COMMISSIONER FOR OLDER PEOPLE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (COPNI)

AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 3 DECEMBER AT 1:30PM IN EQUALITY HOUSE, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Gerard Campbell (Chair)
Breidge Gadd
Don Mackay
Julie Erskine

APOLOGIES No apologies

IN ATTENDANCE Claire Keatinge, Commissioner, COPNI
John Stevenson COPNI
Glenda Doherty COPNI

Christine Burns (NIAO)
Colette Kane (NIAO)
Frank Duffy (OFMDFM)

Agenda Item 1: Apologies No apologies were received. A NIAO representative indicated that she would have to leave the meeting at 3pm. The OFMdFM representative had indicated that he may arrive slightly late.	**NOTED**
Agenda Item 2: Chair's Business a) **Conflict of Interests** No conflict of interests were reported in this period. b) **Fraud** No incidents of fraud were reported in this period. c) **Risk Management update** ARAC members and NIAO reported that they were content with the risk register. ARAC members and NIAO made a number of minor recommendations for the format of the risk register. ARAC members were concerned that the lack of permanent staff still presents a significant risk to COPNI and agreed to raise this with the OFMdFM representative when he arrived. The Commissioner reported that she to present her draft themes and priorities at the OFMdFM Committtee and will identify	**ARAC 12/12/1**

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that she continues to work with a temporary staff team. NIAO indicated that any recommendations coming through in the Audit regarding OFMdFM approvals and permanent staffing would be sent to OFMdFM **Actions:** • A 3x3 matrix for risk analysis will be used. • The register should contain targets and indicate who is responsible for managing the risk. • The Commissioner will raise the issue of permanent staffing at the OFMdFM Committtee. • ARAC members to write in support of the Commissioner re: permanent staffing, if required **d) Single Tender Actions** No Single Tender Actions were reported in this period.	**ACTION:** **COPNI** **COPNI** **COPNI** **ARAC**
Agenda Item 3: Draft Minutes of the meeting of 3 September 2012. Draft minutes of the last ARAC meeting were discussed. The minutes were approved, however, members made recommendations on format. Two outstanding or ongoing actions will be progressed. **Actions:** • Future minutes should summarise details and anonymise individuals. • Details of CIPFA training program will be forwarded again to COPNI. • COPNI will continue to pursue the Chief Executive's Forum for a certificate or letter of attendance for training for ARAC members.	**ARAC 12/12/2** **ACTION:** **COPNI** **DM (ARAC)** **COPNI**
NIAO and ARAC: Brief Discussion on NIAO Audit COPNI and the OFMdFM representative left the room whilst ARAC members discussed the NIAO audit with ARAC members.	
Agenda Item 4: NIAO Risk Management Session NIAO presented a training session on Risk Management to ARAC members and attendees. NIAO said that it was important that ARAC endorses the risk management strategy and risk register for COPNI as COPNI has no board. ARAC members suggested meeting with the Audit and Risk Committees of other Arms Length Bodies for training purposes. **Action** • Meeting of ARAC with the Audit and Risk Committees of other Arms Length Bodies to be arranged	 **ACTION:** **COPNI**
Agenda 5: Matters arising not already on the Agenda No other matters were reported for this period	

Agenda Item 6: Commissioner's Update The Commissioner reported back on progress that had been made by COPNI on engagement and outward facing work with politicians, stakeholder, ageing networks and older people. The Commissioner reported that her draft themes and priorities had been positively received by stakeholders.	
a) **Feedback on Stewardship Statement** The Commissioner indicated that a six month stewardship statement was completed in September as OFMdFM did not ask for a stewardship statement in June.	**ARAC 12/12/3**
b) **Report on Accountability Meeting** The Commissioner attended the Accountability meeting with OFMdFM on 23 October 2012. OFMdFM reported at the meeting that they would not be hard charging for "loaned" staff.	
c) **Permanent Staffing Progress** ARAC members expressed their concern to the OFMdFM representative that permanent staff may not be in position until the next financial year and that the permanent staff business case, MSFM and business plan should be expediated. OFMdFM reported that the permanent staff business case was in the late stages of approval. The OFMdFM representative said he would keep ARAC abreast of approvals and would come back to them with regards to progress on the MSFM and business plan.	
Action • OFMdFM to keep ARAC informed of progress on the permanent staffing business case • OFMdFM to report progress on the MSFM and business plan	**ACTION:** **OFMdFM**
Agenda Item 7: Internal Audit	
a) **Internal Audit Management Response 11/12** The management response to the internal audit was discussed. It was an Amber report and there was an acknowledgement by the auditor that processes had developed considerably since 2011/12. ARAC members agreed that where recommendations were not accepted these should be reviewed by ARAC. ARAC members asked for minor amendments to the action plan.	**ARAC 12/12/4**
Action • Action plan to be colour coded • Grid to be drawn up, summarising progress on actions	**ACTION:** **COPNI**

• In future audits, recommendations that are not accepted should be reviewed by ARAC.	
b) **Update on Internal Audit Procurement** It was reported the selection panel had met with Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) to agree selection criteria and a timeline for procurement on 19 November 2012. The tender selection meeting is scheduled for 10 December 2012 and an award is anticipated by 12 December 2012. It is anticipated that an initiation meeting would take place prior to Christmas. ARAC members would review the draft audit plan in mid-January 2013, prior to the commencement of the Audit.	**ARAC 12/12/5**
Agenda Item 8: Update on COPNI Budget It was reported that the budget had been updated. An easement of £70K has been made in the January Monitoring Round due to an anticipated reduction in expenditure due to the removal of costs for loaned staff, and delays in recruiting permanent and temporary staff and approval of capital spend. Accruals and proposed expenditure were discussed and an update was provided on planned procurement.	**ARAC 12/12/6**
Agenda Item 9: NIAO Audit 2011/12 a) **Draft Management letter** The Chair thanked the staff at NIAO for a professional audit. It was reported that COPNI had obtained a non-qualified result – a good result in their first year. Priority 1 and 2 areas were discussed. Attention was drawn to suggested amendments which would be addressed by NIAO in the final document. ARAC members gave their formal endorsement to the document. The Chair advised that the Letter of Representation should be signed by the Commissioner and given to NIAO. **Action:** • Commissioner to sign Letter of Representation and give to NIAO b) **Final draft Year End Accounts 11/12** NIAO conducted an audit on financial statements up to the period of March 2011/12. NIAO reported that they were content that the accounts were a proper reflection of FReM and nothing of significant concern was found.	**ARAC 12/12/7** **ACTION:** **COPNI** **ARAC 12/12/8**
Agenda Item 10-17: Governance Policies ARAC members welcomed the updated governance policies and provided COPNI with general and specific advice and assurance on the documents. **General advice** • All policies should build in the provision for issues to be	**ARAC 12/12/9** **- ARAC 12/12/18**

brought to the Chair of ARAC where the issues concern the Commissioner. **<u>Specific Advice</u>** **Financial Manual** • All references to banking arrangements should refer to Danske rather than Northern bank **Gifts and Hospitality** • It is good practice for the corporate register for gifts and hospitality to be placed online. • Staff should ensure that gifts offered should be put on the register even if that gift is rejected. **Business Continuity Plan** • The business continuity plan should state where COPNI would relocate if unable to access the building. **Fire Evacuation procedures** • Fire evacuation procedures should be given at the commencement of every meeting in COPNI **Health and Safety Policy** • "Near misses", that is, where an incident has occurred but is not formally reported should be recorded. One of the ARAC members would provide COPNI with a form. **Secretariat Support Paper** • ARAC members reported that the Secretariat Support appraisal mechanism and checklist would be further discussed and evaluated in a subsequent meeting. **Action** • COPNI to implement recommendations • "Near misses" form to be forwarded to COPNI. • Secretariat support paper to be put on the agenda of the next full ARAC meeting.	 **ACTION:** **COPNI** **JE (ARAC)** **COPNI**
Agenda Item 18. Any Other Business None	
Agenda Item 19. Future Meeting Schedule The Chair reported that a further one-off meeting of ARAC would be required in mid-January to discuss the draft Audit plan. The Chair would forward suitable dates to COPNI. **Action** • The Chair to forward suitable meeting dates to COPNI • COPNI to arrange meeting with ARAC members	 **ACTION:** **Chair** **COPNI**

Signed: _____ **Chairperson**

Date: ____17/6/13____