Agenda Item: 24a

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn
NHS Foundation Trust

Committee Chair's Assurance Report

Report to:	Board of Directors (in Public)
Date of meeting:	2 February 2021
Title of Report:	Assurance Report from the Audit Committee
Recommendation:	For assurance
Chair:	David Dickinson, Non-Executive Director
Purpose:	The report summarises the assurances received, approvals, recommendations and decisions made by the Audit Committee at its meeting on **27 January 2021**. The Committee agreed to have an additional meeting in January with a reduced agenda. The purpose was to review internal audit progress and review those completed internal audit reports in advance of the March meeting.
Background:	The Committee meets no less frequently than quarterly. Its purpose is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the Board Assurance Framework and associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Trust's financial, non-financial and quality performance to the extent that it affects the Trust's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment and to oversee the financial reporting process. The work of the committee will facilitate the completion of the Annual Governance Statement by the Accounting Officer.
Item for Escalation	**Cyber Security Audit** The report was received by the Committee with the internal audit report outcome of 'no assurance'. The Committee expressed its disappointment but constructive debate was had. The Committee was informed of the plans in place to address the findings with a task and finish group being formed to implement the recommendations. The Committee agreed that progress should be reported through the Finance and Activity Committee and the Audit Committee.
Item for Assurance	**Internal Audit Progress Report** The Committee received the Internal Audit Progress Report and improvements in process for clear escalation and action are needed and will be considered by management. The focus of the programme for 2020/21 is to ensure the core audits are completed to inform a Head of Internal Audit Opinion (HOIA). The Committee was also informed that a draft programme for 2021/22 will be completed and a draft received at the March Committee meeting.

Item for Assurance	**Board Assurance Framework (BAF)** The report was received by the Committee with the internal audit report outcome of 'significant assurance'. This reflected the excellent work completed over the period and the improvements within the BAF process.
Item for Assurance:	**Absence and Sickness Management** The report was received by the Committee with the internal audit report outcome of 'partial assurance'. The Committee requested further clarity within the management responses with respect to the role of the People Committee. Recommendations in the internal audit report were agreed by management.
Item for Assurance	**Mandatory and Statutory Training** The report was received by the Committee with the internal audit report outcome of 'partial assurance'. The Committee focused on the high rated recommendation that training of new staff needs to be provided in a more timely manner. Recommendations in the internal audit report were agreed by management, but the management response in the report needs to be amended and improved.
Item for Assurance	**Freedom to Speak Up** The report was received by the Committee with the internal audit report outcome of 'partial assurance'. Whilst the Committee recognised the partial assurance outcome the Committee agreed this was a new area of audit that will assist the Trust in making good progress in moving forward. Recommendations in the internal audit report were agreed by management.
Item for Assurance	**Internal Audit Tracker** The Committee received the Internal Audit Recommendation Tracker. The Committee recognised this was a good starting position but improvement was required in the timeliness of updates, evidence confirmation process and more meaningful management reporting. The Committee was informed that the model created for IQIP tracking would be adopted for the Internal Audit Recommendation Tracker.
Risks to refer to risk register:	None
Other items of business:	None

Attendance record

Attended: D Dickinson (Chair), I Mack, G Ward, C Shaw, C Benham, C O'Brien, CT McLaughlin (Grant Thornton), S Evans (Grant Thornton), A Prime, C Wilson (KPMG)

Invitees: C Castleton, L Skaife-Knight, N Hall

Apologies: S Pooni, M Robertson

Minutes: I Fraser-Barker