



**Sub-Committee Member of the Board of the  
National Advocacy Service for People with  
Disabilities  
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee**

**Role Description**

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## **1.0 The Organisation**

The National Advocacy Service (NAS) is a non-profit organisation and is registered as a charity. As such, it is governed by the Charities Act 2009, it is also a company limited by guarantee (not having share capital) and it complies with the Companies Act 2014. NAS is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority and its Registered Charity Number is 20141332. The NAS CHY number is 21530 and its CRO number is 535779. NAS is compliant with the Charity Regulatory Authority Governance Code and complies also with Financial Reporting Standards 102 and SORP (FR102) thereby ensuring accountability and transparency.

The National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities (NAS) provides an independent, confidential and free, issue-based representative advocacy service that works exclusively for the person with a disability using the service and adheres to the highest professional standards. In addition, the organisation provides the Patient Advocacy Service which works to provide advocacy to a person wishing to make a complaint about the care they have received in a Public Acute Hospital, Nursing Home or in the aftermath of a Patient Safety Incident.

The main object for which the company is established is to 'Benefit the community at large by integrating those who are disadvantaged and by promoting their full participation in society through the provision to them of independent, confidential and free, representative Advocacy Services.'

## **2.0 General Overview of the Finance Audit and Risk Committee**

The Constitution of NAS is comprised of a Memorandum and Articles of Association (copy accompanies). There are nine Board members who are appointed to the Board of the NAS in accordance with the NAS Constitution and the Charities Act 2009. The Board of NAS exercises

control over, and is legally responsible for, the management of the NAS (including the Patient Advocacy Service) and ensures compliance with regulatory and sectoral requirements. Board members are appointed for a term of 3 years until the conclusion of the third annual general meeting of the company following their appointment. Board members can be appointed for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.

There are 3 sub-committees which report into the Board. These include HR, Finance, Audit & Risk (including Governance) and Service Delivery and Development (including Policy and Communications). The Constitution of the NAS Service is reviewed as needed as are its supporting policies.

The Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee reports directly into the Board. The establishment and operation of the Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee complies with the Charities Governance Code and best practice guidelines.

### **3.0 Principal Function of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee**

3.1 The overall function of the Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee is to support the work of the National Advocacy Service Board by ensuring the effective review and monitoring of financial risks; reliable management and financial reporting; compliance with laws and regulations; maintenance of an effective and efficient audit; and an effective risk management process. The Sub-Committee shall provide advice and make recommendations to the Board in order to ensure that the company's governance and financial management policies and practices are in accordance with or exceed prescribed standards and act independently of management.

- 3.2 To keep under review the governance practices, procedures and related documentation of the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities so as to maintain alignment with the Governance Code of the Charities Regulator, as well as good practice, and to make appropriate recommendations to the Board in this regard, including in relation to self-review by the Board.
- 3.3 To give advice and make recommendations to the National Senior Management Team in relation to all matters to do with the company's governance and financial management policies and practices and the allocation of financial resources.
- 3.4 Provide support and guidance in order to ensure that the objectives of the strategic plan, as they relate to governance and financial management are achieved, within the budget framework, as approved by the Board.
- 3.5 The Chairperson of the Finance Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee will report to the Board at each scheduled meeting.
- 3.6 Assess the adequacy of systems, policies and procedures to support a consistently high standard of governance within the organisation. Priority areas will include financial management, compliance with Company Law, compliance with funders' standards and procedures.
- 3.7 Keep under review the financial sustainability of the organisation, having regard to, on the one hand, anticipated expenditure commitments and, on the other, the predicted levels and sources of income.
- 3.8 Ensure that best practice is applied in the management of finances to ensure value for money and transparency. Systematically review progress on the implementation of recommendations arising from external and internal audits.
- 3.9 Regularly review budgets and expenditure reports to assess accuracy and compliance with accounting standards and integrity

of financial information. The Finance, Audit & Risk (including Governance) Committee review and recommend for approval the expenditure reports, before they are submitted to the Board and subsequently the Citizens Information Board. Budgets having been reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee are recommended for approval to the Board.

- 3.10 Review the adequacy of risk management arrangements, including risk registers, and insurances.
- 3.11 Ensure that there is co-ordination and good working relationships between internal audit, external audit and any other review bodies that have been set up.
- 3.12 Review annual pension trustee report.
- 3.13 Liaise with and manage the relationship with the auditors for annual audit and present final audited accounts to the Board for approval as well as ensuring that any audit recommendations are implanted.
- 3.14 The Finance Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee shall meet in advance of any meeting of the Board in order to consider the Accounts and make such recommendations to the Board as are necessary for their approval.

#### **4.0 Person Specification**

- 4.1 An understanding of the work and remit of the National Advocacy Service and the wider environment in which the organisation operates.
- 4.2 Commitment to ensure the work of the organisation in relation to financial management, financial policies and procedures adequacy of systems, compliance with company law, compliance with public sector funding standards and procedures are monitored and implemented.

- 4.3 The ability to critically analyse information, constructively challenge the opinions of others, work to a shared consensus and accept collective responsibility for sub-committee decisions and recommendations.
- 4.4 A strong awareness of good governance, including the ability to understand board level financial data, together with an understanding of budgeting and sound financial management practices in relation to the significant state funding received.
- 4.5 Knowledge and understanding of the charity sector best practice including the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- 4.6 Knowledge of organisational risk management to ensure that the board is well informed of the organisation's risks and ensuring that the organisation has proper risk management provisions in place.
- 4.7 Knowledge of best practice in relation to management of finances whilst ensuring value for money and transparency.
- 4.8 Knowledge of external and internal audits and audit practices as being able to ensure the oversight of implementation of recommendations.
- 4.9 Knowledge of public sector pensions to ensure best value for the organisation as well as members of the organisation's pension scheme.
- 4.10 A strong sense of ethics and integrity together with a clear understanding of good governance practices including the role and responsibilities of sub-committee members.
- 4.11 Excellent communication skills, both oral and written.
- 4.12 The ability to work effectively with others and act to address any conflict, which may arise.

## **5.0 Term and commitment of the role of sub-committee member**

- 5.1 The Sub-Committee meets before each Board meeting and as required. Meetings last approximately 2 hours during normal business hours. Meetings are currently held remotely. Papers are issued in advance of subcommittee meetings and members are expected to adequately prepare for these meetings.
- 5.2 It is expected that all members will make every effort to attend all meetings of the Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee. Where a member is consistently unable to attend meetings, the Chairperson (or in case of non-attendance by the Chairperson, the Chair of the Board) will review their attendance.
- 5.3 Sub-Committee members will need to be available from time to time to provide advice, attend train and provide input to financial decisions outside of meetings.
- 5.4 Sub-Committee members may be asked from time to time to be on an interview panel for roles that become vacant for either the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities or the Patient Advocacy Service.
- 5.5 Sub-Committee members term of office is 3 years.
- 5.6 Outside of retirement at the end of their term, any member of the Committee may resign their position at any time by tendering their resignation in writing to the Board. The notice for resignation of members should be received in writing before the last 2 scheduled meetings which the member intends to attend before resigning from the Sub Committee.

## **6.0 Expenses**

- 6.1 Members of the Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee will not be paid for their attendance at the Finance,



Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee or for time that they spend in preparing for the meetings.

- 6.2 Members of the Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee will be reimbursed by NAS/PAS for expenses incurred and claimed by them in connection with their attendance at meetings of the Finance, Audit and Risk (including Governance) Sub-Committee if any meeting is held in person. Their expenses will be reimbursed against receipts in line with the Department of Finance approved rates.