

Approved Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Board meeting held on 11 July 2019 at Millbank Tower, London

Chair:

Rob Behrens CBE, the Ombudsman

Non-Executive members:

Sir Alex Allan KCB
Elisabeth Davies
Balram Gidoomal CBE
Alan Graham MBE
Ruth Sawtell
Dr Julia Tabreham

Executive members:

Amanda Campbell CBE, Chief Executive
Gill Kilpatrick, Executive Director of
Corporate Services
Alex Robertson, Executive Director of
Strategy and Operations

In attendance

Karl Banister, Director of Legal & Professional
Services
Andrew Dawson, Governance Officer (Minutes)
Maria Mansfeld, Chief of Staff
Richard O'Connell, Director of Resources

Observers

Richard Lord, Assistant Director, Finance

Apologies

Dean Fathers
Mick King

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Behrens welcomed members and others present to the meeting, the purpose of which was to approve the Annual Report and Accounts.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest

3. PHSO Annual Report and Accounts 2018-19

- 3.1 A paper by Gill Kilpatrick and Alex Robertson, presenting the Annual Report and Accounts to the Board for approval, had been distributed.

Resource Accounts

- 3.2 Alan Graham reported that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) had met earlier on 11 July and had received the report of our external auditors, the National Audit Office (NAO) on their audit of the accounts. He was pleased to report that NAO had found that the accounts had been prepared in accordance with the HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual, and had made no recommendations. This was exceptional, and was a great credit to the organisation and the Finance Team.
- 3.3 Alan Graham said that ARAC members had attended a technical walkthrough of the accounts on 28 June 2019. Any issues they had identified with the accounts had been resolved.
- 3.4 Alan Graham confirmed that ARAC were content that the accounts were accurate and prepared correctly, and had agreed to recommend that the Board should approve the accounts and the Ombudsman's Letter of Representation for signature.
- 3.5 Board Members expressed their satisfaction with the audit outcome and endorsed the recommendation by ARAC to approve the accounts, noting in particular that :
- NAO's approval of the accounts without recommendations was unprecedented;
 - The excellent outcome was evidence of the significant improvements in control and the transformation in culture.
- 3.6 Gill Kilpatrick brought to the Board's attention minor changes to the accounts before they were finalised, including an adjustment of £32k for dilapidations at Millbank Tower. She explained that all adjustments had been discussed with NAO.
- 3.7 Gill Kilpatrick said that she wished to record her thanks to the Finance team for the work they had done. She also wished to record her thanks to NAO who had produced the audit within a particularly tight schedule.
- 3.8 Gill Kilpatrick said that she wished to acknowledge the contribution made by Richard Lord, who was leaving the organisation in August. The Board recorded their thanks to Richard Lord.

PHSO Annual Report

- 3.9 Alex Robertson outlined the changes that had been made to the Annual Report since it was last seen by the Board in June 2019.
- 3.10 Elisabeth Davies asked how the report narrative would be used going forward. Alex Robertson said that it would be reflected on the website and fed into our performance reporting. We did not need to wait for publication. We would also share the report with our counterparts
- 3.11 Ruth Sawtell said that the report was a highly useful and valuable document. She asked if there was an estimate of what it had cost to produce. Amanda Campbell said that the figure was not known but could be estimated.

Action: Alex Robertson to provide the Board with an estimated cost for the annual report process.

3.12 The Board **approved** the Annual Report and Accounts.

The meeting ended at 11:40