

Item: 9.3.4

REPORT CLASSIFICATION	✓	CATEGORY OF PAPER	✓
Official		Proposes specific action	
Official: Sensitive Commercial	✓	Provides assurance	✓
Official: Sensitive Personal		For information only	

## BOARD

30 JULY 2024

**Report Title:**

**Audit Committee Highlight Report and Approved Minutes**

### Purpose of report

To provide the Board with the key highlights from the Audit Committee meeting held on 23 July 2024 and confirmed minutes from the meetings held on 22 April 2024 and 13 June 2024

### Key points

The Audit Committee is chaired by David Stout, Non-Executive member of the Board, and provides oversight and assurance to the Board on the adequacy of governance, risk management and internal control processes within the ICB.

The Committee confirmed minutes for the meetings held on 22 April and 13 June 2024 are attached in **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2**.

Please note the meeting held on 13 June 2024 was an Extraordinary Audit Committee to review the annual report and accounts for 2023/24 in preparation for submission to the Board meeting on 25 June 2024.

### **Highlights from the Meeting held on 23 July 2024**

The Committee considered the following key items at the meeting held on 23 July 2024 including:

- ICB Freedom to Speak Up Policy update
- Risk Management and Board Assurance Framework report
- Fit and Proper Person Test (FPPT)
- Finance Update
- Internal Audit progress report
- External Audit progress report
- Counter Fraud progress report and Annual Report 2023/24

The key points from each item are noted below:

#### **ICB Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Policy Update**

The Committee received a presentation from the FTSU Guardian on the progress and planned activity in the areas around: recording system, meetings, number of cases raised, awareness training, assurance audit of trusts. The Local FTSU Policy has been reviewed and revised in January 2024 with plans to revise the ICB strategy document. The ICB will be promoting and communicating staff awareness during the annual National Guardian FTSU month in October 2024.

### **Risk Management Report and Board Assurance Framework**

The Committee received the risk management report, corporate risk register and refreshed board assurance framework for quarter one 2024/25 for review and assurance. The reporting frequency for risk had been updated to quarterly in the risk management strategy and will be presented to Board on 30 July 2024 for approval.

### **Finance Update**

The Committee received an update on the ICB's financial position and essential financial governance matters covering financial performance, losses and special payments, tender waivers and aged debtors and creditors.

The ICB Financial Delegation and Financial Limits update 2024/25 was also reviewed by the Committee which outlined the planned approach to budget delegation arrangements for the ICB for 2024/25 and a proposal to change the financial limits of some key posts within the ICB structure. The Committee agreed the proposed changes and these will be presented to Board for approval on 30 July 2024. It was noted that the updated governance handbook would be submitted for submission to Board on 01 October 2024.

### **Internal Audit Progress Report**

A progress report was shared for information and assurance highlighting the commencement of both planned and ongoing work during 2024/25 with one final report issued on Data Security Protection Toolkit with substantial assurance awarded.

The Committee approved the cancellation of two audits from the 2023/24 internal audit plan as follows:

- Data Maturity Assessment Audit – Internal work has been completed by the ICB to gain assurance and is covered by DSPT audit and the NECS cyber essential accreditation.
- Care Quality Commission assessment – Due to the time delay in the assessment the resource has not been used.

### **External Audit Progress Report**

A progress report was received on external audit activity with no fundamental changes highlighted for the code to external auditors for 2024/25. The Committee noted the changes to the new partner and audit manager roles for future support to the ICB.

### **Counter Fraud progress report and Annual Report 2023/24**

The Committee was provided with a progress report detailing the work undertaken for period 01 April to 01 July 2024 and an update on the current workplan and delivery. The Counter Fraud annual report 2023/24 was received and noted for assurance.

The minutes from the meeting held on 23rd July 2024 will be approved at the next Audit Committee meeting on 10 October 2024 and submitted to the Board at its next meeting on 26 November 2024 for assurance.

### **Risks and issues**

As set out in the risk management report.

### **Assurances**

- The final ICB Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24 was submitted to NHSE deadline of 28 June 2024.
- The Committee approved the removal of the two audits from the 2023/24 internal audit plan.
- The Committee noted the completion of the self-assessment improvement plan objectives from 2023/24 and considered the future planning of the effectiveness survey.
- The ICB FPPT process and LCF framework has been implemented in line with national timeframes and submission to NHSE on 30 June 2024.

### **Recommendation/action required**

The Board is asked to:

- Receive the approved minutes for the Audit Committee meetings held on 22 April and 13 June 2024 for assurance (Appendix 1) and (Appendix 2)
- Note the key highlights from the Audit Committee meeting held on 23 July 2024 for information and assurance.

Acronyms and abbreviations explained						
FFPT – Fit and Proper Person Test NHSE – NHS England FTSU – Freedom to Speak Up						
<b>Sponsor/approving executive director</b>	C Riley, Chief Corporate Services Officer					
<b>Date approved by executive director</b>	23 July 2024					
<b>Reviewed by</b>	D Cornell, Director of Corporate Governance and Board Secretary					
<b>Report author</b>	L Hutchinson, Head of Corporate Governance					
Link to ICP strategy priorities (please tick all that apply)						
Longer and Healthier Lives						✓
Fairer Outcomes for All						✓
Better Health and Care Services						✓
Giving Children and Young People the Best Start in Life						✓
Relevant legal/statutory issues						
Note any relevant Acts, regulations, national guidelines etc						
<b>Any potential/actual conflicts of interest associated with the paper?</b> (please tick)	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>		<b>N/A</b>	✓
If yes, please specify						
<b>Equality analysis completed</b> (please tick)	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>		<b>N/A</b>	✓
<b>If there is an expected impact on patient outcomes and/or experience, has a quality impact assessment been undertaken?</b> (please tick)	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>		<b>N/A</b>	✓
Key implications:						
<b>Are additional resources required?</b>	N/A					
<b>Has there been/does there need to be appropriate clinical involvement?</b>	N/A					
<b>Has there been/does there need to be any patient and public involvement?</b>	N/A					
<b>Has there been/does there need to be partner and/or other stakeholder engagement?</b>	N/A					
<b>Has there been/does there need to be appropriate finance or digital involvement?</b>	N/A					