

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Summary

Key Summary points of the HRA Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 5 May 2020.

Committee governance:

- Quorate
- Attendance (membership 4/4)

Key business conducted

Health Group Internal Audit Service (HGIAS) Assurance reports

- Information Governance report
 - Moderate rating
 - The Committee was pleased to note the positive findings however discussed how the change to home working for all staff may impact on the HRA's approach and assuredness regarding information governance.
- Follow up of recommendations
 - Advisory review
 - The Committee noted some progress had been made to ensure the satisfactory implementation of recommendations.
 - Further work is required to ensure the tracking information of recommendations better reflects the actual status of the recommendation.

Draft HRA HGIAS Audit Plan 2020/21

- The Committee questioned whether the balance of audits was still appropriate in light of Covid-19. The Executive agreed to review the plan and confirm out of session.

Corporate Risk Register Quarter 4 2019/20

- The Committee noted the quarter 4 risk register, which had a large number of new risks relating to the impact of Covid-19 on staff, members and the wider research community.
- The register also included a number of risks relating to the research systems programme. The Committee noted the risk register had been drafted prior to the Department of Health & Social Care Investment Committee meeting where approval had successfully been secured to continue to the next stage of procurement. The Committee noted this would likely result in a decrease in

the risk profile for a number of the research system related risks on the register.

Communications cascade exercise

- Feedback from exercise conducted in December 2019 / January 2020 which tested the HRA's ability to communicate with all staff in an emergency using personal mobile numbers held on the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) and the Government's [Notify](#) system.
- The exercise was largely successful with the vast majority of staff receiving the test communication. Those staff whose contact information was missing or incomplete on ESR were subsequently asked to update their records.
- The Notify system was utilised in a real-life situation when all staff were requested to work from home on the evening of 16 March. The lessons learnt from the exercise helped ensure the real-life use of the system worked effectively.

Risk deep dive – HRA management response to Covid-19

- The Committee received an update on the work undertaken by the HRA thus far in managing the impact of Covid-19 on its staff and volunteer members.
- The Committee noted the positive feedback Graham and Richard had received regarding the HRA's response following discussions with staff forum representations.
- This mirrored the findings from a short survey conducted regarding how staff are finding working from home. This recognised the challenges faced by some staff such as carer responsibilities. 50% of individuals advised they were likely to work more from home in the future. 87% of the total responders (135) agreed the HRA was handling the situation well or very well which the Committee was assured to read.
- A discussion regarding the risks affecting the HRA and the wider research system also took place. The Committee noted the likely change to how research in the NHS will operate and recognised the need for the HRA to re-orientate itself to meet this need.
- The Committee agreed the next steps for moving to new way of working and considering the possible scenarios in the medium and long term will be key and recommended further discussion take place at a future Board meeting.
- The Committee was assured by the considerable work undertaken by the HRA in managing the situation and congratulated staff and members for the hard work undertaken.

Draft annual report and accounts 2019/20

- The Committee received the first draft of the annual report and accounts for 2019/20.
- The Committee had no major issues to flag at this stage and looked forwarding to reviewing the more complete version in June.