

Audit & Risk Committee of Governing Body

Minutes of 25th November, 2020

Present:	Dr Fionnuala Anderson (Chairperson), Marie Carroll, Kieron Connolly, Sam Dunwoody
Apologies:	Maeve McConnon
In Attendance:	David Smith, Bernard Mullarkey, Conor Logan, Elaine Dominguez (Minute-taker)

The Meeting was held as a Video Conference Meeting due to the Government's restriction requirements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting commenced at 10.30hrs and concluded at 12.25hrs

The Chairperson requested that another member of the Audit & Risk Committee act as Chairperson for this meeting; Marie Carroll agreed to carry out the role on this occasion.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted, as circulated, with the removal of Item 7.2 as the issue of the Management Letter was previously discussed at the meeting of 29th September 2020.

Proposer: FA
Seconder: SD

2. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Adoption of Minutes of the Meeting of 29th September 2020

The Minutes of the meeting of 29th September 2020 were adopted as circulated.

Proposer: FA
Seconder: MC

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2019/2020 (Item 5.1) – the Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2019/2020 was approved by the Governing Body at its meeting on 7th October 2020.

4.2 IADT's Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 (Item 5.3) – the Institute's Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 was approved by the Governing Body at its meeting of 7th October 2020 and subsequently forwarded to the HEA on 15th October 2020. It was reported that the President received correspondence from the HEA on 23rd November 2020, which contained a Template/Guidelines for the completion of the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020. The S/FC will compare the template with

the original template circulated by the HEA in August 2020. It was further reported that the HEA Board has requested that the Audit and Risk Committee of each institution include, in future internal audit work plans, a review on one or two areas of the Rolling Review of Pay and Pensions in 2020 as relevant to their Institution. It was noted that as part of the Deloitte Audit Plan 2020-2023 (approved by the Audit & Risk Committee on 29th September 2020), an internal audit review is underway, with a close-out meeting this week, on the Institute's compliance with the Employment Control Framework. The Secretary/ Financial Controller will consult the Rolling Review document to ensure that this recent internal audit captures the requirements of the HEA.

4.3 Management Letter for Financial Statements for year ended 31st August 2019 (Item 7.1) – in relation to the proposal for the C&AG's Audit Completion Report and DHKN's Management Letter for the Financial Statements for year ended 31st August 2019 to be brought to the Governing Body via a summary report, it was confirmed that the Secretary/Financial Controller would present a report to the Board at its meeting of 9th December 2020.

5. Internal Audit

5.1 Meeting with Deloitte – Clíodhna Maloney and Brenda Nelson (Managers at Deloitte) joined the meeting via MS Teams at 11.13hrs and briefed the Audit & Risk Committee members on the Internal Audit Follow-up Review Report as circulated.

5.2 Deloitte Internal Audit Follow-up Review Report (October 2020) – during the briefing by the representatives from Deloitte, it was noted that the Follow-up Review Report lists 38 recommendations as follows: 16 Issues closed/superseded; 5 Issues to be proposed as Risk Accepted; 10 Issues partially implemented/in progress, 4 issues overdue, and 3 issues not due.

In relation to the 4 overdue issues, the following was noted:

- (i) **Items 3.3.1 and 3.3.2** - these actions were under the remit of the then Head of Creative Engagement, who was on extended sick leave during 2019/2020 and who subsequently resigned from the Institute. The Institute recognises that these issues/recommendations should have been delegated to another Executive/Management Team member in light of the long-term absence of the Head of Creative Engagement. It was proposed that the recommendations under 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 will realistically not be actioned until Q2 2021.
- (ii) **Item 3.4.7** – a Continuous Assessment Policy is due to be completed by the end of 2020.
- (iii) **Item 3.7.1** – the revised due date for the development of formal procedures to manage the process for the resignation of Governing Body members is March 2021.

The Chairperson of the Audit & Risk Committee enquired as to whether the Committee members, or the representatives from Deloitte had any issues they wished to discuss in the absence of IADT staff members. It was confirmed that there were no issues that required further discussion/revision. The Chairperson thanked both Clíodhna Maloney and Brenda Nelson for the work completed to date. The internal auditors left the meeting at 11.25hrs.

5.3 Risk Acceptance Proposals – the Secretary/Financial Controller briefed the Audit & Risk Committee members on the risks proposed to be accepted by the Institute. A discussion arose in relation to the acceptance of risks where the majority of the internal auditor’s recommendations have been completed, but with elements which cannot be implemented, and how these can be monitored while accepting the residual risk. It was noted that the President wishes to implement a digital risk register with a live dashboard for the monitoring of risks for the Institute as a replacement for the existing Risk Register.

Post Meeting Note:

It was agreed with the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee that the Secretary/Financial Controller would withdraw the risk acceptance proposals and would reformulate these for future presentation to the Audit & Risk Committee.

5.4 IADT Master Internal Audit Report Tracker – This document was reviewed/discussed as part of the Deloitte Internal Audit Follow-up Review Report (Item 5.2). Updates in addition to those discussed previously included:

- (i) **Access Control Policy for Safeguarding Student Assessments/Project Work (Item 3.4.1)** = the Heads of Faculty/Heads of Department are to develop and implement Access Control Policies in relation to safeguarding interim assessments/project work.
- (ii) **Student Support Services (Item 3.4.2)** – contracts have been awarded to relevant organisations to provide supports for students including: Irish sign language interpreting services, Notetaking services, Speed Text Operator services and Personal Assistant services.
- (iii) **Update of the SOP for Invigilators (Item 3.4.3)** – due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no written examinations were held during the second semester of the 2019/2020 academic year; however the SOP will be updated prior to the next set of written examinations.
- (iv) **Update of IADT’s Procurement Policy (Items 3.5.1, 3.5.2 & 3.5.3)**– the Procurement Policy has been updated accordingly, was approved by the Governing Body on 9th September 2020, and has been uploaded onto the Institute’s website.
- (v) **User Access Reviews of Banner, Digitary & CAO Connect (Item 3.4.1)** – quarterly reviews are being conducted on Banner user access but no new users have been added or amended in the past academic year; there are only 3 users with access to Digitary; and quarterly reviews are being conducted on user access of CAO Connect (no new users or user privileges have been added or amended during 2019/2020).
- (vi) **Consistent Purging of Data (Item 3.4.2)** – the purging of data relating to postgraduate applications will be completed in December 2020 and annually thereafter.
- (vii) **Review of Protected Disclosures Policy (Item 3.7.4)** – IADT’s Protected Disclosures Policy has been reviewed, was approved by the Governing Body on 17th June 2020, and has been uploaded onto IADT’s website.

6. Corporate Procurement

6.1 Corporate Procurement Plan 2020/2021 – IADT’s Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP) 2020/2021 was discussed as circulated. It was reported that the Secretary/Financial Controller, Finance Manager and ICT Manager met last month with the

Education Procurement Services to receive feedback on the CPP 2019/2020. It was noted that 50% of the Institute's expenditure relates to National Framework Agreement (NFA)/Contracts. The 17% 'Not Specified' relates to contracts for the Institute's ICT infrastructure, which are dealt with via HEAnet. It was noted that as HEAnet is not listed in the spreadsheet provided by the OGP/EPS for completion and, therefore, these contracts must be categorised as 'Not Specified'. The 16% 'Own Contracts' are due to a number of instances whereby the OGP/EPS has instructed the Institute to carry out their own contract process. The 16% 'Pre-National Framework Agreement/Contract' relate to those contracts in place prior to the introduction of the NFA. The 1% 'Not Applicable' are contracts where the Institute has no capacity to change the provider (e.g. Office of Comptroller & Auditor General).

6.2 Multi-Annual Procurement Plan 2021 – IADT's Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) 2021 was discussed as circulated. It was noted that the MAPP provides a breakdown of the Institute's National Framework Contracts, own contracts, etc. It was reported that the Institute is projecting expenditure of over €11.9M for the period 2020 to 2022. It was noted that the requirement for a public procurement tender process to be carried out is €25K, consisting of either a single contract, or cumulative contracts over a three-year period. The only exception to the National Framework Agreement stipulations is the Institute's educational partnership contract with Sound Training College, listed as 'Specialist Provider'.

6.3 Contracts Control Sheet Update - the updated Contracts Control sheet was discussed as circulated. The following items were noted:

- (i) **Financial Services (Actuarial)** – a three-year contract was awarded to Greavy & Co. via a tender process completed for the sector by THEA; however, the contract has yet to be signed.
- (ii) **Library Subscriptions** – these are contracts which are renewed on an annual basis.
- (iii) **Payment System (On-Line)** – the Institute plans to go out to tender once the current procurement process for the upgrade/replacement of the Students Records System is complete and has been rolled out – estimated to be in 2021.
- (iv) **Pest Control** – the commencement of a tender process has been delayed but will be processed in the coming months.
- (v) **Stationery Supplies** – the contract with the successful suppliers has yet to be signed. In the interim, IADT will continue to order in line with our Procurement Policy.
- (vi) **Utilities Supplies (Gas)** – a 40-month contract has been awarded to SSE Airtricity (via an OGP tender process), due to commence on 1st April 2021.
- (vii) **Waste Management** – the framework put in place via the OGP will be actioned in Q1 2021.
- (viii) **Water Bottles & Filtration Units** – a 2-year contract has been awarded to Glenpatrick Water Coolers, with paperwork due to be completed in Q4 2020.

It was reported that the Secretary/Financial will be advising all Managers of relevant contracts due to expire during 2021 in order that they may commence the necessary processes to ensure continuity of service.

The CPP 2021, MAPP 2021 and Contracts Control Sheet were approved by the Committee.

Proposer: FA
Seconder: SD

7. Financial Statements

7.1 Draft Financial Statements for year ended 31st August 2020 – it was reported that the draft Financial Statements for year ended 31st August 2020 are reaching the final stages of completion and will be circulated to the Committee. The requirement is for each Institute to submit their Financial Statements 2019/2020 by 30th November 2020. It was reported that the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) has issued new reporting requirements, which are in addition to the reporting requirements for the HEA (as contained in the Governance Statement). It was noted that THEA, on behalf of the Institutes of Technology, requested Deloitte to carry out a review of the various requirements of both the C&AG and the HEA. As a result of this, a workshop will be held for IoT Finance Managers on Monday, 7th December to review/clarify each of the disclosures required in the Governance Statement and bring them in line with those required in the Financial Statements. It was confirmed that the Institute will submit the Financial Statements for year ended 31st August 2020 prior to the audit being carried out by the C&AG, and that the C&AG has been informed accordingly. It was proposed that the Institute report that it is 'fully compliant, with the exception of...' in the case of issues which require further action being taken. The President reported that the Executive Team members have been reminded that the meeting of reporting deadlines is a priority, with direct communication to be made with the relevant reporting body in the case where any extension to a deadline is required. It was noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in additional reporting and duplication of data due to additional funding to support higher education at this time.

8. Risk Management – Update on COVID-19 Progress

8.1 The President briefed Audit & Risk Committee members on the Institute's management of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was reported that to-date there have been no cases of on-campus transmission of the virus. Matters of note were as follows:

- (i) Lead Worker Representatives** - the Institute made a concession to allow Union representation to form part of the Lead Worker Representatives cohort. However, there have been two further complaints made to the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) in October and November, both of which have been concluded with no onsite inspection by the HSA to date. These complaints are in addition to the one made to the HSA in May 2020 in relation to the protocols and processes the Institute implemented in response to COVID-19. The HSA investigated the complaint, carried out an onsite inspection, and ruled in favour of the Institute.
- (ii) Return to On-Campus Activity 2021** – despite the Institute being categorised as an 'essential service' and therefore instructed to remain open during the Level 5 restrictions, additional precautions were implemented to safeguard the wellbeing of both staff and students. During the Level 5 restrictions on-campus activity reduced from 25% (since September 2020) to 6% of students on any given day from the commencement of Level 5 restrictions. It was noted that the Minister for FHERIS has requested that HEIs increase the level of activity/operations on their campuses; however, this conflicts with advice

issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). As a result, the Institute is in constant dialogue with the Minister for FHERIS and it is hoped that a statement will be issued by the Department of FHERIS providing clarity on the situation. It was noted that some of the larger universities have stated that they will continue to offer their students blended learning until May/June 2021. Above all, student wellbeing is paramount to the Institute. IADT's COVID-19 Steering Group agreed that on-campus delivery be deferred until 11th January 2021 at the earliest.

(iii) Students Recruitment – the recruitment process for 2021/2022 has commenced with Open Days being held online from November 2020 through to February 2021; the first virtual Open Day will be held on Saturday, 28th November 2020.

(vi) Changes to Work Safety Protocols – the Institute has been informed that Changes to Work Safety Protocols will be issued shortly by the Department of FHERIS, which the Institute will be required to implement.

The Audit & Risk Committee members acknowledged and expressed their support of the work carried out by the Executive, Management Team, and the COVID-19 Steering Group for the successful management and operation of the Institute in a safe manner during the pandemic.

A discussion arose in relation to the communication of updates in relation to COVID-19 protocols. The Executive Team members have been requested to inform their Managers of key items of information raised during Executive Meetings relating to COVID-19 measures/impacts, which the Managers will communicate to relevant staff members as quickly as possible.

9. Statutory Reporting

It was noted that no Statutory Reports were made in relation to Accidents, Data Breaches or under the Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy since the last Audit & Risk Committee meeting of 29th September 2020. It was also confirmed that there were no further updates in relation to Student/Staff Complaints. As mentioned in 8.1, two further complaints were made to the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) in October and November 2020 with the investigation being concluded and no on-site inspection being requested by the HSA to date.

10. President's Expenses

The Secretary/Financial Controller confirmed that the President's Expenses continue to be signed off by him and that there have been no matters of concern in relation to these. It was reported that a credit card has been issued to the new Head of Faculty of Film, Art & Creative Technologies, which will impact on the level of expenditure made against the President's credit card for Faculty-related purchases.

11. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Implications

There were no Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Implications noted regarding any items discussed at the meeting.

12. A.O.B.

There were no matters for discussion under A.O.B.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 17th February/Tuesday 23rd March 2021 at 10.30am.

Signed: _____
Dr Fionnuala Anderson
Chairperson

Date: _____