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Item 8

4th December 2019



Glasgow City Council

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Report by Convener

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Annual Assessment

Purpose of Report:

To provide an Annual Assessment of the work of the Committee as required by Standing Order 31.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to consider and note the Annual Assessment.

Ward No(s):

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

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1. Background

1.1 The Council's Standing Order 31 notes that:

“An annual assessment of the work of each Scrutiny Committee shall be carried out to assess the effectiveness of the working of the committee and to assess any training needs of members and officers. The assessment will be carried out by the relevant Convener in years 1 and 2 and an independent assessment will be carried out in year 3 and every third year thereafter.”

1.2 The Convener carried out an annual assessment in year 1 and it was considered and approved by the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee at its December 2018 meeting.

1.3 This report is the Convener's annual assessment for year 2 and it will assess the effectiveness of the working of the Committee and assess any training needs.

1.4 The annual assessment in year 3 will be an independent assessment.

2. Workplan

2.1 The Committee agreed a Workplan at its meeting in August 2019.

2.2 All members were invited to input into the Workplan at the meeting. Members are also welcome, at any time, to raise suggestions with the Convener and/or Executive Director.

3. Co-opted External Members

3.1 As part of its Terms of Reference the Committee can co-opt external members to support the scrutiny role.

3.2 Members of this Committee may, therefore, wish to consider the use of co-opted individuals to support the overall scrutiny function, or specific areas of work.

3.3 Any specific proposals can be discussed with the Convener and/or the Executive Director.

4. Call Ins

4.1 The Council's scrutiny committees are responsible for hearing any call in of Council decisions.

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- 4.2 The call in process is designed to allow members to subject decisions by the City Administration Committee to further scrutiny and to make further recommendation for action.
- 4.3 To date no call ins have been heard at this Committee. A set of procedures and guidance have been developed to deal with any call ins.

5. Colin Mair Review of Governance and Accountability

- 5.1 The annual assessment in year 1 noted that Full Council considered the Colin Mair Review at its meeting in September 2018 and agreed to set up a Working Group to consider amendments and a revised Action Plan would be reported to the Business Bureau.
- 5.2 The Working Group has now completed its deliberations and the Head of Audit & Inspection is preparing a final report for submission to the Business Bureau. The Head of Audit & Inspection will provide follow up reports to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee showing progress towards achievement of the Council's Action Plan once it has been agreed by the Business Bureau.
- 5.3 The Review suggested that:

“The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and the Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee should work together...”

The conveners of both scrutiny committees meet on a regular basis to discuss matters. A meeting has also taken place involving the Conveners and Vice Conveners of both scrutiny committees. Discussions have centred on areas that are common to both committees, such as Workplans, Best Value and Arms Length External Organisations. The intention is also for the conveners of both scrutiny committees to meet with the conveners of the policy committees annually.

- 5.4 The Review also suggested 'away days' and this Committee may wish to consider holding an 'away day' or an informal meeting. For example, members of the Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee had informal meetings without Council officers present to enable members to comment on committee activity outside of the formal meetings.

6. Effectiveness of the Working of the Committee

- 6.1 The Committee has worked very effectively over the last year. Members behave with good conduct and show a wide understanding of financial and audit issues. Attendance by members and Council officers has been good.
- 6.2 Members regularly question Council officers from all Services and where questions cannot be answered written answers are provided at the next meeting as part of the 'Follow Up' report.

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- 6.3 The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee agreed to move the reporting of Revenue and Investment Programme Monitoring to bi-monthly and also agreed a new format of reports. Both of these changes have worked well in year 2.
- 6.4 Audit reports are keenly scrutinised by members.
- 6.5 Members raised concerns about taking committee reports in private, but this led to a positive change where a report is tabled in public which summarises the contents and explains the reasons for taking the full report in private. Following that members consider the full report in private.
- 6.6 The issue of when hard copy committee papers are published has been long-standing. It is the intention to change the publication day of this Committee's papers and it will start in early 2020.

7. Training Needs

- 7.1 There is no specific training required to sit on the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee. However, the Council does organise training sessions which cover finance. For example, Treasury Management Training was organised in October 2019.
- 7.2 Consideration could be given to exploring what training is available from external organisations and also what members of scrutiny committees across the UK receive and from which we could learn. For example, the Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee received training from the Improvement Service on scrutiny.
- 7.3 Members may wish to raise with their Group's Business Manager any suggestions for training sessions which can be raised at the Business Bureau. This Committee's lead officers are also available to brief any member on specific areas as required.

8. Year 2 Overview

- 8.1 The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee receives regular Revenue and Investment Programme Monitoring reports and a total of 48 Internal Audits were tabled at the Committee.
- 8.2 The Committee has effectively considered reports on a variety of matters including the Annual Accounts and Annual Audit, Arms Length External Organisations Financial Monitoring, the Treasury Management Strategy, the Common Good Fund, Best Value, the Internal Audit Plan, Gifts and Hospitality, the Corporate Risk Register and the Sundry Trusts Fund.

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- 8.3 Audit Scotland regularly attend the Committee and present reports covering the local authority or national issues. Members actively question and comment on these.
- 8.4 Members of the Committee have also requested reports and these have been tabled. For example, Developer Contributions from Community Growth Areas.

9. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	No specific financial resource implications identified
<i>Legal:</i>	No specific legal resource implications identified.
<i>Personnel:</i>	No specific personnel resource implications identified.
<i>Procurement:</i>	No specific procurement resource implications identified.

Council Strategic Plan:

The Annual Review of the Committee supports the Council Strategic plan priority of a well governed City that listens and responds.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

No significant impact identified

No significant impact identified.

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Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental: No significant impact identified.

*Social, including
opportunities under
Article 20 of the
European Public
Procurement
Directive:* No significant impact identified.

Economic: No significant impact identified.

**Privacy and Data
Protection impacts:** No significant impact identified.

10. Recommendations

10.1 The Committee is asked to consider and note the Annual Assessment