

## **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE PANEL (SPECIAL).**

Minutes of special meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr  
on 26th June 2018 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Peter Convery (Chair), Brian Connolly, Chris Cullen, Martin Dowey, Hugh Hunter and Arthur Spurling.

Apologies: Councillors Alec Clark and Helen Moonie.

Attending: T. Baulk, Head of Finance and ICT; W. Carlaw, Service Lead – Democratic Governance; T. Simpson, Service Lead – Corporate Accounting; A. McGregor, Acting Chief Internal Auditor; and J. McClure, Committee Services Lead Officer.

### **1. Declarations of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest by Members of the Panel in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

### **2. Annual Accounts 2017/18.**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 20th June 2018 by the Head of Finance and ICT presenting the unaudited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 ('the unaudited Accounts').

The Head of Finance and ICT and the Service Lead – Corporate Accounting highlighted the main points in the annual accounts and a full discussion took place in relation to this Council's financial performance in comparison to other local authorities; long term liabilities (pensions); the Council's borrowings and investments; Council Tax debt compared to other authorities; the Council's funding to the IJB; PPP contracts; credit risks and the safety measures put in place; and contingent assets and liabilities.

Following questions from Panel Members on a number of issues, the Panel noted:-

- (1) that the unaudited Accounts had been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice and were submitted to the External Auditors by 30th June 2018;
- (2) that there was a statutory requirement for the accounts to be made available for public inspection;
- (3) that the coming few years would be very challenging for this Council;
- (4) that audit fees were determined by Audit Scotland within a set fee range with only limited ability to negotiate within the range;
- (5) that this Council prepared the accounts on behalf of Ayr Renaissance LLP and the Partnership Board then considered and approved these accounts, however they were exempt from audit; and

- (6) that the situation in relation to non-domestic rates was still being considered by this authority following the findings from the Barclay review instructed by the Scottish Government.

The Panel commended the Head of Finance and ICT and his staff on their work on these unaudited Annual Accounts and

**Decided:**

- (a) having considered the unaudited Annual Accounts (Appendix 1 to the report) prior to their submission to the Council's External Auditors, to note that all figures remained subject to audit;
- (b) having considered the unaudited Charitable Trust Accounts (Appendices 2 to 4 to the report) prior to their submission to the Council's External Auditors, to note that all figures remained subject to audit; and
- (c) to request that the Head of Finance and ICT report back to a future meeting of this Panel following completion of the audit.

The meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.