

To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny

Board On: 27 August 2018

Report by: Director of Finance & Resources

Heading: **AUDIT, RISK AND SCRUTINY BOARD - ANNUAL PROGRAMME - 2018/19**

1 Summary

- 1.1 In terms of the guidelines for its operation, the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board prepares an annual programme which may include consideration of routine reports, as well as areas of specific investigation. A lead officer is appointed by the Chief Executive for each investigation.
 - 1.2 Each year it has been the practice that members of the Board are asked to suggest topics for investigation and to provide information in relation to why the investigation should be undertaken and the anticipated outcome. A report is thereafter submitted to the Board outlining the suggestions received in order that the Board can agree its annual programme.
 - 1.3 This report highlights the issues in terms of the number of reviews the Board can reasonably undertake and makes recommendations in relation to the programme and outstanding reviews.
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2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That consideration is given to the 2018/19 annual programme comprising of the following two outstanding investigations agreed as part of the 2017/18 programme:

- bus deregulation and its effect on transport services in Renfrewshire (Lead Officer: Peter McCulloch, Adult Services Manager, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); and
- the newly-introduced speed limit in Brookfield (A761) (Lead Officer: David Wilson, Social Work Manager, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership)

2.2 That consideration be given to whether the remaining three investigations carried forward from the 2017/18 programme should be taken forward at this time or considered either as reserve items or as part of the 2019/20 programme, namely:

- maintenance of multi-occupancy accommodation;
- the effectiveness of Fair Trade; and
- conversion of grassed areas to parking; and

3 **Background**

3.1 The guidelines for the Board's operation suggest that in relation to (a) scrutiny of service delivery and performance and (b) monitoring and reviewing service delivery, performance, policies and practices, the Board may select particular areas for investigation as part of its annual programme, thereafter making recommendations to the Council. In relation to the Council's role in community leadership, the guidelines recognise that this is not clear cut and requires to be considered carefully to ensure that the respective functions and responsibilities of other public bodies are not compromised but that the Board allows the Council to provide a forum for an informed public debate on these issues.

3.2 Investigations are generally scheduled to be considered over at least five meetings but this is dependent upon the availability of witnesses and whether the Board wishes to hear further evidence. The Board previously agreed that, given the level of business before it, there be no more than two investigations on an agenda to allow sufficient consideration to be given to each and to prevent meetings continuing into the afternoon. Realistically no more than two investigations can be undertaken within the Board's annual cycle of five/six meetings, although additional meetings can be held if required in terms of the Council's procedural standing orders.

3.3 At the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board meeting held on 27 August 2017 the following reviews were agreed; and their order of priority, as follows:

- fly tipping in the countryside and known fly tipping spots;
- Housing repairs by Council and outside contractors;
- bus deregulation and its effect on transport services in Renfrewshire;
- the newly-introduced speed limit in Brookfield (A761);
- maintenance of multi-occupancy accommodation; and
- the effectiveness of Fair Trade

3.4 It was also agreed that in relation to the reserve topics of Council Tax exemptions and Japanese knotweed in our gardens and landscapes that full investigations were not required but instead that reports on these topics would be sufficient.

3.5 At the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board held on 6 November 2018, it was agreed that the 2017/18 programme also include an investigation of conversion of grassed areas to parking.

3.6 An invitation to submit suggestions for areas of investigation for the 2018/19 annual programme was sent to Members in April 2018. No suggestions for the programme were received.

4 Progress of Annual Programme 2017/18

4.1 During the 2017/18 programme, the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board heard evidence in relation to (a) fly-tipping in the countryside and known fly-tipping spots and (b) housing repairs by Council and outside contractors.

4.2 The final report detailing the conclusions and recommendations for housing repairs by Council and outside contractors is contained within a separate report on the agenda for this meeting. The final report for fly-tipping in the countryside and known fly-tipping spots will be submitted for the Board's consideration to its September meeting.

4.3 The report in relation to Council Tax exemptions was submitted to the Board on 29 May 2018 and included information relating to exemptions and discounts and highlighted the new ways of providing customers with information, including the new customer portal. The report on Japanese knotweed is the subject of a separate report on the agenda for this meeting.

4.3 To date the following five reviews are still outstanding:

- bus deregulation and its effect on transport services in Renfrewshire;
- the newly-introduced speed limit in Brookfield (A761);
- maintenance of multi-occupancy accommodation;
- the effectiveness of Fair Trade: and
- conversion of grassed areas to parking

- 4.4 It is proposed that the 2018/19 programme comprise of the first two investigations on the list of reviews, both of which have lead officers appointed, as follows:
- bus deregulation and its effect on transport services in Renfrewshire (Lead Officer: Peter McCulloch, Adult Services Manager, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); and
 - the newly-introduced speed limit in Brookfield (A761) (Lead Officer: David Wilson, Social Work Manager, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership)
- 4.5 Members may wish to consider whether the remaining three investigations should be taken forward at this time or continued for consideration either as reserve items or as part of the 2019/20 programme, namely:
- maintenance of multi-occupancy accommodation;
 - the effectiveness of Fair Trade; and
 - conversion of grass areas to parking

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community Planning** – none
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** – none

7. **Equality & Human Rights**

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable