

AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee held in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 21 December 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jackie Maceira, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey and James McCallum.

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Gerry McNerney, Director of Corporate Services; David Connell, Head of Finance; Lorraine Coyne, Manager of Audit; Colin McDougall, Section Head, Internal Audit; Louise Love, Section Head (Operations), Internal Audit; Jim Pow, Manager of Finance (Housing and Technical Services); Stephen West, Manager of Resources (Social Work Services); Liz Cochrane, Principal Policy Officer; David Webster, Section Head (Performance Management); May Simpson, Assistant Policy Officer; and Craig Stewart, Administrative Assistant, 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 Margaret Bootland.

Councillor Jackie Maceira in the Chair

PRESENTATION BY AUDIT SCOTLAND ON MODERNISED AUDIT

7784 The Committee heard a detailed presentation from Elaine Barrowman, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland, on the new performance and risks framework that was being rolled out by Audit Scotland.

7785 It was noted:-

- (a) that this new approach was piloted last year in two local authorities and had already been applied to all health sector audits;
- (b) that in this regard, the new audit approach, which was being referred to as the 'modernised audit', focused more on the key priorities and risks facing the Council;

- 7786 Following a question and answer session, the Convener, Councillor Maceira, thanked Ms Barrowman for her interesting and informative presentation.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 7787 The Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 14 September 2005 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

FOLLOW UP REVIEW OF HOUSING RENTS SYSTEM

- 7788 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services advising of the progress being made in addressing the issues raised by Audit Scotland in their audit of the Housing Rents System.
- 7789 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Finance in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the progress made to date in respect of this matter; and
 - (2) that the report be remitted to the next meeting of the Social Justice Committee in view of concerns raised in respect of the delay in completion of the interface to the financial ledger, the revised target date for which being 31 March 2006.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICES – QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

- 7790 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing on the performance of the Chief Executive's Services for the period to 30 September 2005.
- 7791 After discussion and having heard the Convener, Councillor Maceira, and the Principal Policy Officer, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
 - (2) to note that performance information relating to the Chief Executive's Department would continue to be submitted to the Audit & Performance Review Committee.

THE ACCOUNTS COMMISSION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2004/2005

- 7792 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-
- (a) informing on the final figures for the Accounts Commission performance indicators for 2004/2005 and providing comparisons with previous years' figures where applicable; and
 - (b) providing performance monitoring information, from August 2005, on the statutory performance indicators.
- 7793 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and the Policy Assistant in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the report.

MONITORING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

- 7794 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-
- (a) providing a corporate overview of complaints and complaints processing for the period 1 April 2005 to 30 September 2005; and
 - (b) providing comparative data relating to the previous six month reporting periods.
- 7795 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and the Policy Assistant in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the results of the monitoring exercise.

AUDIT SCOTLAND BEST VALUE TRANSITIONAL AUDIT

- 7796 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing the findings of Audit Scotland's Best Value Transitional Audit.
- 7797 Having heard the Head of Finance, the Committee agreed to note the findings of the review as detailed in the Action Plan.

AUDIT SCOTLAND REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

- 7798 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing the findings of Audit Scotland's review of the Council's approach to performance management and improvement.

7799 After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the findings of the review as detailed in the Action Plan; and
- (2) to note that a report on the CIPFA guidance, which provided clarification on the roles of committees dealing with scrutiny and performance arrangements, would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

AUDIT OF BEST VALUE

7800 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the position with the Best Value Audit.

7801 Having heard the Section Head (Performance Management), the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the terms of the report; and
- (b) to note that a further update would be provided to the Committee as the Audit developed.

AUDIT SCOTLAND REVIEW OF SUPPORTING PEOPLE ARRANGEMENTS

7802 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing the findings of Audit's Scotland's follow up review of the Supporting People Arrangements.

7803 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and relevant officers in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the findings of the review as detailed in the Action Plan.

AUDIT SCOTLAND FINANCIAL STRATEGY REVIEW

7804 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing the findings of Audit Scotland's review of the Council's financial strategy.

7805 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and relevant officers in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the findings of the review as detailed in the Action Plan.

AUDIT SCOTLAND'S FINAL AUDIT REPORT TO MEMBERS 2004/2005

- 7806 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of Audit Scotland's report on the audit of West Dunbartonshire Council's accounts 2004/05.
- 7807 Having heard the Head of Finance, the Committee agreed to note the current position of the Action Plan.

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2005

- 7808 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of the work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section against the Audit Plan 2004/05.
- 7809 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Audit in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the report.

SICKNESS ABSENCE STATISTICS – QUARTER 2 (JULY TO SEPTEMBER) 2005/2006

- 7810 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services informing on the levels of employee absence during the 3 month period 1 July to 30 September 2005.
- 7811 After discussion and having heard the Director of Corporate Services in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
 - (2) to note the actions that had been taken by Departments to reduce the level of sickness absence.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

- 7812 As this would be the last meeting of the Committee of 2005 the Convener, Councillor Maceira, took the opportunity to extend his best wishes to everyone for the forthcoming Festive Season.

The meeting closed at 11.45 a.m.