



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EAST LOTHIAN INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD
AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 8 MARCH 2023
VIA DIGITAL MEETINGS SYSTEM**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor L Bruce
Ms E Gordon
Ms F Ireland (Chair)
Councillor L Jardine
Mr D Binnie (NV)

Officers Present:

Ms C Flanagan
Mr I Gorman
Mr D Stainbank

Other Attendees:

Mr J Boyd, Audit Scotland
Ms K Graham, Audit Scotland

Clerk:

Ms F Currie

Apologies:

None

Declarations of Interest:

None

1. MINUTES OF THE EAST LoTHIAN IJB AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING OF 6 DECEMBER 2022 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the East Lothian IJB Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 6th December 2022 were approved.

The following matters arising from the minutes were discussed:

Item 1 (Matters Arising) – the Chair asked when the self-evaluation questionnaire would be circulated to members of the Committee.

Duncan Stainbank said he would take direction from members but his intention had been to send this out in April/May. Members agreed with this timescale.

Item 2 (IAR – CIPFA Financial Management Code) – the Chair queried whether the timescale of April 2023 for completion of a multi-year financial plan was still achievable given the recent correspondence from East Lothian Council.

Claire Flanagan indicated that she intended to bring a revised version of the medium term financial plan, presented to the IJB in December 2022, to the IJB's meeting in March 2023 and that this would take account of the 2023/24 budget offers from the partners. However, she cautioned that position set out in the plan would probably not be balanced.

2. RISK REGISTER UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Finance Officer laying out the IJB's risk register.

Ms Flanagan presented the quarterly update report highlighting changes to individual risks and seeking members' approval to remove risk 5045 (COVID) from the register. She advised that this risk had been subsumed into other risks as services moved on from responding to the pandemic. Ms Flanagan also asked members to consider whether to include 'homelessness' as a specific risk in the IJB's register; to reflect the role of housing in supporting the transformation programme, or whether homelessness should be included within one of the IJB's other risks, such as 'financial resources'.

The members discussed this proposal and agreed that they needed further detail and understanding of the impacts of potential housing challenges on the delivery of the strategic plan, where the IJB's responsibilities lay in relation to housing and how its inclusion in the IJB's risk register would sit in relation to the partners' registers and that of the HSCP.

Iain Gorman proposed inviting Scott Kennedy and Ian Orr, who were responsible for the administration of the Council and NHS Lothian's risk registers, to forthcoming meetings of the Committee to discuss the complex relationships between the registers in more detail. Members agreed to this proposal.

Ms Flanagan and Mr Gorman also responded to further questions from members on risks 5045 and 3924. They confirmed that further details on mitigation measures would be included for risk 3924 and that a broader risk related to communicable diseases was now included in the HSCP's risk register but, as the rating was currently under 12, it was not reported to the Committee.

A vote was taken by roll call and the recommendations were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

- i. Note the risks on the current risk register;
- ii. Consider if any further risks should be added; and that risk 5045 (COVID) should be removed from the register.

3. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24

A report was submitted by the Chief Internal Auditor informing the Committee of Internal Audit's operational plan for 2023/24.

Mr Stainbank presented the report. He outlined the background to the plan and the factors taken into account when identifying audit assignments. He drew members' attention to the proposed audit work, the assessed risk and the timeframe for completion of each audit.

Mr Stainbank responded to questions from members providing further detail on the scope of the audit work on Change Boards and Performance Management, and an explanation of the Publication Scheme. He agreed to circulate a copy of the Publication Scheme to members.

A vote was taken by roll call and the recommendation was unanimously approved.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve the audit plan for 2023/24.

4. EAST LoTHIAN IJB DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2022/23

A report was submitted by Audit Scotland outlining the draft Annual Audit Plan for 2022/23.

The Chair welcomed John Boyd, Audit Director, and Karla Graham, Senior Auditor, to the meeting.

Mr Boyd confirmed that he and his team would be responsible for auditing the East Lothian IJB over the next 5 years. He presented the draft audit plan for 2022/23 which he said covered the key responsibilities and planned audit work for the year, as well as an initial risk assessment. He summarised the main areas of audit focus including the review of financial statements, materiality, and Best Value. He outlined the timetable for completion of the audit work and confirmed that the audit plan would be finalised and published by the end of March.

Mr Boyd responded to questions from members. He noted a change to the date of the Committee's September meeting and provided further detail of the specialist expertise and tools used to assess areas such as vision, leadership and governance, as part of the broader audit work.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the draft annual audit plan 2022/23.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – WORKFORCE PLANNING

A report was submitted by the Chief Internal Auditor informing the Committee of the recently issued audit report on Workforce Planning

Mr Stainbank presented the report, outlining the background and purpose of the audit. He advised members that a rating of 'reasonable assurance' had been given and he highlighted some of the key findings of the audit work.

Responding to questions, Mr Stainbank confirmed that there should be read-across between the IJB's workforce plan and those of its partners. There also needed to be an understanding of strategic objectives and how those fed into the work of the partners.

Mr Gorman acknowledged the difficulties of achieving this in practice but he felt that the necessary plans and understanding were now in place.

Ms Flanagan added that the IJB workforce plan covered the staff within the Health & Social Care Partnership and the individual who supported this work was the Partnership's workforce development officer.

In reply to a further question on the findings, Mr Gorman acknowledged that the monthly vacancy analysis did apply to all staff, not just nursing. He agreed to revise the wording in the report.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the audit report.

6. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – STRATEGIC PLANNING

A report was submitted by the Chief Internal Auditor informing the Committee of the recently issued audit report on Strategic Planning

Mr Stainbank presented the report, outlining the background and purpose of the audit. He advised members that a rating of 'reasonable assurance' had been given and he highlighted some of the key findings of the audit work.

Ms Flanagan referred to one of the audit findings relating to the recruitment of a commercial sector representative to the Strategic Planning Group. She observed that, historically, many IJBs had found it challenging to appoint to this role; the issue was not restricted to East Lothian.

Responding to questions, Mr Stainbank confirmed that the Strategic Plan would always be in draft until approved by the IJB. In practice, the IJB was asked to approve a Word version of the plan, which was then converted to a published format with photos and other graphics. However, Management had been asked to amend the wording of the recommendation to the IJB to make it clear that the IJB was approving the text and delegating authority to officers for this to be made into a final published version. The timing of the recommendation (December 2023) reflected the next point at which the annual performance report was due to be presented to the IJB.

Mr Stainbank also confirmed that the audit had reviewed the governance arrangements around the preparation of the Strategic Plan, rather than the content of the current Plan.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the audit report.

7. ASSESSMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Mr Stainbank reminded members that they had previously agreed that he should review how the Committee was performing and report back at a future meeting. As mentioned during agenda item 1, part of that work would involve a questionnaire to members with a view to identifying any skills gaps and considering the next steps. The questionnaire would be circulated within the next couple of months.

Signed

Fiona Ireland
Chair of the East Lothian IJB Audit and Risk Committee