

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2008 AT 1000 HRS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors Tom Cook, Willie Coffey, Helen Coffey, John Campbell, Alan Brown, Stuart Finlayson, Barney Menzies, Elaine Dinwoodie and Drew Filson.

ATTENDING: Fiona Lees, Chief Executive; Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; William Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Alex McPhee, Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management; David Mitchell, Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services; Colin Houston, Chief Auditor; Julie McGarry, Administration Manager; Alan Wasson, Audit Manager - IT; Iain Tough, Corporate Business Manager; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Maureen McKay and Eric Ross.

CHAIR: Councillor Tom Cook, Chair.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

1. There were submitted and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 November 2008 (circulated).

1.1 MATTERS ARISING

1.1.1 Void Weeks for Council Houses (Item 9(i), Page 551, 07/11)

The Chair confirmed that the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services had provided information to Members on the reasons for the increase in the number of void weeks for Council houses between Period 6, 2007 and Period 6, 2008.

1.1.2 Income from Whitelees Wind Farm (Item 9(ii), Page 551, 07/11)

The Chair confirmed that the Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management had provided information to Members on the inclusion of income from the Whitelees Wind Farm within the Employability balance featured in the Corporate Support section of the Finance and Service Strategy Report to Period 6.

AUDIT

PROGRESS REPORT - INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2008/2009

2. There was submitted a report dated 8 December 2008 (circulated) by the Chief Auditor which provided a mid-year progress report on performance against the Audit Plan for the financial year 2008/09.

During discussion and in response to issues raised and questions put by Members of the Committee, the relevant Officers provided clarification with regard to the undernoted matters, namely:-

- the school location audits at New Farm and Kirkstyle Primary Schools and in this connection the Committee noted that the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services would be considering the need and extent of possible training arising from issues identified as a result of the audits;
- the origin of Internal Audit investigations which result in reports to the Police;
- the arrangements in place for the gritting of roads and footways and the Council's response to the heavy demand for such services during the extremely cold weather over the two week period from 27 November 2008; and
- the testing of a sample of Education Maintenance Allowance application forms and the arrangements now in place within Secondary Schools to check both entitlement to, and level of, bonus payments.

It was, otherwise, agreed to note the terms of the report.

SCRUTINY

AWARDING OF CONTRACTS

3. There was submitted and noted a report dated 3 December 2008 (circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support which provided, for information, details of tenders which had been accepted over the recent period.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

4. Prior to close of the meeting, the Chair wished those present and in attendance the compliments of the festive season.

The meeting terminated at 1022 hrs.