

FALKIRK COUNCIL

MINUTE of the MEETING of the AUDIT COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on MONDAY 24 JUNE 2013 at 9.30 a.m.

COUNCILLORS: Depute Provost John Patrick
Allyson Black
Tom Coleman (Convener)
Baillie Joan Paterson

OFFICERS: Margaret Anderson, Director of Social Work
Paul Ferguson, Revenue Manager
Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services
Gary Greenhorn, Head of Education Planning & Resources
David McGhee, Head of Resources & Procurement
Gordon O'Connor, Internal Audit Manager
Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager
Mary Pitcaithly, Chief Executive

ALSO

ATTENDING:

Fiona Mitchell Knight, Audit Scotland
Lisa Proctor, Audit Scotland
John Jenkins, Audit Scotland

AC1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Roseann Stevenson, Provost Pat Reid and Councillor Steven Carleschi.

AC2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

AC3. MINUTE

Decision

The Minute of the Meeting held on 25 March 2013 was approved.

AC4. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS – KEY FINANCIAL SYSTEMS CONTROLS

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer presenting the external auditor's report on a review of key financial systems of internal control.

Audit Scotland had undertaken an evaluation of the Council's internal financial controls. The audit found that the key controls were operating satisfactorily. While no specific risks were identified a number of areas for improvement had been highlighted and these were detailed in an action plan together with the management's planned response.

Decision

The Report was noted.

AC5. INTERNAL AUDIT: ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT 2012/13

The Committee considered a report by the Internal Audit manager on the 2012/13 internal audit programme

The 2012/13 audit programme consisted of 23 main reviews. The report provided a summary of the internal audit work undertaken together with the level of assurance provided of each review. The Internal Audit manager had, on the basis of the assurances given, provided substantial assurance on the Council's overall framework of controls for the year 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

Committee sought further detail on the reviews of corporate risk management arrangements, recruitment and selection and on maintenance within Council housing.

Decision

The Report was noted.

AC6. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2012/13

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive presenting the Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the Council's Annual Accounts for 2012/13.

The Committee discussed the need to ensure that the areas for improvement identified within the Statement are managed and prioritised within the context of the Council's overall workplan. The Committee also sought information on plans to redevelop the Council's website.

Decision

The Annual Governance Statement 201/13 was approved.

**AC7. FALKIRK COUNCIL ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE
2013 - 16**

The Committee considered an update by Audit Scotland on the Assurance and Improvement Plan.

The Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) for the Council had been established in 2010. It set out the planned scrutiny activity for the Council for the period April 2010 to March 2013 based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by the main local government and inspection agencies. Its aim was to focus on scrutiny activity. The AIP had been updated annually and the AIP for the period April 2013 to March 2016 was now presented.

The Committee sought clarification on arrangements for showing best practice amongst and between the local public bodies and how the AIP sat in the hierarchy of audit plans.

DECISION

The report was noted.