

**Minutes of the Office for Budget Responsibility Oversight Board and Audit Committee
– 4 October 2018, 14.00-15.30**

Oversight Board

Attending

Members: Sir Christopher Kelly (Chair), Bronwyn Curtis CBE, Robert Chote, Graham Andy King, Sir Charlie Bean. Staff attending: Stephen Farrington (Chief of Staff), Shaun Butcher (Deputy Chief of Staff) and Mark Dembowicz (Head of Strategy, Operations and Communications).

1. Procedures

The Board welcomed Sir Chris Kelly to his post as a non-executive member of the office, and agreed that Lord Burns should remain as Chair and that Sir Chris should become Chair of the Audit Committee.

The Board reviewed the risk register and discussed the updates that had been made since the previous meeting, which were limited, following the recent wide-ranging review. The Board discussed the departure of some experienced staff in the coming year and the procedures in place to maintain continuity and succession planning. The Board also discussed recent suggestions for the expansion of the OBR's remit.

The Board reviewed a paper produced by the NAO on *Cyber security and information risk guidance for Audit Committee's* and discussed the steps being taken to mitigate the associated risks (including the use of social media and information leaks). The OBR will seek assurances and request an update from the MoJ cyber security lead, in respect of overall IT network security.

The Board was asked to consider the implications of a Government Digital Service decision to revoke the gov.uk element of the OBR's email domain. The Board considered the options and agreed that the department should procure the obr.uk domain, ensuring consistency across the website, email and social media accounts.

The Board reviewed its work over the previous 12 months and concluded that it had met its responsibilities. It was agreed that future appointments to the Board should include some overlap, to ensure continuity and enable new members to get up to speed with procedures with the support of the outgoing member.

2. Update on OBR activity

The Board discussed a summary of the OBR's recent outputs, stakeholder engagement, management issues and upcoming priorities, presented by the BRC. The following issues were discussed:

1. The publication of the inaugural *Fiscal risks report* in July, which was well received, and welcomed in particular by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). We also published our second evaluation of anti-avoidance and operational policy measures.
2. Our monthly commentary on the public finances, which had recently shown repeated and often large downward revisions to borrowing in 2016-17, and is now £7 billion lower than the ONS' first estimate;
3. Interactions with departments, staffing and office management, including the wider engagement required for the delivery of the *Fiscal risks report*, which required a broad range of expertise from across government. We have also stepped up our engagement with the Scottish and Welsh administrations and published shared principles of engagement, ahead of agreeing a full MOU.

3. Finances and accounts

The Board discussed the financial position for the year to date and some exceptional costs which relate to the move to new premises.

Audit Committee

Attending

Members: Lord Burns, Dame Kate Barker (Chair), Robert Chote, Andy King (Chief of Staff), Mark Dembowicz, Kate Ivers (OBR financial adviser), (OBR accounts adviser), (OBR office manager), Neil Chapman (Government Internal Audit Agency).

1. Internal audit progress report and plan for 2017-18

The Government Internal Audit Agency presented the internal audit plan. The committee accepted the audit plan together with the associated fees.

2. External audit plan for 2017-18

The NAO presented the 2017-18 audit planning report which was accepted by the committee.