



**MINUTES OF MEETING of the AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in Council
Chambers, Kilncraigs, Alloa on THURSDAY 24 AUGUST 2023 at 9.30 AM.**

PRESENT

Councillor Janine Rennie (Chair)
Councillor Denis Coyne (Vice Chair)
Councillor Martha Benny
Councillor Kenneth Earle
Councillor Ellen Forson
Councillor Phil Fairlie
Councillor William Keogh
Councillor Bryan Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE

Stuart Crickmar, Strategic Director (Partnership & Performance)
Lorraine Sanda, Strategic Director (People)
Colin Bruce, Chief Education Officer (People)
Chris Alliston, Senior Manager, HR & Workforce Development (Partnership & Performance)
Lee Robertson, Senior Manager, Legal and Governance (Partnership & Performance)
Cherie Jarvie, Senior Manager, Partnership & Transformation (Partnership & Performance)
Lindsay Sim, Chief Finance Officer (Partnership & Performance)
Veronica Cully, Partnership and Inclusion Manager (People)
Lesley Taylor, Acting Principal Educational Psychologist (People)
Adrienne Aitken, Education Senior Manager (ELC, Primary & Libraries) (People)
Lisa Brown, RIC Quality Improvement Officer, Seconded (People)
Robbie Stewart, Service Manager Sport and Leisure (People)
Michael Boyle, Improving Outcomes Business Manager (People)
Catriona Scott, Education Manager Secondary (People)
Kay Strang, Headteacher, Park Primary School (People)
Tom Black, Headteacher, Lornshill Academy (People)
Steven McGuckin, Headteacher, Alloa Academy (People)
Scott McEwan, Headteacher, Alva Academy (People)
Heather Buchanan, Solicitor, Legal and Governance (Partnership & Performance) (Clerk to the Committee)
Melanie Moore, Committee Services, Legal and Governance (Partnership & Performance)

ON TEAMS

Pete Leonard, Strategic Director (Place)
Derek Barr, Procurement Manager (Performance & Partnership)
Isabel Wright, Internal Audit Manager (Partnership and Performance)
Judi Richardson, Performance & Information Adviser (Partnership & Performance)
Gillian Scott, Senior Manager, Early Intervention (People)
Sarah McPhee, Senior Internal Auditor, Falkirk Council
Maxine Ward, Interim Head of Community Health and Care
Gillian White, Committee Services, Legal and Governance (Partnership & Performance)

AS(23)28 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Religious Representatives, Rev Sang Y Cha and George Marcinkiewicz.

AS(23)29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

AS(23)30 MINUTE OF AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 JUNE 2023

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 15 June 2023 were submitted for approval.

Decision

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 15 June 2023 were agreed as a correct record by the Committee and signed off by the Vice Chair.

AS(23)31 LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SCOTLAND OVERVIEW 2023

A report, submitted by the Strategic Director, Partnership and Performance, provided Committee with an update on key current issues facing Local Government in Scotland as reported by the Accounts Commission in May 2023 so as to inform the adequacy of its scrutiny plans and activity over the coming year.

Motion

That the Committee agrees the recommendation as set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Ellen Forson. Seconded by Councillor Kenneth Earle.

Decision

Having challenged and commented on the report, the Committee agreed to note the report.

AS(23)32 COUNCIL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2022/23 AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

The report, submitted by the Chief Finance Officer, provided an update on the financial performance for the Council as at 31 March 2023, in respect of the General Fund (GF) revenue and capital spend and the achievement of savings, for the current financial year 2022/23, the Clackmannanshire element of the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Health and Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) revenue spend and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital spend, for the financial year, 2022/23.

Motion

That Committee agrees the recommendations set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Denis Coyne. Seconded by Councillor Kenneth Earle.

Decision

Having commented on and challenged the report, the Committee agreed to note the report on:

1. the General Fund revenue underspend of £(5.335)m for the year to 31 March 2023;
2. the Clackmannanshire element of the Health and Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) spend on budget for the year to 31 March 2023;

3. the HRA revenue surplus of £(1.361)m over the budgeted surplus for the year to 31 March 2023;
4. the HRA Capital programme underspend of £(4.759)m;
5. the General Fund Capital Programme underspend of £(10.657)m, and
6. progress in delivering the £1.838m approved savings programme, as at 31 March 2023.

AS(23)33 EXCEPTIONS FROM THE APPLICATION OF CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

It is a requirement of Contract Standing Orders that exceptions should be reported to the next available Audit Committee. The purpose of the paper submitted by the Strategic Director, Partnership and Performance is to provide detail on Exceptions to Contract Standing Orders submitted in the previous quarter.

Motion

That the Committee agrees the recommendation as set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Kenneth Earle. Seconded by Councillor Coyne.

Decision

Having challenged and commented on the report, the Committee agreed to note the report.

AS(23)34 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIONS

The report, submitted by the Strategic Director, Partnership and Performance, provided the Committee with a progress update on outstanding actions arising from Internal Audit reports.

Motion

That the Committee agrees the recommendations as set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Martha Benny. Seconded by Councillor Denis Coyne.

Decision

Having challenged and commented on the report, the Committee agreed to note the report and note that progress updates on outstanding Internal Audit actions will be provided henceforth on a six monthly basis.

AS(23)35 DRAFT AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN 2023/24

The report, submitted by the Strategic Director, Partnership and Performance, is to develop a forward plan for Audit and Scrutiny Committee and to introduce the concept of an annual self evaluation and report.

Motion

That the Committee agrees the recommendations as set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Ellen Forson. Seconded by Councillor Kenneth Earle.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

1. note the draft forward plan as set out in Appendix 1;
2. note that it is intended to convene an informal meeting of the Committee members to review the forward plan prior to a final draft being considered by Committee in October 2023;
3. note that approach to the development of a Committee Annual Report based on the indicative self evaluation approach outlined at Appendix 2.

AS(23)36 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT 2022/23

The report, submitted by the Internal Audit Manager, is to develop a forward plan for Audit and Scrutiny Committee and to introduce the concept of an annual self evaluation and report.

Motion

That the Committee agrees the recommendations as set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Kenneth Earle. Seconded by Councillor Ellen Forson.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note that:

1. sufficient Internal Audit work was undertaken to support a balanced assurance;
2. Internal Audit can provide **SUBSTANTIAL** assurance on the Council's arrangements for risk management, governance, and control for the year to 31 March 2023;
3. should the trend away from substantial assurance continue, there is a risk that, in future years, the Internal Audit Manager may not be able to reach an overall conclusion that substantial assurance can be provided in relation to arrangements for risk management, governance and control;
4. the Strategic Director Partnership and Performance will provide any status changes to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee as part of a six monthly update report. Internal Audit will also provide assurance and follow up as part of the established action tracking process. Any recommendations that remain outstanding beyond the agreed implementation date will be included in future update report to the Audit Committee.
5. Internal Audit met, or exceeded, each of its Key Performance Indicators;
6. the Internal Audit section operated in compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, and there has been no impairment to independence during the year.

AS(23)37 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The report, submitted by the Strategic Director, Partnership and Performance, provided the Committee with the Quarter 1, 2023/24 update on Clackmannanshire Council's Risk Register (Appendix A).

Motion

That Committee agrees the recommendation set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Bryan Quinn. Seconded by Councillor Ellen Forson.

Decision

Having commented and challenged the report, the Committee agreed to note the report as appropriate.

AS(23)38 PEOPLE DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLAN REPORT 2022/23

The report, submitted by the Senior Manager, People, provided an annual update on progress against the actions, priorities and key performance indicators set out in the Clackmannanshire People Directorate Business Plan, 2022-23, which was approved by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in August 2022. It summarises the actions that we have taken over the past year to address our improvement priorities and the impact of our work to date. It also highlighted any challenges that we may have encountered.

Motion

That Committee agrees the recommendation set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Ellen Forson. Seconded by Councillor Martha Benny.

Decision

Having commented and challenged the report, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

AS(23)39 NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN 2023/2024

The report, submitted by the Senior Manager, People, presented the National Improvement Framework (NIF) Plan Report 2023/24.

Motion

To agree the recommendation set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Ellen Forson. Seconded by Councillor Janine Rennie.

Decision

Having commented and challenged the report, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

AS(23)40 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2022/23

The report, submitted by the Strategy and Performance Adviser, presented an overview of performance in relation to complaints handling during the year 2022/23.

Motion

To agree the recommendation set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Martha Benny. Seconded by Councillor Kenneth Earle.

Decision

Having commented and challenged the report, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

Ends 1142 hrs