Agenda Item: 19a

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:	7 April 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 **9 March 2021.**
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 Assurance	**Clinical Audit Quarter 3 Performance Report** The Committee received partial assurance through the clinical audit quarter 3 performance report. The Committee noted the additional verbal assurance provided by the Director of Patient Safety on the progress being made in clinical audit. The Committee welcomed the significant progress in the clinical audit function over the last 18 months but recognised there is more work to be done to achieve the position the Trust is aspiring to. The Director of Patient Safety will share the draft year-end position with the Committee.
Item for Assurance	**Internal Audit Progress Report** The Committee received the Internal Audit Progress Report and the improvements in the process for escalation and outstanding actions was recognised by the Committee. 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).
Item for Assurance	**Care of Deteriorating Patient** The Committee received the Care of the Deteriorating Patient internal audit report. The Committee acknowledged the partial assurance status of the audit report but recognised that much progress had been made within this area. The Committee

	recognised that more work was needed but the Trust was making progress in the right direction.
Item for Assurance	**Safeguarding** The Committee received the Safeguarding internal audit report. The Committee acknowledged the partial assurance status of the audit report and gained less assurance on this report than the care of the deteriorating patient audit. The Committee recognised that more work was needed with a particular focus required with cultural change and ensuring actions were embedded.
Item for Assurance:	**Cancer Waiting Times** The Committee received the Cancer Waiting Times internal audit report which provided significant assurance, with some improvement required. The Committee welcomed this generally positive report.
Item for Assurance	**Internal Audit Recommendations Tracker** Some good progress in this area. The Committee had good suggestions to develop this report for future Committee meetings. The Committee is able to assurance to the Board that internal audit recommendations are being progressed.
Item for Assurance	**Strategic Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22** The Committee received the Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22. The Committee supported the plan but agreed that Infection Prevention and Control and Radiology should be brought forward within the plan and consideration of strategic planning and Referral to Treatment (RTT) being deferred to accommodate this.
Item for Assurance	**Counter Fraud (LCFS) Update – Interim Report** New standards have been issued nationally to guide counter fraud activity for all government institutions, resulting in new NHS Counter Fraud Authority guidance. Clarification is being sought on the requirements of three aspects of this new guidance and as a result an initial assessment of the Trust's compliance is amber against these three areas, and green against 10 areas. The Trust is starting from a reasonable base and the three items will be progressed either with the NHS Counter Fraud Authority or internally.
Item for Assurance	**External Audit Plan 2020/21** The Committee received the external audit plan from KPMG. The plan focused on the delivery of the external audit programme for 2020/21 and highlighted the main audit risks. The Board will need to give consideration to the impact on the valuation of the estate (land and buildings) in relation to the structural integrity of the roof. The Committee noted the work needed to complete the value for money risk assessment and will be identifying an additional date for the Committee to meet to consider the outcomes of the risk assessment before the next scheduled meeting in May 2021.
Item for Assurance	**Year End Considerations 2020/21** The Committee received three year end related reports for consideration and commentary in advance of the 31 March 2021. The Committee received a draft going concern statement and recognised that this would be finalised after the 31 March 2020/21.

	The Committee understood the requirements to demonstrate the Trust is a going concern and although uncertainties exist welcomed the draft statement. The Committee would receive the final statement as part of the approval of the annual financial statements. The Committee received the accounting standards and policies for review in advance of the preparation of the financial statements. The paper also described some specific technical elements that were being adopted within the year as directed by national guidance and as a response to COVID. The Committee noted the paper and agreed to the accounting standards and policies. The Committee received a briefing paper on the revised Value for Money test. The Committee noted the additional work required as part of this revised process.
Risks to refer to risk register:	None
Other items of business:	Other items the Committee reviewed: • IG Breaches • Waivers • Losses • Interests, Gifts & Hospitality Registers

Attendance record

Attended:

D Dickinson – Committee Chair & Non-Executive Director
I Mack – Non-Executive Director
G Ward – Non-Executive Director
C Shaw – CEO
C Benham – Director of Finance
S Pooni - LCFS, Grant Thornton
M Robertson - LCFS, Grant Thornton
S Beavis – KPMG
C Wilson – KPMG
C T McLaughlin – Grant Thornton
S Evans – Grant Thornton
D-D A Graham – Grant Thornton
A Prime – Trust Secretary

Invitees:

C O'Brien – Director of Patient Safety
A Brown – Chief Nurse
S Jones – Deputy Chief Operating Officer
L Lippman – Deputy Director of Finance
P Jackson – Grant Thornton
S Cordon – Grant Thornton

Minutes:

S Gilder – Corporate Governance Support Manager