



Report Title	Audit and Risk Committee Chair's Report	
Author	Amanda Moat, Non executive Director and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee	
Accountable Director	Kathryn Vause, Executive Director of Finance	
Previous committees/groups	N/A	
Recommended action(s) (assurance, approval, information)	Assurance/Information	
Purpose of the paper	The report provides highlights of the Audit and Risk Committee to provide assurance to the Trust Board.	
Executive Summary		
<p>This report highlights key matters discussed at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 14 April 2026 to provide assurance to the Board.</p> <p>The Committee focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Interim Head of Internal Audit Opinion. - Enhanced governance to support management action closure. - The Internal Audit Plan. - Counter Fraud Activity Progress against plan and impacts of a recent legislative change. - Annual Accounts Audit Plan. - Financial Year End Timetable and Accounting Policies. - BAF and CRR summaries. - Procurement and Special Payments Exception reports. - Draft Annual Governance Statement. - Committee Assurance Reports. - Committee TOR and annual Governance Statement. - Effectiveness Surveys of ARC, Internal and External Audit. 		
Recommendation(s)	The Trust Board is asked to note the contents of the report and action items in the alert section.	
Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and level 2 committees only)	<p>10. Act as a collaborative, integral, and influential system partner.</p> <p>12. Secure sufficient revenue resources and use them wisely to ensure value for money.</p>	

Highlight Report

Report from: Audit and Risk Committee
Date of the meeting: 14 April 2026

Key discussion points at the meetings and matters to be escalated to Trust Board:

Alert:

- The Committee recommends the Trust Board approves the following:
 - Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference.
 - Annual Accounts Audit Plan for 2025/2026.
 - Internal Audit Plan and Charter for 2026/2027 (255 days).
- The Committee asks the Trust Board to note the Interim Head of Internal Audit Opinion for 25/26 as “moderate”, the final Head of Internal Audit Opinion to be presented at ARC in June with the Annual Accounts. The movement from significant assurance in 2024/2025 is due to continued management action closure performance deterioration in Q4 (the majority on 2 reports), combined with several control reviews having limited assurance. Additional governance and assurance actions were presented to the committee and are in place for 2026/2027 to improve performance.
- Another independent will need to Chair the specific item “Annual Governance Statement” at June’s Trust Board due to conflict of interest because the Deputy Chair is in the Chair’s seat that day.

Advise:

The Committee:

- Four assurance reviews from the 25/26 plan are still to be received by committee members. These are abstraction rates; establishment control; digital implementation and starter/leaver processes.
- Approved the 26/27 Counter Fraud Work Plan.
- Requested reporting enhancements to tracking risk ratings year-on-year and monitoring quarterly movements to identify long-term structural shifts while catching short-term volatility. It also provides a mechanism for the Board to align strategy and risk tolerances.
- Noted the draft annual governance statement. The final statement will need to be approved at June’s Board. A disclosure will explain the Audit and Risk Committee Chair’s dual role with Deputy Chair of the Trust.
- Approved the financial year end accounting policies.
- Have requested additional assurance on:
 - The learning from incidents driving increased personal injury and negligence claims.
 - Litigation cases and vehicle related claims and how these inform preventative measures of risk mitigation.

Assure:

The Committee:

- Received the Internal Audit Update Report and were assured by additional governance arrangements put in place to address management action process weaknesses for 26/27.
- Received audit reports with significant assurance in the following areas:
 - Business continuity management.
 - Received a moderate assurance audit report performance management framework.
- Were assured by the 25/26 counter fraud (CF) progress report with an additional action to engage hard to reach staff groups for CF awareness.
- Were assured that the Board Assurance Report and Corporate Risk review outputs reflected risks and issues being managed by the Trust.
- Risk assurance reports from Quality, Finance & Performance and People committee were received and noted. An exercise is underway to standardise best practice for the reports.
- Standard Exception reports for the following were received, and the committee noted the assurance the papers gave with regards to key processes and control reporting:
 - Single Tender Waivers / Direct Awards (non-framework) and Contracts over Threshold Q4 25/26.
 - Schedule of Losses and Special payments (25/26).
- Were assured by the internal and external audit effectiveness survey results.

New risks identified:

No new risks were identified

Report completed by: Amanda Moat, Committee Chair
Date: 12 May 2026