



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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PUBLIC MEETING: INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2020 @ 1330 HRS

BY TELECONFERENCE

PRESENT:

Kirsty Darwent, Chair (KD)
Nick Barr (NB)
Fiona Thorburn (FT)
Brian Baverstock (BB)

Bill McQueen, Deputy Chair (BMcQ)
Primrose Stark (PS)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Blunden (MB)
Richard Whetton (RW)
Alasdair Cameron (AC)
Debbie Haddow (DH)
Heather Greig (HG)

Chief Officer
Head of Corporate Governance
Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Board Support Team
Board Support Executive Officer/Minutes

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 None.

3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE

3.1 It was agreed that the items required to be taken in private were the private minutes from the previous meeting on 16 January 2020 and the COVID-19 Update.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 None

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 16 JANUARY 2020

5.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

6 ACTION LOG

- 6.1 The Committee considered the action log and agreed the closure of the completed actions.
- 6.2 **Item 8.2 Chairs Issues and Common Themes - ICT (03/10/19)** – MB advised that Accenture had been appointed the contract for the digital review, however, due to the current COVID-19 situation, commencement had been delayed until September 2020. As this would be progressed through the Board governance route, the Committee agreed the action would be closed.
- 6.3 **The Committee noted the updated action log.**

7 AREAS OF OVERLAP

- 7.1 BB raised the issue of responding to various recommendations from external assurance providers and the timelines for responding if the IGC reverted to a 6 monthly meeting cycle. As a new approach was being developed in relation to how the organisation responds to HMFSI reports, BB asked if the current arrangements for Committees was consistent with this approach.
- 7.2 KD stated if any implications arose the IGC would determine which Committee was appropriate to progress those specific areas. KD added that should a quick decision or response be required on any matter in between scheduled meetings this could be progressed by e-mail or telephone.
- 7.3 BB referred to an Internal Audit review of transformation which was delayed during the 2019-20 audit plan. This was subsequently covered by the Gateway Review and scrutinised by TMPC and ARAC, however, BB expressed his concern around the assurance received following this and requested it be included within the 2020-21 audit plan.
- 7.4 FT and PS welcomed a further review to identify if any elements of assurance required to be gathered and should there be gaps these should be addressed as part of the 2020/21 audit plan.
- 7.5 It was agreed that a discussion between BB, MB, SO'D and Internal Auditors (IA) should take place in relation to shaping the future audit plan, asking IA to look at what has been undertaken already, where there are gaps and what work may need to be carried out in audit terms to fill these gaps, with a recommendation that would inform the 2020/21 [future] audit plan.

ACTION: BB

- 7.6 BMcQ queried the formal process to decide what the audit plan would include and it was clarified as the Board's role but informed by these early conversations. KD clarified that there was some pre-work required to be carried out and brought back for further discussion. It was agreed that the plan would be an iterative process.

8 CHAIRS ISSUES AND COMMON THEMES

8.1 TED Review – Overlap With SDC/TMPC

- 8.1.1 FT advised that TMPC had considered the TED Review and the areas of overlap arising from the various elements of it. Due to the good communications between FT and NB the different areas of the review which TMPC and SDC would scrutinise were clear. It was anticipated that when the portfolio training element was added to the structure of the training delivery this would change.
- 8.1.2 PS highlighted the additional overlap with Staff Governance Committee which was keen to understand the action planning and how matters could be expedited to become business as usual. PS reiterated the importance of constant communication between the three Chairs.

8.1.3 The Committee welcomed this agreed approach.

9 INSPECTIONS AND AUDITS

9.1 Gateway 0 Review

9.1.1 RW referred to the Gateway 0 Review report which was previously circulated to Board members. Although it would be scrutinised by TMPC the opportunity for discussion at IGC was due to the strategic nature, the link to change across the organisation and the interest to all Committees owing to the nature of the work.

9.1.2 The Review which was carried out on 16-17 February 2020 by the Scottish Government Centre of Expertise (CoE), interviewed 13 people across the Service and met with the SRO each day. The final report, agreed between the SRO and the CoE team was given an Amber rating signifying the ability to deliver with some issues that required management attention.

9.1.3 RW outlined the 7 recommendations arising from the Review and advised that an action plan had been produced detailing the key activities to be undertaken to address these recommendations.

9.1.4 BB requested assurance that the benefit management strategy was well advanced. RW provided reassurance stating that a significant amount of work had been undertaken and further work would be carried out within the timescales detailed in the review to show higher level portfolio benefits.

9.1.5 The IGC welcomed the opportunity to note the Gateway 0 Review noting it was the role of the TMPC to undertake the actual scrutiny.

9.2 HMFSI Update from SDC

9.2.1 NB referred to a brief overview of the SDC meeting held on 12 March 2020 which was circulated to IGC members. A summary of the SDC meeting was given.

9.2.2 It was previously agreed that a more detailed update around HMFSI inspection reports would be given to ensure all Board members were fully aware of the situation. NB invited feedback in relation to the level of feedback required.

9.2.3 An update in relation to HMFSI and the current PIF review and new approach referred to at item 7.1, was requested along with an overview of the new roles of key officers. MB would provide an update on these and circulate an organogram of the new SLT structure once completed.

ACTION: BST

9.2.4 It was agreed that members would be keen to receive updates in regard to HMFSI, however, it was felt that an update on inspection reports to IGF was appropriate with a wider HMFSI update to be provided to the full Board.

9.2.5 It was noted that no formal notification had been received from HMFSI with regards planned inspection activity for the forthcoming year. It was proposed that in an attempt to further strengthen relationships a meeting with HMFSI and MB, KD, NB be requested to discuss work activity. MB agreed to write to HMFSI to request his intentions in this matter.

ACTION: MB

9.2.6 RW confirmed that in order to gain a more structured approach with HMFSI, a revised approach was currently being developed as previously referred to. This would be circulated to the Board once finalised.

9.2.7 The RDS Training inspection report was discussed and it was confirmed a copy would be

sent to the Board in due course.

10 COMPLIANCE AND GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND PRACTICES (PRINCIPLES 5 AND 6)

10.1 AC provided an update in relation to the performance reporting against principles 5 and 6 set out in the SFRS Code of Corporate Governance. With significant progress being made 3 Reasonable Assurance had been increased to Substantial resulting in all 13 actions being Substantial. There were therefore no Insufficient, Limited or Reasonable Assurance.

10.2 Due to the review of the corporate governance framework to be undertaken across the organisation, AC advised this was the final time the report would be presented in the current format.

10.3 **The Committee noted the content of the report and progress made against the Improvement Actions.**

11 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

11.1 AC advised that during an IGC workshop held in January 2020, the amount and level of business of the Committee was discussed and it was therefore proposed that it would be more appropriate to being a Forum moving forward. The Terms of Reference were amended to reflect these discussions and the proposed main amendments were noted as:

- Role and change from Committee to Forum.
- The Forum would meet at least 6 monthly but could hold meetings as required.
- Where required the Forum would circulate information electronically if a quick response was required in relation to a specific matter.
- Removing their previous oversight role with this being a key responsibility for the Board.
- No decision-making powers.
- More emphasis placed around reducing duplication, identifying common themes and a joined-up approach to Governance.
- Forum meetings to be held in private, with the Board receiving updates accordingly.
- Responsibilities refined, with the understanding that ARAC will have the clear focus on Governance as per their ToR seeking 'Assurances relating to the corporate governance requirements for the organisation'.
- Deputy Chairs of the Committees can stand in for the Chairs of Committees in their absence.

11.2 BB queried an element of duplication in relation to review of actions taken on recommendations to governance both internally and from eg HMFSI and also the scrutiny of compliance with legislation and performance against national standards. RW confirmed that general oversight and consideration of these areas sat with the Board and IGF (if decided by the Board) would be more around awareness and discussion. It was noted however that some areas previously taken forward by the IGC around compliance and promotion of good practice may require to go to ARAC when the IGC becomes a Forum (if decided by the Board). The phrasing within the ToR would be amended to reflect this and circulated to Committee members for agreement.

ACTION: BST

12 ANNUAL VALUE ADDED STATEMENT 2019/20

12.1 AC presented the Annual Value Added Statement for the IGC for 2019/20. Aspects within the report support the review of the effectiveness of the Board as a whole as well as the move from a Committee to a Forum based on the level of business being brought forward.

12.2 Key areas highlighted the work of the Committee, common themes, areas of overlap, workshops etc.

12.3 The Committee noted the contents of the Annual Value Added Statement 2019/20.

13 FORWARD PLAN

13.1 Committee Forward Plan

13.1.1 AC presented the Committee Forward Plan for noting.

13.1.2 As discussed earlier in the meeting the Digital Review would be removed and progressed through the Board.

13.1.3 The Committee noted the Forward Plan.

13.2 Items for Consideration at Future Board and Strategy/Information & Development Day Meetings

13.2.1 BMcQ asked if other forms of communication methods would be utilised for upcoming Board/Committee meetings. KD confirmed that other methods using video facilities would be explored for these purposes and introduced over the coming weeks.

14 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

14.1 AC confirmed the actions arising during the meeting which the Committee agreed.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 The next meeting of the Integrated Governance Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday 9 July 2020 at 1330 hrs in the Braidwood Suite, SFRS Headquarters, Westburn Drive, Cambuslang, G72 7NA, subject to the COVID-19 situation at that time.

15.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1515 hrs.

PRIVATE SESSION

16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING: 16 JANUARY 2020

16.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

17 COVID-19 UPDATE

17.1 The Committee took the opportunity to obtain a brief update on the COVID-19 situation from MB, however, a comprehensive update would be provided at the Board meeting on 26 March 2020.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 1530 hours.