

Board of Governance of the Comptroller and Auditor General

MEETING

held on 27 October 2021 at 09:30

by Video Conference

MINUTES

Present	Grace Nesbitt	Chair
	Russel Griggs	Senior Independent Member
	Rob Tinlin	Independent Member
	Lynn Pamment	Comptroller and Auditor General
In attendance	Stephen Warren	Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General and Secretary to the Board of Governance

21/30 Item 1: Declarations of interests

Members of the Board:

- noted that the Chair and Mr Tinlin had notified amendments to their declarations of interest and that the register would be updated to reflect these; and
- confirmed that they had no specific interests in the matters on the agenda.

21/31 Item 2: Chairman's update

The Chair reported that she had a productive face to face meeting with Deputy Inna Gardiner, the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.

21/32 Item 3: Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021

The Board received and agreed to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 July 2021.

21/33 Item 4: Risk register

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General and reviewed the Office's risk register, including those items identified by the Board as of particular relevance to its functions.

The Board noted the report and the contents of the risk register.

The Board agreed the entries in risk register in so far as they related to items of particular relevance to its functions.

The Comptroller and Auditor General agreed to:

- **review the wording of two entries in the risk register; and**
- **update the independent members of the Board following her first meeting with the new permanent Chief Executive.**

21/34 Item 5: Matters arising

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General detailing the actions agreed at its meetings of 6 October 2020, 26 March 2021 and 15 July 2021 and the steps subsequently taken.

The Board noted the report.

21/35 Item 6: Comptroller and Auditor General's Report

The Board received a report from the Comptroller and Auditor General covering:

- a) reports issued and planned. The Comptroller and Auditor General focussed on:
 - the publication of a report on the Integrated Technology Solution project and the forthcoming hearing of the Public Accounts Committee with the Chief Operating Officer on this topic; and
 - changes in the work programme to reflect the demands on the Office.
- b) the appointment and monitoring of financial statements auditors. The Comptroller and Auditor General highlighted the signing of a contract with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to undertake reviews of audits undertaken by auditors

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appointed in the Comptroller and Auditor General, the results of which would be reported to the next meeting of the Board.

- c) interaction with the States Assembly, including the Public Accounts Committee. The Comptroller and Auditor General reported on the work programme of the Public Accounts Committee and its impact on the Office.
- d) developments within the States of Jersey. The Comptroller and Auditor General highlighted in particular the appointment of a new permanent Chief Executive.
- e) developments within the Jersey Audit Office. The Comptroller and Auditor General highlighted in particular:
 - a draft revised Travel Policy for the Office. The Board endorsed the revised Policy subject to such amendments as might be required to reflect changes in Jersey's Covid-19 travel testing policy; and
 - a draft Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy. The Board endorsed the draft Strategy.
- f) external engagement.
- g) data losses. The Comptroller and Auditor General confirmed that there were no data losses to report to the Board.

The Board noted the report.

21/36 Item 7: Auditors appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor General

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General that explained:

- changes in audit appointments in the course of the previous year; and
- the action taken under the Audit Quality Framework to obtain assurance about the quality of work undertaken by auditors appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Board noted the report.

21/37 Item 8: External communications

The Board received a report from the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Comptroller and Auditor General highlighted in particular:

- increased use of the Office's website;

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- developments in the Office's social media presence; and
- planned developments of the Office's website.

The Board noted the report.

21/38 Item 9: Finance update

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General detailing:

- the financial performance of the Office to 30 September 2021; and
- the estimates for inclusion in the Government Plan 2022 to 2025.

The Board noted the report.

21/39 Item 10: Schedule of potential changes in legislation and advice sought from H M Attorney General

The Board received and noted a report without debate.

21/40 Item 11: Gifts and hospitality register

The Board received and noted a report without debate.

21/41 Item 12: Forward look

The Board received a draft forward work programme from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Board agreed the draft forward work programme.

21/42 Item 13: Dates of future meetings

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Board agreed:

- **that, subject to Audit Scotland having returned to physical meetings, it would plan to meet on Wednesday 9 March 2022 in Edinburgh;**
- **that, on that day, it would seek to meet with representatives of both Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission;**

- **that the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General would liaise with the Public Accounts Committee Officer to identify appropriate dates for the Board meeting in Jersey in Summer 2022 that would allow the Board to meet the Public Accounts Committee; and**
- **to keep its plans under review in light of Covid-19 restrictions in Jersey and the United Kingdom.**

21/43 Item 14: Review of operation of the Board of Governance - results of questionnaire

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General analysing the results of the self-assessment undertaken by Board members and the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General using the framework previously used by the UK National Audit Office.

The Board:

- noted the need to link its strategy strongly to its statutory purpose;
- recognised that the Board had reasonable confidence about the availability of funding to enable the Office to develop and operate as planned;
- reaffirmed its support for an increase in the size of the Board to increase diversity through the appointment of a member from Jersey;
- recognised the importance of structured evaluation of the performance of individual Board members;
- recognised the value in securing structured feedback from stakeholders on the Board's performance; and
- endorsed periodic external review of the Board's effectiveness.

The Board asked the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General to prepare a pro-forma for evaluation of the performance of the Chair (by Professor Griggs) and other independent members of the Board (by the Chair).

The Board agreed to complete the evaluations before the next Board meeting.

The Comptroller and Auditor General agreed to identify means for more strongly integrating financial and non-financial reporting to the Board and report to the next meeting of the Board.

21/44 Item 15: Review of operation of the Board of Governance - action plan implementation

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General highlighting those recommendations made in the independent review of the operation of the Board consideration of which had been deferred.

The Board received a briefing from Professor Griggs on his positive engagement with a contact within the Channel Islands financial services industry about potential support for staff applying for membership of the Board of Governance.

The Board agreed that:

- **the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General would draft a short succession plan for consideration at its next meeting;**
- **the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General would draft a strategic framework linking the Board's work programme to its statutory functions for consideration at its next meeting;**
- **Board members would complete and consider the results of a self-assessment survey on an annual basis; and**
- **the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General would circulate an updated action plan in response to the UK National Audit Office review based on its deliberations.**

21/45 Item 16: Potential changes to public audit law in Jersey

The Board received a report from the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General. The Board discussed the draft report and a draft letter to the Chief Minister and Chair of PAC.

The Board endorsed the proposals for changes in public audit legislation set out in the draft letter.

The Board agreed that:

- **the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General would revise the letter to include recommended amendments to legislation to provide a role for the Board in the appointment of a Comptroller and Auditor General, including the appointment of an Acting Comptroller and Auditor General; and**
- **following agreement of the revised draft letter, the Chair of the Board would send the revised letter to the Chief Minister and the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.**

The meeting closed at 13:05.

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