variations in performances between different IJBs, as well as areas where similar challenges had been identified across all IJBs, and the Committee **agreed:-**

that officers extrapolate and report to the next meeting any specific Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board issues.

11. SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT HEALTH & SPORT COMMITTEE REPORT – LOOKING AHEAD TO THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HEALTH BUDGET 2019/ 20

There had been circulated copy of the Scottish Parliament Health & Sport Committee's 9th report, "Looking ahead to the Scottish Government – Health Budget 2019-20: Is the budget delivering the desired outcomes for health and social care in Scotland?".

The Committee heard further from the Chief Finance Officer of the intent of the cross-party Committee's report to inform Holyrood's budget plans and of the high level conclusions that (a) there was generally a fundamental need for a better relationship between Integration Joint Boards, Health Boards and Councils, in terms of the developing shifting balance of care; (b) the need for leadership development opportunities for lead officers; (c) the challenges of set aside service budgets; (d) outcomes for investment, and (e) funding for alcohol and drug partnerships.

There was discussion of the independence of the Health and Sport Committee and its self determination of the terms of reference for their report; and the list of witnesses who had provided evidence to the MSPs, and the Committee **agreed** to welcome the report as a source of useful information to complement the Audit Scotland report considered in Item 10 above.

12. JOINT INSPECTION OF ADULT SUPPORT AND PROTECTION – CARE INSPECTORATE/ HMICS

There had been circulated a joint report dated July 2018 by the Care Inspectorate and MHICS, looking at the provision of Adult Support and Protection in the North Ayrshire, Highland, Dundee City, Aberdeenshire, East Dunbartonshire, and Midlothian partnerships.

The Committee heard further from the Chief Finance Officer of the specific recommendations made on Aberdeenshire, which had been deemed "adequate" but with attention required on (a) timely referral processing; (b) chronologies; (c) appropriate training for officers and from the Partnership Manager (Central) of the Integration Joint Board's previous consideration of Adult Support and Protection, with the adoption of an Action Plan to address performance to be reported to a future meeting of the Joint Board.

There was discussion of the learning opportunities afforded by the report's assessment of other Partnerships performance; and whether the subject should be a small, specialist resource, or part of everyone's responsibilities and the Committee **agreed:-**

that an update report on the Action Plan previously agreed be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

Arising from discussion of the above, the Committee further **agreed:-**

that future external reports be pre-faced by an officer cover report, highlighting the issues to be considered by the Committee.

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