

**Appendix D - Aberdeen Performing Arts**

Area of Assurance	Assurance Request	ALEO Response and Hub Commentary	Hub Risk Rating
<b>Governance</b>	<p>Assurance of on-going review of all governance documentation and policies. The assurance will be provided through a short written summary of planned and completed activities in this area.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <p>Please provide an update on CEO post and Board training plan to identify and address any skills gaps.</p> <p>Please provide confirmation of scheduling of reviews of governance documentation including policies.</p>	<p>The Hub noted that Sharon Burgess had started in post as APA's new Chief Executive Officer on 1 June 2023 and had embedded well into the organisation. Board recruitment is still in progress with support from a local executive search organisation. It was anticipated that a new Chair elect and at least two board members would be formally joining the board at the AGM at the end of November. Consequently the current Chair would complete 1:1s by the end of the year, including new board members, to identify gaps and allow a board training plan to be put in place for 2024. The Hub agreed to request an update on progress with regard to board recruitment and training plan for the June 2024 meeting.</p> <p>With regard to governance documentation, the Hub was advised that APA held a policy review tracker which outlined scheduled dates for review of the relevant documentation including company policies. Furthermore, APA's compliance register holds key dates for governance and compliance matters. The Hub noted that APA was in the process of implementing Asana, which would allow them to track policy/document reviews automatically and more efficiently. The Hub agreed to request a copy of the tracker and compliance register by way of follow-up.</p>	<b>Very Low</b>
<b>Risk Management</b>	<p>Assurance that risks are being regularly reviewed in accordance with the organisation's agreed risk management policy, are kept under regular review with control actions monitored to completion, and are linked to the achievement of outcomes for the ALEO and the Council. This assurance will be provided through provision of risk registers and relevant supporting minutes/documentation.</p>	<p>APA confirmed that the audit on the statutory accounts was completed in September 2023 and that no audit recommendations were made in this area.</p> <p>APA's Health and Safety Champions have been working to close out recommendations resulting from the Health and Safety audit. A Payment Card Industry Data security Standard (PCI DSS) audit will be undertaken early in 2024, this audit is in line with the internal audit priorities agreed by the Finance, Audit and Property sub-committee.</p> <p>APA provided a copy of the current risk register which was reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Property sub-committee in May 2023, the risk register will be reviewed in November at the Board Meetings.</p> <p>The risk register format remains unchanged since the last review by the Hub, the risks identified are scored, grouped by category and the mitigation actions and activities are allocated to an owner.</p>	<b>Very Low</b>

Assurance that appropriate business continuity arrangements are in place, including testing and exercising arrangements or schedules which recognise the evolving risk environment for the Place; in particular that provision is made within plans and exercising to ensure resilience around critical service delivery; that each organisation has an awareness of the Council's responsibilities as a Cat 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act and has agreed mechanisms in place to support these; and that each organisation is fully conversant with the implications for their operations of the CONTEST Strategy (UK Govt strategy for counter-terrorism).

APA confirmed that they are in the process of preparing for the implementation of Martyn's Law. Existing Protect Duty procedures have been reviewed by the Health and Safety lead, Head of Customer Engagement and Customer Experience Manager in addition to liaison with Police Scotland in order to review the existing security plan and supporting procedures.

APA confirmed that staff will be reminded of the procedures established in Winter 2022 covering OC6/RLD to raise awareness and to ensure that any planned or unplanned power outages are managed effectively.

The Hub were advised that whilst no testing of BCP's have been conducted since the last reporting cycle, plans have been tested on a "live" basis via activations in order to respond to external events including show cancellations and weather events.

**Very Low**

**Finance**

Assurance that accounts are being managed within budget, that the level of financial risk to the Council is low and that there is compliance with the Following the Public Pound Code of Practice.

The Hub noted that Budget monitoring and updated cashflow reports continue as agenda items at each Board Meeting. The review of budgets and finance are supported by the organisations Finance, Audit and Property Sub Committee. The organisation continues to review customer behaviour and spending patterns to support Cash Flow and budget monitoring. There is a clear distinction between available funds and advance booking monies within Cash Flow and budget forecasts. Current year monitoring information and Board papers confirm that APA continue to operate within a challenging financial environment. As in previous years, the success or otherwise of the Xmas Panto is liable to factor heavily with respect to the final financial results for 2023-24

**Medium**

Assurance that ALEOs undertake medium-term financial planning or have incorporated medium term planning into a Business Plan to provide assurance that ALEOs are prepared for core funding pressures. Again this ensures compliance with the Following the Public Pound Code of Practice.

A business plan is currently in place, which was provisionally approved at the Board meeting in May 2023 with the proviso that this would be reviewed by the new Chief Executive. APA have intimated that the final plan will in place for approval by the board in February 2024, at which time it will also be reviewed by the ALEO Hub. As the updated Business Plan will be a key document which will also inform the basis for funding bids to external organisations going forward the ALEO Hub recognises that it needs to be as current as possible. There is evidence of scrutiny of cost and funding pressures plus potential mitigating actions within the papers being presented to the Board. The Hub will review the Business Plan in the next cycle of meetings.

**Medium**

Assurance that accounts are being managed within budget, are in line with statutory requirements and Following the Public Pound Code of Practice, and that the level of financial risk to the Council is low.

The Hub noted that audited annual accounts in respect of financial year 2022-23 are not yet available. These are expected to be signed off by the Board in November 2023 and submitted to Companies House and OSCR within the due deadlines. The audited accounts will be reported upon within a future Hub report once they have been lodged with Companies House and OSCR.

