

<b>Agenda item:</b>	18
<b>Attachment:</b>	A

## HRA Board Cover sheet

### 20 September 2023

<b>Title of paper:</b>	10 August 2023 HRA Audit & Risk Committee meeting summary
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Steve Tebbutt
<b>Summary of paper:</b>	To provide a brief summary of the matters discussed at the last HRA Audit & Risk Committee meeting.
<b>Reason for submission:</b>	For information
<b>Further information:</b>	See summary update
<b>Dissemination:</b>	Published on HRA website
<b>Time required:</b>	0 minutes

## Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Summary

Key Summary points of the Health Research Authority (HRA) Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 10 August 2023.

### Committee governance:

- Quorate (5 of 5 members in attendance).
- Committee now has full complement of members with two independent members joining the Committee in February and June 2023 respectively. One independent member has formal financial qualification which meets best practice requirements.

### Key business conducted:

#### Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) audit plan for 2023/24

- One change to the plan for 2023/24 has been agreed with an organisational design audit taking place in quarter 3 replacing the originally proposed Research Systems Programme (RSP) audit.

#### Assurance dashboard

- The Committee received and noted the assurance dashboard which provides an overview of open GIAA audits and Research Ethics Committee (REC) accreditation reviews.
- The Committee was pleased to learn that 10 GIAA recommendations have been closed with recommendations enacted.

#### Risk register

- The Committee received and noted the Executive Committee Monthly Risk & Issue report which details all risks scoring 12 and above and all high priority issues.

#### Information Governance Annual Report

- The Committee received and noted the HRA IG Annual Report 2022/23 which outlined key activity, achievements and issues relating to Information Governance (IG) within the HRA throughout the year. The Committee was satisfied IG issues had been appropriately managed.

#### HRA Business Continuity Annual Report

- The Committee received and approved the HRA Business Continuity Annual Report which describes the activities the HRA has taken in the financial year of 2022-23 to maintain and improve its Business Continuity and Emergency Management Systems.

#### Government Functional Standards

- The Committee received and noted the functional standards summary which provides the latest position regarding the September 2021 requirement of accounting officers to ensure that all 'shall' statements in the respective functional standards are put in place by 31 March 2022.

- The Committee noted that not all the standards have been fully met but acknowledged this was due in part to the nature and size of the HRA. The Committee agreed compliance with the standards was a priority and not meeting functional standards could have an impact on delivery of key objectives, such as RSP.

### **Deep dive into Audit & Risk Committee annual effectiveness review**

- The Committee reviewed the annual effectiveness findings and discussed the areas of strength, areas for improvement, areas where efficiencies can be made and considered any actions going forward and areas for improvement.
- The Committee noted the findings indicated the Committee was largely operating effectively and following best practice. Two areas for improvement were however identified.
  - The Committee discussed holding a face-to-face meeting once a year to build relationships to support more effective working.
  - The Committee discussed whistleblowing and freedom to speak up processes and agreed it was an area which the Committee required greater clarity.

### **Declaration of interest report 2022/23**

- The Committee received and noted the Conflict of Interest and Gifts Register Annual Report. The Committee noted that between April 2022 and May 2023 there had been no declarations or gifts received which required escalation to the HRA executives or Board.