

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, 29 June 2005 at 10.05 a.m.

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

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Gerry McInerney, Director of Corporate Services; David Connell, Head of Finance; Angela Clements, Head of Information Services; Lorraine Coyne, Manager of Audit; Jim Pow, Manager of Finance (Housing and Technical Services); Stephen West, Manager of Resources (Social Work Services); Liz Cochrane, Policy Manager; David Webster, Section Head (Performance Management); May Simpson, Assistant Policy Officer; and Craig Stewart, Administrative Assistant, Legal and Administrative Services.

Also Attending: Angus Brown, Depute Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and Muzz Ahmed, Audit Scotland.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Elaine Barrowman, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland.

Councillor Jackie Maceira in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

6340 The Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2005 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

FOLLOW UP REVIEW OF HOUSING RENTS SYSTEM

6341 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.

6342 Having heard the Manager of Finance the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made to date in respect of this matter; and
- (2) that this item would continue to remain on the agenda of the Audit and Performance Review Committee until such time as the one remaining outstanding issue had been resolved.

MONITORING SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE STATUTORY RETURNS

6343 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing of the results of monitoring Scottish Executive statutory returns for the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005.

6344 After discussion and having heard the Policy Assistant – Performance Review and the Chief Executive in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the results of the monitoring exercise.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

6345 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing on the performance of the Chief Executive's Department for the period April 2004 to March 2005.

6346 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) and the Chief Executive, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE PLAN 2005 – 2009

6347 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing on the Chief Executive's Departmental Service Plan for the period 2005 to 2009.

6348 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) in further explanation the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

MONITORING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

6349 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-

- (a) providing a corporate overview of complaints and complaints processing for the period 1 October 2004 to 31 March 2005; and
- (b) providing comparative data relating to the previous six month reporting periods.

6350 After discussion and having heard the Policy Manager and the Chief Executive in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) that a copy of the contact information for departmental complaints coordinators would be provided to Members Services for information.

AUDIT OF BEST VALUE

6351 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing on issues relating to the Audit of Best Value.

6352 After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Performance Management) in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that Members be encouraged to read and note the various Audit Reports, available from the Audit Scotland website www.audit-scotland.gov.uk or from the Chief Executive's Policy Unit;
- (2) that Members be requested to provide their views on the review of Performance Management arrangements, including the draft SPI reporting template, to the Section Head (Performance Management) by the deadline date of 31 July 2005; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS

6353 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive reviewing progress on the current Best Value Service review programme.

6354 In this connection, it was noted that it was the Council's statutory duty to achieve Best Value in the delivery of services including the requirement to maintain a programme of reviews which may be of specific services or focus on wider aspects of Council responsibility.

6355 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and the Section Head (Performance Management) in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORTING: AN UPDATE

6356 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the latest Best Value Guidance and future Regulations regarding the publication of financial and performance information.

6357 After discussion and having heard the Section Head, Performance Management in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the Public Performance Reporting Strategy on the basis outlined in the report; and
- (2) that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Scottish Executive for information.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL CODE OF PRACTICE

6358 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of the Financial Management and Control Code of Practice which has been introduced as a working document for the good management of financial resources within the Council.

6359 Having heard the Head of Finance in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the Financial Management and Control Code of Practice; and
- (2) to confirm its agreement to the adoption of the code.

DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTEREST

6360 Councillor Casey declared a financial interest in respect of the following item of business and took no part in the Committee's deliberation thereon.

AUDIT SCOTLAND REVIEW OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES

6361 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing the findings of Audit Scotland's Review of Members' Expenses.

6362 It was noted that as part of their planned systems of work for 2004/05, Audit Scotland had conducted a review of the members' expenses function. In this respect, the Executive Summary and Action Plan were appended to the report.

6363 After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance in further 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 REVIEW OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING

- 6364 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of the findings of Audit Scotland's Review of Business Continuity Planning.
- 6365 After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the progress made to date in completing the business continuity plan; and
 - (2) that a further report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

AUDIT SCOTLAND REVIEW OF TRADING ACCOUNTS

- 6366 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of progress with the implementation of the Audit Scotland Action Plan in relation to the Review of Trading Accounts issued on 31 May 2005.
- 6367 The Committee agreed to note the findings of the review as detailed in the Action Plan appended to the report.

THE IMPACT OF FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARD 17 (FRS17) ON TRADING ACCOUNTS

- 6368 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services highlighting the changes brought about by Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17) in 2004/05 and identifying the impact it has made, particularly on the trading accounts in comparison to the consolidated position of the Council's accounts.
- 6369 Having heard the Head of Finance in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the corrective action outlined in paragraph 3.6 of the report.

TRADING ACCOUNTS

- 6370 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of the review undertaken in respect of areas of the Council's current trading activities.
- 6371 Having heard the Head of Finance, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note that Catering, Leisure and Housing Repairs and Maintenance were the three Statutory Trading Account Services identified through the review; and

- (2) to note the change in focus for the Estate Management Service as detailed in the report.

DISASTER RECOVERY UPDATE

6372 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing an update on progress with the Council's Disaster Recovery Plan.

6373 Having heard the Head of Information Services, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the recent disaster recovery test was a success and that the Council had now signed a contract with Synstar for a period of three years;
- (2) to note the draft copy of application recovery plan which was currently being completed; and
- (3) to note the further progress made in terms of providing a robust Disaster Recovery response to computer outages for the Council.

RISK MANAGEMENT

6374 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Service advising of the progress made in relation to developing risk management.

6375 After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance in further explanation the Committee agreed to note the satisfactory progress that had been made in relation to developing Risk Management.

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2005

6376 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.

6377 Having heard the Manager of Audit, the Committee agreed to note the report.

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2005/2006

6378 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services advising of the planned programme of work for the Internal Audit Section for the year 2005/2006.

6379 Having heard the Manager of Audit in further explanation the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

SICKNESS ABSENCE STATISTICS – QUARTER 4 (2004/2005)

6380 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services informing on the levels of employee absence during the 3-month period 1 January to 31 March 2005.

6381 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the actions being taken by Departments in relation to this matter.

The meeting closed at 12.02 p.m.