

THE FIFE COUNCIL - STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

29th June, 2021

10.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Dave Dempsey (Convener), Lesley Backhouse, John Beare, Gordon Langlands, Derek Noble, Jonny Tepp, Ann Verner and Ross Vettrano.

ATTENDING: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director - Finance and Corporate Services, Elaine Muir, Head of Finance, Laura Robertson, Finance Operations Manager, Avril Cunningham, Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, Anne Bence and Paul Noble, Accountants, Finance; Helena Couperwhite, Manager - Committee Services and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Ross Hubert, Auditor, Audit Scotland.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Dave Coleman and Mary Lockhart.

184. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

185. ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2020/21

The Committee considered the annual audit report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, containing the Annual Assurance Statement 2020/21, overview of the 2020/21 audit performance, compliance with the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS) and an update on staffing and fraud and incident report.

Decision

The Committee:

- (1) noted the findings of the 2020/21 annual audit report;
- (2) noted that a medium/high level of control existed and that reasonable assurance could be placed on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's systems of corporate governance and internal control in the year to 31st March, 2021; and
- (3) acknowledged that Avril Cunningham, Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services would be retiring in August, 2021. The Convener, on behalf of the Committee thanked Avril for her substantial contribution and time spent on the Committee and wished her well in her future retirement.

186. UNAUDITED FIFE COUNCIL ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services which contained the unaudited Annual Accounts for Fife Council and its group for 2020-21.

Decision

The Committee noted:

- (1) the content of the report;
- (2) that the Fife Council Audited Annual Accounts 2020/21 would be submitted to the Standards and Audit Committee on 28th October, 2021 for approval; and
- (3) that the Head of Finance would be available to discuss with members any specific queries which might arise prior to submission of the final accounts.

187. UNAUDITED CHARITABLE ACCOUNTS

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services which contained the Fife Council Charitable Trusts - Unaudited Annual Accounts and Financial Statements 2020-21.

Decision

The Committee noted:-

- (1) the content of the report;
- (2) that the Audited Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements 2020-21 would be submitted to the Standards and Audit Committee on 28th October, 2021; and
- (3) that the Head of Finance would be available to discuss any specific queries which might arise prior to the submission of the final accounts.

188. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REVIEW AND STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REVIEW UPDATE

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services which updated members on progress with the Risk Management Strategy Review and Risk Register Review.

Decision

The Committee noted:-

- (1) the progress to date and the next stage of the Risk Management Strategy review - to establish the Risk Management Strategy Group and remit, to develop and implement the Risk Management Strategy and framework;
- (2)/

2021 SA 76

- (2) that a further update on progress with the Risk Management Strategy review and action to be taken, would be reported to a future meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee, and
 - (3) that the revised Strategic Risk Register would be submitted to the Standards and Audit Committee for approval later in the year.
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