

Human Tissue Authority

Board Meeting Conducted in Public

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Agenda item: 9

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Audit and Risk 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 8 June 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 noted four reports since their last meeting that concluded the 2022/23 internal audit plan, these included three moderate assurance reports for Living Organ Donation; Record to Report Financial Processes and Performance Measurement. The fourth, a review of HTA's Records Management Processes provided limited assurance, but this was anticipated

and the report provides helpful recommendations for revised process currently being developed within the organisation.

5. The Committee then received the internal audit opinion for 2022/23 from the Head of Internal Audit, which concluded that an overall rating of moderate assurance could be provided. This was in keeping with previous years, although the committee noted that the report indicated a slight downward trajectory from previous years and that this would need to be addressed during 2023/24 if moderate assurance levels were to be maintained.

Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

6. The Director of Resources presented the Annual Report and Accounts for the 2021/22 financial year to the Committee. The committee noted and discussed material movements in the accounts from the previous financial year and the new disclosures for this reporting year.
7. The Committee then received the draft External Audit Completion Report from Dean Gibbs of KPMG on behalf of the National Audit Office. The committee noted that there were no material errors found or audit adjustments recommended, and that the opinion was for the accounts to be unqualified.
8. Subject to the conclusion of the audit process with no further material findings, the Committee endorsed the recommendation that the Annual Report and Accounts be signed by the Accounting Officer.

Strategic Risk Register

9. The revised Strategic Risk Register (SRR) was considered by the Committee, this had been updated to reflect the 2023/24 Business Plan and included updates to several risk areas and the Executive's proposal to create new risks for failure to deliver the Business Plan and failure to adhere to corporate responsibilities. The Committee were not minded to agree with the Executive regarding the new risks and felt that the areas identified did not necessarily require explicit separation but could be conveyed within the existing 7 strategic risks.

Other items

10. The Committee received an update on Cyber Security from Louise Dineley, Director of Data, Technology & Development, and noted the annual report from the Senior Information Risk Owner.
11. The Committee noted that the HTA was in the process of finalising its annual Data Security Protection Toolkit submission to NHS Digital, which is due on 30 June 2023.
12. The Committee also received an update on the HTA's assessment against Government Function Standards. The Committee noted the work to assess the current adherence and asked for more explicit indication of the further work that would be undertaken to move towards compliance or recommendations to risk accept partially met against areas where full compliance would be both resource intensive with limited additional risk mitigation.

Recommendation

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