

AUDIT, RISK AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 4 December 2018. Minute of Meeting of the AUDIT, RISK AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Flynn, Convener; Councillor Yuill, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allard, Duncan, Graham, Lumsden, Avril MacKenzie, Reynolds and Townson.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest in respect of the items on the agenda, thereafter, the following declaration of interest was intimated:-

- (1) Councillor Duncan declared an interest in item 8.3 (ALEO Assurance Hub Annual Review) by virtue of her position as a Board Member of Aberdeen Performing Arts and considered that the nature of her interest did not require her to leave the meeting at that item on the agenda.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the declaration of interest.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 25 SEPTEMBER 2018

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 25 September 2018.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to article 6, resolution (i) to request Councillor Allard to raise his questions with the Chief Officer Organisational Development; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

3. The Committee had before it the Business Planner as prepared by the clerk.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the business planner.

SPSO DECISIONS, INSPECTOR OF CREMATORIA COMPLAINT DECISIONS - CUS/18/297

4. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer which provided information on all Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and Inspector of Crematoria decisions made in relation to Aberdeen City Council since the last reporting cycle, together with details of the SPSO Local Authority 2016-17 annual statistics tables,

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to provide assurance to Committee that complaints and Scottish Welfare Fund applications are being handled appropriately.

The report recommended:

that the Committee notes the details in the report.

Councillor Townson sought information in relation to whether the Council were informed of complaints that had been made directly to the SPSO without using the Councils Complaints Procedure, wherein the Senior Customer Experience Officer advised that the SPSO would direct complainants to use the Councils Complaints Procedure and that information on those complaints were not shared with the Council.

Councillor Townson sought clarification as to whether the Council would pursue a complainer if it was found to malicious or fraudulent, wherein the Chief Officer Governance advised that if required it would be decided on a case by case basis.

Councillor Duncan sought further information in relation to complaint handling improvements, wherein the Senior Customer Experience Officer advised that there was a new customer experience platform to monitor complaints and the responses issued from officers; online training for officers had been introduced and face to face training had also been delivered.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in response to a question from Councillor Duncan relating to whether there was a system in place for officers to view previous complaints to ensure that lessons were learnt, to note that there was a system in place and that the Chief Officer Governance would liaise with officers to determine how the information could be presented to the Committee; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the content of the report.

RIPSA ACTIVITY - GOV/18/073

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer Governance which advised that it was a requirement under paragraph 3.29 of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice for Covert Surveillance and Property interference that elected members review the authority's use of covert surveillance on a quarterly basis to ensure that it was being used consistently with the local authority's policy and that the policy remained fit for purpose.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the update within the report.

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Councillor Townson sought information as to whether the names of Authorising Officers were available to the Public, wherein the Committee were advised that the information would be circulated outwith the meeting.

Councillor Townson sought information as to whether anyone involved in a covert surveillance that resulted in a court appearance would be removed from being used in the future, wherein the Chief Officer Governance advised that this would be determined on a case by case basis.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in response to a question from Councillor Townson relating to whether the names of the Authorising Officers were available to the public, to note that a response would be circulated to the Committee outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the content of the report.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Duncan declared an interest in the following item by virtue of her position as a Board Member of Aberdeen Performing Arts and considered that the nature of her interest did not require her to leave the meeting at that item on the agenda.

ALEO ASSURANCE HUB ANNUAL REVIEW - GOV/18/235

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer Governance which presented (1) the updated terms of reference for the ALEO Assurance Hub for discussion, consideration and approval; and (2) the associated annual work plan for information.

The report recommended:

That the Committee –

- (a) approve the revised ALEO Assurance Hub Terms of Reference as attached as Appendix A to the report; and
- (b) note the ALEO Assurance Work Plan for 2019 as attached as Appendix B to the report.

Councillor Duncan sought guidance as to whether the Council should be monitoring what steps ALEO Boards were taking to be more representative, wherein the Interim Democracy Manager advised that the Boards were aware of the requirement and that information would be sought as part of the workplan and reported to this Committee.

Councillor Townson sought clarification as to whether ALEO's had a statutory duty to have procedures in place against the PREVENT strategy, wherein the Interim

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Democracy Manager advised that there wasn't a statutory duty on ALEO's and that the Council would be seeking assurance from ALEO's on how they assist the Council in meeting their PREVENT strategy obligations.

Councillor Duncan sought guidance on the questions asked of each ALEO and whether the size of the ALEO was taken into consideration, wherein the Interim Democracy Manager advised that initially each ALEO were asked the same questions and depending on the responses, further questions were asked to gain the assurance required.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

MOT ISSUES - OPE/18/236

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which presented the findings of the internal corporate investigation regarding the information that had been received that there were Council vehicles being used without having a valid MOT certificate.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the findings and recommendations of the Internal Corporate Investigation into the use of Council vehicles without an MOT certificate.

The Vice Convener sought information relating to the interim measures in place and whether they placed additional responsibilities on staff and requested information on when the new Fleet system would be in operation, wherein the Fleet Services Manager advised that the interim measures were labour intensive and that the Fleet Management System was currently in the tendering process.

Councillor Duncan sought guidance on what was being done to change the culture and knowledge of staff using the systems in place, wherein the Chief Operating Officer advised that there was a Culture Development Programme being progressed across the directorate.

Councillor Graham sought clarification as to whether Management were aware of the issue prior to the information being in the Press, wherein the Fleet Services Manager advised that Management were not aware of the issue.

Councillor Reynolds sought clarification regarding insurance for vehicles that did not have a valid MOT certificate, as Police Scotland had always advised the Licensing Committee that if a vehicle had no MOT then it would not be insured. The Chief Officer Governance advised that he would discuss the issue with colleagues and provide a

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response outwith the Committee and would ensure the information was provided to the Licensing Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in response to questions from members regarding whether vehicles without a valid MOT were fully insured, to note that the Chief Officer Governance would liaise with colleagues and provide a response outwith the meeting;
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendation contained in the report.

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT - IA/18/017

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Internal Auditor which advised on progress against the 2018/19 internal audit plan.

The Convener sought guidance as to whether an additional audit could be incorporated into the current 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan, wherein the Chief Internal Auditor advised that it would not be possible in this audit plan and that it could be incorporated into the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request the Chief Internal Auditor to include in the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan, an audit in relation to the Councils' Travel Policy to give assurance that the Council had appropriate arrangements in place; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the content of the report.

TRANSFORMATION - IA/AC/1910

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Internal Auditor which presented an audit in relation to Transformation which was undertaken to provide assurance that the Council had appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the success of its transformational aspirations and involved a review of the governance and programme management arrangements for implementing the Target Operating Model.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report and endorse the recommendations for improvement as agreed by the Service.

DEVOLVED EDUCATION MANAGEMENT - IA/AC/1903

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Internal Auditor which presented an audit in relation to Devolved Education Management which was

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undertaken to provide assurance that the scheme in place was adequate and that the decision making process was appropriate based on delegations in place.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report and endorse the recommendations for improvement as agreed by the Service.

INTERNAL TRANSPORT TENDERING PROCEDURES - IA/AC/1830

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Internal Auditor which presented an audit in relation to Internal Transport Tendering which was undertaken to ensure that purchases were being undertaken in line with the Council's Financial and Procurement Regulations and involved an examination of a selection of purchases from the previous two financial years and checking that where appropriate tenders were undertaken that there was evidence of Committee approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report and endorse the recommendations for improvement as agreed by the Service.

BUSINESS RATES - IA/AC/1911

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Internal Auditor which presented an audit in relation to Business Rates which was undertaken to provide assurance over the accuracy of Business Rates billing and the robustness of collection arrangements.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report and endorse the recommendations for improvement as agreed by the Service.

INTERNAL AUDIT FOLLOW UP ON RECOMMENDATIONS IA/18/018

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Internal Auditor which advised on progress made by Services with implementing recommendations that had been agreed in Internal Audit reports.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report and request all Services to undertake the work required to complete the outstanding audit recommendations.

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EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 6 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

QUESTIONS IN PRIVATE

14. In relation to article 11 of this minute, the Vice Convener sought guidance relating to information provided during discussions on the report.

The Committee resolved:-
to note the information provided.

- **COUNCILLOR STEPHEN FLYNN, Convener**

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