

Human Tissue Authority Board meeting

Date: 7 December 2023
Paper reference: HTA 32/23
Agenda item: 9
Approved by: Professor Gary Crowe

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Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee update

Purpose of paper

1. This paper provides an overview of the business of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting held on 19 October 2023.

Action required

2. The Board is asked to note the content of this report.

Background

3. The Committee discussed the following items as material elements of the meeting.

Internal Audit

4. The Committee received a report from GIAA on the progress of the planned Internal Audits.

Audit recommendations

5. The Committee received an update on progress of outstanding recommendations and agreed to accept at risk 2 recommendations (Utilisation of Capabilities and Record 2 Report; accounting periods), and close a further 4 recommendations.

External Audit

6. KPMG provided an update on planning for the 2023/24 financial audit and agreed to present their plan at ARAC's February 2024 meeting.

Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT)

7. The Committee received a report from the Director of Data, Technology and Development. Members were asked to note the preparations being made for 2023 submission and the main changes to the DSPT standards and progress with the action planning.

Strategic Risk Register

8. The revised Strategic Risk Register (SRR) was considered by the Committee. Discussion focussed on a resource issues affecting business delivery and the delivery of new actions from the Department as well as mitigations, including asking the Department for additional funding.
9. The Committee raised concerns around essential projects that were postponed, in particular IT projects. The Executive assured the committee that once the role of Head of IT was in place, projects could commence.
10. A deep dive into risk 4 (Failure to adequately deliver the diverse, capable workforce the HTA requires or needs to fulfil its functions and objectives) was presented to the committee. A review of roles within the HTA has been undertaken and a register of critical posts/single points of failure has been developed. The paper covered HR risks across the organisation and covered a number of current and future actions, but recognised that it was difficult to mitigate against all risk due to the size of the organisation.
11. Concern was raised where some roles have specialist knowledge and what further actions can be taken to reduce risks. A recommendation of role-sharing

was made in addition to looking at what other organisations are doing around workforce demographics. The committee requested that an action plan be developed looking at the risks outlined in the deep dive, to be discussed at the next Remco, including a new 'people strategy' to be taken forward in 2024/25.

Other items

12. The Committee received an update on Cyber Security, the Committee noted that there were no instances where cyber security has posed a threat or compromised the HTA. The Committee were advised that employees internet usage/access to unauthorised sites were being monitored.
13. The Committee considered a number of policies and procedures including approval of the counter fraud, bribery and corruption strategy and reserves policy and reviewing the gifts and hospitality register.

Recommendation

14. The Board is asked to note the content of this report.