

Minute of Meeting

Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 06 November 2017	10:00	Corporate Meeting Room 1, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Tom Begg, Councillor Bill Binks, Councillor Stephen Burns, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Alison Jean Dowling, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Jim Harte, Councillor Emma Rodden, Councillor Jim Sharkey

Chair

Councillor Binks, Convener presided.

In Attendance

A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; L McIntyre, Strategic Planning & Policy Development Manager and K Owkzarek, Senior Planning & Policy Development Officer (both Chief Executive's); J Trainer, Head of Early Years and Inclusion (Children's Services); F Carlin, Head of Planning & Housing Services (Development & Housing Services); O Reid, Head of Public Protection, C Dalrymple, Regulatory & Enforcement Manager and C Hunter, Environmental Improvements Manager, Lead Officer (all Environment & Communities); R McGrath, Head of Business & Customer Services, and A McMahon, Chief Internal Auditor, K Locke, Risk Manager, Lead Officer, S Fanning, Senior Health & Safety Officer, R Cree, OD & Workforce Planning Manager; P Feeney, Enterprise Architect, C Peters, Cyber Security Architect and C MacDonald, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 Training for Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board Members

There was submitted a report by the Chief Auditor relative to training for Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board members.

The report intimated that at the Board held on 28 August 2017, members raised a number of questions in relation to cyber security and it was agreed that further information would be provided. The report indicated that the training briefing on risk management which was due to be given at this meeting would be replaced with a briefing on cyber security risk and control and the briefing on risk management would instead be provided as part of the all-member training programme. A copy of the revised Audit, Risk & Scrutiny training programme was appended to the report.

The Council's Cyber Security Architect gave a presentation on cyber security risk and control. The presentation gave a brief overview of cyber crime in 2016/17; outlined the real threat and exposure; detailed the future of cyber security; highlighted the Scottish Government Strategy; and showed live feed from a cyber attack map.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the amended programme of training briefings be agreed; and
- (b) That the training briefing on cyber security risk and control be noted.

2 Summary of Internal Audit Reports for Period to 30 September 2017

There was submitted a report by the Chief Auditor relative to the requirement in terms of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) that Internal Audit communicated the results of each engagement to the Board. The Appendix to the report provided a summary of findings in relation to final reports issued for those engagements completed during the period 1 July to 30 September 2017. The appendix detailed the category of assurance, service, engagement, assurance rating and gave recommended risk ratings for each engagement as either critical, important, good practice and service improvement.

The report intimated that in addition to the reports listed in the Appendix, Internal Audit had an ongoing commitment to arrange corporate and service initiatives, progress information security matters in partnership with ICT and Legal Services, provide regular advice to officers, provide internal audit services to the associated bodies for which Renfrewshire Council was the lead authority and to Renfrewshire Leisure Limited and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board, coordination of the Council's Corporate Risk Management activity and management of the counter fraud, risk management and insurance teams.

DECIDED: That the summary of audit findings reported during the period 1 June to 30 September 2017 be noted.

3 Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress and Performance to 30 September 2017.

There was submitted a report by the Chief Auditor relative to Internal Audit and Counter Fraud performance from 1 April to 30 September 2017 in terms of the delivery of the Audit Plan for the year and outlining actual performance against targets

set by the Director of Finance & Resources.

The report intimated that Internal Audit monitored their progress and performance on a regular basis using a range of performance indicators and reported these to members as part of this report. It was noted that actual performance was slightly below target due to a higher than average proportion of annual leave being taken by staff over the summer months and also a vacancy within the internal audit team.

No formal performance targets for fraud investigation had been established as a major part of the team's work involved being the single point of contact for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Single Fraud Investigation Service and the Service Level Agreement for this work contained time targets for completion. The remainder of the corporate counter fraud resource was currently being utilised on fraud prevention work and also the investigation of non-benefit referrals received to date in areas such as tenancy, revenues and education.

It was noted that effort over the last year had focused on increasing fraud awareness among employees to prevent fraud from occurring against the Council. The types of fraud referrals received to date were wide-ranging and the team's objective was to concentrate on investigating those referrals considered to contain the greatest fraud risk.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

4 Strategic and Corporate Risk Registers 2017, Mid-Year Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to progress as at mid-year to manage the risks recorded in the Strategic and Corporate Risk Registers 2017. A copy of the complete risk registers were appended to the report. The report identified risks, linked actions and detailed progress to deliver the planned actions. The report indicated that the mid-year review had concluded that good progress had been made in the control and management of identified risks. No new risks had emerged that had not been anticipated and the overall strategic and corporate risk profile remained unchanged from that reported to the Board in June.

DECIDED: That the progress made to manage the identified risks be noted.

5 Chief Executive's Service Risk Management Plan Mid-Year Report

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress as at mid-year to manage the risks recorded in the Chief Executive's Service Risk Management Plan 2017, a copy of which was appended to the report. The report identified risks, outlined planned actions to manage those risks and detailed progress to deliver the planned actions. The report indicated that the mid-year review had concluded that good progress had been made in the control and management of the identified risks. No new risks had emerged that were not anticipated and there had been no significant changes in terms of the risk scoring for any of the individual risks that formed the corporate risk register.

DECIDED: That the progress made to manage the identified risks be noted.

6 Children's Services Risk Management Plan 2017/18: Mid-Year Progress Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to progress as at mid-year to manage the risks recorded in the Children's Services Risk Management Plan 2017, a copy of which was appended to the report. The report identified risks, outlined planned actions to manage those risks and detailed progress to deliver the planned actions. The report indicated that the mid-year review had concluded that good progress had been made in the control and management of the identified risks. No new risks had emerged that were not anticipated and there had been no significant changes in terms of the risk scoring for any of the individual risks that formed the corporate risk register.

DECIDED: That the progress made to manage the identified risks be noted.

7 Development & Housing Services Risk Management Plan 2017/18: Mid-Year Progress Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to progress as at mid-year to manage the risks recorded in the Development & Housing Risk Management Plan 2017, a copy of which was appended to the report. The report identified risks, outlined planned actions to manage those risks and detailed progress to deliver the planned actions. The report indicated that the mid-year review had concluded that good progress had been made in the control and management of the identified risks. No new risks had emerged that were not anticipated and there had been no significant changes in terms of the risk scoring for any of the individual risks that formed the corporate risk register.

DECIDED: That the progress made to manage the identified risks be noted.

8 Environment & Communities Risk Management Plan Mid-Year Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment & Communities relative to progress as at mid-year to manage the risks recorded in the Environment & Communities Risk Management Plan 2017, a copy of which was appended to the report. The report identified risks, outlined planned actions to manage those risks and detailed progress to deliver the planned actions. The report indicated that the mid-year review had concluded that good progress had been made in the control and management of the identified risks. No new risks had emerged that were not anticipated and there had been no significant changes in terms of the risk scoring for any of the individual risks that formed the corporate risk register.

DECIDED: That the progress made to manage the identified risks be noted.

9 Finance & Resources Risk Management Plan 2017, Mid-Year Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to progress as at mid-year to manage the risks recorded in the Finance & Resources Service Risk Management Plan 2017, a copy of which was appended to the report. The report identified risks, outlined planned actions to manage those risks and detailed progress to deliver the planned actions. The report indicated that the mid-year review had concluded that good progress had been made in the control and

management of the identified risks. No new risks had emerged that were not anticipated and there had been no significant changes in terms of the risk scoring for any of the individual risks that formed the corporate risk register.

DECIDED: That the progress made to manage the identified risks be noted.

10 Absence Statistics - 2017/18 Quarter 2

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the Council's absence statistics for the period 1 July to 30 September 2017. The report provided information in relation to absence targets and how services and categories of staff had performed against them. An analysis of the reasons for absence for the period was included in the report. Information was also provided on supporting attendance activity levels by service and costs of sick pay and the overall number of days lost for Quarter 2, ending 30 September 2017 and for the equivalent quarters in previous years.

In relation to training for employees on psychological non work related stress and in particular working with NHS Choose Life Team to offer safeTalk and ASIST suicide awareness and prevention, it was proposed that consideration be given to this being added to the members' training programme as this would be particularly useful during their surgeries when dealing with a member of the public who was particularly upset and stressed. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report on absence statistics for the period 1 July to 30 September 2017 be noted; and

(b) That it be agreed that consideration be given to adding safeTALK and ASIST suicide awareness and prevention to the members' training programme.

11 Report by Audit Scotland - Equal Pay in Scottish Councils

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to Audit Scotland's published report on Equal Pay in Scottish Councils. The report detailed audit information collected by Audit Scotland from across all Scottish councils focussing on how councils implemented the Single Status Agreement; how much councils had spent on settling equal pay claims; how councils demonstrated that they were dealing effectively with equal pay claims and minimising risks; the effectiveness of the governance and oversight arrangements of the Single Status agreement; and what lessons could be learned for the future.

In relation to the gender pay gap and the setting of targets and timescales to close the gap, it was proposed that a report outlining recommendations would be submitted to a future meeting. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That it be agreed that a report outlining recommendations relative to the gender pay gap and the setting of targets and timescales would be submitted to a future meeting.

12 The Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland Annual Report 2016/17

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the annual report by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland. The report provided details of the investigation of complaints about the conduct of councillors, members of devolved public bodies and MSPs and scrutiny of Scotland's Ministerial public appointments process. The report also related to the first year of the Commissioner's 2016/20 strategic plan, looked forward to the second period of the 2016/20 plan and provided an overview of the 2016/17 budget.

The report advised that the volume and complexity of conduct complaints had decreased by 20%. However the largest category of complaints related to disrespect and appeared to be increasing as a percentage of the total volume of complaints received. Nationally during 2016/17 the Commissioner received 174 complaints about councillors and the subject matter of the complaints was detailed in the report. No specific figures for Renfrewshire Council were included in the report. However, information had been received separately from the Commissioner that, during the period covered by the report 4 complaints had been received against Renfrewshire councillors compared with 6 in 2015/16. The report also referred to a hearing into a complaint concerning a Renfrewshire councillor which had been reported to the meeting of the Council held on 15 December 2016. The report noted that, as part of the elected members' training and development programme, briefings on code of conduct matters were provided to members; a new programme of briefings was in preparation for 2018 and members had been invited to attend the Standards Commission road show on 15 December 2017.

DECIDED:

(a) That the 2016/17 Annual Report by the Commission for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland be noted; and

(b) That the actions taken in Renfrewshire in relation to the Code of Conduct and members' training and development be noted.

13 Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Annual Programme 2017/18 - Request for Additional Review

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to a request from Councillor Sharkey for an additional item to be considered by the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board as part of its 2017/18 Annual Programme in relation to the conversion of grass areas to parking.

DECIDED: That it be agreed that the review regarding the conversion of grass areas to parking be included as item (vii) to the Annual Programme 2017/18.

14 Fly-Tipping in the Countryside and at known Fly-tipping Spots

There was submitted a report by Karen Locke, Lead Officer relative to the proposed purpose, scope and terms of reference and witnesses to be called for the review of fly-tipping in the countryside and at known fly-tipping spots.

The report intimated that the key purpose of the review would be to understand what drives individuals and organisations to fly-tip; to set out the Council's current

arrangements for addressing fly tipping; and to identify any other mitigation that could be recommended and that the Council could pursue within available resources.

The report advised that fly-tipping was a national problem and there were a number of reasons which caused people or businesses to fly-tip. Types of waste included general household waste, larger domestic items including fridges and mattresses, garden refuse, and commercial waste such as builders' rubble, clinical waste and tyres.

The review would consider available research, use of social media to seek feedback from residents; focus on services currently provided by Environment & Communities; and fly-tipping prevention and detection activities. The report proposed that witnesses/representatives from the Council's Environment & Communities, other local authorities, and partners including Police Scotland, SEPA and Zero Waste Scotland be invited to future meetings to provide information to the Board.

In addition to the witnesses suggested in the report, it was proposed that North Ayrshire Council be asked to provide evidence. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the purpose and scope of the review be approved;
- (b) That the provisional timescale as outlined in the appendix to the report be approved;
- (c) That the Lead Officer be authorised to contact any organisations recommended by the Board who might have information useful to the Board and who might be potential witnesses;
- (d) That powers be delegated to the Lead Officer in consultation with the Convener to alter the timetable having regard to the availability of evidence and witnesses throughout the course of the review;
- (e) That the Lead Officer be authorised to make the necessary arrangements to progress the review within the agreed timescales; and
- (f) That, in addition to the witnesses suggested in the report, North Ayrshire Council be asked to provide evidence.

15 Housing Repairs by Council and Outside Contractors

There was submitted a report by Colin Hunter, Lead Officer, relative to the proposed purpose, scope, terms of reference and witnesses to be called for the review of housing repairs by the Council and outside contractors.

The report intimated that the key purpose of the review would be to consider whether robust procedures were in place to ensure that repairs to Council housing stock were carried out to a high standard; were completed timeously and within set targets; to ensure that properties were not left in a dangerous condition; that satisfactory monitoring and evaluation of repairs was undertaken; and that there were measures in place to address unsatisfactory works by both external contractors and Building Services staff. The review would focus on existing practices and strengths and would consider examples of best practice, both within Renfrewshire and at least one

neighbouring authority, taking evidence from Council officials and inviting responses from Residents and Tenants Associations where they had concerns regarding the quality of repair works undertaken. The Scope of the review would identify the current processes in place within Development & Housing Services and Building Services within Environment & Communities to monitor and ensure that high standards of work were applied to repairs; and invite evidence from at least one neighbouring authority on their approach to securing high standards of repairs by external contractors and Council staff.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the purpose and scope of the review be approved;
- (b) That the provisional timescale as outlined in the appendix to the report be approved;
- (c) That powers be delegated to the Lead Officer in consultation with the Convener to alter the timetable having regard to the availability of evidence and witnesses throughout the course of the review;
- (d) That the Lead Officer be authorised to contact any organisations recommended by the Board who might have information useful to the Board and who might be potential witnesses; and
- (e) That the Lead Officer be authorised to make the necessary arrangements to progress the review within the agreed timescales.