

AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 21 June 2006 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Margaret Bootland, Gail Casey, Jackie Maceira and James McCallum.

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; David Connell, Head of Finance; Lorraine Coyne, Manager of Audit; Colin McDougall, Section Head, Internal Audit; Don Findlay, Manager of Technical Services; Moira Swanson, Research and Information Manager; Liz Cochrane, Principal Policy Officer; David Webster, Section Head (Performance Management); and Craig Stewart, Administrative Officer, Legal and Administrative Services.

Also Attending: Elaine Barrowman, Senior Audit Manager and Angus Brown, Depute Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Geoff Calvert.

Councillor Jackie Maceira in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

9303 The Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 8 March 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

REMIT, TIMETABLE AND MEMBERSHIP – AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

9304 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive which developed the discussion on issues relating to the remit of the Audit and Performance Review Committee in order to meet the requirements identified in the Council's draft Best Value Improvement Plan.

9305 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and the Principal Policy Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to remit consideration of the report to the next meeting of Council.

FOLLOW UP REVIEW OF HOUSING RENTS SYSTEM

- 9306 With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Committee of 8 March 2006 (Page 2289, paragraph 8472 refers), a report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services advising of the progress being made in addressing the issues raised by Audit Scotland in their audit of the Housing Rents System.
- 9307 The Committee was advised that the one remaining recommendation related to the creation of a system interface being developed between the Saffron rents system and the financial ledger to allow automatic transfer of data.
- 9308 After discussion and having heard the Convener, Councillor Maceira, the Committee agreed to note, with satisfaction, that the testing of the interface was now complete and the interface would be operational from the first ledger run of the new financial year.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2006

- 9309 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services seeking approval of the Council's Asset Management Plan 2006.
- 9310 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Technical Services in explanation, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to recommend that the Asset Management Plan 2006 be approved; and
 - (2) that consideration of the matter be remitted to the Council for approval as the decision was outwith the delegated powers of the Committee.

AUDIT SCOTLAND'S ANNUAL OVERVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT

- 9311 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing the findings of Audit Scotland's review of the adequacy of Internal Audit arrangements covering the financial year 2005/2006.
- 9312 Having heard the Head of Finance, the Committee agreed to note the recommendations arising out of the review as detailed in the action plan appended to the report.

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2006

- 9313 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section against the Audit Plan 2005/06.
- 9314 Having heard the Manager of Audit, the Committee agreed to note the report.

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2006/2007

- 9315 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the planned programme of work for the Internal Audit Section for the year 2006/2007.
- 9316 Having heard the Manager of Audit, the Committee agreed to note the report.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN ACTIONING RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED WITHIN INTERNAL AUDIT AND EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

- 9317 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the progress being made in actioning recommendations contained within key Internal Audit and External Audit reports which departmental management have committed to implementing.
- 9318 A copy of Appendices A and B to the report, which had been omitted from the papers, was circulated to Members.
- 9319 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Internal Audit) and relevant officers in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
 - (2) to note that all of the outstanding recommendations, in both Internal Audit and External Audit reports, would be monitored by Internal Audit and, if satisfactory progress had not been achieved over the next 3 months, then departmental management would be asked to provide an explanation to the next scheduled meeting of the Audit and Performance Review Committee.

ACTIVITY ON WHISTLEBLOWING HOTLINE

- 9320 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the level of activity on the whistleblowing hotline since its launch on 6 March 2006.

9321 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Internal Audit), in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the developments in relation to the Council's Whistleblowing Hotline; and
- (2) to remit the report to the next meeting of the JCF for information.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEAMMATE ELECTRONIC WORKING PAPERS PACKAGE

9322 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the progress being made in the development of the TeamMate electronic working papers package by Internal Audit.

9323 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Internal Audit) and the Head of Finance in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress being made in the development of the TeamMate electronic working papers package.

APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

9324 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the outcome of the audit tender exercise conducted by the Accounts Commission for Scotland in respect of the financial years 2006/07 to 2010/11.

9325 Having heard the Head of Finance, the Committee agreed to note that KPMG had been appointed to carry out the audit of West Dunbartonshire Council with effect from the financial year commencing 1 April 2006.

AUDIT SCOTLAND – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT PLAN 2005/06

9326 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on the approach to be adopted by Audit Scotland in relation to the audit of the financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2006.

9327 Having heard the Head of Finance and the Senior Audit Manager, the Committee agreed to note the approach to be adopted by Audit Scotland in relation to their audit of the financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2006.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

9328 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing further information on work carried out to implement the Council's Risk Management obligations.

- 9329 After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress being made in the development of the Council's Risk Management Programme.

CORPORATE PLAN: PERFORMANCE AND UPDATE

- 9330 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 9331 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the revised Corporate Objectives on the basis outlined in the report.

AUDIT OF BEST VALUE

- 9332 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing a further update on the position with the Best Value Audit.
- 9333 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) and the Chief Executive in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed :-
- (1) to note the report; and
 - (2) to note that the Audit Report on Highland Council was available, for Member's information, on the Audit Scotland website and/or from the Policy Unit on request.

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS

- 9334 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive reviewing progress on the current Best Value Service review programme.
- 9335 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) and the Research and Information Manager in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 9336 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing a summary of the progress of the Statutory Performance Indicators for the year 2005/06.

- 9337 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) and relevant officers in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the position on the performance of these indicators.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS – SURVEY RESULTS

- 9338 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on the recent surveys of Customer Service Standards.
- 9339 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) and the Chief Executive in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

MONITORING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

- 9340 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-
- (1) providing a corporate overview of complaints and complaints processing for the period 1 October 2005 to 31 March 2006; and
 - (2) providing comparative data relating to the previous six month reporting periods.
- 9341 In relation to Appendix 1 to the report concerning Complaint No. 9 (Service Area – Finance Council Tax), it was agreed to note that the Outcome listed as “**Unjustified** Apology issued” appeared erroneous and would be further clarified.
- 9342 Having heard the Section Head (Performance Management), the Committee agreed to note the results of the monitoring exercise.

SICKNESS ABSENCE STATISTICS – QUARTER 4 AND ANNUAL RETURN

- 9343 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing on the levels of employee absence during the 3 month period 1 January to 31 March 2006 and Annual Absence Statistics.
- 9344 Having heard the Chief Executive in elaboration, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

QUALITY & SERVICE AWARDS

9345 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the progress of various quality and service awards.

9346 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) and the Chief Executive in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note, with satisfaction, the contents of the report; and
- (2) to congratulate the officers involved for the high quality of the award submissions.

The meeting closed at 11.24 a.m.