

Minutes of the Performance and Resources Committee meeting held on 21st February 2024 at 9:30am online via MS Teams.

Name	Role	Present (Yes/No)
Dr Ann McGarry	Committee Chair	Yes
Ms Emily Kelly	Committee Member	Yes
Dr Denis O'Driscoll	Committee Member	Yes
Mr Martin Sisk	Committee Member	Apologies
Mr Sean Reilly	Committee Member	Yes
Mr Martin Higgins	Committee Member	Apologies
Members of PSI staff in attendance included:		
Ms Joanne Kissane (JK)	Registrar	Yes
Ms Eileen Troy (ET)	Finance and Support Services Manager	Yes, for Agenda Items 1-6.6.
Dr Cheryl Stokes (CS)	Head of Corporate Services	Yes
Ms Isabel Turnock (IT)	Business Support Services Executive	Yes
Mr Aidan Flynn (AF)	Business Transformation Project Manager	Yes, for Agenda Items 9-10.
Ms Patience Tafuma (PT)	Strategic HR Manager	Yes, for Agenda Item 7.
Mr Neil Wall (NW)	ICT and Corporate Reporting Manager	Yes, for Agenda Item 8.
Mr Dan Burns (DB)	Head of Strategic Policy, Research, and Communication	Yes, for Agenda Items 9-10.
Ms Aoife Mellet (AM)	Head of Governance and Programme Delivery	Yes, for Agenda Item 9.

Agenda Item 1 – Apologies

Information

Apologies were received from Mr Martin Sisk and Mr Martin Higgins.

Agenda Item 2 – Declaration of Interests

Information

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Agenda

Information

The Committee considered and approved the agenda for the meeting.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee approved the agenda.

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Draft Minutes of Committee meeting held on 28th November 2023

Information

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2023 were considered by the Committee, and no changes had been notified in advance of the meeting.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The Committee approved the Minutes of the 28th November 2023 meeting on the proposal of Dr Denis O’Driscoll and seconded by Ms Emily Kelly.

Agenda Item 5 – Approval of 2024 Committee Workplan

Information

The Committee discussed its proposed 2024 Work Plan. The Executive highlighted two key items in the Annual Work Plan for the Committee’s information: the Strategic Financing Review Project and the Organisation Development Review Project. The Executive noted work done to date and identified the next steps.

The Executive also highlighted the inclusion of a review of the implementation of the Climate Action Roadmap to the Committee Workplan, which had been approved by Council in December 2023.

The Committee noted that in relation to Treasury Management, the management of diversification and risk would be discussed at its next meeting.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the approval of the Committee's Workplan for 2024, on the proposal of Dr Denis O'Driscoll and seconded by Ms Emily Kelly.

Agenda Item 6 – Finance and Support Services

Agenda Item 6.1 – Approval of the Updated Corporate Procurement Plan 2021-2024

Information

The Committee considered the updated Corporate Procurement Plan 2021 – 2024, noting the existing plan has been extended by a year. The Executive noted key amendments to the plan, such as the inclusion of a high-level expenditure analysis for 2023, commitment to green procurement principles, updated targets, and the removal of metrics not in use. The Committee noted the importance of reviewing performance against the plan, as well as discussing learnings, and suggested a qualitative reflection of procurement activities annually. The Committee suggested consolidation of the quarterly reports for their review at the end of the year, for ease of access and to better enable oversight and evolution of planning.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee agreed to recommend the approval of the extended Corporate Procurement Plan 2021-2024 to Council for approval at its next meeting, as proposed by Dr Denis O'Driscoll and seconded by Ms Emily Kelly.

Agenda Item 6.2 – Updated Procurement Policy

Information

The Committee discussed the PSI's Procurement Policy, which had been updated to reflect objectives under the Climate Action Roadmap e.g. the inclusion of green procurement criteria. The Executive highlighted the amendment relating to Circular 05/2023, which increased the threshold for which the e-Tenders platform must be utilised. The Committee agreed to consider further, as part of the next annual review, whether oversight by the Performance and Resources Committee should be maintained at €25,000 or increased to €50,000 for goods and services. The Committee noted the updates to the procedures used, including in relation to evaluation clarifications and the use of external evaluators. The Executive also highlighted updated text relating to the new dynamic purchasing system, in operation by the Office of Government Procurement.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the approval of the revised Procurement Policy at its next meeting, on the proposal of Dr Denis O'Driscoll and seconded by Ms Emily Kelly.

Agenda Item 6.3 – Approval of the Procurement Plan for 2024

Information

The Committee discussed the 2024 Procurement Plan, noting items brought forward from 2023, including procurement relating to the Third Country Qualification Route and print and design services. The Executive highlighted significant services to be procured during the year, including facilities management services and the procurement for the Irish Institute of Pharmacy services, which will likely extend into 2025.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council, the approval of the Procurement Plan for 2024 at its next meeting, on the proposal of Dr Denis O’Driscoll and seconded by Ms Emily Kelly.

Agenda Item 6.4 – Finance and Support Services Update

Information

The Executive provided an update on Finance and Support Services matters, highlighting two procurement extensions and compliance with treasury management metrics. The Committee noted that the review of the superannuation metrics occurs annually at the final meeting of the year.

The Committee noted the updated layout of this agenda item, allowing information to be presented in advance for the Committee to engage with, and the Executive available to answer questions, where required during the meeting. The Executive welcomed feedback on this change.

The Executive provided an overview of planned facilities works, including fire remedial upgrades which have commenced and the upgrade to emergency and general lighting systems due to commence in March, noting the expected disruption to staff.

The Committee queried whether the fire remedial works had been included as part of the Facilities Risk Register and the Executive agreed to follow up on this. It was confirmed after the meeting that this item had been recorded on the Facilities Risk Register.

Agenda Item 6.5 – Overview of draft financial outturn to 31 December 2023

Information

The Executive presented an overview of the draft financial outturn to 31 December 2023, noting the ongoing nature of the external audit, with variance analysis still to be completed and possible reclassification work required. The Committee noted overall alignment of the income with projections, and variances of expenditure in line with trends. The Executive highlighted key projects funded from the reserves and noted the revaluation of PSI House in the fixed assets on the balance sheet, with reference to the Valuation Report circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting.

The Committee confirmed the next steps in relation to the ongoing External Audit, and the preparation of the Annual Financial Statements, which will be included in the Annual Report, to come before the Audit and Risk Committee, and then to Council on 21st March 2024.

Agenda Item 6.6 – Strategic Financing Review Overview

Information

The Committee discussed the memo provided outlining activities carried out as part of the Strategic Financing Review Project. The Executive highlighted the work done to date on this matter, including previous reports which are available on the Council iPads, with the purpose of the current memo being to synthesise this information.

The Executive explained the existence of a structured process to be followed prior to triggering a fee review, including assessing modelling and assumptions, and reviewing international and national fee comparators. The Executive noted that the memo sets out how the current fee structure was reached, the assumptions used, and the next steps of inputting these into the model, with reference to significant changes around inflation and pay costs from 2021. Further testing of the assumptions was discussed, including the significant pay increases and the outputs of the upcoming life cycle review of PSI House, as well as the importance of reviewing the level and utilisation of the Designated Legal Reserve.

The Committee discussed how PSI might address and critically review requirements to increase efficiency, in light of the PSI House valuation report. The Executive outlined the aspects expected to be covered by the life cycle review, including building optimisation and a cost-benefit analysis for future building use options.

Agenda Item 7 – HR, People and Organisation Development
Agenda Item 7.1 – Workforce Planning and Recruitment Update

Information

The Committee noted the update on workforce planning and recruitment, noting the vacancies in the Finance area in particular, and confirming continued oversight to ensure resourcing is sufficient to complete critical work, such as the Strategic Financing Review Project. The Committee was advised that all roles in the Finance and Support Services Team were filled but that some roles were filled on an agency basis.

The Executive noted difficulties recruiting individuals into finance roles, due to competition with the private sector, requiring an innovative approach to ensure the right candidates are attracted. The Committee discussed the importance that PSI continues to promote itself as an attractive employer in the contract and onboarding stages, including ensuring current staff were available, if requested, to discuss the organisation with potential candidates.

The Committee discussed reviewing recruitment approaches of similar sized organisations, and the significance of highlighting opportunities for training and professional development in attracting applicants. The Committee also noted the importance of clarity in job titles and the organisation structure, as well as ensuring responsibilities are reflective of the salaries offered, to identify the right candidate.

Agenda Item 8 – ICT

Agenda Item 8.1 – Approval of the ICT Strategy 2024-2027

Information

The Executive highlighted the documentation provided to the Committee in reference to the ICT Strategy, including the cover memo, appendix containing detailed analysis from Auxilion, and the proposed strategy itself. The Committee noted the inclusion of 2024 projects in the cover memo, as well as expected projects, all of which will be subject to ongoing Committee oversight via the ICT Strategy Implementation Health Cards.

Decision Approved, and/or Action Requested

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the approval of the ICT Strategy 2024-2027, on the proposal of Dr Denis O’Driscoll and seconded by Ms Emily Kelly.

Agenda Item 8.2 – Penetration Testing and General Cybersecurity Update

Information

The Committee noted the update provided on penetration testing and general cybersecurity, and the positive results received.

Agenda Item 9 – Performance Update

Agenda Item 9.1 - Update on 2024 Service Plan Project Health Tracker

Information

The Committee discussed the updated Service Plan Project Health Tracker, noting that the individual projects are progressing on schedule.

Agenda Item 9.2 - Update on Health Cards:

1. Business Transformation Programme
2. ICT Strategy Implementation
3. Organisation Development Project
4. Strategic Financing Review
5. New Website Redevelopment and Roll-out
6. HR Strategy Implementation

Information

The Executive provided a summary of the updates included in the Health Cards. The Committee noted the completion of the requirements phase for the Business Transformation Programme, as well as the implementation of elements of the ICT Strategy, with infrastructure updates expected to be completed by the end of February. The Executive outlined that a more detailed update of the Organisation Development Review Project would be provided at the Committee's next meeting, and the next steps for the Strategic Financing Review Project were covered previously in Agenda Item 6.6. The Executive discussed the Website Development Project, currently at the stage of requirements gathering, as well as noting the progress made on the implementation of the HR Strategy, particularly the employee-wide engagement survey, and progress made to date on the wellbeing strategy.

The Committee discussed the rationale for the Website Development project in further detail, noting that the back end of the website has very limited functionality, with out-of-date software, making updates very onerous. The Executive also noted that the existing website is not compliant with the EU Web Accessibility Directive, which will be remedied by the upgrade, as well as allowing for mobile device responsiveness and a more modern look and feel. There will also be better support from the website provider under the new contract in place. The Executive outlined the planned approach to stakeholder engagement on the new website, including obtaining feedback from a panel of pharmacists and other regulators.

Agenda Item 10 – General matters

Agenda Item 10.1 – Areas of focus for next meeting

Information

The Committee discussed the areas of focus for its next meeting with reference to the 2024 Workplan, including a review of treasury management, diversification, and risk, as well as a more detailed consideration of organisation development.

Agenda Item 10.2- Recap of decisions taken at this meeting for Committee Report to Council

Information

The Committee noted the decisions taken at this meeting, including the approval of the Committee’s 2024 Workplan, the Corporate Procurement Plan, the updated Procurement Policy, the 2024 Procurement Plan, and the ICT Strategy.

Meeting Concluded at 10:41 am.

Signed by:

Chair

Date