

THE FIFE COUNCIL - STANDARDS, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Committee Room 2, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

30 June 2025

10.00 am – 1.40 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Dave Dempsey (Convener), Tom Adams, David Alexander, Lesley Backhouse, John Beare, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Al Clark, Gordon Pryde and Ann Verner.

ATTENDING: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services, Elaine Muir, Head of Finance, Tracy Hirst, Finance Operations Manager, Ashley Breckenridge, Accountant, Matthew Ross, Finance Business Partner, Anne Bence, Accountant, Paul Noble, Accountant, Finance Services; Les Robertson, Head of Revenue and Commercial Services, Gary Moyes, Category Manager, Procurement Services; Pamela Redpath, Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, Clare Whyte, Risk Management Team Leader, Hazel Hastie, Auditor, Carolyn Ward, Audit Team Manager, Shona Slayford, Audit Team Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, Finance and Corporate Services; Shelagh Mclean, Head of Education and Childrens Services, Kevin Funnell, Service Manager, Education and Childrens Services; Diarmuid Cotter, Head of Customer and Online Services, Kerry Hutchison, Revenues Manager, Customer and Online Services; Ross Spalding, Service Manager, Climate Change and Zero Waste; Jane Findlay, Lead Consultant, Climate Change and Partnerships; Jill Blair, Events Management Officer, Emma Palmer, Emergency Resilience Lead Officer, Emergency Resilience Team; Allan Barclay, Service Manager, Brian Fairie, Team Manager, Building Services; David Paterson, Community Manager (Levenmouth), Communities and Neighbourhoods Service; Lynne Johnston, Business Change Manager, Alan Hall, Business Change Manager, Mhairi Mullen, Service Manager, Housing Services; Sharon Murphy, Community Investment Manager; Policy and Communications; Martin Kotlewski, Service Manager - Solutions Service Assurance, BTS; Avril Sweeney, Manager (Compliance), HSCP Health and Social Care Localities; Pam Ewen, Head of Planning, Planning Service; John Mitchell, Head of Roads and Transportation Services, Danny Jack, Team Manager (Fleet Compliance), Roads and Transportation Services; Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Kerry Elliott and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officers, Legal and Democratic Services.

ALSO ATTENDING: Callum Justice, Audit Manager, Internal Audit, Glasgow City Council.

145. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No.22

146. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Standards, Audit and Risk committee of 29 April 2025.

Decision

The committee approved the minute.

147. CONTROLLER OF AUDIT'S SECTION S102 REPORT - ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services providing the Controller of Audit's Section 102 Report – Aberdeen City Council. The report also detailed the actions taken by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services in response to the report and accompanying letter from the Account Commission.

Decision

The committee noted:-

- (1) the key messages and lessons detailed in the report; and
- (2) the actions taken by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services.

148. ISSUED AUDIT REPORTS

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services summarising findings from the Internal Audit Reports finalised since the previous meeting of the committee. The report highlighted areas of concern and, if applicable, instances where Services were not taking appropriate action.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the contents of the report, including the summary of findings detailed at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) expressed concerns over number of lone worker fobs issued and not in use and requested all audit recommendations for Children's and Families Service were complete by required implementation date of 31 October 2025.

The committee adjourned at 11.30 am and reconvened at 11.45am.

149. POST AUDIT REVIEW (PAR) REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, updating members on progress towards implementing internal audit recommendations previously agreed with Management.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report and the progress made in implementing recommendations.

150. 2024/25 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, presenting the 2024/2025 Internal Audit Annual Report. The report provided an independent annual internal audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's governance, risk management and control framework and summarised the key activities from which the opinion was derived.

Decision

The committee considered and noted the contents of the report, including the overall audit opinion reached for 2024/25 that reasonable assurance could be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control.

151. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2025

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services, presenting the Annual Governance Statement for consideration, approval and inclusion into the unaudited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the contents of the covering report;
- (2) approved the Annual Governance Statement as detailed at Appendix 1; and
- (3) noted that following approval, the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services would include the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2025.

152. FIFE COUNCIL UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS 2024-25

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services containing the unaudited accounts for Fife Council and its group for 2024-25.

Decision

The committee considered and noted the unaudited accounts for 2024-2025.

153. FIFE COUNCIL CHARITABLE TRUSTS - UNAUDITED ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2024-25

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services containing the unaudited annual accounts for Fife Council Charitable Trusts for 2024-25.

Decision

The committee considered and noted the unaudited accounts for 2024-2025.

154. 2025/26 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, detailing the Internal Audit Plan for the 2025/26 financial year, the outcome from the review of the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan and update on progress made towards delivering planned audit assignments.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) reviewed and approved the 2025/26 Internal Audit Plan as detailed at Appendix A to the report;
- (2) reviewed and approved the amendments made to the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan at paragraph 2.2 in the report; and
- (3) noted the update on progress made towards delivering the 2023/24 and 2024/25 Internal Audit Plans at Appendix B to the report.

155. STANDARDS, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services outlining the workplan for future meetings of the committee.

Decision

The committee reviewed the content of the work plan and agreed it would be updated as required.

The committee resolved, under Section 50(a)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7a of the Act.

156. ISSUED AUDIT REPORT - BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS (BTS), CYBER SECURITY

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Audit and Risk Management Services, summarising findings from the Business Technology Solutions, Cyber Security Report – Threat and Vulnerability Management IT

2025 SA 66

Internal Audit Report. The report highlighted four areas for improvement including required management actions and provided an overall risk grading of High.

Decision

The committee noted the content of the report, including the summary of findings at Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Clark left the meeting during consideration of the above item.