

Minutes of COPFS and QLTR Audit and Risk Committee Extraordinary Meeting for the Approval and Signing of the COPFS & QLTR Annual Accounts 2021- 22

Held on Wednesday, 24 August 2022 at 11:00 hours (via Microsoft Teams)

Present:

Members

Robert Tinlin	Non-Executive Director (Chair)
David Watt	Non-Executive Director
Vanessa Davies	Non-Executive Director

In Attendance

David Harvie	Crown Agent, Chief Executive and COPFS Accountable Officer
Robert Sandeman	QLTR Accountable Officer
Keith Dargie	COPFS Head of Business Services and Chief Digital Officer
Marlene Anderson	COPFS Director of Finance and Procurement
Jim Montgomery	Audit Manager, SG Internal Audit Directorate
William Wilkie	Senior Auditor, SG Internal Audit Directorate
Gillian Woolman	Audit Director, Audit Scotland
Esther Scoburgh	Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland
Katie Gibson	Audit Scotland QLTR Lead
Sharon Davies	COPFS Head of Management Accounting and Planning
Nikolaos Koutris	COPFS Head of Financial Accounting and Systems
Clair Lumgair	COPFS Finance Business Partner
Ian Palmer	COPFS Secretariat

Apologies

None tendered

1. Welcome / Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed attendees.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Governance of response to HM Inspectorate of Prosecutions Scotland reports

DH (CA) apologised for the late submission of **ARC Paper 29A** (2022) and that the associated documents were not the most up to date versions.

The committee welcomed the direction of travel outlined in the report and agreed that discussion will be continued at the November 2022 ARC Meeting once administrative details and documents have been finalised.

Action:

Secretariat to re-schedule Governance of response to HM Inspectorate of Prosecutions Scotland reports to November 2022 ARC Agenda.

3. Internal Audit

ARC Paper 30 (2022) DIAA Progress Update Report to ARC

ARC noted the report and looked forward to receiving further updates for discussion at future ARC Meetings

In relation to the Gateway Review of COPFS Procurement of Mortuary and Pathology Services, WW reported that the planning meeting took place on 18 August and the review scheduled for 7 – 9 September 2022.

The review report will be presented for discussion at the ARC meeting in November.

Ongoing work includes a review the Court Recovery Programme, Digital Resilience and a follow up to the Wellbeing Review 2020-21.

Releasable under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act after next meeting

Audit resource capacity and availability issues are being looked at.

ARC will continue to receive update reports regarding these issues.

General discussion followed.

During discussion it was identified that in relation to assurance mapping it would be of some value to look at having a review of the framework of Fraud Risk Assessment.

The undernoted papers had been submitted for information and were noted by the Committee:

ARC Paper 31 (2022) DIAA Annual Report 2021-22

ARC Paper 32 (2022) DIAA Annual Assurance Report 2021-22
(SG Corporate Systems)

ARC Paper 33 (2022) DIAA Quarterly Bulletin (August 2022)

4. COPFS Annual Report and Financial Statements as at 31 March 2022

It was reported that the final version of the COPFS Annual Accounts and Report for 2021-22 had not yet been completed for final presentation and approval.

The finalised document will now be presented to the committee for approval on **14 September 2022 at 12.30 pm**

In the interim, MA presented a draft version of **ARC Paper 34 (2022)**

It was reported that the majority of the draft document reflects what will appear in the final version subject to the inclusion of some additional/updated data.

It was confirmed the presentational style of the document will be reformatted for final website publication.

Marlene gave an overview of the document which included

- 77% of resource spending is on staffing. This evidences a commitment to the maintenance of core business and contributing to the overall progress of Court Recovery.
- Increasing serious and complex caseloads which attracted additional funding
- Efficiency savings achieved in non-staffing costs.

ARC noted the draft documents and welcomed the increasing level of detail and the planned presentational enhancements to be made prior to final publication.

A general discussion focussed on the utility of the annual report.

Recommendations had been made earlier in the year in relation to the contextualisation of performance and outcomes. Discussion followed on how these might be incorporated and strategic planning.

ARC thanked the teams involved for their work in preparing the draft reports and looked forward to receiving the final version for discussion in September.

5. Report to those charged with governance (ISA 260) and COPFS Annual Audit Report 2021-22

GW gave a verbal update

Some ongoing case related expenditure submissions have yet to be concluded before the Audit Report and Opinion can be finalised and presented. Liaison work is ongoing in this regard.

Subject to the relevant information being submitted and the audit being concluded it is anticipated these documents will be ready in advance of formal presentation at the 14 September ARC Meeting.

Key messages included:

- Audit went well and thanks given to all participants for the co-operation and support received.
- Audit plan was presented on 3 March 2022 and there are no changes to the audit risks identified at that time.
- Audit was conducted remotely with a final meeting held in person.
- Given personal circumstances, which necessitated interaction with a service of COPFS, it is anticipated that the final report will be subject to Audit Scotland peer review to ensure objectivity.

6. Presentation of QLTR Annual Accounts 2021-22

SD presented **ARC Paper 35 (a)** (2022)

She reported there were a couple of minor amendments to the documents in the meeting pack and these have been incorporated in the final papers submitted for approval.

Releasable under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act after next meeting

SD conveyed her thanks to all colleagues involved in the preparation of the report and accounts.

SD gave a brief overview of the paper and general discussion followed.

A review of enhancing the utility of the QLTR Performance Report is planned for October 2022.

It was agreed that it may also be opportune to plan a review around the governance structures of QLTR.

The annual accounts were approved.

ARC thanked all staff involved in the production of these accounts and for the hard work and dedication shown by the QLTR team.

7. Report to those charged with governance (ISA 260)

QLTR Annual Audit Report 2021-22

ES presented **ARC Paper 36 A** and **B** for approval.

KG and ES gave an overview of the report and minor adjustments noted.

General discussion followed and the report was formally approved.

8. Approval and Recommendation to sign the QLTR Annual Accounts for 2021-22

The committee approved the papers and agreed a recommendation of assurance that the accounting officer may sign the QLTR accounts for 2021-22.

ARC will next meet for the formal approval of COPFS Annual Accounts and Report 2021-22 on **14 September 2022 at 12.30 pm**