

AUDIT, RISK AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 JUNE 2023

DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE - CUS/23/179

7. With reference to article 17 of the minute of meeting of Council of 22 February 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer Services which presented a report in response to the notice of motion from Councillor Kusznr, which requested the preparation of a feasibility study to explore the establishment of a parallel Local Government Transparency Code, similar to the one in place for local authorities in England.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the current position regarding data publication and compliance; and
- (b) note that a report from the Chief Officer – Customer Experience and People and Organisational Development will be provided pending the outcome of Scottish Government consultation and further review.

In response to a question regarding how many of the total number of requests had come from Councillors, the Customer Services Manager advised that she would liaise with colleagues to see if that data was still collected and whether it was consistent.

In response to a question regarding the number of requests for spatial data to be published, the Chief Officer – Data Insights advised that the figure was very low and that he would circulate the information via email.

In response to questions regarding why the Council could not proceed prior to the outcome of the Scottish Government consultation and the timeframe for reporting, the Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development and Customer Experience advised that the Council were required to comply with the Code, Scottish Government guidance and legislation. She further advised that there were resource implications as further changes may be required following the results of the consultation. In relation to the timeframe for reporting, it was noted that it was not currently known when the findings from the consultation would be available.

Councillor Allard, seconded by Councillor McLellan moved:-

That the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Kusznr, seconded by Councillor Massey, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 understands the current position regarding data publication and compliance in Scotland; and
- 2.2 instructs the chief officer – Customer Experience and People and Organisational Development to come back to committee following the

publication of the results of the recent consultation to further consider the progression of a parallel Aberdeen Taxpayers Transparency Code for approval.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (7) – Councillors Allard, Bouse, Fairfull, McLellan, McRae, Radley and van Sweeden; for the amendment (6) – the Convener and Councillors Ali, Bonsell, Kuznir, Massey and Mrs Stewart.

The Committee resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

In terms of Standing Order 34.1, Councillor Kuznir intimated that he would like this matter to be referred to full Council in order for a final decision to be taken. Councillor Kuznir was supported by the Convener, and Councillors Ali, Bonsell, Massey and Mrs Stewart.