

Key Matters and Escalation Report to the Group Trust Board

Name of Committee: Audit and Risk Committee (In Common)

Chair: John Kennedy

Meeting Date: Monday, 28 April 2025

Key matters

The committee received and discussed the following:

Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust (CCS)

- Local Counter Fraud Service Annual Report for 2024-25 - the Trust was expected to achieve an overall rating of Green for its 2024-25 Counter Fraud Functional Standard Return (CFFSR).
- LCFS 2025-26 Work Plan (**approved**).
- Draft Head of Internal Audit Opinion for 2024-25.
- Final Internal Audit Plan for 2025-26 (**approved**) – further discussion to take place to align plans for both Trusts.
- Internal Audit Progress Report – four reviews had been completed:
 - Planned and Preventative Maintenance (**reasonable assurance**)
 - Accounts Payable (**reasonable assurance**)
 - Recruitment (**substantial assurance**)
 - Cost Improvement Programmes (**partial assurance**)
- Update on External Audit activities - the accounts for 2024-25 had been produced in draft, field work was underway and preparations to deliver the full accounts to the Extraordinary Audit & Risk Committee on 25th June 2025 were on track.
- Draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2024-25.

Discussion in Common

- 2025-26 Audit & Risk Committee in Common Work Plan
- Group Trust Board Assurance Framework (**reasonable assurance**) – more detail under ‘key risks and issues’.

Norfolk Community Health & Care Trust (NCHC)

- LCFS Annual Report 2024-25 – the Trust was expected to achieve an overall rating of Green for its 2024-25 Counter Fraud Functional Standard Return (CFFSR).
- LCFS Outcome-based metrics 2024-25.
- Draft Head of Internal Audit Opinion for 2024-25 (**rated reasonable**).
- Internal Audit Annual Report 2024-25
- Internal Audit Progress Report – two audits had been finalised:
 - Core Financial Systems (**substantial assurance**)
 - Temporary Staffing (**reasonable assurance**)
- Update on External Audit activities – process for the 2024/25 external audit was on track and the draft accounts had been submitted.
- Draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2024-25

Key escalations

There were no escalation points to report for either Trust.

Key Points to note:

CCS

- A '**Partial Assurance**' rating for the recent Cost Improvement Programme (CIP) internal audit and would need increased committee scrutiny.
- Draft Head of Internal Audit Opinion for 2024-25 (**rated amber/green with no issues to be highlighted for the annual governance statement**).

NCHC

- The outcome-based metrics for LCFS would be reviewed.
- There is an accounting deficit of £7.6million for the 2024/25. This was not an issue but an expected deficit owing to works carried out at the Willow Unit.
- Draft Head of Internal Audit Opinion for 2024-25 (**rated reasonable**).
- **Limited assurance** had been provided for the recent Business Planning and Continuity internal audit and would need increased committee scrutiny.

Key risks and issues

The committee had received and approved the first iteration of a Group Board Assurance Framework which incorporated a register of the principal risks faced by each Trust in meeting its strategic objectives. There were currently 13 strategic risks, of which 4 NCHC risks were rated 15 or above. One relates to maintaining quality of care for patients, one to cyber security and two to financial pressures.

There was one NCHC strategic issue which had previously been assigned to the NCHC board and related to 'Community Capacity'. This was under review and would be reported through the Norfolk Adults Services Assurance Committee in future.

Good practice or innovation

- The committee had passed on their thanks to all involved for the effective collaboration work which had taken place to deliver a draft annual report and accounts for both Trusts in a timely way.