

**Approved Minutes of the Board Extraordinary meeting held at 11:05 on
9 July 2020 (Video Conference)**

Chair:

Rob Behrens CBE, the Ombudsman

Non-Executive members:

Sir Alex Allan KCB

Linda Farrant

Dean Fathers

Balram Gidoomal CBE

Alan Graham MBE

Carolyn Hirst

Anu Singh

Apologies

Elisabeth Davies

Mick King

In attendance:

Richard O'Connell, Director of Resources

Andrew Dawson, Governance Officer
(minutes)

Maria Mansfeld, Chief of Staff

Executive members

Amanda Amroliwala, Chief Executive

Gill Kilpatrick, Chief Operating Officer

Observer:

Jeremy Short, Senior Financial
Accountant

1. Chair's Introduction and Welcome

- 1.1 Rob Behrens introduced all present to the meeting to approve the annual report and accounts for 2019-20
- 1.2 Amanda Amroliwala said that she wished to place on record her thanks to all of the PHSO staff who had been involved in producing the annual report and accounts.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Feedback from Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

- 3.1 Alan Graham informed the Board that ARAC had looked in detail at the accounts on 25 June at the technical walkthrough meeting. Committee members had raised some subsidiary points which had been answered in correspondence.
- 3.2 Alan Graham reported that, before the present Board meeting on 9 July, ARAC had received the National Audit Office (NAO)'s annual completion report following their audit of the resource accounts. The NAO had made no recommendations in respect of the accounts and had indicated that the Comptroller and Auditor General should certify the accounts with an unqualified audit opinion.
- 3.3 In response to questions from Board members, Alan Graham confirmed that none of the matters raised at the technical walkthrough meeting had required the accounts to be amended. ARAC had no concerns about the accounts.
- 3.4 Alan Graham said that he wished to place on record his thanks to NAO for their work to ensure that the audit was completed in what had been a challenging timescale and for their constructive and supportive approach throughout the process. He also wished to thank our internal auditors, RSM, for their support during the year.
- 3.5 Alan Graham advised that it was the recommendation of ARAC that the Board approve the 2019/20 Annual Report and Accounts, and that the Chair sign the letter of representation.

4. PHSO Annual Report and Accounts 2019-20

- 4.1 Maria Mansfeld presented a paper asking the Board to approve the Annual Report and Accounts. She advised the Board that, subject to the Board's approval and certification of the accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General, we aimed to lay the report before Parliament on Monday 20 July, before recess.
- 4.2 After the report is laid we will share it with other Ombuds and stakeholders. It will be placed on our website and publicised by social media.
- 4.3 The Board agreed the following:

- To delegate authority to Amanda Amroliwala as accountable officer to approve any final adjustments to the resource accounts;
- To approve the PHSO Annual Report and Accounts for 2019/20 for publication and laying before Parliament;
- To authorise the Ombudsman to sign the accounts and the Letter of Representation.

5. Any Other Business

- 5.1 Amanda Amroliwala informed the Board that it was Richard O'Connell's final attendance at a PHSO Board meeting, as he will be leaving the organisation over the summer.
- 5.2 On behalf of the Board, Rob Behrens thanked Richard O'Connell for his work for PHSO

The meeting ended at 11:40