

**Minutes of the PSI Audit and Risk Committee meeting, which convened online on  
Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

**Agenda Item 1 – Closed Session of the Committee**

Issue
The Committee met in closed session. No members of PSI staff were present.

**Agenda Item 2 - Attendees & Apologies**

Name	Role	Present (Yes/No)
Ms. Geraldine Campbell	Committee Chair	Yes
Mr. Liam Burke	Committee Member	Yes
Mr. John Given	Committee Member	No
Mr. Peter Dewhurst	Committee Member	Yes
Dr. Paula Barry Walsh	Committee Member	No
Ms. Ciara Lynch	Committee Member	Yes
Dr. Cyril Sullivan	Committee Member	Yes
<b>Members of PSI staff &amp; non-Committee external attendees included:</b>		
Dr. Cheryl Stokes	Head of Corporate Services	
Mr. Éanna Ó Lochlainn	Corporate Governance and Planning Officer	
Ms. Eileen Troy	Finance and Support Services Project Manager	
Ms. Joanne Kissane	Registrar & Chief Officer	
Ms. Aoife Mellett	Acting Head of Governance & Programme Delivery, Chief Risk Officer, Data Protection Officer, FOI Officer (for part of meeting only, joined at 15.05)	
Mr. Neil Wall	ICT and Corporate Reporting Manager	
Ms. Patience Tafuma	Strategic HR Manager and PSI Internal Health and Safety Appointee	
Ms. Laura Irwin	Community Pharmacy Quality and Safety Manager	

Colour code: *Red—for decision; Green—for discussion; Blue—for information*

### Agenda Item 3

#### Issue

The Chair invited members of the Committee to declare any conflicts of interest with regard to any of the items scheduled for discussion at the meeting, before it commenced.

#### Information

Members of Committees of Council are subject to Section 9, Schedule 1, of the Pharmacy Act 2007 regarding disclosures of interest, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the meeting agenda.

#### Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

No conflicts of interest were declared by any member of the Committee with regard to the items scheduled for discussion at the meeting.

### Agenda Item 4

#### Issue

Request for Approval of the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

#### Information

The Chair noted that the draft Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on had been circulated to Committee members in advance of the meeting and that no amendments had been received.

#### Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

**Decision Approved:** The Committee approved the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting, held on 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2024, on the proposal of Dr. Cyril Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Liam Burke.

### Agenda Item 5

#### Issue

Q1 Management Accounts to 31 March 2024

## Information

The Committee was informed that income for the period was €2.166m, which was in line with the budget for the year. This compared to an income of €1.936m in the same period last year. Recognition of pharmacist qualifications was ahead of the budget by €22k due to the high number of Third Country Qualification Route (TCQR) applications. However, this still represented a decrease of €12k compared to the same period last year. The Committee was informed that total payroll costs for the period were €0.990m, €17k under budget, as compared to €0.827m in the same period last year. Total temporary staff costs for the period were €159k, €15k under budget. Total organisational costs for the period were €78k, €22k under budget. This included an underspend of €7K on printing, postage and stationery.

The Committee asked for context regarding the figure for building maintenance costs and was informed that it related to fire-proofing. The Committee noted the positive variance in the Q1 accounts and asked if this was expected to continue as the year progressed. The Committee was informed that this was unlikely and that a significant deficit was anticipated at year-end. The Committee noted that the figures for legal costs had also improved and asked if this was likely to continue. The Executive stated it was difficult to predict and that sometimes there were timing differences due to some legal advisors only submitting invoices when cases were concluded.

## Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The update was noted by the Committee.

## Agenda Item 6

### Issue

Update on the Implementation of Internal Audit Recommendations.

### Information

The Committee expressed concern regarding the Internal Audit Finding relating to appropriate members of the Finance Team verifying suppliers' request for change of bank details by telephone before processing the relevant amendments on the system. The Internal Auditor had indicated that a record of this telephone verification (e.g., date of call, personnel who made the call, supplier personnel contacted, etc.) should be retained on file. The Executive stated that this recommendation had been implemented, and a record is kept of the phone call. The Executive clarified that this was only being done when circumstances permitted, as certain organisations do not facilitate calls, and verification by

phone would not, therefore, be possible. The Committee queried who would risk assess each non-verification event, when they occurred. The Committee was informed the risk was assessed by the Finance and Support Services Manager. The Committee requested that all such non-verification events be formally recorded, incorporating the sign-off from the Finance and Support Services Manager.

The Committee was informed the audit finding concerning the recruitment of Authorised Officers had now been addressed and that the PSI was on track to meet its key performance indicator regarding the number of pharmacy inspection visits.

The Committee noted the continued absence of a cross-organisational PSI Anti-Fraud Policy, incorporating mandatory anti-fraud training. The Executive stated that a PSI Anti-Fraud Policy would be brought to the Committee to review in Q3 2024.

#### Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The update was noted by the Committee.

### Agenda Item 7

#### Issue

Review of Risk Registers

#### Information

With regard to the PSI Corporate Risk Register, the Committee noted that the number of pharmacies operating without a nominated supervising pharmacist was consistently decreasing month on month. As of the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, the number stood at 51. The Registrar advised the Committee that the Executive would reassess the risk in advance of the next Audit and Risk Committee and discuss the revised risk at the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee queried the absence of any narrative in the PSI Corporate Register's Risk Evaluation Column regarding this risk's consequences and requested that this be addressed. The Executive agreed to do this.

With regard to the ICT Risk Register, the Committee noted that there continues to be a significant risk posed by the PSI's outdated CMS. The Committee was informed that mitigating measures were in place, and the matter was constantly monitored, but it was unlikely it would be resolved until year-end 2025, after Phase 3 of the Business Transformation Programme is in place. The Committee was informed that the PSI would have 24-hour cyber security monitoring in place from Q3. The Committee was also

informed that other potential mitigations, recently made available by Microsoft, are also being assessed by our IT vendors. The Committee was informed that the PSI had received legal advice, which suggested that the NIS2 Directive does not apply to PSI, as the PSI could not be deemed to be a public administration body under the definition in the Directive, but that the matter would be revisited once the Heads of Bill was published, which would transpose the Directive into Irish law.

With regard to the Human Resources Risk Register, the Committee was informed that an updated Safety Statement was due to be circulated to all staff shortly for comment. The Committee noted the PSI's continued reliance on agency staff in its Finance and Support Services Team, describing the situation as volatile. The Executive advised that it was hoped that the organisation review and strategic workforce plan would examine pay grades for some of the roles in order to attract full time staff and compete with the private sector. The Committee noted that the situation was undesirable and queried what measures were being taken to address it, suggesting that if Finance roles were being incorrectly graded, this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

With regard to the Finance and Support Services Risk Register, the Committee expressed surprise that the PSI was reimbursing subscription fees, including annual registration fees, to professional members of staff, with potential risks arising relating to the non-reporting of benefit in kind to Revenue, where a job description or contract did not explicitly state the requirement to be a member of a professional body. The Committee was informed that such payments to PSI staff were custom and practise and in line with Revenue guidelines, where the role being carried out required that the individual was a member of a professional body and that with the turnover of staff within the Finance and Support Services Team and role changes within the organisation, that situations were identified where individuals who were no longer entitled to claim, had claimed reimbursement, and that this is currently being reviewed.

The Committee was informed that an external contractor had been engaged to assist with issuing the Single Public Service Pension Scheme staff pension benefit statements, as well as other issues relating to the PSI's legacy superannuation pension scheme.

#### **Decision Approved and/or Action Requested**

The update was noted by the Committee.

## Agenda Item 8

### Issue

Report from PSI Internal Health and Safety Appointee on the management of any major incidents, near misses, and lessons learned and acted upon.

### Information

The Committee was informed that an Authorised Officer had been involved in a minor road traffic accident. No injuries were sustained by the Authorised Officer. Minor damage was caused to the vehicle in which they were travelling. No other vehicles were involved. The Committee was informed that Decision Driver training has commenced for all authorised officers.

### Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The Committee noted the update.

## Agenda Item 9

### Issue

Report on the management of any Data Breaches

### Information

The Acting Data Protection Officer informed the Committee that there had been no data breaches which required notification to the Data Protection Commissioner since the Committee's last meeting in March.

### Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

**Decision Approved:** The report on the management of any data breaches was noted by the Committee.

## Agenda Item 10

### Issue

Report on the management of any Freedom of Information Requests.

### Information

The Acting Freedom of Information Officer informed the Committee that the PSI received 9 Freedom of Information requests in 2024 to date (4 since its last meeting).

**Decision Approved and/or Action Requested**

**Decision Approved:** The update on the management of Freedom of Information requests received by the PSI was noted by the Committee.

**Agenda Item 11**

**Issue**

Any Other Business

**Information**

One item was tabled.

**Decision Approved and/or Action Requested**

The Committee agreed that its next meeting, which was due to convene on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024, should be in person and incorporate a discussion on the PSI's Internal Audit Plan 2024/2025, as well as a workshop on risk management.

**The meeting finished at 15:30**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**